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Strengthening Iraqi Military and Security Forces

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Please note that this is a working draft designed to solicit comments and additional data, and will be steadily revised and updated over time.

Executive Summary

There are five key elements to any kind of “victory” in Iraq, both for the Iraqi people, and for the US and its Coalition allies:

- Establishing a pluralistic Iraqi government capable of both governing and providing security to the people of Iraq, and finding a new balance of political power acceptable to Arab Shi’ite, Arab Sunni, the Kurds, Turkomans, and other minorities. Must be capable of effective governance at the local, regional, and national level.
- Creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces capable of bringing security to the entire country, of eventually replacing all Coalition forces, and capable of conducting effective operations while winning the support of the vast majority of the Iraqi people.
- Providing effective aid, debt and reparations relief, and Iraqi economic reform efforts that – coupled to effective security – move the nation onto the path to stable economic development where wealth and economic growth are distributed in ways that meet the needs of all of Iraq’s people.
- Developing a new national consensus that legitimizes Iraq’s post Saddam government and social structure, and that can find a “golden mean” between the different goals and expectations of its different ethnic and religious elements.
- Finding a new balance of relationships with Iraq’s neighbors that will ensure that they do not threaten Iraq, or interfere in its affairs, while making it clear that Iraq no longer poses a threat to any neighboring state.

Building effective Iraqi military and security forces is only one of the elements necessary to implementing a successful strategy in Iraq, one that can meet both US strategic needs and the needs of the Iraqi people. It is, however, an element that is critical to the creation of a legitimate government in Iraq, and to establishing the stability and security vital to Iraq’s political and economic development.

The report documents a tragic US failure to develop and implement such a strategy during the first year of the US occupation in Iraq. It is a failure to understand the strategic situation in Iraq and the realities of Iraqi politics. It is a failure at every level to prepare for a coordinated US effort at nation building. It is a failure by the US military to prepare for the military aspects of stability operations, and by the US State Department to recognize the need to create effective police forces. It is a failure to react to the growing reality of the insurgency in Iraq and for the need for Iraqi military, security, and police forces that could be true partners in fighting that threat.

The end result was to leave many Iraqi forces without anything approaching adequate organization, training, equipment, and facilities. For political and other reasons, the Administration, CPA, and US command emphasized quantity over quality to the point where unprepared Iraqis were sent out to die. The end result was far more of an abuse of the troops concerned than any shortfalls in providing suitable equipment to US forces.

The other side of this story, however, is a series of changes are taking place in the way the US is preparing Iraqi forces that may well correct these mistakes and create the kind of Iraqi forces that are vital to both Iraq's future and any successful reductions in US forces and US withdrawals from Iraq. It is not clear that these steps can overcome the legacy of past neglect and failure, but they do offer serious hope if the Administration, the US Congress, and the US military fully recognize and support the US training mission and Iraq's evolving military, security, and police forces.

The Need for Specific Changes in US Policy and Actions

This report shows that US and the Iraqi government have made significant progress since the summer of 2004. Effective Iraqi forces are now taking the field and some have proven themselves in combat. For the US to be truly effective in carrying out this mission, however, there is still much to be done. If Iraqi military, security, and police forces are to be created at anything like the levels of strength and competence that are required, the US needs to take – or reinforce – the following steps:

US Policy Priorities

- Accept the fact that success in Iraq is dependent on US ability to create effective Iraqi police, security, and counterinsurgency forces as soon as possible, and that this a top priority mission. US forces can win every clash and encounter and still decisively lose the war after the war.
- Make it fully clear to the Iraqi people and the world that the US recognizes that Iraqis must both replace US and Coalition forces in visibility and eventually take over almost all missions.
- Keep reiterating that the US will set no deadlines or fixed limits on its military effort, and will support Iraq until it is ready to take over the mission and the insurgents are largely defeated.
- Make it clear that the US and Britain will not maintain post insurgency bases in Iraq, and will stay only as long as the Iraqi government requests and needs their support.
- Accept the need for a true partnership with the Iraqis and for giving them the lead and ability to take command decisions at the national, regional, and local levels as soon as they are ready. Make nation building real.
- Accept the reality that the US cannot find proxies to do its work for it. NATO may provide token aid in training, but will not provide major aid or training on the required scale. Other countries may provide politically useful contingents, but US, British, and Iraqi forces must take all major action. Stop provoking a pointless confrontation within NATO over levels of troops and training aid that the US simply will not get. Concentrate on the mission at hand.¹

Priorities for Iraqi Force Development

- Develop a coherent and practical plan for creating the kind of Iraqi forces that can stand on their own and largely or fully replace Coalition forces as independent units. Implement the plan as quickly as possible. Give Iraqi military, security, and police forces the equipment and facilities they need to take on insurgents without US or other support and reinforcement.
- Implement General Luck's plan to strengthen Iraqi forces with large numbers of US advisors as soon as possible, but clearly plan to phase out advisors and eliminate Iraqi dependence on such advisors as soon as is practicable.
- Keep up constant pressure on the Iraqi government to improve its effectiveness at the central, regional, and local level in supporting Iraqi forces and in providing aid and governance efforts that match the deployment and mission priorities of the security and police forces. Push the Iraqi government towards unified and timely action, towards promoting competence and removing incompetent personnel.
- Prepare and execute a transition plan to help the new Iraqi government that emerges out of the January 30, 2005 elections understand the true security priorities in the country, and ensure it acts as effectively as possible in developing effective governance and efforts to create Iraqi forces.
- Resist US and Iraqi government efforts to rush force development in ways that emphasize quantity over quality, and continue the focus on leadership, creating effective units, and ensuring that training and equipment are adequate to the task.

- Pay careful attention to the merger of the Army and National Guard, which risks creating a larger and lower quality force, rather than the effective forces that are needed.
- Focus on the importance of political security. Security for both Iraqi governance and Iraqi elections must come as soon and as much as possible from Iraqi forces. Iraqi forces will not be ready to undertake such missions though mid 2005 and probably well into 2006, but they must be given the highest possible visibility in the roles where they are most needed. They will not be ready for the January 30, 2005 election, but careful planning will be necessary to make them ready for the Constitutional referendum, and full national election at the end of 2005.
- Create command, communications, and intelligence systems that can tie together the Iraqi, US, and British efforts; and that will give the new Iraqi government and forces the capability they need once the US leaves.
- Make the supporting economic aid effort as relevant to the counterinsurgency campaign as possible, and link it to the development of Iraqi government and security activity effort in the field. The aid effort must become vastly more effective in insurgent and high-threat areas. One of the most senior officers pointed out as early as mid-2003 that, "Dollars are more effective than bullets. Physical security is only a prelude to economic security."
- Take a much harder look at the problems in Iraqi governance at the central, regional, and local level. Force the issue in ensuring suitable Iraqi government coordination, responsiveness, and action. Tie aid carefully to the reality of Iraqi government civil efforts to put government in the field and follow-up military action with effective governance.
- Carefully review US military doctrine and guidance in the field to ensure that Iraqi forces get full force protection from US commanders, and suitable support, and that USA forces actively work with, and encourage, Iraqi units as they develop and deploy.
- Re-examine the present equipment and facilities program to see if it will give all elements of Iraqi forces the level of weapons, communications, protection, and armor necessary to function effectively in a terrorist/insurgent environment. Ensure a proper match between training, equipment, facilities, and US support in force protection.
- Provide full reporting on Iraqi casualties and not simply US and Coalition forces. Fully report on the Iraqi as well as the US role in press reports and briefings. Treat the Iraqis as true partners and give their sacrifices the recognition they deserve.

The Need for Credibility and Transparency

- Start talking honestly about the threat. Admit the scale of Iraqi Sunni insurgency efforts. Be honest about the scale and nature of the foreign threat, and the complex mix of groups involved, rather than placing too much emphasis on Al Qaeda. Provide objective reporting on the role of outside powers, like Iran and Syria, without exaggeration.
- Provide public and honest weekly reporting. Use transparency to force the issues so no one can delay or hide a future lack of progress. Prove to the Iraqi people, the American people, and Congress that there is real and not simply cosmetic success.
- Provide honest data on the Iraqi training effort that distinguishes serious training from token training.
- Provide similar data on facilities and equipment. Map the areas where such aid has been fully provided, and Iraqi forces have taken over the mission. Substitute frankness and transparency for propaganda.
- Force accountability on the system. Ruthlessly demand that all contract terms be met, make it clear that contract disputes will not be tolerated, and take the trouble to fire any US military and federal employees who delay contract and aid efforts.

Many serious problems remain in every aspect of the Iraqi force development program, but the more one considers the history of this program as described in this report, the more it is clear that pursuing the right program consistently and with the right resources can succeed.

The Broader Lessons for US Policy and Planning

At the same time, the analysis in this report shows that the US has broader lessons to learn. It is difficult to review the data in this report without concluding that the US failed the Iraqi people and the Iraqi forces it was trying to create for more than a year. These failures were partly failures driven by inexperience and by the wrong kinds of planning and doctrine.

The US military was unprepared at the senior command level for counterinsurgency, and especially for serious partnership and interoperability with the new Iraqi forces it was seeking to create. The civil aid effort was organized around creating the wrong kind of police forces for a kind of nation building that could only take place in a far more permissive environment. Creating effective police and security forces for high-risk environments is a mission for which the State Department and USAID are unprepared and which should be part of an integrated effort linking the creation of effective military, security, and police forces.

No one who talked to the US advisors who served in the field from the earliest days of the advisory mission to the present can have anything other than respect for what they tried to do, and for their deep concern for the forces they were training. The advisory teams saw the Iraqis as both partners and as people.

At higher levels, however, the US government and the US military were slow to react, focusing on US forces and US priorities. The end result was that the US effectively exploited a situation where Iraqis had no economic choice other than to volunteer, and the US sent them unprepared into the field. The fact these forces then had failure after failure was inevitable, and the fact that some died as a result of US incompetence and neglect was the equivalent of bureaucratic murder. The men did not fail the system; the system failed the men.

The US now has every possible incentive to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces. This is the only practical way to “win” in Iraq, cut the size of US commitments, and establish a government the Iraqis see as legitimate. The US certainly understands this at the command level in Iraq and in the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I), and seems to now understand it at the policy and command level in Washington as well.

What is not clear is whether all the necessary resources are really being provided, and whether a comprehensive and realistic plan exists to ensure that Iraqi military, security, and police forces develop as they should. General Luck’s plan to strengthen Iraqi forces with American advisors is a useful step, but only if it leads to Iraqi forces that become fully independent and which can replace US and other Coalition forces. As yet, there is no strategy or plan that shows the US will give Iraqi forces the heavier equipment they need to fight and survive, the facilities they need to be protected, the communications required, or any of the other essential tools that will create truly independent and self-

sufficient forces. Such a plan is the sine qua non of any effective US strategy and plan for Iraq. The fact it still does not exist in any public form – if at all – is a devastating indictment of US leadership and credibility,

The problem is not simply American. Major problems have emerged in the inability of the Iraqi Interim Government to follow up on US and Iraqi military and security efforts and to establish effective governance in the field. The reprogramming of US aid to serve military and security interests is a vital start, but it is totally unclear that a broader plan exists to recast the US economic aid effort to achieve the security and stability that is a critical precondition to longer term aid efforts.

The US not only needs a workable strategy and plan for the development of Iraqi forces that can operate independently and replace US and other Coalition forces as soon as is feasible, it needs one that is integrated into an overall plan for every aspect of US military, advisory, and aid activity in Iraq. This is another key lesson of the US experience in both Afghanistan and Iraq. No one can ignore the ad hoc nature of day-to-day reality, but this is no excuse for not being able to tie all US government efforts together around some common Interagency effort and maintain a focus on a common plan and strategy.

Finally, the history of the US effort to create Iraqi forces is a warning that Americans at every level need to think about what alliance and interoperability really mean in creating allied forces for this kind of nation building and warfare. Iraq is only one example of how vital a role such forces must play in many forms of asymmetric warfare. What is equally clear is that Americans must understand that they have a moral and ethical responsibility to the forces they are creating, and are not simply creating a useful expedient. The only truly important force numbers in this report count men, not things or dollars.

I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
THE CONTRADICTIONS IN IRAQI EXPECTATIONS AND THE STEADILY GROWING NATURE OF THE SECURITY PROBLEM.....	1
LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE	2
II. FAILURES IN GRAND STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT: THE BACKGROUND TO THE EFFORT TO CREATE EFFECTIVE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES	4
WARNING INDICATORS.....	5
THE IMPORTANCE OF IRAQI PUBLIC OPINION AND HOSTILITY AND DISTRUST OF COALITION FORCES	6
<i>Coalition Operations = “Occupier” Operations = Anger and Friction</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Early Warning of the Need for Effective Iraqi Forces and True Interoperability: The Polls Before the Transfer of Power</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Iraqi Views Harden: The Polls in 2004</i>	<i>7</i>
THE INITIAL IDEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO REALITY	8
PROBLEMS IN THE CULTURE OF THE US MILITARY	10
FAILURES AT THE US ADVISORY AND CIVILIAN ASSISTANCE LEVEL.....	11
PROBLEMS IN GOVERNANCE AND IRAQ’S ECONOMY AND SOCIETY	12
III. FAILURES IN RECOGNIZING THE GROWTH AND CHARACTER OF THE INSURGENT THREAT	15
DENIAL AS A METHOD OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY WARFARE	15

FAILING TO ADMIT THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM THOUGH MID-2004.....	16
IV. EVOLVING THREAT TACTICS AND PRESSURE ON GOVERNMENT FORCES.....	17
POLITICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND INFORMATION WARFARE LESSONS	18
LESSONS ABOUT METHODS OF ATTACK AND COMBAT	21
<i>Iraqi-US Asymmetric Interaction and Non-Interoperability.....</i>	<i>24</i>
IV. US TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT EFFORT: THE FAILURES OF 2003.....	25
PLANNING FOR THE WRONG FORCES AND THE WRONG MISSION	25
PROVIDING THE TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT EFFORT WITH TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE.....	25
SLOWLY TILTING TOWARDS REALITY AFTER SEPTEMBER 2003	26
V. FAILING TO DELIVER AN ADEQUATE TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT PROGRAM THROUGH THE TENURE OF THE CPA AND MID-2004	28
DATA ON THE PROGRESS IN TRAINING AND EQUIPPING IRAQI SECURITY FORCES.....	28
PROGRESS AT THE TIME THE CPA WENT OUT OF BUSINESS AT THE END OF JUNE 2004.....	29
TOO LITTLE AND TOO LATE IN GETTING RESOURCES TO THE IRAQIS.....	29
FORCE STATUS DATA	30
MANPOWER AND TRAINING STATUS	31
MANNING AND TRAINING ISSUES IN MID-2004	32
EQUIPMENT ISSUES IN MID-2004	32
<i>Equipment Status Under the CPA.....</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>The Equipment Effort at the End of the CPA</i>	<i>33</i>
MILITIA AND DISARMAMENT ISSUES	34
THE HUMINT PROBLEM	36
VI. THE FALL OF 2004: THE EFFORT TO TRAIN IRAQI MILITARY AND SECURITY FORCES GATHERS MOMENTUM.....	38
CREATING MORE EFFECTIVE CORE FORCES.....	38
MANNING, TRAINING, AND EQUIPMENT OF THE OVERALL MIX OF IRAQI FORCES BY MAJOR FORCE ELEMENT	41
EQUIPMENT HOLDINGS.....	43
IRAQI MINISTER OF DEFENSE BRIEFING — SEPTEMBER 22, 2004	44
RESOURCES AS OF SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER	45
VII. THE STATUS OF IRAQI FORCES IN NOVEMBER 2004.....	46
NUMBERS OF ACTIVE, TRAINED/EQUIPPED/AUTHORIZED IRAQI MILITARY, SECURITY, AND POLICE FORCES AS OF LATE NOVEMBER 2004.....	46
ON DUTY VERSUS TRAINED AND EQUIPPED.....	47
LACK OF MEANINGFUL EQUIPMENT REPORTING.....	48
KEY IRAQI FORCE COMPONENTS.....	49
VIII. THE RUN UP TO ELECTIONS: IRAQI SECURITY AND MILITARY FORCES IN DECEMBER 2004 AND JANUARY 2005	52
MANNING	52
OPERATIONAL READINESS AT THE END OF 2004	57
EQUIPMENT AT THE END OF 2004.....	60
FACILITIES AT THE END OF 2004.....	62
SPENDING AT THE END OF 2004.....	62
MANNING AT THE BEGINNING OF 2005	62
EQUIPMENT AT THE BEGINNING OF 2005.....	69
IX. THE BROADER PICTURE: TRENDS IN IRAQI MILITARY AND SECURITY FORCE LEVELS FROM DECEMBER 2003 TO JANUARY 2005	71
X. THE EVOLVING NATURE OF THE INSURGENCY.....	79

THE DOMINANT ROLE OF IRAQI SUNNI ARAB INSURGENTS	80
OUTSIDE ISLAMIST GROUPS AND VOLUNTEERS	84
THE UNCERTAIN STATUS OF THE SHI'ITES	86
THE KURDS AND OTHER MINORITIES	87
THE PROBLEMS OF IRAN AND SYRIA	87
INCLUSION VERSUS CONFLICT	89
THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE IRAQI MILITARY, SECURITY, AND POLICE FORCES.....	89
XI. BUILDING THE FUTURE.....	91
STATEMENTS BY GENERAL JOHN ABIZAID AND LIEUTENANT-GENERAL DAVID PETRAEUS ON IRAQI TRAINING IN DECEMBER 2004.....	92
NATO, UN, AND REGIONAL FORCES ARE ONLY A LIMITED ANSWER.....	93
ADDITIONAL US AND COALITION TROOPS ARE A LIMITED ANSWER AS WELL	94
FOR IRAQIS AND BY IRAQIS	95
CHANGES IN STRATEGY?.....	95
OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE SECURITY AREA.....	97
<i>US Policy Priorities</i>	98
<i>Priorities for Iraqi Force Development</i>	99
<i>The Need for Credibility and Transparency</i>	100
APPENDIX A	103
CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS INVOLVING IRAQI SECURITY FORCES*	103

I. Introduction

There are five key elements to any kind of “victory in Iraq, both for the Iraqi people, and for the US and its Coalition allies:

- Establishing a pluralistic Iraqi government capable of both governing and providing security to the people of Iraq, and finding a new balance of political power acceptable to Arab Shi’ite, Arab Sunni, the Kurds, Turkomans, and other minorities. Must be capable of effective governance at the local, regional, and national level.
- Creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces capable of bringing security to the entire country, of eventually replacing all Coalition forces, and capable of conducting effective operations while winning the support of the vast majority of the Iraqi people.
- Providing effective aid, debt and reparations relief, and Iraqi economic reform efforts that – coupled to effective security -- move the nation back on the path to stable economic development where wealth and economic growth are distributed in ways that meet the needs of all of Iraq’s people.
- Developing a new national consensus that legitimizes Iraq’s post Saddam government and social structure, and that can find a “golden mean” between the different goals and expectations of its different ethnic and religious elements.
- Finding a new balance of relationships with Iraq’s neighbors that will ensure that they do not threaten Iraq, or interfere in its affairs, while making it clear that Iraq no longer poses a threat to any neighboring state.

Building effective Iraqi military and security forces is only one of these elements, but it is an element that is critical to the creation of a legitimate government in Iraq and to establishing the stability and security vital to Iraq’s political and economic development. It also, however, is an element of nation building that presents many practical problems.

The Contradictions in Iraqi Expectations and the Steadily Growing Nature of the Security Problem

Survey after survey since the Coalition invasion has shown that the Iraqi people give their highest priority to two aspects of security. The first is adequate day-to-day security for themselves and their families. The second is the reduction or elimination of coalition military forces (now the Multinational Force or MNF), and particularly that of the US, by replacing them with Iraqi forces. Polls have shown that most Iraqi Arabs wanted and expected Coalition forces to withdraw from Iraq ever since the transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi Interim Government took place in June 2004.

From the start, most Iraqis have failed to see the contradictions between these goals. They have wanted too much from the Iraqi military and security forces too soon, and they have seen security in nationalistic terms. They have failed to understand the weaknesses in the military, security, and police forces that existed under Saddam Hussein, the extent to which the military forces effectively disbanded themselves as the Coalition forces advanced during March and April of 2003, and the collapse that took place in Iraq’s police force that accompanied the collapse of most aspects of Iraqi governance when Saddam’s regime fell in April and May of 2003.

Iraqi Arab Sunnis have been particularly hostile to Coalition forces, and most have seen the Coalition invasion as humiliating and illegitimate. Iraqi Arab Shi’ites have been more

accepting, particularly immediately after the invasion, but have also wanted Iraqi forces to provide security and the Coalition to withdraw as soon as possible. Only the Kurdish minority, some 15% of Iraq's population, has shown broad support for the Coalition's political efforts in Iraq and for its military presence.

At the same time, security has become a steadily more important concern. Iraq has become an increasingly violent country ever since the fall of Saddam Hussein. This violence originally was largely a matter of looting and crime, revenge, the settling of long-standing grudges, and limited Kurdish ethnic cleansing in the north. Since the summer of 2003, however, it has been dominated by a growing insurgency. This insurgency has been largely Sunni Arab, but has included powerful Arab Shi'ite elements as well, most notably the militia forces of Moqtada al-Sadr.

While many areas in Iraq have been relatively secure, insurgent attacks have affected virtually every major city and their environs, and major incidents continue in such key cities as Baghdad and Mosul. The Sunni Arab elements of the insurgency have grown steadily in the so-called "Sunni triangle" and the largely Sunni areas of Al Anbar Province, but also in Sunni towns and villages to the north and south of Baghdad.

US, British, and Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) forces have scored significant military victories against both the Sunni Arab and Shi'ite Arab insurgents in cities like Najaf, Baghdad, Samarra, Fallujah, and Mosul. These victories, however, have not yet been translated into lasting security in any major city or region, and the fact that most such victories have been US-led and executed leaves many Iraqis with the impression their country is still dominated by Coalition "occupiers." It is clear that most Iraqi Arabs will only see a new government as fully legitimate if it can provide security and governance with Iraqi forces, and not those of the US and Britain. Most Sunni areas will remain actively hostile until most or all US and British security activity is replaced by Iraqi police and security forces, and this is true of many in Shi'ite areas as well.

Looking Towards The Future

As this analysis shows, however, the effort to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces has faced many problems, and few of these problems have been eliminated. The effort to provide effective force and mission goals, proper training, and adequate facilities and equipment, has been faltering and slow. The US made serious mistakes in its initial plans to deal with Iraqi military, security, and police forces, and failed to act effectively during the first year of the Coalition occupation.

Iraqi forces must now be created under the pressure of a "war after the war" where they have become a major target for insurgent forces. The numbers of Iraqi forces that are required are very high, and Saddam's forces have proved to be a weak foundation to build upon. For all the talk of "bringing back" the Iraqi Army, it is clear that Iraq's past military, security, and police forces require a massive retraining and reorganization effort, and that there is no alternative to a largely "zero-based" approach if Iraq's new forces are to be effective and supportive of a pluralistic government and the rule of law.

At the same time, the establishment of effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces is only one element of the changes necessary to provide security. Forces cannot be effective without good governance at the local, regional, and national level; the IIG has

so far failed to provide such governance, to act decisively and quickly when threatened areas are made more secure, and to establish an effective flow of coordinated activity at any level. It is true that there cannot be governance without security, but it is equally true that there cannot be security without governance.

Progress towards a political process that legitimizes the government in the eyes of all major ethnic and religious groups is equally important. So is providing economic hope and security, while moving Iraq towards sustained economic development. It is clear, however, that the creation of effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces is absolutely critical to giving Iraq the future it deserves and to allowing the Coalition to withdraw under conditions that give it a political victory to match its original military victory.

It is impossible to set deadlines for such success, or even to be certain that it is achievable. It is possible, however, to explore the progress made to date, to explain the strengths and weaknesses of that effort, and to draw some conclusions as to the priorities for future action. The key issues are what factors shape the current effort to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces; how successful have these efforts been to date; and what are the prospects for the future? The answers to these questions will be critical both to Iraq's future and the Coalition's success.

II. Failures in Grand Strategy and Strategic Assessment: The Background to the Effort to Create Effective Iraqi Security Forces

One can argue over the US decision in May 2003 to formally disband the Iraqi military forces that existed under Saddam's regime. The Iraqi military had, however, largely disintegrated by mid-April 2003. Most of the regular forces dependent on conscripts had collapsed because of mass desertions; the heavier units in the regular army were largely ineffective and suffered from both desertions and massive looting. The Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard units had been defeated in the field and were too politicized to preserve. Additionally, much of the Iraqi police vanished during the collapse of virtually every aspect of governance. Few facilities survived intact, most equipment was looted, and what remained was generally unsuited to the needs of forces that could serve a post-Saddam Iraq.

Paul Bremer, the much-maligned former head of the CPA, highlighted several of these points in early January 2005. He stated:

Recently some Monday morning quarterbacks have questioned the Coalition's decision to "disband" Saddam's army and bar senior Baathists from government jobs after we liberated Iraq. These were the right decisions. They served an important strategic purpose and recognized realities on the ground....Conservative estimates are that Saddam's security and intelligence forces killed at least 300,000 of their fellow countrymen....During my time in Iraq, Iraqi citizens from all over the country, from every sect, religion and ethnic group, repeatedly praised the de-Baathification and disbanding of Saddam's security forces as the Coalition's most praiseworthy decisions....There was a practical side to our decision, too. By the time Baghdad and Tikrit fell, the Iraqi army had already disbanded itself. There was not a single organized Iraqi military unit intact after mid-April 2003....In many military bases at Liberation not a single brick was left standing on another. No base was usable without major repairs.²

It has since become all too clear from the performance of the personnel that served under Saddam that most Saddam-era force elements lacked the training, leadership, and motivation to act as the kind of military, security, and police forces Iraq needed in the post-Saddam era. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, speaking on this issue, commented that "...the units that existed—previous to the invasion are not ones that were trained in the type of skills that we necessarily prize, to include a respect for the lives of civilians and civilian property."³ There were outstanding elements in each service, but the vast majority was poorly trained, lacked effective leadership and organization, and were designed more to protect the regime – at the cost of corruption, self-interest, and inertia – and not the nation. The services were vastly overstaffed with senior officers who were used to getting privileges, but not to leading and taking initiative.

The fact remains, however, that the US-led Coalition was far too slow in trying to create effective Iraqi forces and police. It initially tried to restrict the development of Iraqi armed forces to a token force geared to defend Iraq's borders against external aggression. It did not try to create police forces with the capability to deal with serious insurgency and security challenges. As time went on, it ignored or did not give proper priority to the warnings from US military advisory teams about the problems in organizing and training Iraqi forces, and in giving them the necessary equipment and facilities.

The US failed to treat the Iraqis as partners in the counterinsurgency effort for nearly a year, and did not attempt to seriously train and equip Iraqi forces for proactive security and counterinsurgency missions until April 2004 – nearly a year after the fall of Saddam Hussein and two-thirds of a year after a major insurgency problem began to emerge.

Warning Indicators

No one foresaw the exact course of events in Iraq, or provided precise warnings as to the kind of insurgency that would develop in the country. Many inside and outside of government did warn, however, that the US and Coalition would at best be greeted as liberators for a matter of months, and that the US would immediately begin to face hostility from an extremely nationalistic country while having to deal with deep religious and ethnic divisions. Many warned of the possibility of having to deal with some form of insurgency, and DIA and other elements of the intelligence community warned that Saddam Hussein's regime might be preparing for such insurgency and dispersing arms and munitions.

Before the war, US intelligence detected indicators that Saddam Hussein was seriously planning for a possible armed resistance if he lost control of Iraqi cities, and that some Iraqi security forces were planning for armed resistance if the regime fell. Arms were being distributed to groups like the Popular Army.

During and immediately after the fighting, the US became aware that some 900 munitions sites and 10,000 arms caches – in excess of 650,000 tons of munitions – were scattered around the country. It was clear from the start that many had been “looted,” and that the Coalition did not have the manpower to rapidly secure the rest. While the Coalition eventually claimed to have destroyed and secured most of the munitions, as of October 2004, it could not account for some 250,000 tons of munitions.

In short, there were ample intelligence and other warning indicators before the invasion that showed how important it would be to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces. There were ample warnings of the kind of hostility that an “occupation mentality” on the part of the Coalition might create, and it was clear what might happen in a highly militarized society once the regime fell.

The US chose to largely ignore these indicators. This was partly the result of the ideological belief of many officials and advisors in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of the Vice President, and National Security Council that Iraqis would see the Coalition as a liberator, and that the people wanted “transformation” into a Western-style democracy and economy. It was partly the result of the fact the US military saw warfare in terms of quick, decisive uses of overwhelming force against the conventional forces of a state, resisted nation building and peacemaking operations, and was unprepared for lasting counterinsurgency missions.

It was also the result of over 30 years of Ba'ath and Saddam Hussein dictatorship, and the fact Britain had forged Iraq out of elements of the Ottoman Empire on the basis of divide and rule tactics, and that the regimes that followed had never established a power structure based on any fair equity for Iraq's Shi'ite majority or its Kurdish, Turkoman, and other minorities.

The Importance of Iraqi Public opinion and Hostility and Distrust of Coalition Forces

Some elements of Iraq did greet the advancing Coalition forces as liberators, but scarcely with the fervor and broad popular base that the US officials shaping the invasion expected. Almost no Iraqis, however, wanted the Coalition to stay as occupiers or to be “transformed” from the outside. The nature of the Coalition efforts that followed almost ensured that much of its activity would be seen as imposing US goals and values, and the inevitable backlash was compounded by the fact that two critical groups had good reason to oppose the Coalition efforts. One was the Sunni Arab elements that suddenly lost the privileges and power they had had since the founding of Iraq, especially under Saddam and the Ba’ath. The second were those Arab Shi’ites who wanted to create their own version of Iraq, especially those who wanted a more Islamic state in which they could play a dominant role.

At the same time, most Iraqis made it clear they had a strong nationalist resentment of any lasting Coalition military presence. From the start of the occupation, Iraqi public opinion made it clear that training effective Iraqi military, police, and security forces was not a luxury or sideshow. Regardless of how many Iraqis did or did not welcome the fall of Saddam Hussein, one public opinion poll after another showed that Coalition forces quickly came to be seen by many Iraqis as occupiers, and as occupiers that could not bring security.

While many Iraqi expectations of what the Coalition should and could do for them were unrealistic, and many criticisms of the Coalition and Coalition forces were unfair, the reality was that Iraqis were all too aware that the US had failed to secure the country, key government offices, and key cultural centers. In their eyes, the US did not show it would reconstitute an effective Iraqi government and security structure, and police services and personal security remained at risk.

COALITION OPERATIONS = “OCCUPIER” OPERATIONS = ANGER AND FRICTION

Moreover, the presence of Coalition forces created a natural friction with the population, particularly in Sunni Arab areas. Most had little experience with Iraqi culture and history or with Islam. They had limited training and equipment for counterinsurgency and counterterrorism missions.

US operations were initially often of limited effectiveness, frequently involved the detainment of innocent Iraqis and “collateral damage,” and alienated otherwise friendly Iraqis. The US saw the insurgents as a limited force with limited popular support that could be defeated without creating strong and highly effective Iraqi armed forces, and badly underestimated the personal security problem.

Yet, the US and Coalition did not see the need to rush the creation of effective Iraqi military, police, and security forces in spite of the developing scale of the military problem, and in spite of polls showing 2/3 of Sunnis and 1/3 of Shi’ites oppose war, while 33% of Sunnis and 11% of Shi’ites support attacks on the Coalition.

EARLY WARNING OF THE NEED FOR EFFECTIVE IRAQI FORCES AND TRUE INTEROPERABILITY: THE POLLS BEFORE THE TRANSFER OF POWER

Polls consistently showed from June 2003 onwards that the number one concern of Iraqis is personal security for themselves and their families, with crime as an even larger fear than insurgency. Concerns over jobs, medical care, and education come next. After that, politics lags significantly behind. Effective police for local security and to fight crime are as critical as having Iraqi security forces takeover counterinsurgency missions, and removing or minimizing the signs of the Coalition as “occupiers.”

The patterns in the earlier polls may be summarized as follows:

- First poll conducted in Iraq in August 2003 by Zogby International, revealed that just over 50% of Iraqis felt that the U.S. will “hurt” Iraq over the next five years and that a slightly higher number thought “democracy is a Western way of doing things and it will not work here”. Some **31.6% felt that Coalition Forces should leave within six months; 34% said within one year; and 25% within two years.** In addition, just under 60% felt that Iraq should determine its political future alone and without the help of the Coalition.⁴
- Some of these findings were substantiated by a poll conducted in May 2004 by BBC, ABC News, the German network ARD and NHK in Japan. Among these: while more than half said that life was better a year ago under Saddam, “only 25 per cent expressed confidence in the US/UK occupation forces and 28 per cent in both Iraq’s political parties and the CPA”.⁵
- USA Today/CNN/Gallop polls published in April 2004 revealed further developments in Iraqi perceptions of U.S. policy, presence and operations. **Among these was that “53% say they would feel less secure without the Coalition in Iraq, but 57% say the foreign troops should leave anyway”, while 71% of the respondents identified Coalition troops as “occupiers”.**⁶
- 29 April 2004 *USA Today* poll cited earlier, many Iraqis considered American troops to be arrogant and insensitive:
 - 58% said [Coalition Forces] soldiers conduct themselves badly or very badly;
 - 60% said the troops show disrespect for Iraqi people in searches of their homes, and 42% said U.S. forces have shown disrespect toward mosques;
 - 46% said the soldiers show a lack of respect for Iraqi women; and
 - 11% of Iraqis say Coalition Forces are trying hard to restore basic services such as electricity and clean drinking water.
- US/Oxford polls show 78% of Iraqis had no confidence in Coalition forces in October 03 and 81% in June 2004 – and this figure included the Kurds.

IRAQI VIEWS HARDEN: THE POLLS IN 2004

The patterns in latter polls are equally clear. The comparison of more recent poll data in Figure 1.1 was developed by Rick Barton and Sheba Crocker of CSIS, and again clearly reflects trends in Iraqi attitudes that reinforce the warning that only Iraqi police and security forces can provide the political dimension of victory, no matter how well US and other Coalition forces do at the military and tactical levels.

Figure 1.1**Iraqi Public Opinion Polls: Iraqi Faith in Iraqi Forces versus Hostility to Coalition Forces****IIACSS: How much confidence do you have in the [new] Iraqi police] to improve the situation in Iraq?**

	Jan. '04	Apr.-May '04	May '04
Great Deal;	44.80%	47.90%	47.30%
Fair Amount	35.00%	29.60%	28.70%
Not Very Much	6.70%	8.60%	5.70%
None at All	11.00%	11.20%	15.80%

IIACSS, Department of State, CPA, "National Poll of Iraq."
Iraqi Perception

Oxford: How much confidence do you have in the [new Iraqi police]?

	Oct.-Nov. '03	Feb. '04	Mar.-Apr. '04	Jun. '04
Great Deal	19.70%	27.60%	33.00%	35%
Quite a Lot	30.60%	43.30%	39.20%	39%
Not Very Much	33.40%	20.60%	17.60%	20%
None at All	16.30%	8.50%	10.20%	7%

Oxford Research International, "National Survey of Iraq."

Attitudes Towards Iraqi Army Forces

IIACSS: How much confidence do you have in the [new Iraqi army] to improve the situation in Iraq?

	Jan. '04	Apr.-May '04	May '04
Great Deal	34.70%	36.50%	32.90%
Fair Amount	28.40%	25.00%	28.50%
Not Very Much	9.70%	9.90%	8.60%
None at All	17.20%	17.80%	20.10%

IIACSS, Department of State, CPA, "National Poll of Iraq."

Oxford: How much confidence do you have in the [new Iraqi army]?

	Oct.-Nov. '03	Feb. '04	Mar.-Apr. '04	Jun. '04
Great Deal	16.00%	19.70%	24.40%	24%
Quite a Lot	30.10%	42.20%	46.70%	50%
Not Very Much	34.30%	27.50%	17.10%	20%
None at All	19.50%	10.70%	11.80%	6%

Oxford Research International, "National Survey of Iraq."

Attitudes Towards US and Coalition Forces

Oxford: How much confidence do you have in the [U.S. and UK occupation forces]?

	Oct.-Nov. '03	Feb. '04	Mar.-Apr. '04	Jun. '04
Great Deal	7.60%	8.70%	7.00%	6%
Quite a Lot	13.60%	19.00%	18.40%	14%
Not Very Much	22.20%	25.60%	22.30%	30%
None at All	56.60%	46.80%	52.30%	51%

Oxford Research International, "National Survey of Iraq."

IIACSS: How much confidence do you have in [Coalition forces] to improve the situation in Iraq?

	Jan. '04	Apr.-May '04	May '04
Great Deal	11.60%	2.60%	1.50%
Fair Amount	16.70%	4.40%	8.20%
Not Very Much	13.70%	4.70%	6.10%
None at All	53.30%	83.50%	80.60%

IIACSS, Department of State, CPA, "National Poll of Iraq."

See endnotes for Iraqi Attitudes towards Iraqi police forces for a comparison.

The Initial Ideological Approach to Reality

The US did not plan for an effective effort to secure the country or to develop effective Iraqi forces before or during the invasion. It failed to deal with the risk, and then with the reality, of a growing insurgency effort for nearly a year after the fall of Saddam Hussein. This is in many ways due to the fact that a relatively small group of "neoconservatives,"

rather than the Interagency process, dominated planning for the stability and nation building phases following the fall of Saddam Hussein, and that the Department of Defense was put in charge of the operation.

The problem of dealing with the Iraqi Army and security forces was handled largely by ideologues that had an unrealistic grand strategy for transforming Iraq and the Middle East. Their strategic assessments of Iraq were wrong in far more important ways than their assessment of the potential threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

They were fundamentally wrong about how the Iraqi people would view the US invasion. They were wrong about the problems in establishing effective governance, and they underestimated the difficulties in creating a new government that was legitimate in Iraqi eyes. They greatly exaggerated the relevance and influence of Iraqi exiles, and greatly underestimated the scale of Iraq's economic, ethnic, and demographic problems.

They did not foresee the impact of the war on America's overall structure of alliances and world opinion. They fundamentally misread the linkages between the invasion of Iraq, the Arab-Israel conflict, and the fighting in Afghanistan. They did not foresee its impact on the Middle East and the Islamic world, the resulting decline in support for the war on terrorism, or the risks that Islamists inside and outside Iraq could become part of an insurgent threat. They failed to see that Iraqi Shi'ites might welcome the Coalition as liberators, but not as occupiers, were almost certain to divide into factions, and could present another insurgent risk.

They saw military action by the Department of Defense as a workable substitute for effective coordination and action by all the agencies of government. Above all, they failed to see the importance of serious stability operations and nation building; they did not plan effectively for the risk of insurgency; and they assumed that they were so right that America's allies and the world would soon be forced to follow their lead.

The end result was that they had no practical grand strategy beyond Saddam's fall, and their strategic assessments were slow to improve thereafter. Many "neoconservatives" wasted a year after the Coalition's apparent military victory, living in a state of ideological denial. The US effectively occupied Iraq as proconsuls, rather than rushing to create a legitimate government and effective Iraqi military and security forces. US aid efforts faltered in a mix of uncoordinated, ideologically-driven plans to make the Iraqi economy "American," and bureaucratic fumbling. They failed to rush aid in where it might have bought acceptance and stability – a fault only partially corrected by the fact the US military did implement effective emergency aid as part of its Commander's Emergency Relief Program (CERP).

No analysis of the successes and failures in creating effective Iraqi forces can ignore this. What realism there is in the present US approach to the "war after the war" in Iraq has been thrust upon "neoconservatives" after the fact. To the extent the US may be evolving a workable approach to a grand strategy, that evolution has been shaped largely by the people that "neoconservatives" chose to ignore in going to war in the first place. The adaptation to the political and military facts in Iraq has come from military, State Department, and intelligence professionals.

Problems in the Culture of the US Military

The US military, however, must share part of the blame. The US military talked “asymmetric war,” but it planned and organized for conventional war. It entered the Iraq War focused on conventional combat, high-technology warfare, and short wars in which the use of decisive force was assumed to produce decisive results.

At almost every level, it lacked training in grand strategy in any practical terms. It failed to learn from the lessons of being unprepared for conflict termination in the Gulf War of 1991, and the practical problems of nation building in Bosnia and Kosovo. Its leadership largely saw stability operations, nation building, creating security, and dealing with local military and security forces as secondary missions that diverted and locked down scarce military resources.

The US military never planned for an effective occupation of the country and never planned for extensive civil-military operations or to create the kind of area expertise, military police, and human intelligence (HUMINT) resources it might need. It focused on the military dimension of battle, and forgot the fundamental principle that all victory is ultimately political in character. In doing so, it seems to have ignored or put aside at least some of the prior contingency planning by USCENTCOM, the command with real expertise in the area.

While some senior US officers in Washington did warn that massive occupation forces would be needed, this seems to have been more to argue for large war fighting forces or as a counter to the enthusiasm of ideologues than the result of detailed analysis and planning. In general, the military, as well as the civilians, did not plan for successful conflict termination or stability operations, and it focused on early withdrawal rather than the range of missions that might occur.

US officers indicate that the operational plan called for rapid withdrawals from Iraq after Saddam’s fall – with some plans calling for a rapid reduction to 30,000 troops – rather than for an effective stability and security effort. It is also all too clear that the US military did not plan either to provide US forces training and equipment for counterinsurgency missions, or to provide the kind of training cadres and facilities necessary to help Iraqi forces.

The US military – like most of the world’s militaries – focuses on its own priorities and force developments. Its exceptional level of professionalism and technology, however, often has the negative effect of making it reluctant to cooperate fully with allies and to develop true interoperability. When it does, it tends to do so only with proven, highly professional partners like Britain and Australia.

Some US field commanders did see the need to establish “interoperability” with the Iraqis, particularly in gaining local political support, HUMINT, translation skills, etc. A few saw early on that the counterinsurgency, security, and police missions required a different kind of interoperability that would make the development of Iraqi forces critical to nation building, security, and counterinsurgency missions. The US military culture was not prepared for such interoperability at the start of the occupation, however, and it took roughly a year of developing insurgency to make senior US military commanders in Washington and the Gulf region understand the essential importance of allies. In the

process, they repeated many of the mistakes made in Vietnam and Lebanon – forgetting, if they ever knew – the lessons of those operations.

At a different level, the top leadership of the US military failed to establish effective links to the civil occupation authority in the Office of Reconstruction & Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) before, during, and immediately after the fighting that toppled Saddam Hussein. It then tolerated, if not encouraged, the poor relations between Bremer, the CPA, and General Sanchez and the field commanders for the year that followed. The lack of interagency cooperation in Washington had its mirror image in the field, made worse by two leaders who proved unable to develop an effective working relationship on a personal or staff level.

It is fair to argue that the fundamental failure of the Interagency process to coordinate the efforts of the Department of Defense with those of the State Department and other civilian agencies lies with the President, his National Security Advisor, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of State. There is no question, however, that the military did not see the need for “jointness” at the civil-military level in the field, that this inevitably complicated virtually every aspect of the effort to create effective Iraqi forces and to link the effort to create them to the effort to create effective Iraqi governance, and to implement key aspects of the US aid program.

Failures at the US Advisory and Civilian Assistance Level

A failure at a different level took place on the civilian side of the aid process. In fairness, the Bush Administration made the task of the CPA and aid officials extraordinarily difficult by failing to create any meaningful plans for nation building before or during the war, failing to create effective civilian structures to assist in nation building and recruiting suitable personnel in advance, and by failing to develop and budget anything approaching a meaningful aid program. These failures are the sole responsibility of the President, his National Security Advisor, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of State.

At the same time, the State Department and USAID are organized around the idea that regular police forces should be created as soon as possible to replace reliance on outside forces and the armed forces. The US Congress has also pressed hard to keep the US military role in training paramilitary forces to a minimum, largely as a legacy of problems in Latin America and elsewhere during the Cold War. This reflects a legitimate concern with the human rights abuses that sometimes occur when military or paramilitary forces become involved in police functions.

The difficulty is that such concepts are fundamentally unworkable when there are major threats to the police from militias, insurgents, organized terrorists, and large criminal elements. The transition to stability requires well-armed and well-protected security forces in large numbers that can coordinate directly with the military and handle serious threats. Trying to create regular police forces is a recipe for disaster or constant reliance on the military: A lesson that became brutally clear in the Balkans and Afghanistan long before the US became involved in Iraq.

The end result was that when the US did find that virtually all of its assumptions about post Saddam Iraq were wrong, it went on to try to create regular police forces under the

Ministry of the Interior with American advisory teams and foreign support focused on creating the wrong kind of police force.

Creating the police, and forces like the Facilities Protection Service, was treated as a low level task that was as important in terms of employing Iraqis as creating effective units. The police and the bulk of the security forces were given grossly inadequate training, equipment, facilities, transport, and protection, and with a lack of the kind of structured leadership and emphasis on “unit integrity” necessary to equip police units to protect themselves and fight.

These problems were then compounded by recruiting US police advisors – some more for US domestic political reasons than out of any competence for the job – with no area expertise and little or no real knowledge of the mission that the Iraqi security and police forces actually had to perform.

As is discussed later, the end result was to waste nearly a year until police and security force training were better integrated with the military training effort and the US military advisory team was given responsibility for planning the kind of security and police force Iraq needed—the kind of forces which the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior and US civilian advisors were incapable of planning and creating. It then was to leave General Petraeus and the Iraqi government with a legacy of vast numbers of men with few real qualifications, the wrong kind of training, and that had been recruited without proper vetting and often without regard to even elementary qualifications like physical condition and literacy.

Problems in Governance and Iraq’s Economy and Society

Another set of problems have contributed to the difficulties in creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces since the fall of Saddam, and which continue to this day. Effective forces require effective governance at every level.

They require coordination at the central government level to ensure they are properly financed, given clear direction, and that coordination takes place between the ministry leading the armed forces (Ministry of Defense) and the police and paramilitary security forces (Ministry of Interior). Effective planning and direction must take place at the regional and local levels, and more importantly, there must be local government to support, give direction to, provide effective services, and win the support of the local people.

Police and security forces can never be effective by themselves. They must serve a local government and the local population to win popular support, or they find themselves isolated and locked into a fortress and defensive mentality. They also are inherently vulnerable. They have to move, they have families, and they have relatives. In most cases, they are local. Leaving such forces vulnerable and unsupported has two major effects: it leads to constant desertions and turbulence within local forces, resulting in alliances with threat elements for self-preservation, corruption to try to buy security and status, and to cases where the security and police forces use excessive violence without really knowing who the enemy is.

In practice, there still is no effective governance in much of Iraq, and these problems only began to be solved after the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) took power in June 2004.

Serious coordination problems still exist within ministries, and between the defense, interior, and finance ministries. The central government cannot give effective direction and leadership, implement policy or react effectively to local requests, and above all move money and resources on anything like a timely basis.

Many regional and local governments are equally ineffective. In many cases, the local government serves its own interest, and in high threat areas, the local government often simply does not function or will not confront the insurgents or other threats. The government is penetrated by insurgent sympathizers at many levels, corruption is common, and senior officials are often unwilling or reluctant to replace incompetent or corrupt subordinates until they fail so conspicuously that they create major security problems.

All of these problems were made much worse, however, during the first year of Coalition occupation and the time of the CPA. The “green zone” mentality of the CPA, and its focus on Baghdad, meant that there was little effective leadership and help at the regional and local level. Some State Department and other civilians did outstanding personal work, but the US civilian teams in the field were far too small to help compensate for the lack of effective local government, or to provide the US military with the kind of support they needed in any part of the nation building and aid process. In terms of local governance and local police and security operations, the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime left a vacuum that US civilians were not available to fill and that the US military was not trained to deal with.

Iraq faced four other problems:

- Iraq’s pre-invasion police were largely timeserving instruments of regime security with little training and competence and who were largely passive. Its security forces were much better trained and equipped, but largely active instruments of regime repression. They did not go along to get along; they were key parts of the problem. The armed forces had many elements that were effective and were not regime loyalists, and that could later be recruited into the police and security forces. The Saddam-era police and security forces provided no solid foundation to build upon, even if de-Baathification had not been a problem.
- Debaathification did, however, block the US teams developing the military, security, and police forces from recruiting many of the most experienced leaders and military personnel for much of the first year of the occupation. Some of the best and most qualified personnel could not be recruited.
- This, in turn, ensured there were few stable unit elements with proven leaders and personnel, and no amount of training and equipment can substitute for experienced leadership and the level of unit integrity that creates mutual loyalty among those assigned. Essentially, the US and Iraqi government ended up emphasizing sheer throughput in terms of numbers of personnel going through a grossly inadequate training system without bothering to give them any place to go.
- The near collapse of much of Iraq’s economy following the invasion, coupled to the disbanding of the armed forces and much of the government, put tremendous pressure on young men to join the armed forces, security forces, and police regardless of their personal goals and ambitions. It then placed them in a society undergoing political, economic, and social turmoil – as well as a society experiencing a growing insurgency. Inevitably, large numbers of men joined for all the wrong reasons, often had no incentive to take risks, did not take training and discipline any more seriously than they were forced to, focused on family and local problems, and had little reason to be loyal. Some became informers or supporters of the insurgency.

Criticizing Iraq forces – particularly the police and security forces -- for failing to perform under these conditions is both grossly unfair and misses virtually every relevant lesson for nation building.

III. Failures in Recognizing the Growth and Character of the Insurgent Threat

Much has been made of the decision to disband the Iraqi Army, and many see it as a key failure in US policy. As has been explained earlier, however, the decision needs to be put in perspective. Most of the Iraqi Army had either been shattered in the field or had deserted before ORHA – much less the CPA – entered the country. In many cases, key facilities had been destroyed or looted to the point where barracks could not be occupied. Not “disbanding” was not a choice in any serious sense; it had already happened, and events since that time have shown that creating effective forces would have still required a massive training, equipment, and facility improvement effort, as well as massive purging of low grade forces and inadequate leaders.

What *is* valid criticism is that Ambassador Bremer, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, seems to have made this decision after limited consultation with Washington, and that the US formally dissolved the existing army without providing either the Iraqi people or former Iraqi military personnel with any clear or convincing plan to create a new one or to include those who had served in the previous force. It also excluded former Ba’ath and career officers and personnel who were competent and had simply gone along with the former regime to survive or because of the very national threats that developed during the Iran-Iraq War. If the overall manning of the leadership cadres consisted of timeservers, uniformed bureaucrats, and men seeking their own advantage, there were still many in these cadres that had served with honor in previous wars.

It is important to note that Ambassador Bremer did this with strong encouragement – if not pressure – from Iraqi exile leaders like Ahmed Chalabi. Nevertheless, the end result was to further alienate an already hostile Sunni leadership, and largely exclude – rather than co-opt – senior Iraqis in both the military and security services.

Denial as a Method of Counter-Insurgency Warfare

More broadly, the US did not react effectively as it became clear during the fall and winter of 2003 that the Iraqi people did not want Coalition forces to perform security and police missions as the post war insurgency steadily gathered momentum. The US minimized the insurgent and criminal threat and exaggerated the popular support for US and Coalition efforts. Polls as early as the summer of 2003 showed that at least one-third of Arab Sunnis while over 15% of Shi’ites supported attacks on Coalition forces. The numbers may now be substantially higher.

The US assumed for the first year after the fall of Saddam Hussein that it was dealing with a limited number of insurgents that Coalition forces would defeat well before the election. It did not see the threat level that would emerge if it did not provide jobs or pensions for Iraqi career officers, or co-opt them into the nation building effort. It was slow to see that some form of transition payments were necessary for the young Iraqi soldiers that faced massive, nation-wide unemployment. As late as the spring of 2004, the US still failed to acknowledge the true scale of the insurgent threat and the extent to which popular resentment of Coalition forces would rise if it did not act immediately to rebuild a convincing mix of Iraqi military and security forces.

The US failed to establish the proper political conditions to reduce Iraqi popular resentment of the Coalition forces and create the political climate that would ease the task of replacing them with effective Iraqi forces. It did not make it clear that the US and Britain had no economic ambitions in Iraq and would not establish permanent bases, or keep Iraqi forces weak to ensure their control. In fact, Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, the first American Administrator in Iraq, suggested in early 2004 that US forces might remain in Iraq for “the next few decades,” adding that securing basing rights for the US should be a top priority.⁷

Moreover, the US did not react to the immediate threat that crime and looting presented throughout Iraq almost immediately after the war, and which made personal security the number one concern of the Iraqi people. It acted as if it had years to rebuild Iraq using its own plans, rather than months to shape the climate in which Iraqis could do it.

Failing to Admit the Scope of the Problem though Mid-2004

As a result, the US failed to come to grips with the Iraqi insurgency during the first year of US occupation in virtually every important dimension. It was slow to react to the growth of the insurgency in Iraq, to admit it was largely domestic in character, and to admit it had significant popular support. For all of 2003, and most of the first half of 2004, it referred to the attackers as terrorists, kept issuing estimates that they could not number more than 5,000, and claimed they were a mixture of outsider elements and diehard former regime loyalists (FRLs). It largely ignored the warnings provided by Iraqi opinion polls, and claimed that its political, economic, and security efforts were either successful or would soon become so. In short, it failed to honestly assess the facts on the ground in a manner reminiscent of Vietnam.

As late as July 2004, the Administration still seemed to live in a fantasyland in terms of its public announcements, perception of the growing Iraqi hostility to the use of Coalition forces, and the size of the threat. Its spokesmen were still talking about a core insurgent force of only 5,000, when many Coalition experts on the ground in Iraq saw the core as at least 12,000-16,000.

Such US estimates of the core structure of the Iraqi insurgency also understated the problem, even if the figures had been accurate. From the start, there were many part-time insurgents and criminals who worked with insurgents. In some areas, volunteers could be quickly recruited and trained, both for street fighting and terrorist and sabotage missions. As in most insurgencies, “sympathizers” within the Iraqi government and Iraqi forces, as well as the Iraqis working for the Coalition, media, and NGOs, often provided excellent human intelligence without violently taking part in the insurgency. Saboteurs can readily operate within the government and every aspect of the Iraqi economy.

Iraqi and foreign journalists provided an inadvertent (and sometimes deliberate) propaganda arm, and media coverage of insurgent activity and attacks provides a de facto command and communications net to insurgents. This net provides warning, tells insurgents what attacks do and do not work, and allows them to coordinate their attacks to reinforce those of other insurgent cells and groups. As in all insurgencies, a race developed between the insurgents and the Coalition and Iraqi Interim Government forces to see whose strength could grow faster and who best learns from their enemies.

IV. Evolving Threat Tactics and Pressure on Government Forces

From roughly August 2003 to the present, Iraqi insurgents have developed a steadily more sophisticated mix of tactics, all of which required increasingly more competent and combat-capable Iraqi government military, security, and police forces. There are no reliable unclassified counts of insurgent attacks and incidents, or of the casualties on both sides. The US reports only on its own casualties, and the Iraqi government has stopped making its own estimates public. Estimates of insurgent casualties are tenuous at best.

The NGO Coordinating Committee on Iraq has, however, made estimates of the patterns of attack between September 2003 and October 2004, which seem broadly correct and illustrate key patterns in the fighting:

- From September 2003 through October 2004, there was a rough balance between the three primary methods of attack, namely improvised explosive device (IED), direct fire, and indirect fire, with a consistent but much smaller number of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED). Numbers of attacks varied significantly by month. There was a slow decline from well over 400 attacks each by improvised explosive device (IED), direct fire weapons, and indirect fire weapons to around 300. There was also, however, a slow increase in attacks using VBIEDs.
- Attack distribution also varies, with a steadily rising number of attacks in the area of Mosul in the north. Baghdad, however, has been the scene of roughly twice as many attacks and incidents as the other governorates, with 300-400 a month on average. Al Anbar, Salah-al-din, and Ninewa have had roughly one-third to one half as many. Babil and Diyala have averaged around 100 per month, Lower levels of attack have taken place in Tamin and Basra.
- Since the Shi'ite fighting with Sadr has ceased, and the peak of insurgent activity in the south has declined. There have been relatively low levels of attack in the Karbala, Thi-Qar, Wassit, Missan, Muthanna, Najaf, and Qaddisyaa governorates.
- Erbil, Dahok, and Sulaymaniyah are northern governorates administrated by the two Kurdish Regional Governments (KRGs) and have long been relatively peaceful.
- Attacks fit a broad pattern during the day, although 60% of the attacks reported are unspecified. Of those that do have a specific time reported, 10% are in the morning, 11% are in the afternoon, and 19% are at night.

A rough NGO Coordinating Committee on Iraq estimate of targets and casualties for the from September 2004 to October 2004 is shown in the figure below and helps illustrate the continuing diversity of the attacks and that far more than American casualties are involved:

Table 1**Illustrative Patterns in Targeting and Casualties (September 2003-October 2004)**

Target	Number of Attacks/Incidents	Killed	Wounded
Coalition Forces	3227	451	1002
Coalition Air Convoy	49	55	32
CPA/US Officials/Green Zone	32	60	206
Diplomatic Mission	11	7	9
Local Authority	31	56	81
Contractor	113	210	203
Civilian	180	1981	3467
Criminal & Suspect	49	31	972
ICDC	58	191	310
Kurds Army	31	25	8
Police	209	480	1012
UN	67	2	3
IO	1	2	0
NGO	5	5	11
Journalist	8	27	38
Interpreter	7	17	6
Public Property	182	5	15
Unspecified	43	1	1

Political, Psychological, and Information Warfare Lessons

One key point that needs to be remembered is that the media tends to focus on dramatic incidents with high casualties, and describes these as some sudden change in tactics. In reality, the patterns of insurgent activity have evolved broadly and have come to include a wide range of tactics which are exploited whenever a given group finds them convenient, and which are repeated and refined with time. Insurgents learned the following methods and tactics relating to political, psychological, and information warfare:

- **Attack the structures of governance and security by ideological, political, and violent means:** Use ideological and political means to attack the legitimacy of the government and nation building process. Intimidate and subvert the military and security forces. Intimidate and attack government officials and institutions at the national, regional, and local levels. Strike at infrastructure, utilities, and services in ways that appear to show the government cannot provide essential economic services or personal security.
- **Create alliances of convenience and informal networks with other groups to attack the US, various elements of the Iraqi Interim Government, and efforts at nation building:** The informal common fronts operate on the principal that the “enemy of my enemy” is my temporary friend. At the same time, movements “franchise” to create individual cells and independent units, creating diverse mixes of enemies that are difficult to attack.
- **Link asymmetric warfare to crime and looting; exploit poverty and economic desperation:** Use criminals to support attacks on infrastructure and nation building activity, raise funds, and undermine security. Exploit unemployment to strengthen dedicated insurgent and terrorist cells. Blur the lines between threat forces, criminal elements, and part-time forces.

- **Exploit Arab satellite television as well as traditional media:** Islamist movements and other insurgents learned how to capture maximum exposure in regional media, use the Internet, and above all, exploit the new Arab satellite news channels.
- **Maintain a strategy of constant attrition, but strike hard according to a calendar of turning points and/or at targets with high political, social, and economic impact:** Insurgents and Islamists learned the importance of a constant low-level body count and the creation of a steady climate of violence. This forces the US into a constant, large-scale security effort; makes it difficult for Iraqi forces to take hold; puts constant pressure on US and Iraqi forces to disperse; and ensures constant media coverage.

At the same time, insurgents and Islamists showed a steadily more sophisticated capability to exploit holidays, elections and other political events, and sensitive targets both inside the countries that are the scene of their primary operations and in the US and the West. Attacks on Kurdish and Shi'ite religious festivals are cases in point.

- **Push “hot buttons:” Try to find forms of attack that provoke disproportionate fear and “terror” to force the US Iraqi forces into costly, drastic, and sometimes provocative responses:** Terrorists and insurgents have found that attacks planned for maximum political and psychological effects often have the additional benefit of provoking over-reaction. Hamas and the PIJ exploited such tactics throughout the peace process.
- **Game Regional, Western, and other outside media:** Use interview access, tapes, journalist hostage takings and killings, politically-led and motivated crowds, drivers and assistants to journalists, and timed and targeted attacks to attempt to manipulate Western and outside media. Manipulate US official briefings with planted questions.
- **Use Americans and other foreigners as proxies:** There is nothing new about using Americans and other foreigners as proxies for local regimes, or attacking them to win support for ideological positions and causes. There has, however, been steadily growing sophistication in the timing and nature of such attacks, and in exploiting softer targets such as American businessmen in the country of operations, in striking at US and allied targets in other countries, or in striking at targets in the US. It is also clear that such attacks receive maximum political and media attention in the US.
- **Attack UN, NGO, Embassies, aid personnel, and foreign contractor business operations:** Attacking such targets greatly reduces the ability to carry out nation building and stability operations to win hearts and minds. Attacking the “innocent,” and curtailing their operations or driving organizations out of the country has become an important focus of insurgents and Islamist extremist attacks.
- **Kidnap, kill, and/or intimidate women and cadres of foreign workers:** Killing and kidnapping women, particularly those working in NGOs and aid projects gets great media attention and leads some organizations to leave the country. Kidnapping or killing groups of foreign workers puts political pressure on their governments, gets high local and regional media attention, and sometimes leads governments to stop their workers from going to Iraq.
- **Attack other religious and ethnic groups in Iraq:** Targeting other groups like Shi'ites and Kurds, using car bombings for mass killings, hitting shrines and festivals forces the dispersal of security forces, makes the areas involved seem insecure, undermines efforts at governance, and offers the possibility of using civil war as a way to defeat the Coalition and Iraqi Interim Government's efforts at nation building.
- **Kidnap, kill, and/or intimidate professionals, Iraqi media and intelligentsia, “mystery killings:”** Steady killing and intimidation of individual professionals, media figures, and intelligentsia in threatened areas offers a series of soft targets that cannot be defended, but where a cumulative pattern of killing and intimidation makes governance difficult, creates major problems for security and police forces, weakens the economy, and exacerbates the general feeling of insecurity to the point where people lose faith in the Iraqi government, Coalition, and political

process. According to the head of Iraqi Journalists Syndicate, Shihab al-Tamimi, kidnappings and assassinations targeting Iraqi journalists surged in the weeks leading up to the January 30 election.

- **“Horror” attacks, atrocities, and alienation:** Whether or not the tactics were initially deliberate, insurgents in Iraq found that atrocities like desecrating corpses and beheadings are effective political and psychological weapons for those Islamist extremists whose goal is to divide the West from the Islamic world, and create an unbridgeable “clash of civilizations.”

Experts have long pointed out that one of the key differences between Islamist extremist terrorism and previous forms of terrorism is that they are not seeking to negotiate with those they terrorize, but rather to create conditions that can drive the West away, undermine secular and moderate regimes in the Arab and Islamic worlds, and create the conditions under which they can create “Islamic” states according to their own ideas of “Puritanism.”

This is why it serves the purposes of Islamist extremists, as well as some of the more focused opponents of the US and the West, to create mass casualties and carry out major strikes, or carry out executions and beheadings, even if the result is to provoke hostility and anger. The goal of Bin Laden and those like him is not to persuade the US or the West, it is rather to so alienate them from the Islamic and Arab world that the forces of secularism in the region will be sharply undermined, and Western secular influence can be controlled or eliminated. The goal of most Iraqi insurgents is narrower – drive the US and its allies out of Iraq – but involves many of the same methods.

Seen in this context, the more horrifying the attack, or incident, the better, even if it involves Iraqi military, security, and police forces. Simple casualties do not receive the same media attention. They are a reality of war. Killing (or sometimes releasing) innocent hostages does grab the attention of the world media. Large bombs in crowds do the same, as does picking targets whose innocence or media impact grabs headlines. Desecrating corpses, beheading people, and similar acts of violence get even more media attention – at least for a while.

Such actions also breed anger and alienation in the US and the West and provoke excessive political and media reactions, more stringent security measures, violent responses, and all of the other actions that help instigate a “clash of civilizations.” The US and the West are often provoked into playing into the hands of such attackers.

At the same time, any attack or incident that garners massive media coverage and political reactions appears to be a “victory” to those who support Islamist extremism or those who are truly angry at the US – even though the actual body count is often low, and victory does not mean creating stronger forces or winning political control. Each such incident can be used to damage the US and Western view of the Arab and Islamic worlds.

- **Deprive the central, regional, and local governments’ efforts to expand legitimacy. Attack nation-building and stability targets:** There is nothing new about attacking key economic targets, infrastructure, and aspects of governance critical to the functioning of the state in an effort to disrupt its economy, undermine law enforcement and security, and encourage instability. Iraqi insurgent and Islamist attacks on aid workers and projects, and their role in encouraging looting, sabotage and theft did, however, demonstrate a growing sophistication in targeting stability efforts and tangible progress in aid and governance. These tactics also interact synergistically with the above tactics.
- **Confuse the identity of the attacker; exploit conspiracy theories:** Insurgents and Islamists learned that a mix of silence, multiple claims to be the attacker, new names for attacking organizations, and uncertain levels of affiliation both make it harder for the US to respond. They also produced more media coverage and speculation.

As of yet, the number of false flag operations has been limited. However, in Iraq and elsewhere, attacks have often been accompanied by what seem to be deliberate efforts to advance conspiracy theories to confuse the identity of the attacker or to find ways to blame defenders of the US for being attacked. In addition, conspiracy theories charging the US with deliberately or carelessly failing to provide an adequate defense have been particularly effective.

- **Seek to create sanctuaries like Fallujah, take shelter in mosques, shrines, and high value targets, and targets with high cultural impact:** Again, exploiting facilities of religious, cultural, and political sensitivity is not a new tactic. However, as operations against Sadr and in Fallujah have shown, the tactics raise the media profile, create a defensive deterrent, and can be exploited to make the US seem anti-Islamic or to be attacking a culture and not a movement.
- **Exploit, exaggerate, and falsify US attacks that cause civilian casualties, collateral damage, friendly fire against local allies, and incidents where the US can be blamed for being anti-Arab and anti-Islam:** Terrorists and insurgents have found they can use the media, rumor, and conspiracy theories to exploit the fact the US often fights a military battle without proper regard for the fact it is also fighting a political, ideological, and psychological war.

Real incidents of US misconduct such as the harsh treatment of detainees and prisoners, and the excessive security measures are cases in point. So too are careless political and media rhetoric by US officials and military officers.

Bin Laden, the Iraqi insurgents, etc., all benefit from every Western action that unnecessarily angers or frustrates the Arab and Islamic worlds. They are not fighting to influence Western or world opinion; they are fighting a political and psychological war to dominate Iraq and the Arab and Islamic worlds.

Lessons About Methods of Attack and Combat

There is no clear division between tactics focused on the political and psychological nature of war and military tactics. However, some of the major adaptations that insurgents and terrorists in Iraq made in terms of warfare and modes of attack include:

- **Mix crude and sophisticated IEDs:** Hezbollah should be given credit for having first perfected the use of explosives in well structured ambushes, although there is nothing new about such tactics – the Afghans used them extensively against the Soviets. Iraq has, however, provided a unique opportunity for insurgents and Islamist extremists to make extensive use of IEDs by exploiting its massive stocks of arms. The Iraqi attackers also learned to combine the extensive use of low grade IEDs, more carefully targeted sophisticated IEDs, very large car bombs and other devices to create a mix of threats and methods that is much more difficult to counter than reliance on more consistent types of bombs and target sets.
- **Suicide bombs, car bombs, and mass bombings:** The use of such tactics has increased steadily since 1999, in part due to the high success rate relative to alternative methods of attack. Exploding vehicles account for approximately 60% of Iraqi police and recruit fatalities.⁸ It is not always clear that suicide-bombing techniques are tactically necessary. In many cases, timed devices might produce the same damage. Events in Iraq have shown, however, that suicide bombers still have a major psychological impact and gain exceptional media attention. They also serve as symbols of dedication and commitment, can be portrayed as a form of Islamic martyrdom, and attract more political support and attention among those sympathetic to the cause involved.
- **Attack lines of communication (LOCs), rear area, and support activity:** Iraqi insurgents soon found that dispersed attacks on logistics and support forces often offer a higher chance of success than attacks on combat forces and defended sites, and makes the Coalition fight wars based on “deep support” rather than “deep strikes” beyond the Forward Edge of Battle Areas (FEBA).
- **Strike at highly visible targets with critical economic and infrastructure visibility:** Water and power facilities have a broad political, media, economic and social impact. Striking at critical export-earning facilities like Iraq’s northern export pipeline from the Kirkuk oil fields to the IT-1A storage tanks near Baiji, where oil accumulates before it is pumped further north to Ceyhan, has sharply affected the government’s revenues, forced it to create special protection forces, and gained world attention.
- **Kill Iraqi elites and “soft targets”:** The insurgents soon found it was far easier to kill Iraqi officials and security personnel, and their family members, than Americans. They also found it

was easier to kill mid-level officials than better-protected senior officials. In some areas, simply killing educated elites and/or their family members – doctors, professionals, etc. – could paralyze much of the nation building process, create a broad climate of insecurity, and force the US and Iraqi forces to disperse resources in defensive missions or simply have to stand aside and tolerate continued attacks.

- **Target elections, the political process and governance:** Elections and the local presence of government are soft disperse targets whose operation is critical to political legitimacy. Hitting these targets helps derail the political process, gets media visibility, offers vulnerable “low hanging fruit,” and intimidates the government and population in much wider areas than those subjected to direct attack.
- **Strike at major aid and government projects after completion; break up project efforts when they acquire visibility or have high levels of employment:** Insurgents and terrorists often simply struck at the most vulnerable projects, but they seem to have learned that timing their attacks, looting, sabotage, and intimidation to strike when projects are completed means the Coalition and government aid efforts have maximum cost with minimum effect. They strike at projects when the security forces protecting workers and aid teams were no longer there. This often led the local population to blame the Coalition or government for not keeping promises or providing the proper protection. Alternatively, breaking up project efforts when they began to have maximum local visibility and employment impact had many of the same effects.
- **Hit the softest element of Iraqi military, security, and police forces:** The insurgents found they could strike at men on leave, their families, recruits or those seeking to enlist, green troops and trainees, and low quality units with limited fear of effective retaliation. High profile mass killings got major media attention. Moreover, isolated forward elements in hostile or threatened areas not only were vulnerable, but successful attacks broke up governance, aid efforts, and intimidated local populations. This strategy has been most damaging to Iraqi police, which remain the weakest element in the security apparatus.
- **Make better use of light weapons like automatic weapons, sniping, RPGs, and mortars; attack from remote locations or use timed devices:** While much will depend on the level of insurgent and Islamist extremist access to arms, Iraq and Afghanistan have seen a steady improvement in the use of systems like mortars and anti-tank weapons, and efforts to acquire Manpads, ATGMs, mortars, rockets, and timed explosives. The quality of urban and road ambushes has improved strikingly in Iraq, as has the ability to set up rapid attacks, and exploit the vulnerability of soft skinned vehicles.
- **Create informal distributed networks for C4IBM—deliberately or accidentally:** Like drug dealers before them, Iraqi insurgent and Islamist extremists have learned enough about COMINT and SIGINT to stop using most vulnerable communications assets, and to bypass many – if not most – of the efforts to control cash flow and money transfers.

The use of messengers, direct human contact, coded messages through the Internet, propaganda web pages, and more random methods of electronic communication are all cases in point. At the broader level, however, insurgents in Iraq seem to have adapted to having cells and elements operate with considerable autonomy, and by loosely linking their operations by using the media and reporting on the overall pattern of attacks to help determine the best methods and targets.

Smuggling, drug sales, theft and looting, and direct fund transfers also largely bypass efforts to limit operations through controls on banking systems, charities, etc. Under these conditions, a lack of central control and cohesive structure may actually be an asset, allowing highly flexible operations with minimal vulnerability to roll-up and attack.

The existence of parallel, non-competing groups of hostile non-state actors provides similar advantages and has the same impact. The fact that insurgent and Islamist extremist groups operate largely independently, and use different tactics and target sets, greatly complicates US operations and probably actually increases overall effectiveness.

- **Make cities and towns urban sanctuaries and defensive morasses:** Iraqi insurgents found that cities with supportive and/or accepting populations can be made into partial sanctuaries and centers for defensive fighting and ambushes, and that tactical defeat can normally be dealt with by dispersal and hiding among the civilian population. Such tactics combine well with attacks on local authorities and security forces friendly to the US, efforts to block nation building at the local level, and efforts to exploit religion, ethnicity, tribalism, etc.
- **Use neighboring states as partial sanctuaries:** While scarcely a new tactic, Iraqi insurgents have made increased use of cross border operations and taken advantage of the difficulties in securing the Syrian, Iranian, and Saudi borders. The Vietnamese used the same tactic in Cambodia and Laos, and so have many other insurgent forces. The idea of securing a nation based on securing the territory within its tactical boundaries is often a tactical myth.
- **Exploit weaknesses in US human intelligence (HUMINT), battle damage assessment (BDA), and damage characterization capabilities:** Iraqi insurgents and other Islamist extremists learned that US intelligence is optimized around characterizing, counting, and targeting things, rather than people, and the US has poor capability to measure and characterize infantry and insurgent numbers, wounded, and casualties. They exploit these weaknesses in dispersal, in conducting attacks, in concealing the extent of losses, and in manipulating the media by claiming civilian casualties and collateral damage.
- **Carry out sequential ambushes:** Increasingly carry out complex mixes of sequential ambushes to draw in and attack Iraqi and US responders to the initial or previous follow-on attacks.
- **Exploit slow Iraqi and US reaction times at the local tactical level, particularly in built up areas:** Learn to exploit the delays in US response efforts, and rigidities in US tactical C⁴I behavior, to attack quickly and disperse.
- **Exploit fixed Iraqi and US patterns of behavior:** Take advantage of any tendency to repeat tactics, security, movement patterns, and other behavior; find vulnerabilities and attack.
- **Hit at US HUMINT links and translators:** US dependence on Iraqi translators and intelligence sources is a key area of US vulnerability and one the insurgents have learned to focus on.
- **Use “resurgence” and re-infiltration – dig in, hide, and reemerge:** Disperse under pressure or when defeat seems likely. Let the US take an “empty” city or objective. “Resurge” when the US tactical presence declines.
- **Use incident frequencies, distribution of attacks, and tactics that strain or defeat US intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (IS&R) assets and ability to support Iraqi forces:** There is no question that assets like RPVs, aircraft, SIGINT systems, etc. can provide significant capability *when they are available*. It is unclear whether it is deliberate or not, but the geographic spread and daily incident count in Iraq indicates that insurgent movements and actions often reach numbers too large to cover. In fact, the US averaged some 1,700-2,000 patrols per day during May 2004. While it is nice to talk about netcentric warfare, it is a lot harder to get a big enough net.

Insurgents learned that the US has less ability to track and characterize irregular forces, insurgent/terrorist teams, and urban and dispersed infantry than forces using mechanized weapons or significant numbers of vehicles. Blending into the civilian population has worked well for local insurgents and Islamists in both Afghanistan and Iraq, and Iraqi insurgents learned that they can exploit rules of engagement where the US and Iraqi government forces do not have soldiers or agents on the ground to perform targeting and IFF functions. As valuable as IS&R assets are, they do not provide some critical kinds of situational awareness with any reliability.

- **Increase the size and power of IEDs to nullify the advantages of US and Coalition armor:** In two separate instances in early January 2005, IEDs destroyed a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and an Abrams tank. The two vehicles are among the more heavily armored vehicles in the US arsenal. Prior to the two bombings, both the Abrams and the Bradley Fighting Vehicle had proven relatively effective in protecting troops inside.

- **Choose a vulnerable Iraqi and US force:** Deny the US and Iraqi forces a large, cohesive enemy while attacking small or dispersed elements of US and Iraqi forces, facilities, or targets.
- **Counter USIS&R capabilities by adapting new techniques of communication and interaction:** The steady leakage of details on US and allied intelligence collection methods has led Islamist extremist and terrorist movements to make more use of couriers and direct financial transfer; use electronic communications more safely; screen recruits more carefully, find ways to communicate through the Internet that the US cannot target, disperse better, and improve their hierarchy and cell structure.
- **Counter US and Iraqi government IS&R assets with superior HUMINT:** Developments in Iraq indicate that the US faces a repetition of its experience in Vietnam in the sense that as various insurgent factions organize, they steadily improve their intelligence and penetration of organizations like the CPA, CJTF-7, the Iraqi government and security forces, and the Iraqi factions backing nation building.

Like Vietnam, Iraq is a warning that hostile HUMINT sources are often pushed into providing data because of family ties, a fear of being on the losing side, direct and indirect threats, etc. In Iraq's case, it seems likely that family, clan, and ethnic loyalties have made many supposedly loyal Iraqis become at least part time sources, and that US vetting will often be little more than either a review of past ties or checks on the validity of data being provided. The end result may be an extremely high degree of transparency on US, Iraqi government, aid, and every other aspect of Iraqi operations. This will often provide excellent targeting data on key US and allied officials, events, etc. It can include leverage and blackmail, and vulnerability data, as well as warning of US and other military operations. *Dual loyalty and HUMINT penetration of Iraqi security and military forces may be the rule, rather than the exception*

IRAQI-US ASYMMETRIC INTERACTION AND NON-INTEROPERABILITY

Most of these developments will be all too familiar to any reader of the world's press during 2003 and 2004. It is important to note, however, that the insurgency rose and became steadily more effective while the US failed to treat the Iraqi forces as serious partners, and failed to promptly restructure its goals and training and equipment effort.

What was even more serious from a human point of view was the vast asymmetry in interoperability that built up as the insurgency took hold. As the following data make brutally clear, the US failed to provide minimal facilities and equipment such as body armor, communications and vehicles. While the US training teams and US commanders in the field made steadily better efforts to organize and train Iraqi forces to protect themselves, the US as a whole concentrated on manpower numbers and then left Iraqis out in the field to die.

The seriousness of this problem is all too clear in the Congressional and media reaction to the discovery the US was slow to uparmor the HUMVEEs and trucks for its ground forces in December 2004. The resulting debate failed to ask what equipment was being provided to Iraqi forces although they had been a prime target of the insurgents and terrorists since late summer of 2003.

The US went into the Iraq War unprepared to see the Iraqis as allies, and then proved unprepared to provide real interoperability as it found the "war after the war" was even more real than the battle to topple Saddam Hussein.

IV. US Training and Equipment Effort: The Failures of 2003

For all of these reasons, the US efforts to shape, train, and equip Iraqi military and security forces need to be put in historical perspective. It was not until the spring of 2004 that the effort to create the Iraqi forces that both Iraq and the US needed gained any urgency, and until then no guidance was given to shape the training program to meet the needs that were evolving in the field. For most of the year following Saddam's fall, the broad directive was to spend several years shaping a military designed to defend Iraq's borders, and for much of that time the training was of so low priority that it was left to an uncoordinated effort by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior that lacked any serious US support.

Planning for the Wrong Forces and the Wrong Mission

Once the CPA replaced ORHA, and serious post-conflict planning began in April 2003, the goal for the Iraqi army was to create three light motorized divisions over a period of several years that were designed for border defense. These were to be built from the ground up and gradually become heavier, mechanized divisions, with the longer term goal being the creation of 6-9 divisions over a period of 5 years or more. The key was that they would be subordinate to the new civilian authority and democratic system the US hoped to create, and that they would not repeat the past mistake of creating large, corrupt, expensive, and political military forces.

Unlike the previous Iraqi forces, they were to be lean and leadership-driven by well-trained officers and cadres of NCOs. They were to grow at a pace dictated by manpower quality, and they were to have the incentives, pay, facilities, and career structure necessary to create a relatively moderate-sized force in a functioning democracy. Even so, several members of the Interim Government, including Ahmed Chalabi, largely opposed the effort to create effective military forces of any kind and continued to make efforts to slow down the US effort in the months to come.

The actual process of creating Iraqi forces began in July-August 2003. The effort was led by Walter Slocombe, who effectively became Iraq's Minister of Defense, and Major General Paul D. Eaton. It relied heavily on training in Jordan and using Jordanian officers. In addition, an NCO academy was set up in Iraq. The goal was to create US-trained and equipped battalions that would become cadres that could train other Iraqi forces. Eventually, three Iraqi light motorized brigades would be created which could grow to three divisions over time.

Providing the Training and Equipment Effort with Too Little, Too Late

Every aspect of the program faced massive political and material problems from April 2003 to September 2004. The barracks left intact by the fighting were looted – lacked wiring and plumbing – and would not have been acceptable even by the standards of Saddam's conscript forces. Suitable facilities had to be built or reconditioned virtually from scratch, and getting the proper material not only involved formal contracts, but then

ran into delivery problems compounded by the growing violence, sabotage, and theft in the country. As a result, facilities became the initial limiting factor.

These problems were compounded by equipment difficulties. The US issued competitive bids for the equipment for the three initial motorized battalions modeled largely on US Army tables of equipment and organization (TO&E). They were to have a mix of shoot, move, and communications capabilities that could grow rapidly to a three-division force, and gradually become heavier over time. It should be noted, however, that the request for proposals was geared to providing light forces to screen a border. No attempt was made to develop TO&Es tailored to serious counterinsurgency warfare, and this meant steady follow-on efforts to provide better and heavier equipment in virtually every area.

The winner -- the Neur Corporation -- was selected in a "blind" evaluation with almost unanimous support. The winning company, however, was said to have ties to a relative of Ahmed Chalabi and the award was contested. Given the lack of priority for effective Iraqi forces, the award was rescinded and the contract was then held up. As a result, the US team had to improvise, building on existing contracts and finding any vehicle possible to get the required services and equipment.

Slowly Tilting Towards Reality After September 2003

It was not until the insurgency gathered serious momentum in September 2003 that the US began to see the mission as critical to successful nation building and the reduction of the longer-term US presence in Iraq. It then decided to triple the planned rate of initial build-up, though the mission of the army still was focused primarily on border defense and not on active counterinsurgency warfare. This decision was not made until November-December 2003 -- largely as a result of the steady increase in insurgent attacks. It then took until January 2004 for the US to decide to send Major General Karl Ikenberry to survey the situation and provide a study to recommend possible changes.

General Ikenberry did not actually arrive in Iraq until February, and it was only in March 2004 -- nearly a year after Saddam's fall -- that building up Iraqi military forces for the counterinsurgency mission was given high priority. It also was only at this point that shaping the growth of the police, border forces, and other security forces was made part of the US training and equipping mission. Up until that time, it had remained under the Ministry of the Interior, and had been left largely to individual and uncoordinated efforts -- some of them highly regional -- within the Ministry. There was no top down direction for the effort until March 2004.

Given this background, it is surprising that General Eaton was able to give his successor, Lieutenant General David Petraeus, as large a mix of capabilities as he did. By June 2004, the Iraq Army had many of its initial training facilities and barracks ready, and had trained some 1,500 officers for a force of three light divisions -- most were trained in Jordan. It had also trained some 3,500 NCOs.

The US Congress must accept some blame for failing to create procedures that allow time-critical expenditures on security aid. Yet, as officers like Major General Charles H. Swannack, the commander of the 82nd Airborne, pointed out in interviews, the CPA sometimes made it as difficult to use US aid funds to train and equip Iraqi security forces

as did the Congress, and commanders sometimes had to use CERP aid when they should have had all the funds they needed.⁹

It is also impossible to ignore the fact that until April 2004, US plans failed to recognize the need to treat the Iraqis as full partners in achieving security in Iraq and to make meaningful efforts to train and equip them effectively to perform counterinsurgency missions and more conventional warfare. For nearly a year, the US acted as if the insurgency was not nationalist in character, was driven by former regime loyalists and foreign volunteers, and was small and unpopular. It emphasized the foreign threat increasingly after January 2004, although Swannack noted that only 50 men out of the 3,800 the 82nd Airborne apprehended in the Sunni triangle area were foreign. For nearly a year, the US acted as if the threat would go away once the US and the rest of the MNF defeated it and that it could be dealt with without supplying serious aid to Iraq.

V. Failing to Deliver an Adequate Training and Equipment Program Through the Tenure of the CPA and Mid-2004

It is difficult to track just how successful the efforts to restructure the creation of effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces were once the decision was taken to create the kind of forces the new Iraqi government really needed. The data that are available, however, strongly argue that far too little was done during most of 2004.

Data on the Progress in Training and Equipping Iraqi Security Forces

The US provided only limited meaningful data on the nature of its efforts to train and equip Iraqi forces during this period, and has provided less and less relevant data as time has passed. US military officers justify these shortfalls in two ways: The first, and least convincing explanation is that they are focused on the future and past reporting is focused on the past. The more convincing explanation is that the debate in Washington over how many troops are on the ground, equipped, or trained has focused on the wrong issues and misleading numbers: As one senior officer intimately involved with the effort to create Iraqi forces has put it, “The real issue is how many will actually fight, how well they will fight, and who they will fight for.”

The end result, however, is that the US effort in Iraq has never had enough transparency to provide either a clear picture of what has happened or serious credibility. The material available from unclassified US sources during the time of the CPA omitted critical details on the nature of the training Iraqis receive, and provided little data on the portion that actually went through academy and received proper military training. It provided only limited data on the flow of US aid to the Iraqi army and security forces, and US reports often used unrealistic and outdated requirements and metrics for measuring how the equipment effort actually meets Iraqi requirements.

The new reporting systems adopted after the end of the CPA have, if anything, become steadily worse. They disguise the details of many serious problems in the security and aid efforts that were revealed in the previous reporting. The new reporting no longer distinguishes construction and non-construction expenditures by category, no longer reports the number of serious incidents occurring by day and week, and have begun to omit any data on equipment transfers either in terms of absolute numbers or relative to requirements.

The data the US has provided are, however, adequate enough to show that there were continuing problems in the effort to train and equip the Iraqi security forces through the fall of 2004, and to provide details on critical problems in the security program. The data that describe progress through September 2004 also document an inexcusable level of failure on the part of the US, and particularly on the part of the CPA and Department of Defense, in developing effective Iraqi capabilities.

In spite of all these problems, serious training in urban warfare and efforts to provide proper equipment – including reconnaissance assets and other special equipment – had

begun by the time the CPA transferred sovereignty in June 2004. For example, the CPA reported, as it went out of business, that it had decided to give the Iraqi Air Force two Seeker reconnaissance aircraft to conduct surveillance of the borders and oil facilities and was rushing procurement of 14 more.

Progress at the Time the CPA Went Out of Business at the End of June 2004

The CPA had begun to take the creation of Iraqi forces far more seriously at the end of its existence, and made the following claims when it gave sovereignty back to the Iraqi Interim Government in June 2004:

- The Iraqi government announced a new law allowing it to impose emergency security measures to combat terrorism.
- The initial battalion of the Iraq Intervention Force (IIF) deployed into Baghdad at the end of June.
- The IIF was being established, trained and equipped for urban counterinsurgency operations.
- All three battalions of the first IIF brigade were scheduled ready by the end of July.
- At the end of June, 41 of 45 battalions of the Iraqi National Guard (formerly the Iraqi Civil Defense Corp) were manned above 75 percent strength.
- Iraqi forces had begun joint patrols throughout Iraq with Coalition and Iraqi police forces.
- Efforts were underway to recruit six additional 400-man public order battalions as part of the Iraqi Police Service civil intervention force.
- With these additions, the Iraqi Police Service civil intervention force would total nine public order battalions and two counterinsurgency battalions.
- A total of 5,502 new IPS recruits had completed the eight-week training course.
- Five classes, or over 3,411 students, had graduated from the Jordan Academy.
- Four classes, or 2,091 students, had graduated from the Baghdad Public Safety Academy.
- Approximately 25,000 IPS personnel who served as police under the former regime had completed a three-week Transition and Integration Program taught by the Coalition.
- IPS officers were also being taught basic criminal investigation, criminal intelligence, and dignitary protection by Coalition advisors.

A more detailed review of the data available shows all too clearly, however, that US had continued to fail to treat the Iraqis as real partners in achieving security in Iraq, and to train and equip them effectively to perform counterinsurgency missions and warfare.

Too Little and Too Late in Getting Resources to the Iraqis

One legacy of the mistakes the US made in planning for effective Iraqi forces was that Iraq's total defense budget for 2004 was only \$101 million and its justice budget was only \$151 million, although Iraq's actual defense budget for 2004 became \$450 million. There is, however, an unexplained category called "additional security projects" that was raised from \$500 million to \$1 billion in March 2004.¹⁰ More generally, CPA reporting shows all too clearly how slow the flow of resources to Iraqi forces really was:

- The weekly status reporting issued by the Department of Defense as of 13 July 2004 confirmed the fact that the actual flow of US aid to Iraq, and its impact on the Iraqi security, still remained

almost glacially slow. As of 13 July, the US had only actually spent \$220 million out of the \$2,976 million apportioned for security under the FY2004 aid program of \$18.4 billion.

- CPA reporting as of June 29, 2004 showed that obligations for non-construction security procurement were about 25% of goal, and commitments were around 50%. The figures for construction tasks were far more favorable and almost totally misleading. They indicated that the \$749 million was obligated and \$1,003 million was committed, to meet a goal for 1 July 2004 of \$749 million.
- The CPA status report issued on 6 July 2004 showed that obligations for non-construction security procurement were about 30% of goal on 30 June 2004, and commitments were around 60%. The figures for construction tasks were far more favorable, but almost totally misleading. They indicated that the \$825 million was obligated as of 30 June 2004, and \$985 million was committed, to meet a goal for 1 July 2004 of only \$749 million. Yet, virtually every report on Iraqi security efforts indicates that facilities remain grossly inadequate.
- The status reports provided on progress as of July 13th were less detailed than previous statements, but showed that the CPA 2207 Report called for \$3.243 billion in FY2004 aid funds for construction and non-construction projects for security and law enforcement. While \$1.507 billion of this total had been obligated, only \$220 million had actually been spent. The CPA 2207 Report called for \$1.038 billion in FY2004 aid funds for justice and public safety, but only \$300 million had been obligated and only \$14 million had been spent.

Force Status Data

The data on the status and readiness of Iraqi forces in the summer of 2004 also had many elements that made the simple lists of “achievements” the CPA claimed somewhat less than credible:

- The CPA went out of business just as the first battalion of the Iraq National Task Force division began to deploy to Baghdad, and as the new Iraqi government overrode its plans to leave the Iraq Civil Defense Corps as a largely passive defense force and converted it to a National Guard. The Iraqi police are just beginning to acquire serious counterinsurgency capabilities in the form of nine public order battalions and two counterinsurgency battalions as part of an Iraqi Police Service (IPS) civil intervention force.
- As of 26 June 2004, the US reporting summarized in the final CPA status report showed a net average increase in the number of significant insurgent attacks using improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne IEDs, mortars, rocket propelled grenades, and improvised rockets over the period since September 2003. They were averaging over 40 per day and the total number of incidents of all kinds was far higher.¹¹ The US had reported the capture or killing of many Iraqi foreign and domestic insurgents, but no decline in the total number of active insurgents since its first meaningful estimates in July 2003. It could not characterize the leadership or membership of either domestic or foreign insurgent groups with any precision, or the level of actual Al Qaida central influence and control.
- As of July 30, 2004, the central Iraqi police office dealing with the key problem of kidnapping still had almost no office equipment, no phone of its own, no air conditioning, no computers, and a small fraction of an authorized staff far too small to do the job. There were 42 officers assigned to a task that the head of the section estimated required 1,000.¹²
- The Iraqi Interim Government was still experiencing critical loyalty and performance problems in critical areas like Baquba in late July. Some reports indicated the top four security officers in the new government security forces had to be removed during fighting with insurgents during this time.
- In early August 2004, defections were reported to remain a major problem, and the police and security forces were reported to be including 30,000 more names on their roles than they could actually account for. The British officer in charge of assistance to the new police force, Brigadier

General Andrew MacKay, referred to the fact that many police left without sending in resignations or having their departure reported as “ghosts.”¹³

Manpower and Training Status

The CPA never standardized its public reporting on the status of Iraqi training, although the data always implied a much higher level of training than actually took place. The training data on the Iraqi security forces were also altered in ways that disguises the level of training in most services in the CPA reporting issued from April 2004 onwards. This was done by implying that training under the Ba’ath regime, or limited on the job training under the Transition Integration Program (TIP), was adequate.

The final status reports by the CPA show different types of training data for each report. For example, the data issues on 25 June 2004 shows that only 5,857 out of 88,039 Iraqi police had serious academy training, although another 2,387 were in the training pipeline. The CPA report issued on 6 July 2004 did not provide the same detail on training data in previously reports, but did indicate that only 3,411 students had graduated from the Jordanian Academy and 1,674 students had graduated from the Baghdad Public Safety Academy. Even these students had courses lasting less than a fifth as long as similar training in the US and Europe. The figures for the Department of Border Enforcement showed that 255 had postwar academy training out of a total of 18,248, with an additional 25 in training.¹⁴

The CPA went out of business before the Civil Defense Corps was transformed into the National Guard, but its final reports stated that only 2,362 out of 39,128 men were “in training.” It should be noted, however, that the other 36, 762 had completed their initial training and were with units conducting follow-on training or security operations with Coalition Forces. Some of these ING units were some of the first ones the Coalition formed and trained, and some had been training and operating for nearly a year by this time.

The CPA’s final report on the status of the Iraqi Army for July 6 showed that 10,222 men were said to be in service, of which 2,316 were “in training.” The data for the Facilities Protection Service showed an active strength of 74,069. No data were provided on what portions were regarded as trained and only 77 were reported to be “in training.”

Most of this training also was little more than at the token level. An independent investigation by the GAO describes it as follows:

"State/INL provided the commanders with a temporary curriculum, the Transition Integration Program. The full curriculum is 108 hours long and provides basic police training in such subjects as basic human rights, firearms familiarization, patrol procedures, and search methods. According to a State Department official, the various major subordinate commanders had wide latitude in terms of training police and did not uniformly adopt the Transition Integration Program. They were free to establish their own curriculum and requirements for police, which varied in depth and scope. Training could last between 3 days and 3 weeks. According to a State/INL official, some commanders required trainees to undergo class and field training, while other commanders only required officers to wear a uniform. According to a multinational force interim assessment from May 2004, the Iraq Civil Defence Corps also lacked proper training. It stated that investment into training the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps units varied among the multinational divisions and that the units in the western and center-south major subordinate commands in particular were the least prepared for combat. Furthermore, the training was not sufficient for high-intensity tasks. One CPA official agreed with this, stating that the training for the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps did not

prepare it to fight against well-armed insurgents with mortars and rocket-propelled grenades, for example. The assessment also noted that the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps units contained too many inexperienced officers and soldiers."

Manning and Training Issues in Mid-2004

The data provided by the CPA, Department of Defense, Department of State, and other sources provide the following picture of what was happening to Iraqi military, security, and police forces as of mid-2004:

- As of 25 June 2004, the CPA reported that only 5,857 out of 88,039 Iraqi police had serious academy training, although another 2,387 were in the training pipeline. No figures were made available for how many could be said to have the necessary equipment, transportation, communications, and facilities. The figures for the Department of Border Enforcement showed that 255 had postwar academy training out of a total of 18,248, plus 25 in training.
- Similarly, Brigadier General Andrew MacKay, the British advisor to the Iraqi police, reported that only 87,000 men and women of 120,000 on the payroll could actually be accounted for. Only 6,000 police recruits out of the totals shown had police academy training as of early August 2004, with another 21,000 taking a "three week" course that was sometimes more than a week shorter. At least 60,000 men were serving in police related functions with no training.¹⁵
- Other data provided in a background brief to the press indicate that it will take until the end of 2004 to properly train 20,000 police.¹⁶
- No figures were provided for trained manpower in the new National Guard, although 2,362 out of 39,128 were said to be "in training." The same was true for the Iraqi Army. A total of 10,222 men were said to be in service, of which 2,316 were "in training." The data for the Facilities Protection Service showed an active strength of 74,069. Once again, no data were provided on what portion was regarded as trained and only 77 were reported to be "in training." The service has since been dropped from the State Department's updates.
- Previous reporting by the CPA showed that the July 13th totals for trained manpower were almost meaningless for the Iraqi National Guard, where most men shown as "trained" were actually figures for the output of the token training program conducted for the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps – when the force had a different name, role and mission. For most men involved, the total training program for most new recruits to the National Guard lasted all of two weeks, and the first week is largely orientation. There also were serious problems in paying the National Guard, and skimming off part of their pay was common at the command level. Many of those who were paid get less than \$145 a month out of a pay scale that calls for a minimum of \$170.
- Training in urban warfare, providing reconnaissance assets and other special equipment, were only beginning, and the few meaningful details that have been made public are not reassuring. For example, the CPA reported as it went out of business that it had decided to give the new Iraqi air force two Seeker reconnaissance aircraft to conduct surveillance of the borders and oil facilities and was rushing procurement of 14 more.
- Brigadier General James Schwitters, the US commander of the coalition training team assisting the army, stated in early August that only 3,000 of the men in the army could be regarded as trained.¹⁷

Equipment Issues in Mid-2004

The data the US provided on Iraqi equipment holdings reflected continuing problems, although they were no worse than the overall US reporting on every aspect of the aid effort. From the start, the Department of Defense and CPA failed to provide any meaningful metrics of actual progress in terms of successful aid efforts, as distinguished from metrics of money spent, buildings contracted for, peak power generation capacities,

etc. One of the most glaring of these failures was the inability to provide any data on the progress in equipping the Iraqi security forces and giving them proper facilities – a failure matched by what may well be the most incompetent and unforgivable level of success in the US aid effort.

The CPA's public status reports never reported on how many of Iraq's military and security services could be said to have the necessary equipment, transportation, communications, and facilities. However, it was clear from the start that equipment and facilities continued to be a critical problem.

EQUIPMENT STATUS UNDER THE CPA

A GAO study found, however, that data from the CPA's Provost Marshall's Office showed that the Iraqi Police Service was operating with 41% of its required patrol vehicles, 63% of its required uniforms, 43% of its required pistols, 21% of its required hand radios, 7% of its required vehicle radios, and 9% of its required protective vests as late as 28 March 2004. It also found that equipment provisioning for Iraqi Civil Defense Corps was months behind schedule. According to a CPA official, no Iraqi Civil Defense Corps unit possessed body armor, and many were using Saddam-era helmets for protection.

According to a multinational force-planning document, as of 23 April 2004, units were still awaiting the delivery of uniforms, helmets, body armor, vehicles, radios, AK-47 rifles, RPK machine guns, ammunition, and night vision equipment while a CPA official claimed that most, if not all, of this equipment was currently flowing into the region. A multinational force assessment noted that Iraqis within the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps felt the multinational force never took them seriously, as exhibited by what they perceived as the broken promises and the lack of trust on the part of the multinational force. Yet, initially these forces were not trained, equipped, or intended for offensive and active counterinsurgency missions.

This may help explain why the Department of Defense reported the following desertion and manning problems in the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps from 2-16 April: Northeastern Iraq, including the cities of Baquba and Tikrit - about 9,100 to about 6,100, or 30%; Baghdad and surrounding area-about 6,200 to about 3,200, or 49%; Central-southern Iraq, including Karbala, An Najaf, and Al Kut - about 3,500 to about 2,500, or 30%; Multinational Division-Center South Western Iraq, including Fallujah - about 5,600 to about 1,000, or 82%.

Equipment shortfalls are more than statistics. They are a measure of how many Iraqis were being put into the field without the essential equipment and facilities needed to function and survive.

THE EQUIPMENT EFFORT AT THE END OF THE CPA

It is striking that it took the US government until 13 July 2004 to provide reporting on efforts to equip the Iraqi forces in anything approaching a systematic form, and that no mention was made of the need to virtually zero-base many aspects of a failed US aid effort this spring. This new reporting also did not provide any insights into facility problems that were still a critical weakness for virtually every element of the Iraqi security and police forces.

The data also had serious category and definition problems that understated the seriousness of the CPA and CJTF-7 failure to provide effective support to the Iraqi police, security forces, and military:

- They report on requirements in terms of the goals set by the CPA before the transfer of power, and not on the new requirements set since April 2004. As a result, they sharply exaggerate the adequacy of the equipment for every element, and especially the National Guard, Special Forces elements, and the police.
- The figures for weapons did not reflect the fact that current plans did not recognize the need for heavier weapons that only became part of the program once the decision was taken to create heavier forces and a mechanized brigade.
- The figures for vehicles were based on very limited requirements, and did not reflect the need for armored/protected vehicles. The figures set for the Facilities Protection Service sharply understated actual need for any kind of serious counterinsurgency/counterterrorism environment.
- The figures for communications were generally outdated, and did not reflect the understanding that much better systems are needed if the Iraqi forces are to play an active role in counterinsurgency. As a result, some holdings were reported as zero, although limited communications are in place. The Iraqi Special Operations Forces did operate with interim equipment that was adequate, however, and often from the Coalition, when operations required it. The US command in Iraq feel their overall effectiveness has not been hampered by a lack of communications equipment during operations regardless of what the equipment data reflect.

It should be noted, however, that there were special conditions in Iraq that cannot be blamed on the US effort to organize and fund the facility, equipment, and training effort. For example, both the CPA and post-CPA manpower totals were somewhat misleading as some 25-33% of men are on leave or in training at any one time, but this was a fact of life in Iraq at the time. Another unsolved problem was that many Iraqis were in mixed units and had to get home to give their families their pay as well as deal with family issues.

Militia and Disarmament Issues

The US and the Coalition made other mistakes during this period as well. For much of the first year of the occupation, there was more talk about disarming Iraqi civilians than substantive action. It was not until February 2004 – when it only had five months of additional life -- that the CPA really staffed the effort to disarm the major militias that had been key elements of the resistance to Saddam, and it only reached key agreements and began to implement them in May 2004 – when it was beginning to go out of business.

The Coalition did have considerable successes in spite of its slow start. It focused on nine main militias, and ones with considerable political as well as military impact. These militias included the Kurdish KDP and PUK militias, which were known as the Peshmerga, and had a nominal strength of some 75,000 men. They included the Badr Corps with a nominal strength of 16,000, and six other militias: the Iraqi Hezbollah (not affiliated with the Lebanese Hezbollah), the Iraqi Communist Party, the Iraqi National Accord (INA), the Iraqi National Congress (INC), elements of Al Dawa (the Jafri faction), and the Iraqi Islamic Party – the only Sunni militia.

In spite of the short time involved, the CPA was able to get agreement in early June 2004 from all nine of these militias to disband or integrate into the Iraqi forces. This agreement

covered about 100,000 former resistance fighters, and the CPA estimated that about 90% of these individuals would complete the transition and reintegration process by January 2005--all would complete the process by October 2005.

The CPA estimated that about 60% of the militia members would transition into Iraqi security services—such as the Iraqi Armed Forces, Iraqi Police Service, or the Internal Security Forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government. The Kurds agreed to transform the Peshmerga into three elements that would still provide them with some element of security while serving the interest of the government: mountain rangers to guard the borders, a counterterrorism force, and a rapid reaction force. The other militias were to disband and either receive veterans benefits or join the Iraqi military, Civil Defense Corps (ICDC and predecessor of the National Guard), or police.

There were phased draw down agreements reached with six of the nine militias, with the remaining three claiming to have already disbanded their fighting organizations. CPA Order 91 also established penalties for those who did not implement the agreement, and which effectively banned any leaders and political movements that did not comply from participating in the Iraqi political process.

Both the CPA plan and this agreement were coordinated with the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of the Interior, and Ministerial Committee for National Security. The Ministry of Labor and Social affairs and other Iraqi agencies (e.g., the Foreign Ministry, the Iraqi Intelligence Agency and Ministry of Education), came together in a body called the Transition and Reintegration Committee that was to administer the process after the transfer of authority, and in fact began to do so in late May of 2004. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs was critical to implementing one of the most innovative elements of the program: treating those in the militias opposing Saddam as if they were veterans in the Iraqi army. For example, militias with 15 years of service became eligible for pensions and wounded with disabilities were treated as if they were soldiers. This was to be part of a \$205 million program in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to provide a nation-wide job training and placement program that included significant funding for veterans and ease the impact of both employment problems and the tensions growing out of the break up of Iraq's regular forces.

The CPA also developed phased plans to disband the militias (busing was part of the recruiting efforts, primarily of the IAF – there was no plan to move militias in mass) and plans to integrate those who wanted to join the Iraqi forces to enter the military, ICDC, and police. Quotas were established by province and city for those who wanted to join the ICDC, and broader quotas for the police – largely because the Ministry of the Interior simply did not know the short-term employment needs of local police forces. The CPA office involved asked for \$9.7 million for a staff of international experts and Iraqis to manage and coordinate this effort, and while this request was still pending when the CPA disbanded in June, though it had explicit support from the Prime Minister and the National Security Advisor. Some progress was made with elements of militias like the Badr Corps – each of the four Arab militias with T&R plans had a complete schedule for moving their designated members through IAF recruiting, and, indeed, had had at least one group of former fighters processed through the recruiting stations in Baghdad, Basra, or Mosul before the CPA went out of business (some, such as the Badr Corps, had several). Such arrangements were not needed for the peshmerga, as there were

Peshmerga Transition Offices (established by the CJTF – 7) in Iraqi Kurdistan that assisted with transition efforts there.

There were some weapons recoveries, but they were limited and fell behind the goals originally set. For example, the CPA set a ceiling of \$1.5 million for a MANPADS weapons buyback program using funds seized from the Iraqi government, but only found it useful to commit \$610,000, and had only expended \$320,000 at the time it ceased to exist.¹⁸ The pattern of attacks as of early August 2004 indicated the program had had little or no impact.

The practical problem proved to be that the CPA began the effort too late, and the new Iraqi government failed to implement it. As part of the transfer of power, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs all gained new Ministers and none gave implementing the plans developed under the CPA any serious priority. The new Minister of Defense resisted any effort to integrate any militia in a movement with a religious character into the armed forces, and the new Minister of Finance has not yet implemented the Prime Minister's decision to fund the \$9.7 million program recommended under the CPA. Even more seriously, the new minister of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs cancelled the nation-wide job training and placement program, effectively eliminating one of the key aspects of the Veterans program for either the militia personnel who qualified or those in the Iraqi forces under Saddam Hussein.

The situation grew steadily worse as it became clear that Sadr's Mehdi Army posed a threat to the Shi'ite and other militias operating in the south and the east, and the insurgency steadily grew in strength. It became clear that CPA Order 91 was effectively dead, and that the Iraqi Interim Government could not afford to take action against leaders and parties simply because they maintained militias. The fighting against Sadr then further reinforced the reluctance of such militias and parties to comply.

As a result, the militias continue to be a serious potential problem. Talk about disarming them will prove to be no more than an administrative fiction until the Kurdish, Shi'ite, and Sunni groups involved become convinced that the new government is legitimate, will serve their interests, and can provide true security. Even then, massive amounts of arms may be readily available, given the number of arms already disbursed among Iraq's population. Should these groups agree to demobilize, the legal basis for such a program remains in place.

The HUMINT Problem

These problems in creating effective Iraqi forces also greatly complicated the difficulties the US has had in fighting a counterinsurgency campaign. The US initially tried to carry out the impossible mission of developing effective human intelligence (HUMINT) on its own, rather than in full partnership with the Iraqis.

One of the critical lessons of Vietnam was ignored. Rather than seeing the need for effective Iraqi intelligence collection and analysis -- and to rely on Iraqis for the lack of area and language skills and understanding of local political and tactical conditions -- the US tried to create a network of informers and local contacts and carry out analysis on its own.

The US simply does not have the capability in terms of expertise and access to suddenly improvise a largely autonomous HUMINT effort as a substitute for partnership with an intelligence organization run by local allies.

VI. The Fall of 2004: The Effort to Train Iraqi Military and Security Forces Gathers Momentum

As summer faded into fall, the reorganization of the training and equipment effort that had begun in the spring of 2004 began to gather momentum and have more effect. The Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-1) began to get the manning levels it needed to be effective, and was organized into three key elements dealing with the military, security, and police forces with senior US and British commanders:¹⁹

- Military
 - CMATT - Coalition Military Assistance Training Team: Organizes, trains, and equips the Iraqi Armed Forces. During operations, provides ongoing mentoring and advising to Iraqi leaders at all levels of command. Assists the MoD leadership in developing accession sources and leadership programs across all services of the Iraqi Armed Forces. End state is the development of an Iraqi Armed Forces capable of planning and conducting unilateral operations in order to maintain security within Iraq and defend its sovereignty.
 - JHQ - Joint Headquarters Advisory Support Team: Mentors and assists the Iraqi Joint Headquarters in order to become capable of exercising effective national command and control of the IAF, contributing to the IAF capability development process and, in partnership with coalition forces, contributing to improving the internal security situation within Iraq.
- Police
 - CPATT - Civilian Police Assistance Training Team: Organize, train, equip and mentor the Iraqi Civilian Police Forces and Department of Border Enforcement forces and monitor, advise and certify the Facilities Protection Service forces in order to develop capable and credible Iraqi security forces.

Creating More Effective Core Forces

The Iraqi Army and National Guard became more active, although the number of capable forces remained far lower than any of the total figures for manpower and training manpower in Figure 1.3 below might indicate. Iraqi combat forces became active in a number of high-threat areas like Samarra, Sadr City, Najaf, Fallujah, and Mosul. A chronology of these operations is provided in Appendix A.

The core force of combat-capable Iraq units remained small. It consisted of six army and Intervention Force battalions with an authorized strength of roughly 700 men each (total of 4,200 men). Six more army and Intervention Force battalions were supposed to be ready by the end of October (for a total of 8,400 men), but the State Department Iraqi Military Forces Update report issued on November 3, 2004 indicated that only 3,987 army and Intervention Force soldiers were active. Looking back at these data, the facts seem to be that six battalions were operational. Regular Army and Iraqi Intervention Forces reported as fully trained and equipped totaled 6,323, although this figure did include several hundred at the brigade level and higher headquarters, and also included a number of AWOLs that were subsequently dropped from the rolls and which can be seen in subsequent reports.

Nevertheless, those combat elements that were given enough training and equipment to make them combat-ready began to play a larger role. More importantly, the US advisory team placed more and more emphasis on leadership and unit integrity, and less and less

emphasis on sheer numbers. It pressed hard to reward effective leaders and remove weak ones. It also attempted to compensate for the lack of trained units and cadres by stiffening weak units with officers and enlisted men until they could function, rather than on replacing weak units with new units that might be just as weak. This emphasis on leadership and unit integrity is scarcely a new lesson of warfighting, but is a critical warning of the dangers of focusing on throughput and end-strength, rather than meaningful capability.

Two Iraqi Army battalions, a commando battalion, a counterterrorist force, and two National Guard battalions were active in the fighting in Najaf in October 2003. Approximately 2,000 Iraqis were involved in the operation in Samarra, and another 2,000 Iraqi soldiers fought in Fallujah. These troops still lacked the experience, armor, and heavy weapons to take lead roles in combat unless they have substantial US support, and some elements presented problems, but they steadily improved their performance over time.

This core force increased steadily during the rest of 2004. The Coalition had trained an additional twelve battalions of Regular Army and Intervention Forces by the end of December, bringing the total of these battalions to 18. In addition, six brigade headquarters and three division headquarters had been formed. Command and control mechanisms within the Army had improved, with one division establishing a command post in Fallujah to assist in the command and control of Iraqi forces which were operating under the operational control of the Multi-National Force. The total number in those 18 battalions and higher headquarters totaled 9,660, indicating that a number of units were operating at low strength. The Ministry of Defense had implemented a system to recruit and train former Army soldiers, and the first replacements from that pool began flowing into units by the last week of December.

This could prove to be a viable replacement system, but it is too early to make a firm prediction on its effectiveness. The goal was to have 27 battalions (18,900 men) ready for the Iraqi elections at the end of January. Due to infrastructure delays at two separate locations, the training of five battalions of the Regular Army was delayed two to four weeks. These five battalions are now slated to complete their initial training in February.

The training and equipment effort also began to go beyond infantry units, and a mechanized brigade was being created. It will consist of 50 T-55 tanks, 48 BMP-1s, 57 MTLBs, and 36 Spartans. Known as the 1st Mechanized Brigade, 259 soldiers of the first battalion are in training. These men will be trained to handle 10 MTLBs in the near future. There are plans for additional battalions, but the goal is to have the one battalion ready for the elections.

Major progress was made in the construction and repair of military facilities. More than one billion dollars had been spent or was under contract in this effort by October 2004. There was a joint command headquarters operating and Iraqi military officials regarded it as a high status appointment. Five major bases for brigade-size forces, to include three with divisional headquarters, had been built. On the border, 41 forts were completed, including 27 in the north. Ultimately, nearly 300 should be up and running.

The Iraqis had developed a concept for their own training command, which would be modeled on a NATO-developed design. That command will eventually oversee seven

basic training centers, several branch training centers, officer military Academies, and other officer professional development schools to include a staff college.

Manning, Training, and Equipment of the Overall Mix of Iraqi Forces by Major Force Element

Total active strength also increased. While the US Government continued to provide only limited details as to the progress made in training and equipment, and provided no breakouts on the number and adequacy of bases and facilities, the Department of Defense did report enough data on Iraqi manpower, training and equipment as of late September 2004 to provide the quantitative breakout shown in Figure 1.3.²⁰

Figure 1.3

Iraq Manpower, Training and Equipment as of September 22, 2004

<u>Service</u>	<u>Manning</u>		<u>Training</u>		
	Required	Actual	Untrained	In Training	Trained
Army	27,000	12,699	0	7,910	4,789
National Guard	61,904	41,461	0	2,189	39,272
Iraqi Intervention Force	6,584	7,417	0	5,489	1,928
Iraqi Special Ops Forces	1,967	651	0	75	576
Air Force	502	182	0	39	143
Coastal Defense Force	409	412	0	130	282
Total	98,366	62,822	0	15,832	46,990

	<u>Weapons</u>		<u>Vehicles</u>		<u>Communications</u>		<u>Body Armor</u>	
	Required	On-Hand	Required	On-Hand	Required	On-Hand	Required	On-Hand
Army	23,606	15,432	2,298	1,768	3,596	1,021	20,949	6,137
National Guard	68,760	37,636	2,142	727	11,209	427	62,032	23,320
Iraqi Intervention Force	8,850	3,300	583	152	1,789	1,583	6,584	2,741
Iraqi Special Ops Forces	1,898	1,274	180	67	1,212	115	1,620	605
Air Force	383	0	34	4	21	0	502	0
Coastal Defense Force	486	12	15	15	156	1	409	0
Total	103,983	57,654	5,252	2,733	17,983	3,147	92,096	32,803

These data reflect ongoing progress, but they also highlight problems in Iraqi forces as of September 2004:

- The manpower totals do not reflect the fact 25-33% of men were on leave or in training at any given time. Many men are in units deployed a considerable distance from their home, and must travel to give their families their pay, and deal with family issues.
- Figures for training have somewhat uncertain meanings since they include all men trained or in training, but their training was sometimes limited or did not prepare them for demanding aspects of their mission. At the same time, US experts involved in the training process feel that the numbers reported as “trained” do indicate that those counted have completed their initial training and were equipped sufficiently to conduct security operations. For many of those reported, the level of their training also far exceeded basic training. Some had already participated in combat, to include those in the National Guard. Although National Guard initial training is only three weeks, Coalition units work very closely with many National Guard units to develop their capabilities. The short initial training of these units was not, in many cases, a good indicator of their capabilities.
- Total armed forces had 55% of weapons authorized for prior force structure, half of authorized total of 4,421 vehicles, 28% of communications, and 46% of body armor
- The weapons data shown were for small arms and crew served weapons, and do not reflect Iraqi and US plans to create heavier forces with armor.
- Some armor was being delivered; including at least 35 reconditioned Iraqi tanks, AFVS, and APC and 50 armored cars from the UAE.
- Hoped to get armor for more Iraqi mechanized units from Jordan and UAE.
- DoD stated totals for communications equipment totals were misleading, because: “Some radios are on-hand, but they are interim capability only.” US advisors feel that civilian and other radios bought as part of CERP program are adequate, and communications are much better than statistics show.

The Army had 12,699 actives trained or in training of 27,000 man-authorized forces, and its manpower, equipment, and training effort can be summarized as follows:

- Of active strength, 4,789 are defined as trained (3 weeks for former military and 8 weeks for new recruits; the vast majority go through the 8 week course). This total was roughly 18% of authorized strength and 38% of men actually on duty.
- Equipment holdings, as of mid-September, were 65% of authorized weapons, 77% of vehicles, 29% of communications, and 30% of body armor
- Training sufficiently limited so new forces normally need 6-8 weeks of working with US forces. There were exceptions where units were rapidly formed out of experienced army personnel and fought well.
- Iraqi commandos had proven to be a well-trained and effective source of manpower.

The Iraqi National Guard was Iraq’s largest force, but most of it was not a “combat ready” force to fight insurgent battles on its own. Its status can be summarized as follows.

- 41,461 actives vs. requirement for 61,904. Claims that 39,272 are trained and 2,189 are in training ignored the fact basic training is limited and generally does not prepare most forces for demanding counterinsurgency and counterterrorism missions. At the same time, follow on training with Coalition forces does prepare them for such operations, and many units gain experience by conducting “framework operations,” which do play a significant role in the counterinsurgency conflict.
- There were some effective, combat ready elements.

- 40 of 44 National Guard Battalions operating with Coalition forces throughout country. All except those in Fallujah-Ramadi area were carrying out joint operations with Coalition on daily basis.
- Equipment holdings, as of mid-September, are 55% of authorized weapons, 34% of vehicles, 4% of communications, and 38% of body armor.

The Iraqi Intervention Force had 7,417 men active for a force with an authorized strength of only 6,584:

- DoD reported that 29% (of authorized strength) had been trained in the 14-week initial training program.
- Equipment was 37% of authorized weapons, 26% of vehicles, 86% of communications, and 41% of body armor, indicating that all of those trained had been equipped.
- The creation of such specialized counterterrorism/counterinsurgency elements was underway, and by September, some of these units had conducted operations with Coalition forces in Najaf.

Iraqi Special Operations Forces had 651 men active for a force with an authorized strength of 1,967:

- DoD reports that 88% of actives have some training, and that 29% of the fully authorized force is trained and fielded. This force will grow once the conditions for doing so are in place and properly set.
- Equipment is 67% of authorized weapons, 37% of vehicles, 10% of communications, and 37% of body armor, indicating that equipment levels were sufficient for those who were trained and conducting operations with the exception of communications. Interim communications (which often refers to equipment provided by Coalition forces) were available when required.
- The creation of such specialized counterterrorism/counterinsurgency elements is underway. This force was more combat experienced and proven than any other force in Iraqi service.

The Iraqi Air Force and Coastal Defense Force were only token forces. The Air Force then had 0% of authorized weapons, 12% of vehicles, 0% of communications, 0% of body armor.

Equipment Holdings

The data summarized in Figure 1.3 reflected major progress since the spring of 2004, but also revealed massive shortfalls in weapons, vehicles, communications, and body armor relative to the planned requirement. They showed Iraqi forces only had about 40% of their minimum weapons needs, less than one-third of the minimum number of vehicles, about 25% of the necessary communications gear, and about 25% of the necessary body armor.

At the same time, the data summarized in Figure 1.3 did reflect the fact that the equipment flow had generally kept pace with the schedule to train Iraqi Security Forces. Individuals and units had the equipment they needed to continue their collective (unit-level) training and conduct security operations in an environment where they were needed.

- The regular military had about two-thirds of the minimum requirements for weapons, about half the necessary vehicles, 20% of the necessary body armor. All of this equipment was new or reconditioned. The Iraqis did complain about the ambulances provided in the fall of 2004, but MNSTC-I has acquired or ordered new ambulances to replace those that were judged unsatisfactory.

- The new Iraqi Intervention Force and Iraqi Special Operations Force was still in development. However, the Iraqi Intervention Force Brigade that had completed training was equipped, and the Iraqi Special Forces soldiers who were conducting actual operations were equipped. Equipment was on order for the remainder, evident by the fact that all three brigades of the IIF are now trained and equipped.
- The air force and coastal defense force were still hollow forces with little meaningful capability. There were, however, equipment plans for both forces, and both forces were developing initial capabilities in September.
- The security forces and police had about 40% of their minimum weapons requirements, and a third of their authorized vehicles. They have only about 25% of the necessary body armor, and their crippling communications shortfalls are even worse than that of the Iraqi military.
- The new Civil Intervention Force and Emergency Response Unit, which were key elements in the counterinsurgency plans developed by Allawi, were just beginning to form. Both of these forces were conceived by the Coalition between April and June. The Civil Intervention Force had not yet begun training. The Emergency Response Unit had started training with roughly 25% of the force having completed initial training and conducting operations.

These figures again confirm the fact that far too many Iraqis were being exposed to insurgent and terrorist attack without having the weapons and protection they needed to perform their missions and survive. They do reflect some positive trends, but it is not possible to put them in perspective.

Unfortunately, the data the US has made public on Iraqi force developments since September have been censored to the point where they show deliveries, but do not provide any picture of how well they meet actual requirements. As a result, they do not indicate in any detail whether the serious problems in equipment deliveries that existed as of early September are being corrected. All unclassified equipment delivery data have been deleted from US reporting, although US experts state that reporting on “trained and equipped personnel/units” does refer to trained individuals and units that were adequately equipped to perform security operations.

Iraqi Minister of Defense Briefing — September 22, 2004

The US was not the only source of information on the problems in the force development effort. The Iraqi Minister of Defense gave a briefing in Washington on September 22 where he discussed problems that he perceived in the training and equipment effort. He did note that some \$1.7 billion had been spent to augment the Iraqi forces. Additionally, he highlighted the fact that Iraqi pilots were beginning to use two Seeker light reconnaissance aircraft to cover the border areas and that it was the first role the Iraqi Air Force had played.

He also stated, however, that the police and Border Enforcement forces were corrupt, frequently do not show up for work, and have many loyalty issues. The minister labelled them “70,000 men filled with corruption.” It was indicated that the National Guard and Army had elements with the same problems and that some would be purged due to their loyalty to Sadr or their unwillingness to fight. The minister declared that past training efforts had failed to screen and ensure loyalty.

Furthermore, the minister highlighted the fact that the current vehicle pool for the military and security forces consisted mostly of 3,000 vehicles transferred from former civilian ministries like Agriculture. Problems with equipment extend to the weaponry the

Iraqi security forces currently employ. They lack armor and heavy weaponry. The minister attributed this largely to the CPA's fear that the weapons would be turned over to hostile forces.

Resources as of September and October

The data on US expenditures to support the force development effort presented in US reporting on the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Program (IRRP) as of October 2004, indicated that the US had dispersed \$798 million for its Security and Law Enforcement Program at a rate of only \$8 million a week.²¹ It should be noted, however, that the lag, between the receipt of goods or services and payment for them is sometimes months long, and affects the time when the payment actually shows up in the accounting system. These totals also ignore expenditures made under the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI).

The true total for such spending was higher, because the figures just quoted only cover the FY2004 program. Some \$51.2 million had previously been allocated to the Iraqi army in PL-108-11 April 2003. At the urging of the US Embassy, an additional \$1,808.6 million out of the FY2004 total funding for IIRP was reprogrammed to "security and law enforcement" in September 2004.

Unfortunately, the way in which the US government has reported on such aid expenditures in Iraq is so that it is difficult to reconcile the various reports coming out of the Department of Defense and Department of State.²² For example, the Inspector General of the CPA reported on October 30, 2004 that, "As of March 2004, the US had obligated about \$58.5 billion to stabilize the security situation in Iraq: About \$57.3 billion for the US military operations and \$1.2 billion for Iraqi security forces."

To put such reports in broader perspective, the original program level for all aspects of publicly identified security expenditures in the \$18.4 billion FY2004 aid program was \$3,235 million. This was raised to a \$5,045 million program for the FY2004 fiscal year because of reprogramming on September 30, 2004. (\$1,808.6 million was reprogrammed to "security and law enforcement")

In any case, these figures illustrate the slow pace of the US effort to create effective Iraqi forces at the time, although they also reflect the disparity between a large Coalition force presence in Iraq and the initial buildup of Iraqi Security Forces, and the problems in trying to rapidly create effective Iraqi forces in a country with poor infrastructure, limited administrative capabilities, and wracked by an insurgency.

VII. The Status of Iraqi Forces in November 2004

The data the US has made public on Iraqi force development since September 2004 have been cut back to the point where they no longer indicate whether the problems in equipment delays that existed as of early September are being corrected. All equipment delivery data have been deleted from the report. The same is true of detailed data on trained manpower. All breakouts have been eliminated from public US reporting from the Embassy, Department of Defense, and Department of State. The only heading in the Weekly Status Report is now "Trained/On-Hand." This figure has some value, however, since it reflects the trained manpower that remains on duty, to avoid the problem of reporting those who were trained and are not on duty for whatever reason.

Numbers of Active, Trained/Equipped/Authorized Iraqi Military, Security, and Police Forces as of Late November 2004

Some useful data are available from the Coalition training command in Iraq, MNSTC-I, although such data do not provide the detail needed to distinguish between the total number of men trained and equipped, and what are sometimes much smaller numbers of men with fully adequate training and equipment for counterinsurgency and combat missions, and do not reflect the rapidly increasing size of the cadres of fully trained officers and NCOs.

These data are show the state of Iraqi progress as of November 18, 2004, and are summarized in Figure 1.4 below.²³

Figure 1.4
Iraqi Military and Security Forces as of 11/18/2004

<u>Force element</u>	<u>Current strength</u>	<u>On Duty, Trained And Equipped</u>	<u>Total Authorized</u>
Police	87,133	47,342	135,000
Special Police Commando Battalions	2,019	900	2,019
Border Enforcement	16,237	14,593	29,360
Highway Patrol	925	370	6,300
Bureau of Dignitary Protection	484	484	500
Emergency Response Force	168	168	270
Civil Intervention Force	1,091	1,091	3,720
National Guard*	43,318	41,409	61,904 (for 65 battalions)
Special Operations Force	604	590	1,967
Intervention Force	6,584	1,816	6,859
Army	16,634	4,507	27,000
Air Force	206	167	502
Coastal Defense Force	409	536	582
TOTAL	175,812	113,437	271,681
<i>Military Forces</i>	<i>(24,437)</i>	<i>(7,080)</i>	<i>(36,328)</i>
<i>Security Forces</i>	<i>(151,375)</i>	<i>(106,357)</i>	<i>(235,353)</i>

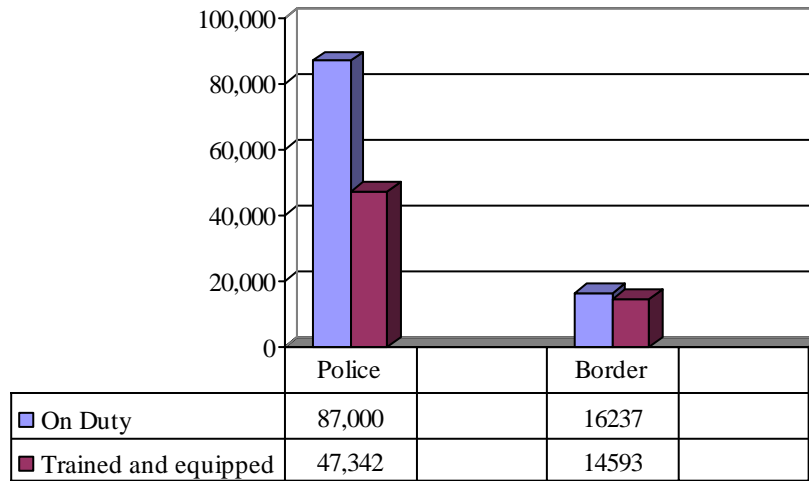
**Data from MNSTC-I are not clear. Data in parenthesis are taken from US Embassy Weekly Status Report of November 3, 2004.*

While the Iraqi security and military forces continue to experience problems with retention and performance, these totals do reflect significant further progress since September 2004.

On Duty Versus Trained and Equipped

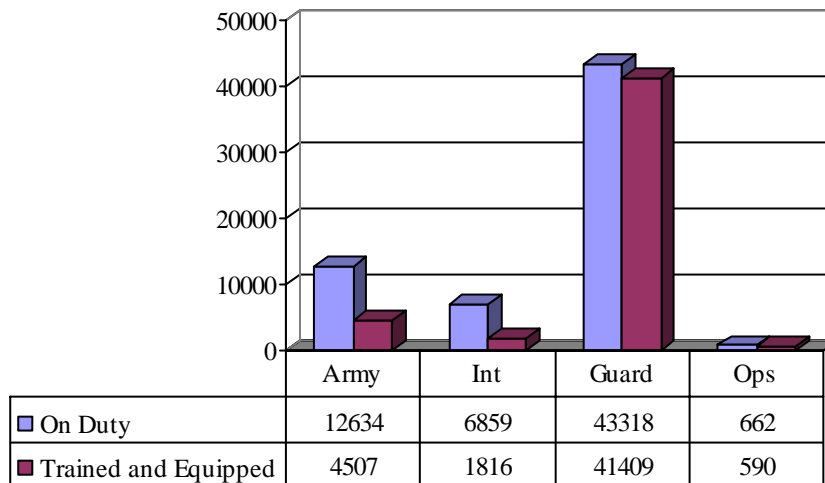
Graphic comparisons may make it easier to understand this level of progress. Figure 1.5 shows the numbers of police and Border Enforcement personnel on duty, and how many of those on duty were reported to be “trained and equipped” as of November 18, 2004. Figure 1.6 shows the numbers of special operations, Intervention Force, and conventional army troops who are on duty and how many of those on duty that are fully trained and equipped as of November 18, 2004.

Figure 1.5
Iraqi Security Forces—Manning vs. Trained/Equipped as of 11/18/04



Source: MNSTC-I answer to inquiry November 2004. “Border” includes the entire Border Enforcement branch.

Figure 1.6
Iraqi Armed Forces—Manning vs. Trained/Equipped as of 11/18/04



Source: MNSTC-I answer to November 2004 inquiry. “Int” represents the military Intervention Force. “Ops” represents Special Operations Forces.

Lack of Meaningful Equipment Reporting

As noted earlier, data on the equipment effort since September 2004 are nearly nonexistent. The US military, however, did release a general statement on the equipment delivered to the Iraqi security forces in November 2004. The military reported

distributing 5,400 Kalashnikov rifles, 16,000 sets of body armor, 1,900 9 mm pistols, approximately 1,000 machine guns, 44 armored personnel carriers, and four T-55 tanks. Exactly which forces received what armaments was not made clear.²⁴

In another statement on November 13, 2004, MNSTC-I indicated that it had delivered 2,919 AK-47 assault rifles, 4,210 helmets, 107 PKM machineguns, 832 RPK machineguns, 7,850 sets of body armor, 11,000 field jackets, 50 Glock pistols, 100,000 RPK/PKM machinegun rounds, 2,400 9mm pistol rounds, 300,000 AK-47 rounds, 600 tactical vests, 30 computers, 300 kneepads, 50 radios, 15,763 pairs of running shoes, 20 holsters, 20 Walther 9mm pistols, 1,300 army t-shirts, and 19,782 desert combat uniforms since November 1.²⁵

These delivery rates seem to be far higher than the rates during the spring, summer, and early fall of 2004.

Key Iraqi Force Components

The US military team in MNSTC-I also provided useful data on the structure and type of training and equipment in key elements of the emerging Iraqi forces in November 2004 that has remained current as of late December 2004:²⁶

- ***Special Police Commando Battalions:*** The Special Police Commando Battalions represent the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's strike-force capability. The commandos – ultimately to be comprised of six full battalions – are highly vetted Iraqi officers and rank-and-file servicemen largely made up of prior service Special Forces professionals and other skilled servicemen with specialty unit experience.

All members of the unit are chosen based on loyalty to Iraq and its new democratic model. The unit focuses primarily on building raid operations, counter-terrorist missions including anti-airplane hijacker, kidnapping and other similar missions.

The force resembles more a paramilitary army-type force complete with heavy weapons, rocket-propelled grenades, AK-47 assault rifles, mortars, and 9mm Glock pistols. The commando battalions give the MOI a high-end strike force capability similar to Special Forces units and was quickly stood up to capitalize on previously existing skill sets in Iraq.

- ***Iraqi Police Service Emergency Response Unit:*** An elite 270-man team trained to respond to national-level law enforcement emergencies. Team members undergo a robust eight-week specialized training course spawned from the current wave of anti-Iraqi forces actions.

The mission of the emergency response unit is to provide a national, high-end, rapid-response law enforcement tactical unit responsible for high-risk search, arrest, hostage-rescue, and crisis response operations. The emergency response unit is the predominant force for national-level incidents calling for a DELTA/SWAT capability and will only be used in extreme situations by local and national authorities.

The \$64.5 million effort is part of a larger mission to create a nationwide law enforcement investigative and special operations capability within the Iraqi Ministry of Interior to counter terrorism and large-scale civil disobedience and insurgencies throughout Iraq. The capability will eventually include a Counterterrorism Investigative Unit and Special Operations Unit. Volunteers for the force must first complete the standard eight-week basic training course or three-week transition integration program course for prior service officers before entering the specialized emergency response unit training modeled after the U.S. State Department's Anti-Terrorism Assistance and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives' training programs.

Of the total force, 235 eligible candidates received rigorous instruction based on the Anti-Terrorism Assistance Crisis Response Team training program while the balance of 35 recruits are

part of the Special Operations Explosive Ordinance Team, based on the State Department's Anti-Terrorism Assistance Explosive Incident Countermeasures training course.

Team members receive instruction on terrorist incidents, kidnappings, hostage negotiations, explosive ordnance, high-risk searches, high-risk assets, weapons of mass destruction, and other national-level law enforcement emergencies. Officers also have an opportunity to receive supplementary training in hostage negotiation, emergency medical procedures, and counterterrorism task force coordination.

- *Iraqi Intervention Forces:* The Iraqi Intervention Force is the counter-insurgency wing of the Iraqi army. Ultimately to be comprised of nine battalions, organized into three brigades, forces negotiate the standard eight-week basic training all Iraqi soldiers go through learning basic soldiering skills such as weapons, drill and ceremony,

Soldier discipline, and physical training skills: After graduation, IIF battalions spend several weeks and months in intensive “military operations in urban terrain” follow-on training – otherwise known as “MOUT” training. In this period, soldiers work through instruction in the art of street fighting and building clearing operations typical to anti-insurgent operations in cities and towns. Units work in close coordination with other IA battalions and will be completely stood-up to the nine-battalion force by early 2005.

- *Iraqi Special Operations Force:* The Iraqi Special Operations Force – the Iraqi Armed Forces’ high-end strike force resembling U.S. Special Forces units – continues training and operations in the country with multinational force assistance.

Consisting of two trained battalions, including the 36th Commando Battalion – an infantry-type strike force – and the Iraqi Counterterrorism Battalion, the force has been involved in many operations throughout the country fighting anti-Iraqi forces with great distinction while continuing the stand-up effort of the unit. The force will add a third “support” battalion to its ranks in the coming months. Training is conducted at an undisclosed location.

“Selection” for the force begins in the Iraqi National Guard and Iraqi army units already operating in the country, much like typical multinational Special Forces’ recruiting efforts in their own countries. Outstanding recruits successfully negotiating the vetting process, including exhaustive background checks, skill evaluations, and unit evaluations along with literacy, psychological, and physical tests, are run through various team-building and physical events meant to lean down the recruit pool. The selection process runs roughly 10 to 14 days.

The Iraqi Special Forces undergo intense physical, land navigation, small-unit tactics, live-fire, unconventional warfare operations, direct action operations, airmobile operations, counterterrorism, survival, evasion, resistance, and escape training. Special Forces soldiers are an army’s unconventional warfare experts, possessing a broad range of operational skills. The unit was formed based on a conversation between the Prime Minister Ayad Allawi and multinational force personnel to give the Iraqi Armed Forces a high-end strike force in its ongoing security mission against anti-Iraqi forces operating in the country.

- *Iraqi Army:* Iraqi army soldiers negotiate the standard eight-weeks of basic training including basic soldiering skills instruction in weapons, drill and ceremony, soldier discipline, and physical training. Units negotiate advanced follow-on infantry, land navigation, and other operational training after graduation before deployment.

The Iraqi army will ultimately be comprised of 27 battalions of infantry – including nine special Iraqi Intervention Force battalions – and three transportation battalions. The army will be organized into nine brigades and three divisions. The bulk of the force is slated to be in place by early 2005. Plans to create heavier and better armored forces are still in flux, but there are now 259 soldiers in the 1st Mechanized Brigade, preparing to train with 10 MTLB armored personnel carriers. These vehicles were drawn from a pool of over 300 armored vehicles that the Iraqis intend to make ready as the unit grows.

- *Iraqi Coastal Defense Force:* The Iraqi Coastal Defense Force is the Iraqi Armed Forces’ naval component. Ultimately to number just more than 400 servicemen, the force also includes a land-

based Coastal Defense Regiment resembling western-type "Marine" infantry forces. Land and sea based forces negotiate IAF eight-week basic training courses before moving on to follow-on training and sea training for the boat crews.

Boat crews learn the basics in seamanship before moving on to instruction in advanced seamanship, towing, gunnery, sea rescue, chart reading, navigation, anti-smuggling, operations, and rigid inflatable boat integration and small boat drill instruction. Training is put in the context of a democratically based maritime sea force.

Primary duties include protecting the country's roughly 50-mile coastline from smuggling and foreign fighter infiltration operations as well as the port assets at Umm Qasr in Southern Iraq and oil assets in the Persian Gulf. The force patrols out to the 12-mile international water boundary in the Persian Gulf with five 27-meter long Chinese-made patrol boats and various other support craft.

- *Iraqi Air Force:* The Iraqi Air Force has begun to fly light reconnaissance missions.. All Iraqi Air Force pilots and maintenance personnel negotiate comprehensive one to four-month "conversion courses" largely comprised of familiarization instruction. The Iraqi Air Force is not yet assigned C-130s, but does have plans to obtain them.

The training brings air force recruits up to speed on current Iraqi Air Force aircraft as well as serving to augment prior skills. The air force actively recruits from prior-service personnel pools in the country – officially sending personnel to training after the Iraqi Ministry of Defense's vetting and screening process clears recruits for duty. Training is almost entirely conducted in the United Arab Emirates and Jordan by multinational force partners. After "conversion course" training is completed, trainees go to assigned squadrons in Iraq for follow-on training comprised of advanced instruction and specific operational training.

The Iraqi Air Force is initially slated as a six-squadron force of various-make light reconnaissance aircraft and various support aircraft including C-130 transport planes and other helicopter craft with operations mainly centered on supporting Iraqi Security Force operations on the ground, infrastructure reconnaissance, and border security missions. The majority of the force is scheduled to be operational by Fall 2005.

VIII. The Run Up to Elections: Iraqi Security and Military Forces in December 2004 and January 2005

Iraqi military and security forces face a crucial period in the run up to the national elections on January 30th. Providing enough security for a vote that is seen as legitimate will be the responsibility, especially at the polling stations, of the Iraqi forces.

Manning

Figures 1.7 through 1.10 illustrate the status of the Iraqi security and military forces as of December 6, 2004. Coalition reporting to the UN Security Council on December 6 provides a better picture of the difference between trained Iraqi security and military forces from the untrained than the Iraq Weekly Status Reports, issued by the Department of State, that have been issued since September 2004.

- Figure 1.7 shows the numbers of National Guard, army, and special operations forces that are trained or on hand compared to the numbers that are required.
- Figure 1.8 shows the number of police and Border Enforcement personnel that are trained or on hand compared to the numbers that are required. It is important to note that those troops listed as trained/on hand are not all fully trained or equipped. Despite repeated assaults on police stations and National Guard posts, and attacks on officers and Guardsmen headed home on leave, the total numbers of police and National Guardsmen have increased slightly. The numbers for the army, special operations, and Border Enforcement, however, have decreased.
- Figures 1.9 and 1.10 show the composition of the Iraqi military and security forces as of December 6, 2004. The military is overwhelmingly dominated by National Guardsmen while police make up the largest proportion of the security forces. It takes time to order equipment, receive it, distribute it to large numbers of forces going through training, train units, and to provide bases for units that have completed training. The fact remains, however, that the slow beginnings in trying to create effective Iraqi forces mean that the progress in the manning of both the military and security forces remains well below the required strength necessary to meet the mission need, and similar problems exist in terms of a force quality.

It is also important to remember that all of the manpower numbers reported in this analysis disguise several important problems. Recruit quality remains a problem, as does the quality of the output of those training courses that accept low-grade entrants. Facilities, training, and equipment have improved, but many recruits have limited literacy, no experience with vehicles and modern technology, and little experience with disciplined or structured work experience. The level of education and work experience Iraq had before the Iran-Iraq War is long gone, and even many recruits with military backgrounds under the regime of Saddam Hussein were loosely organized garrison forces, conscripted into service, and with little meaningful operational experience.

The facts of day-to-day life in Iraq create additional difficulties. Iraqis live in a cash economy and one where forces must visit their families to transfer money and provide services that simply are not as yet available at a local level. Families are vulnerable and subject to intimidation in many areas. This often leads units to have 10-15% of their manpower outside the unit.

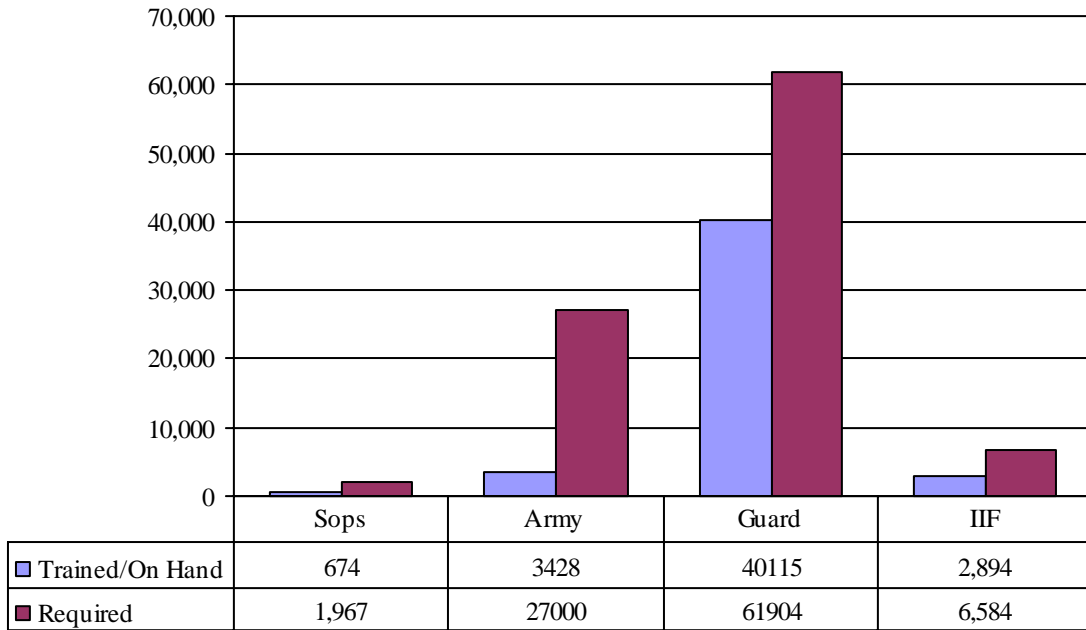
Motivation is a major problem. From the start, recruiting has relied heavily on the fact so many young men cannot find any other job, and increasingly on the fact that aid projects in high threat areas are no safer. This inevitably means much of the recruitment base has

a limited incentive to fight or take high risks, and this is almost inevitable where the proper leadership, facilities, equipment, training and reinforcement capabilities are lacking. Some insurgents and terrorists may seek martyrdom. The men that the Iraqi Interim Government and US have recruited do not and should not. When the system fails the man, the man cannot be blamed for failing the system.

The ethnic and religious makeup of the Iraqi military and security forces is an additional concern. The stated US goal is to create an army that is at least 30% comprised of Sunni Muslims, yet reports indicate that Shi'ites and Kurds did much of the fighting in 2004.²⁷ As of right now, the current ethnic and religious mix of the Iraqi forces is unknown. It is important to create religiously and ethnically diverse forces to prevent one religion or group from feeling persecuted by the others.

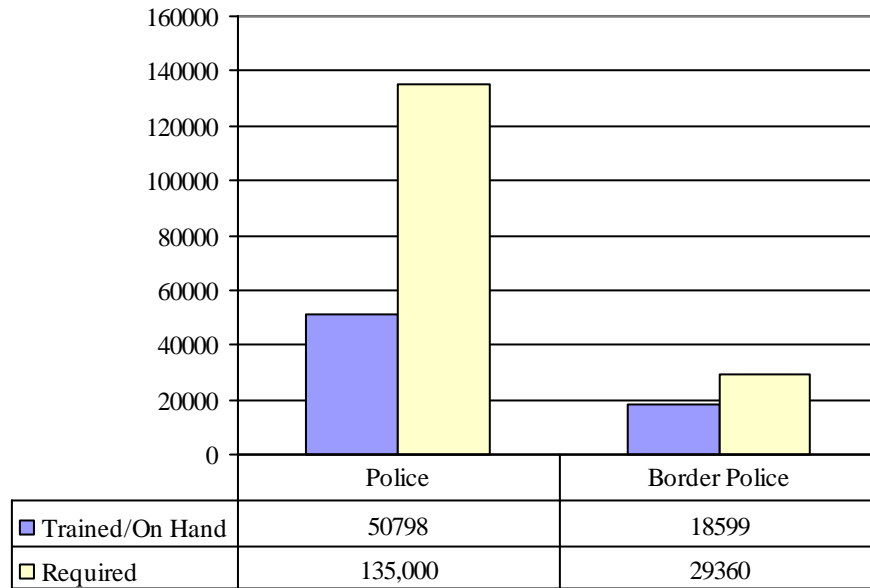
The trends reflected in these figures and those in the next chapter also reflect the reality that some manpower has to be let go or expelled at the same time the force is built up. Far too many men were recruited at all ranks during the first year of occupation that lacked the proper physical capabilities, ability to absorb training, and sometimes literacy. Many were poorly vetted or recruited for political purposes. These men now have to be phased out or dismissed, sometimes including senior officers. As a result, the build up of manpower is not as continuous as the figures in this report might imply.

Figure 1.7
Iraqi Military Forces Trained/On Hand vs. Required as of 12/06/04



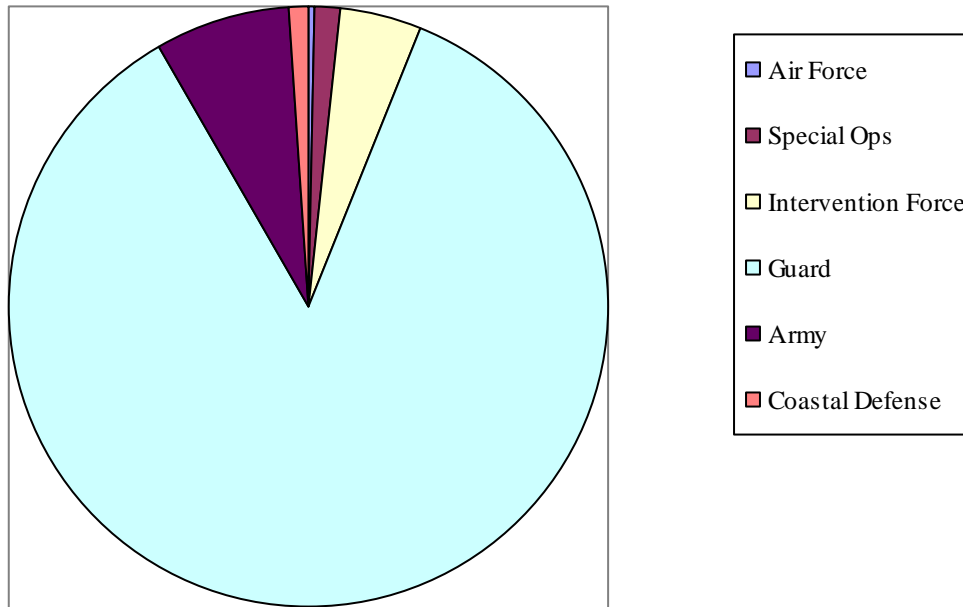
Source: 6 December 2004 report by the United States on behalf of the Multinational Force pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546. The “IIF”, or Iraqi intervention Force numbers, are taken from the 01 December 2004 Iraq Weekly Status Update available at www.defendamerica.mil.

Figure 1.8
Iraqi Security Forces Trained/On Hand vs. Required as of 12/06/04



* Source: 6 December 2004 report by the United States on behalf of the Multinational Force pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546.

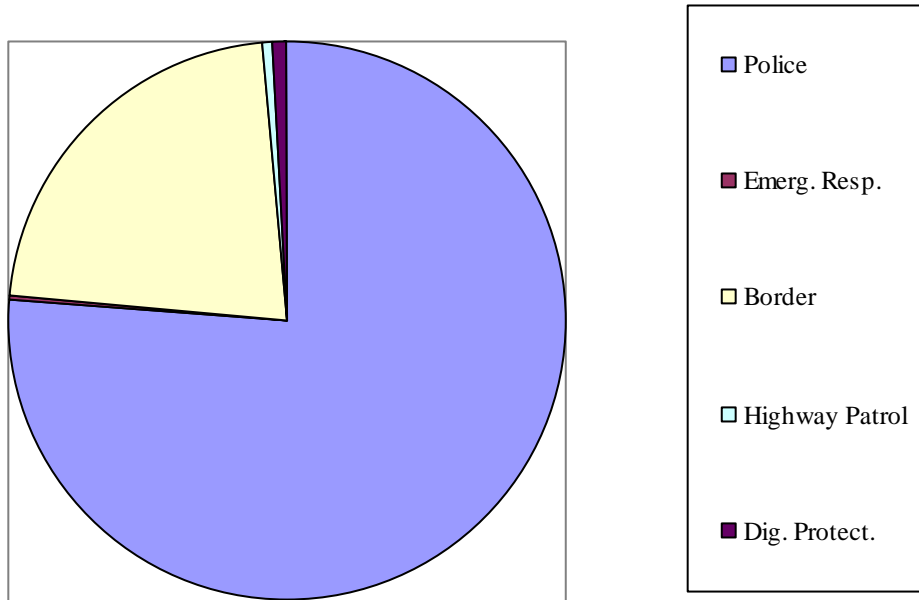
Figure 1.9
Iraqi Military Forces by Proportion as of 12/06/04



Air Force	Special Ops	Intervention Force	Guard	Army	Coastal Defense
167	674	2062	40115	3428	484

Source: 6 December 2004 report by the United States on behalf of the Multinational Force pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546.

Figure 1.10
Iraqi Security Forces by Proportion as of 12/06/04



Police	Emergency Response	Border Patrol	Highway Patrol	Dignitary Protection
43627	168	14593	370	484

Source: 6 December 2004 report by the United States on behalf of the Multinational Force pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546. These numbers include those on hand. The report to the UN did not include numbers for the Highway Patrol and Dignitary Protection Service. These numbers were taken from the 1 December 2004 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil. 'Emerg. Resp.' stands for Emergency Response Unit. 'Dig. Protect' stands for the Dignitary Protection Service.

Operational Readiness at the End of 2004

Almost inevitably, the various insurgent groups have made Iraqi forces more and more of a target as they have increased in strength and have come to play a larger role in securing Iraq. Their evolving tactics have been discussed in Chapter IV, and Appendix A provides a detailed chronology of Iraqi clashes with insurgents since June 2004. It is all too clear that insurgent are making every effort to prevent and break up the successful development of Iraqi military, security, and police forces.

This chronology also shows that there have been many occasions on which various Iraqi forces have failed to perform their missions both as a result of these insurgent attacks, a lack of leadership and integrity on the part of some Iraqi officers, and a lack of experience and dedication on the part of other ranks.

The failure of the Iraqi police forces in Mosul during and after the battle of Fallujah in November 2004, and the need to dismiss their commander Brigadier General Mohammed Keri Barhawi is only one example of such problems.²⁸ Nearly 75% of some 4,000 Iraqi forces deserted when insurgents attacked on November 12, 2004, in the midst of the US-Iraqi attack on insurgents in Fallujah. The ranks of Iraqi National Guard units dropped from 1,100 to 300 men in a matter of hours, and two companies – some 200 men – abandoned all of their equipment. The 106th Iraqi National Guard Battalion did well, but the 307th Battalion virtually disintegrated.²⁹

Equally disturbing, Gen. Babakir Shawkat Zebari, the top Iraqi general, refused to admit the scope of the problem at Fallujah. On December 26, 2004, he stated, “Not a single soldier ran away from the battlefield [in Fallujah]. It was not a difficult battle. Fallujah was cleaned and the number of our martyrs [or fatalities] was only seven.”³⁰ To not recognize problems and setbacks within the Iraqi security and military forces compounds the problem by failing to learn from past mistakes.

Somewhat similar failures occurred in Samarra, although at a much lower level. Some 2,000 Iraqi troops did join the US forces fighting to retake the city in October 2004, but only after some 300 men out of a 750-man battalion deserted before the fighting even began.³¹

At the same time, Iraqi forces are showing that they can be effective when they have the proper leadership, organization, training, equipment, and facilities. Some have fought well in demanding battles and engagements, and even less combat-capable forces like the police are taking hold in many areas.

The same chronologies in Appendix A, and various reports from the media and MNSTC-I, reflect significant successes and progress during the period between September and December 2004:

- The MNSTC-I began deploying five mobile training teams to each of the MNF's six subordinate commands on November 28, to assist in training Iraqi brigade and division senior staff officers. All trainers were formerly instructors at the US Army Command and General Staff College or Combined Arms Service Staff School.
- The Iraqi Army's 1st Mechanized Brigade received another six T-55 heavy tanks and 27 multi-purpose armored vehicles (MTLBs), which are personnel carriers with heavy machine guns, at the Taji Military Training Base north of Baghdad on December 6, 2004. It now has 10 T-55s and 37 MTLBs, and will be steadily expanded to include refurbished T-72s, which will replace the current T-55s. The brigade is scheduled to be operational by the summer of 2005. The brigade is being built up in three phases of roughly 1,000 men each, drawing on the manpower in Iraqi armored and mechanized units before the invasion. It will have all the capabilities of a full mechanized brigade, including infantry, armor, artillery, engineers, and logistics and support. The first phase is due to be complete before the end of 2004, the second by February 2005, and the final phase by May or June 2005.
- UAE donated Panhard M-3 armored vehicles to the Iraqi Army. (Jordan had previously donated over 80 APCs earlier in the year.
- As of December, MNSTC-I announced the mechanized brigade could grow to a full division. The present force development plans call for three infantry divisions plus various support battalions.
- The Iraqi Army began company level training with the Egyptian Army's 3rd Division, Northern Command at the Mubarak City training facility near Alexandria.

- Two battalions from the Iraqi Intervention Force conducted operations in Najaf. These same two battalions plus another conducted effective combat operations in Fallujah together with two regular battalions, an Army Commando Battalion, a Police Emergency Response Unit, and Shewani Special Forces trained by 1st MEF. These forces constituted 2,700 Iraqi's at their peak.
- Iraqi security forces formally assumed local control of security operations in Najaf Province on November 30, 2004.
- The Army had a total of 18 battalions (Regular Army and Intervention Force) that had completed initial training. Although most of these were not at full strength, many soldiers in these units had fought effectively, and were "combat ready," with many being "combat proven." The Ministry of Defense had developed a "direct recruiting" program, whereby it was recruiting and training former soldiers with plans to integrate them into existing units to address manning shortfalls.
- Sixteen National Guard battalions conducted operations effectively at the company level or above, with a number conducting operations effectively at the battalion level. Many Iraqi National Guard (ING) units conducted combat operations. Current plans are to expand the National Guard from its previous authorized strength of 45 battalions and six brigades to 6 Division HQs, 21 Brigade Commanders, and 65 battalions.
- National Guard units were slated to begin advanced training in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) in January 2005, with the goal of creating 10 trained companies of 50 men each by the end of 2005.
- 72 men in the special Counterterrorism Task Force of the Special Forces graduated from a 12-week training course on December 3, 2004.
- Over 34,000 former police had been trained in the three-week Transition Integration Program. Over 18,000 police had been trained in the 8-week Academy program of instruction. Capacity at the 8-week academies in Jordan, Baghdad, and other regional academies was graduating nearly 3,000 new police per month and was poised to graduate over 4,000 per month by early March. The 8-week program was being taught at five different locations.
- The Iraqi Police Service graduated 1,423 officers from the eight-week course at the Basic Police Training course at the International Police Training Center in Amman, Jordan, on December 16, 2004, and 140 officers from four advanced courses at the Adnan Training facility on December 9th. (Prior service officers attend a three-week course.)
- The 8-week police curriculum had been revised so training would better prepare students for the environment in which they would operate, with increased training on survival skills in an insurgency environment, force protection, combatives, and shooting AK-47s as well as pistols. In addition, police stations were being hardened and additional equipment was being issued to police to make them more capable in their operating environment.
- The border forces also began to play a more active role. The numbers of trained border enforcement personnel reflect training done by major subordinate commands (divisions). Capabilities among border enforcement personnel varied widely. However, MNSTC-I established a centralized program of instruction for border personnel, presently at the Jordanian Police Academy with Dept. of Homeland Security instructors. They will move this instruction to Iraq in the near future. In addition, MNSTC-I has started to train some border personnel as units, and has deployed a small number of these to the border to conduct operations as units.
- By the end of December, the Coalition had trained and equipped six Public Order Battalions and three Special Police Battalions trained to operate with mechanized (wheeled) vehicles.
- MNSTC-I had also helped the Ministry of Interior (MoI) equip and employ Police Commando Brigades. These newly formed commando units are designed to provide a high-end police and counterinsurgency capability. These battalions successfully conducted offensive operations in Baghdad, Fallujah, Samarra, Mosul, North Babil, and other areas with favorable outcomes. The Coalition had provided equipment to one full Brigade and in mid-December was in the process of equipping a second full brigade, while a battalion of a planned third brigade was being formed.

- These forces have proved of great significance as have the newly trained Public Order Battalions, three of which had begun operations, and several emergency response units operating effectively at the provincial level.
- The Coalition had also trained, equipped, and helped to employ a small national-level Emergency Response Unit capable of conducting offensive counterinsurgency operations.
 - MNSTC-I also began training and equipping provincial level SWAT Teams that will be capable of providing backup support to police when under attack.
 - The Iraqi Air Force began to take delivery on light aircraft. These included a total of 7 Comp Air 7SL light reconnaissance aircraft, based at the Basra Air Base by December 2004. The Iraqi air force commenced operations 18 August 2004, with the flights of two SB7L-360 Seeker reconnaissance aircraft intended to protect infrastructure facilities and Iraq's borders. The SB7L-360 Seeker is a single-engine, two-man, high-visibility aircraft is fitted with high-resolution surveillance systems. It is capable of providing live observation feedback to ground forces and additionally carry digital video recording hardware and other reconnaissance technology. Their missions are coordinated with Iraqi and Coalition force efforts on the ground and will eventually include operations all over the country.
 - The Iraqi Military Academy had started operating again, with two pilot classes slated to graduate from two different locations in early January.

One key aspect of these developments is that they reflect the impact of MNSTC-I's growing emphasis on mission capability, leadership, and the creation of effective unit elements with a matching emphasis on unit integrity. This sometimes has meant opposing pressures from the US and Iraqi Interim Government to return to focus on numbers rather than quality that dominated much of the effort through the spring of 2003. As has been touched upon earlier, however, there is little point in sending poorly led, trained, and equipped forces out to die.

It is also important to stress that Iraqi forces cannot be blamed for many of their past failures, or for deserting or failing when they are not provided with the proper leadership, training, equipment, and US support. The time seems to be over when the US took advantage of the unemployment and economic chaos in much of Iraq to rush forward the mass recruitment of Iraq forces without giving them the basic tools they needed to be effective and survive. The Iraqi Interim Government and US must still live, however, with the inheritance from a wasted year.

Iraqi forces are also going to remain light and limited in numbers for some time to come. Even when they have all of the training, equipment, and facilities they need, the insurgents can pick the time and place to overwhelm them, intimidate, ambush, and sabotage. They will need Coalition armor, attack helicopters, air support and other forms of force protection and support as much as light US and other Coalition forces.

It is also clear that the Iraqi government is often emerging as a problem. It is not yet capable of unified and timely action in support of the Iraqi forces at the national, regional, and local level. Far too often, it tolerates ineffective or corrupt leaders for political purposes – a failure that kept incompetent police leadership in Mosul long after it was clear that it should be removed.

Equipment at the End of 2004

The US weekly status reports on Iraq no longer report equipment deliveries in terms of total numbers delivered to date or relative to total requirement. MSTC-I does, however,

report total equipment deliveries per month. It reported on December 5th that total deliveries for November 2004 included:

- 44 Panhard M3 armored personnel carriers, 4 T-55 heavy tanks, 19 MTLBs, and 4 Comp Air 7SL aircraft.
- More than 2 million RPK/PKM machine guns rounds, 1.2 million 9mm pistol rounds, 2.8 million AK-47 rounds, 450,000 12 gauge shotgun rounds, 999,000 5.6mm rounds, 48 shotguns, 1,000 9mm pistols, nearly 1,000 PKM and RPK machineguns, 1,150 smoke and riot grenades, 1,900 9mm Glock pistols, 5,400 AK-47 assault rifles, 20 Walther pistols, 78 rocket propelled grenade launchers, 16,000 sets of body armor, 7,400 helmets,
- Two 2-ton trucks, 14 ambulances, 10 GAZ heavy transport trucks, 15 Chevy trucks, 4 Dodge Durangos, 52 Chevy Lumina police sedans,
- 200 vehicle and handheld radios, 150 night vision goggles, some 11,000 field jackets, 3,000 cold weather jackets, 2,000 mattresses and beds, 40,000 desert combat uniforms, 11,000 pairs of running shoes, 300 kneepads, 600 tactical vests, 1,000 holsters, 9,500 t-shirts, 1,200 binoculars, 1,000 handcuff sets, 20 blunt trauma suits, 1,450 compasses, 132 GPS positioning systems, 800 "MAG" lights, 750 whistles, 4,150 hats, 344 first aid kits, 2,000 canteens, 1,500 police shirts, and 2,000 police uniforms.³²

If one looks at total deliveries between July 1 and December 1, 2004, they included more than 69 million rounds of ammunition with another 148 million rounds stored in twelve ammunition sites throughout Iraq. They also included 70,000 pistols, 49,000 AK-47s, 1,700 heavy PKM machine guns, 84,700 sets of body armor, 5,700 vehicles, 54,000 helmets, and 20,000 radios.³³

Some of these figures may seem mundane and trivial, but a careful reading shows a far more rapid rate of delivery does seem to be taking place, and that the mix of equipment reflects a considerably better effort to meet the overall needs of Iraqi forces. The problem is that there is no way to note prior shortfalls, ongoing losses, or total current needs.

What is less clear is whether equipment is being provided in the form that Iraqis feel they need to eventually operate as independent forces. On the one hand, some steps can be carried at very little cost while boosting Iraqi security and military force confidence. One simple example is that of the ski mask. Providing security and military force members with a ski mask allows them to obscure their identity from insurgents and their sympathizers or informers.³⁴ The insurgents are therefore less likely to discover the identities of the policemen and soldiers, and insurgents cannot intimidate and/or threaten their families, enhancing confidence and effectiveness of Iraqi forces. While the ski mask is not a cure-all, it represents one low-cost piece of equipment that many Iraqi forces would like.

On the other hand, a look at deliveries again reveals how lightly armed and equipped most Iraqi forces are, as well as raises real questions about the level of equipment shortfalls tolerated during 2003 and the first half of 2004. As Figure 1.3 has shown, Iraqi forces were being created with a focus on total manpower numbers and far too little concern to giving them even the most basic equipment.

Americans who evaluate Iraqi forces should remember the US debate over uparmoring HUMVEEs and trucks, and providing heavy armor. Even today, most Iraqi forces in the field are still being given little or no protection by US and Coalition equipment standards. If Iraqi forces are to stand on their own, demonstrate the true sovereignty and legitimacy

of Iraq forces, and phase out Coalition forces, they must have the equipment to both operate with reasonable safety and decisively outgun and outmaneuver insurgents and terrorists.

Facilities at the end of 2004

The US Department of State issued a statement on December 3, 2004 that gave the number of reconstruction projects that are underway as of December 2, 2004. The report lists 88 border posts, 17 police stations, and 16 military bases for the Iraqi security and military forces that are being built.³⁵

Like most US reporting, however, it is impossible to know the extent to which such claims of progress relate to the requirement, how many survive the insurgency, and how many are really adequate once completed. Project reporting that is not related to valid objectives and requirements, and where there is no evaluation of the value of what is delivered, is essentially meaningless.

This is particularly important because so many facilities for the police and security forces have been grossly inadequate and under-equipped in the past, and many are still extremely vulnerable to insurgent attack and impossible to isolate or protect in the densely populated areas where they are located. Once again, Iraqi forces suffer from a dual standard. Many must still be deployed without anything approaching the physical security of their Coalition allies. However, regular Army and IIF facilities are protected, as are many ING and police locations. Some ING are also co-located on Coalition forward operating bases. Police stations are often difficult to harden due to their physical location relative to other structures and roads in the area, but US experts report that efforts to provide better force protection to police stations are well underway. Yet, many must still be deployed without anything approaching the physical security of their Coalition allies.

Spending at the End of 2004

The Department of Defense weekly status report still showed relatively low levels of FY2004 aid spending as of December 8, 2004. The total apportionment for security and law enforcement was now shown as \$5,045 million. A total of \$4,278 million was committed, \$2,930 million was obligated, and \$961 million had been spent. This was less than 20% of the total apportionment months after the FY2004 year ended.³⁶

Manning at the Beginning of 2005

The manning levels of the Iraqi security and military forces at the beginning of 2005 were a key focus of the Senate confirmation hearings for Condoleezza Rice's nomination as Secretary of State. On January 18, Rice stated that there were 120,000 trained Iraqi troops.³⁷ Several senators questioned that number, with one Democrat – Senator Biden – saying that he believed that the number of trained Iraqis was much closer to 4,000.

The reality is somewhere in between. There are certainly more than 4,000 trained troops. The army and the Intervention Force account for more than double that figure. The only way to arrive at an estimate near 4,000 was to only count the Iraqi Army, which had a total of 4,159 men as of January 11, 2005.³⁸ The Civil Intervention Force has another 2,862 men, the Emergency Response Unit has 205, the Bureau of Dignity Protection had

484, the Intervention Force had 9,159, and the Special Operations Force had 674. This is a total of 17,000 men and does not count any of the 40,063 men in the National Guard. While the Guard was just being integrated into the Army – January 6, 2005 – it did have 68 battalions and some had moderate effectiveness.

However, it is equally disingenuous to state that there are 120,000 adequately trained and equipped Iraqi troops. If one looks at the numbers provided by the State Department in the Iraq Weekly Status Reports, one can determine that that figure could only be arrived at if all of the Iraqi police were considered “troops.” That in itself would be an inaccurate designation as many police receive only three weeks of training that does not approach the level of training the army receives.

Even if the police were counted as “troops,” an estimate of 120,000 trained troops fails to take into account the fact that the National Guard has fought erratically at best and been unreliable at worst. By the end of 2004, there may not even have been the equivalent of 12,000 reliable, well-trained, well-equipped Iraqi troops that could engage serious insurgent resistance. There were only one or two battalions with any track record of operating on their own without extensive US support, and Iraq’s first mechanized battalion did not become operational until mid-January 2005.³⁹

Some reporting coming out of the military was equally misleading. According to US military assessments, there were approximately 69 Iraqi army battalions operating in the country at the end of the year, and the US military hoped to have 130,000 Iraqi forces – not just soldiers, but army, Guard, police, etc.– by the January 30th election date.⁴⁰ The Embassy report on end of the year forces showed, however, that these “army” battalions were almost all low grade National Guard Battalions. In fact, the Army had a total of 21 battalions, many of which were inexperienced and lacking in combat effectiveness, and it did not plan to deploy more than six more battalions before the elections. The Army – as distinguished from the National Guard – only built up to around 4,700 men by the end January 2005, and even if the National Guard was counted in the total for the Army, the tally would be around 45,000 men.⁴¹

USCENTCOM commander Gen. John Abizaid addressed the ongoing concerns about the Iraqi forces in an interview in late January 2005. He stated:

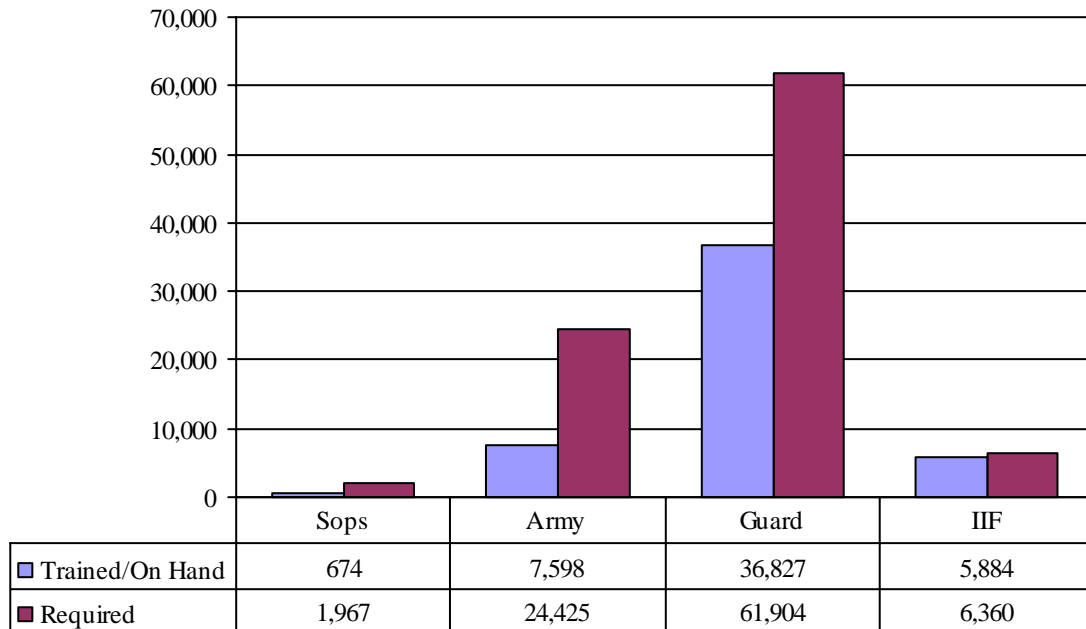
There’s this debate, obviously, in Washington going on right now about the failure of Iraqi security forces, and I would say they’re far from failure. It’s a generational effort. It’s not one that’s going to happen within the next month.... I see failure in some places, but more successes than failures. So they’ll ultimately be successful.⁴²

Figures 1.11 through 1.14 illustrate the status of the Iraqi security and military forces as of January 19, 2005. These graphs are based on the Iraq Weekly Status Reports made available by the State Department since September.

- Figure 1.11 shows the numbers of National Guard, army, Intervention Force, and special operations forces that are trained or on hand compared to the numbers that are required. Between December 1, 2004 and January 19, 2005, the National Guard suffered fairly substantial manpower losses. That being said, the Intervention Force has exceeded its goal end strength and its numbers increased significantly during the same time period. The first significant troop increase in the new year was the graduation of 670 Iraqi intervention Force soldiers from the Taji Military Training Base on January 18, 2005. The army experienced moderate growth.

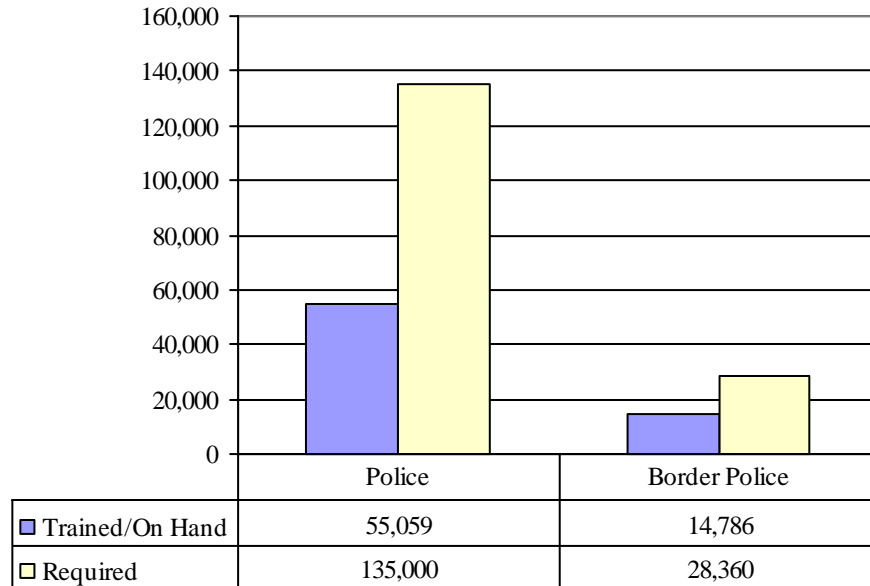
- Figure 1.12 shows the number of police and Border Enforcement personnel that are trained or on hand compared to the numbers that are required. It is important to note that those troops listed as trained/on hand are not all fully trained or equipped. Both the police and the Border Enforcement personnel have been slowly increasing.
- Figures 1.13 and 1.14 show the composition of the Iraqi military and security forces as of January 19, 2005. The military is still overwhelmingly dominated by National Guardsmen while police make up the largest proportion of the security forces. There has been a fairly significant rise in the number of Iraqi Intervention Force troops.

Figure 1.11
Iraqi Military Forces Trained/On Hand vs. Required as of 1/19/05



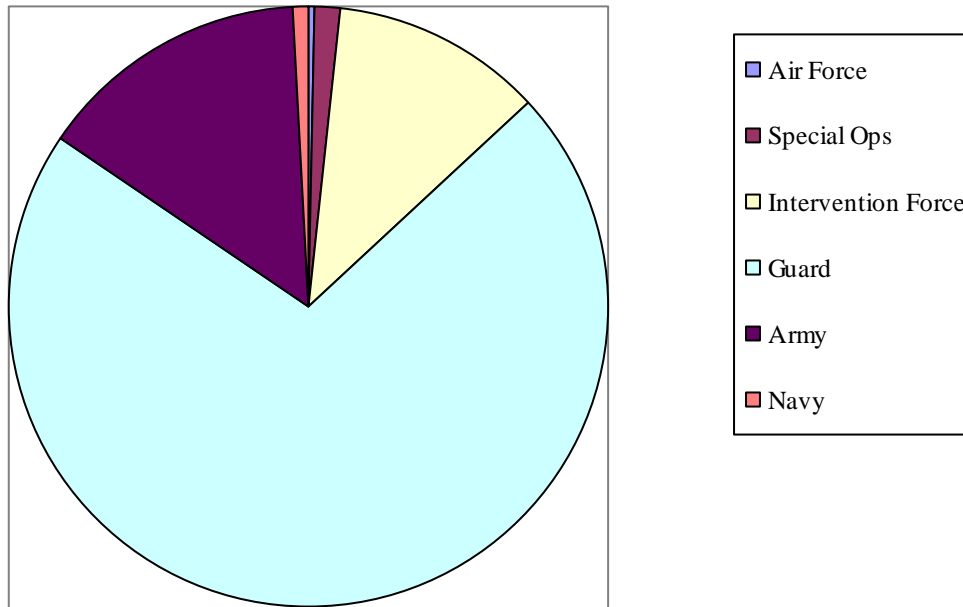
Source: 19 January 2005 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil. "IIF" stands for the Iraqi Intervention Force.

Figure 1.12
Iraqi Security Forces Trained/On Hand vs. Required as of 1/19/05



* Source: 19 January 2005 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil.

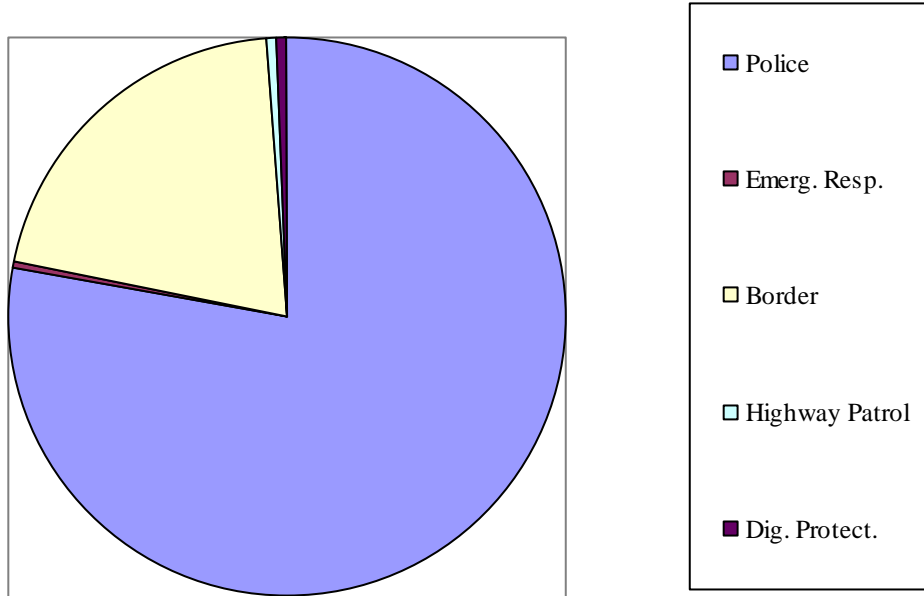
Figure 1.13
Iraqi Military Forces by Proportion as of 1/19/05



Air Force	Special Ops	Intervention Force	Guard	Army	Navy
145	674	5,884	36,827	7,598	495

Source: 19 January 2005 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil.

Figure 1.14
Iraqi Security Forces by Proportion as of 1/19/05



Police	Emergency Response	Border Patrol	Highway Patrol	Dignitary Protection
55,059	205	14,786	354	484

Source: 19 January 2005 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil. 'Emerg. Resp.' stands for Emergency Response Unit. 'Dig. Protect' stands for the Dignitary Protection Service.

It should be noted that the top Iraqi general, Gen. Babakir, stated at the end of 2004 that he expected Iraqi forces to number around 150,000 by summer of 2005. He expected that the US will withdraw its troops from the cities and withdraw to one or two major bases by the end of 2005.⁴³ Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi was more cautious, but stated that he had been speaking with US officials in Baghdad about ways to speed up the training and equipping of Iraqi soldiers. He said that such acceleration would allow the Coalition forces to slowly leave, but he reiterated that he would adhere to a “conditions-based withdrawal” as opposed to a “calendar-based withdrawal.”⁴⁴

Equipment at the Beginning of 2005

As of January 21, 2005, MNSTC-I reported that Iraqi forces had the following major combat equipment:⁴⁵

- The Iraqi Navy has five 100 ft patrol craft and 34 smaller boats.
- The Iraqi Air Force maintains three squadrons with nine reconnaissance aircraft and three US-supplied C-130 transport planes. At least two of the reconnaissance planes are Seabird SB71-360 Seeker aircraft. There is a fourth squadron made up of two UH-1 helicopters. The squadron will receive 14 more UH-1s as well as 4 Bell Jet Ranger helicopters, and should be operational by the end of January.
- One mechanized battalion with a tank company and transportation battalion. The tanks seem to be T-55s and T-72s. The battalion is listed as operational and the necessary equipment and training to form a full-mechanized brigade will be provided by Summer 2005.
- Iraq’s Mechanized Police Brigade is on patrol with 50 BTR-94 armored vehicles.

This is progress towards the heavier forces needed to deal with a serious insurgency, but scarcely the kind of progress that produces the strength and kind of forces capable of independent operations and replacing Coalition forces. Moreover, the forces created had cost some \$1.71 billion out of the \$1.91 billion in ongoing funding for security forces – a high price for such lightly equipped units. At the same time, only \$1,208 million in US FY2004 IRRF II aid for security and law enforcement had been dispersed out of a total of \$5,045 billion that had been apportioned.⁴⁶

Problems with Equipment Procurement within the Iraqi Ministry of Defense

The Iraqi Defense Ministry has also been plagued by controversy over two separate incidents. One incident revolved around the death of two US contractors and questions over the involved contract.

Dale Stoffel, a consultant with CLI USA Inc., had negotiated an agreement with Iraqi officials to repair and renovate a number of Soviet-era armored vehicles including tanks and APCs. Stoffel became concerned that the officials would not honor the contract nor pay him for work already completed. He raised his concerns with the US Department of Defense and the Pennsylvania congressional delegation.⁴⁷

Six days after returning to Iraq, Stoffel and Joseph Wemple were found shot to death ten miles outside of a US military base in Taj. Photos of their possessions were posted on an insurgent website.

The US Department of Defense has launched an investigation and the Iraqi government denies complicity in the deaths of the two contractors. Whether elements within the Ministry of Defense were involved or not, the story garnered wide US attention and is likely to discourage some companies from bidding for contracts in Iraq. This is likely to further complicate the Ministry of Defense's attempts to fully equip the Iraq security forces.

In a second incident, public concern surrounded a sizeable transfer of funds from the Iraqi Central Bank by the Ministry of Defense. Reportedly, \$300 million in US currency was removed from the bank and put aboard a plane bound for Lebanon.

Mishal Sarraf, an aide to Iraqi Defense Minister Hazim al-Shalaan, asserted that the money was used to buy armored vehicles for Iraqi personnel, including tanks and APCs. There was no public bidding for the contracts and the entire Iraqi cabinet did not vote on the deal. Sarraf stated that the arms deal had been approved by the defense minister and by three other senior Iraqi officials, one of whom was Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi. The aide further stated that the arms dealers could not be named because it would endanger their lives and that the deal was concluded quickly so as to rush the vehicles to Iraqi forces as quickly as possible.⁴⁸

Critics challenge this explanation and level charges of corruption. Mowaffak al-Rubaie, the Iraqi national security adviser, was unaware of the deal. He stated, "I am sorry to say that the corruption here is worse now than in the Saddam Hussein era."⁴⁹ The director of the Iraq Revenue Watch, Isam al-Khafaji, stated, "That's the tragedy of Iraq: Everyone runs their business like a private fiefdom."⁵⁰

It should be noted that no wrong-doings have been uncovered and that the Iraqi government flatly denies any charges of corruption. One of the leading critics of the Defense Ministry, particularly with regard to the arms deal, is Ahmed Chalabi, the discredited member of the Iraqi National Congress who is running for a seat in the Iraqi parliament. Chalabi and Shalaan are enemies, and it is possible that the charges are politically motivated. Shalaan has vowed to arrest Chalabi and turn him over to Interpol.⁵¹

Nevertheless, the allegations could still damage the Ministry of Defense's reputation further and hinder further attempts to rush equipment to Iraqi security forces.

The Role of the Iraqi Military and Security Forces During the Election

The Iraqi military and security forces were charged with protecting the 5,500 polling stations during the Iraqi national elections. US military officials state that there were 129,000 Iraqi military and security personnel working with 140,000 election workers and 7,000 candidates to secure the polls during the vote.⁵² Though insurgents mounted over 200 attacks and killed 44 Iraqis during the elections, Iraqi forces are widely regarded as

having performed admirably. In at least one case, an Iraqi guarding a polling station wrestled a suicide bomber away from the site at the cost of his own life.

The Manning Levels of Iraqi Military and Security Forces Following the Election

It should be noted that the reporting format of the Iraq Weekly Status Report changed again and eliminated reporting on the 12 individual military and security force branches in favor of six more general categories. This data is far more general and cannot be meaningfully utilized in the previous graphs and charts. As of 9 February 2005, the manning levels are as follows:⁵³

- The police and highway patrol officers number 57, 287.
- The remaining Ministry of the Interior Forces number 21, 589.
- The Army consists of 56, 587 troops.
- The Air Force consists of 186 men.
- The Navy consists of 525 men.
- Overall, 136,174 members of the Iraqi military and security forces are listed as trained and equipped.

IX. The Broader Picture: Trends in Iraqi Military and Security Force Levels from December 2003 to January 2005

The overall trends in the manning of the Iraqi security and military forces over the past 13 months are illustrated in the figures below:

- Figure 1.15 shows the levels of manning in both the Iraqi Army and Iraqi National Guard from December 2003 to January 2005. The army's manning levels were erratic throughout 2004. They consistently fell towards the end of 2004 but saw an upsurge to 7,598 in January 2005. What would appear to be a significant drop in the Intervention Force's manning levels from January 12th to January 19th is more likely the result of reassigning forces as opposed to desertion or dropout. The IIF is part of the Iraqi army and the listed numbers for the army increased during that time period by roughly the same amount as the IIF decreased. Therefore, it is likely that forces listed as part of the IIF January 12th were re-designated as part of the regular Iraqi army as of January 19th. The National Guard's manning level has remained relatively constant, though it is important to note a decrease in over 6,000 Guardsmen between December 2004 and January 2005. The number of trained and equipped soldiers dropped in November, but has gone up as more units have completed their training.

Reports from Fallujah and Samarra indicated that units of both the army and National Guard fought well. It is important to note, however, that the US was still doing the brunt of the fighting.

It does appear that the quality of both the Guardsmen and soldiers is slowly improving. In one instance on January 18, 2005, four suicide bombs rocked Baghdad within 90 minutes. Yet, the loss of life was far less than it could have been because of Iraqi action. Col. Mike Murray, commander of the US 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry, stated that all of the bombers failed to reach their designated targets. He stated, "Out of four car bombs in Baghdad...in every case there was an Iraqi soldier either from the Iraqi army or the Iraqi national guard or an Iraqi policeman that prevented that car bomb from getting to its intended target."⁵⁴ The challenge to retain Army soldiers remains a concern.

The National Guard was "merged" with the army on January 6, 2005, but it is extremely difficult to understand what this will really mean in terms of combat effectiveness. Generating effective forces takes time, and experts involved in the US training effort caution that it requires synchronization of effort to train, equip, base, and to integrate training resources such as trainers and training locations.

As one expert put it, "One should not expect a constantly increasing generation of force given the complexity of the task and the requirement to use Coalition forces (i.e. those who sometimes conduct operations) to assist with the training process. The Coalition spent considerable time and effort to improve the capabilities of ING battalions, something this report overlooks because it focuses so much on the alleged weakness in the initial training program without any focus on the follow-on training the Coalition provides to ING units. Some 42 battalions of ING are conducting operations at the squad to battalion level (as of early January 2005). They are on the street, and elsewhere, providing security — often with strong effect. Some units are not as strong as we would like, but others are doing better than expected."

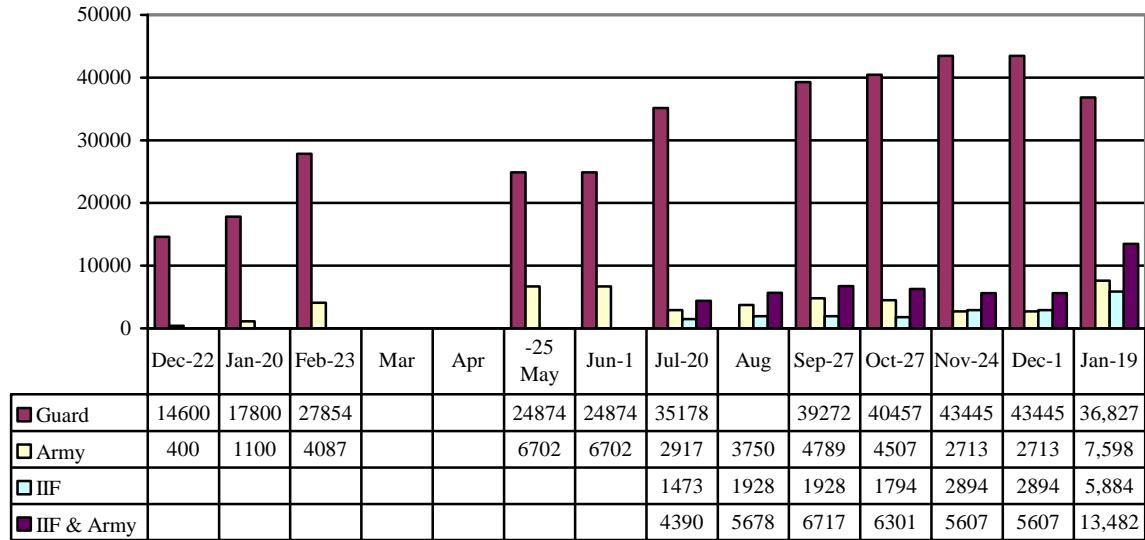
- Figure 1.16 shows the levels of manning in both the Iraqi police and Iraqi border enforcement from December 2003 to January 2005. Police manning levels steadily decreased from the peak in June 2004 (92,227) until late November 2004 when the numbers slowly began increasing once more. The drastic drop in the numbers of police needs to be kept in perspective. While police units were frequently overrun, failed to report for duty, or joined the insurgency, newer reports indicate that some units in Samarra fought tenaciously when attacked. It should be noted that the Justice Department training team has been administering the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) since May 2003 and they claim that 400 women are employed as police officers in Iraq. The levels in the manning of the Border Enforcement Agency remain erratic and it is unclear as to how many individuals are actually out on patrol.
- Figure 1.17 depicts the stated manning goals of the Iraqi Army in contrast with the actual manning levels of the army over the last year. Figure 1.13 shows that the manning end goal of the Iraqi Army has steadily dropped since the peak estimation of 40,000 in December 2003. In May 2004, the total required dropped by 5,000 and it dropped by a further 8,000 in July. The drop in the requirements for the army is likely caused by further specialization within the Iraqi military and security forces with regard to missions and roles. The Iraqi Intervention Force and the Iraqi Special Forces were created as separate entities with specific missions and the police and National Guard generally confront insurgents with US backing unless they are massed in some large force like in Fallujah. When they are in static positions, the army tends to have a larger role.
- Figure 1.18 depicts the stated manning goals of the Iraqi National Guard in contrast with the actual manning levels of the Iraqi National Guard over the last year. Figure 1.15 shows that the Iraqi National Guard requirements increased slightly in May 2004 and July 2004 before skyrocketing in September 2004 with an increase of over 20,000 in the end goal strength. This increase is directly tied to the surge in violence by the insurgents. National Guard manning has had a few setbacks but seems to be slowly improving, as is the quality of the Guard units.
- Lastly, Figure 1.19 illustrates the stated manning goals of the Iraqi police in contrast with the actual manning levels of the Iraqi police over the last year. Figure 1.15 shows that police manning actually exceeded early estimates of the required numbers. Subsequent decreases are, in part, a result of Iraqis taking a larger role in the candidate screening process. The Iraqi Interim

Government, while slow to do so, has begun to fire police that fail to show up for work, police that cooperate with insurgents, and police that are blatantly corrupt.

It should also be noted, however, that the insurgent campaign of intimidation and attacks are likely affecting police manning levels. Since October 2004, manning seems to be slowly increasing, but it is nowhere near the estimated 135,000 that are needed. The requirements for police manning increased dramatically in May 2004 and then burgeoned in September 2004 as part of the response to the insurgency and its associated criminal elements.

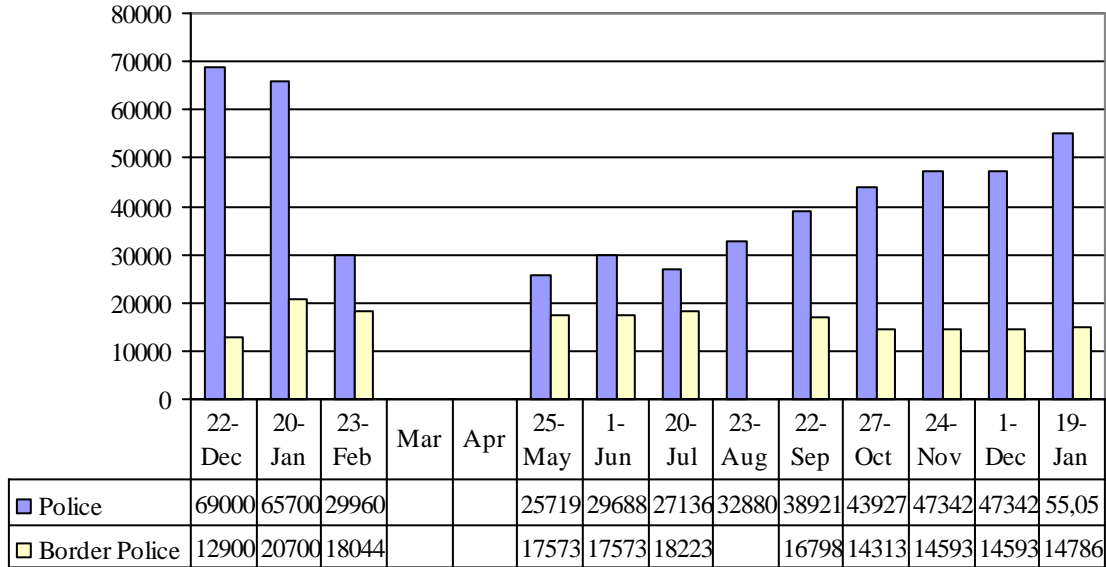
Taken together, these figures reflect a level of progress that shows the overall manning and quality of the Iraqi security and military forces is slowly improving, and the effort to build up Iraqi forces has gathered serious momentum. However, Appendix X shows all too clearly that Iraqi forces regularly suffer setbacks and quality varies drastically from unit to unit or station to station. It is also clear from the trend analyses in Figures 1.15 to 1.19 that the strength of the various Iraqi security and military forces will not be at anything like the levels necessary to provide effective security for the elections in January 2005.

Figure 1.15
Levels of Iraqi Military Forces Over Time, 12/03-01/05*



* Breakouts of the numbers of National Guard on duty but not trained are not available prior to February 23rd, in May and June, and are not available after September 27th. The Army figures include only those soldiers considered trained and equipped. This graph uses the Iraq Weekly Status Reports released first by the Department of Defense and now the Department of State, available at <http://www.defendamerica.mil> as well as information provided by MNSTC-1. For consistency, the graph tries to use the reports that appear at the end of each month. There are no available numbers for March and April, and only the IIF and Army numbers are available for August. This graph does not include the Iraqi Air Force, Civil Intervention Force, Highway Patrol, or Iraqi Navy.

Figure 1.16
Iraqi Security Forces Over Time, 12/03-01/05*

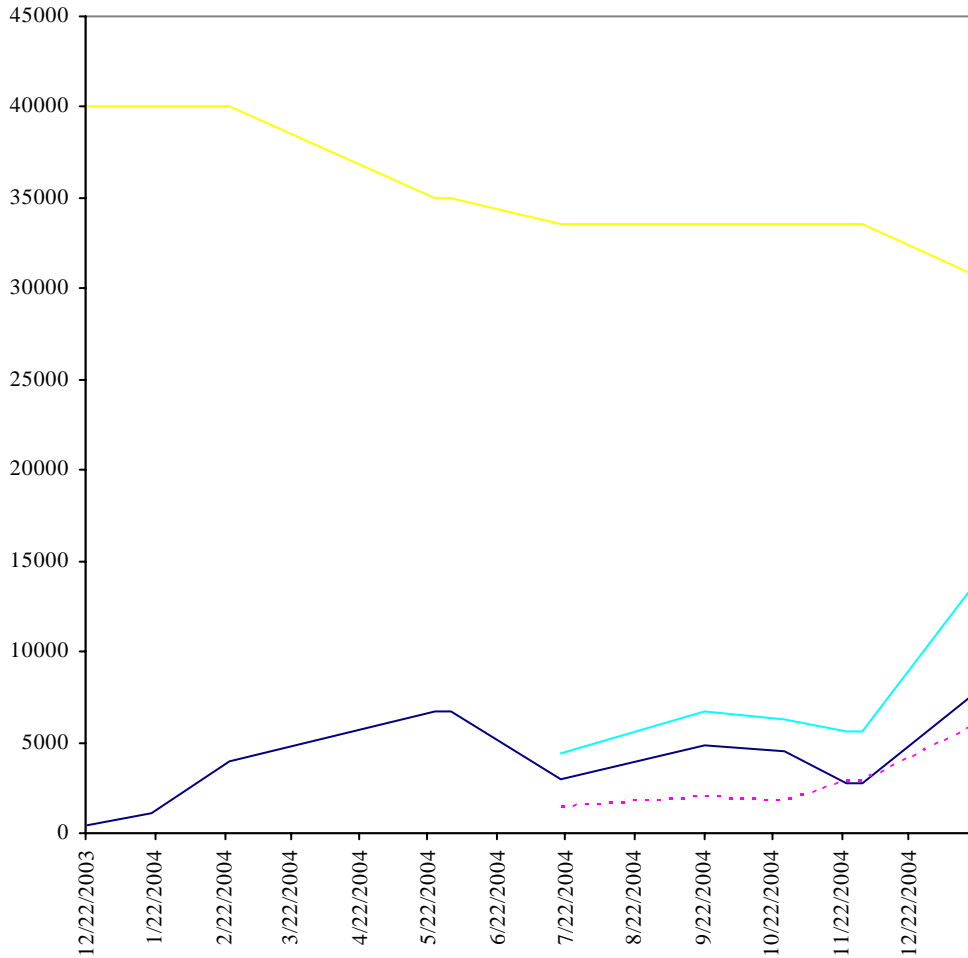


*There are no data for Iraqi security force levels for March, April, and August 2003. From February 2003 on, the Border Police include the entire Department of Border Enforcement. This graph uses the Iraq Weekly Status Reports released by the Department of Defense, available at <http://www.defendamerica.mil>, as well as data provided by MNSTC-1. For consistency, the graph tries to use the reports that appear at the end of each month. Gaps in data reflect unavailable numbers.

The row for police (above) shows two different types of data.

- The numbers for police up until 23 February reflect police reported as being on duty.
- The numbers since 23 February reflect the number trained and equipped and from 27 October the total numbers reflect those trained and equipped either through the 8-week or 3-week program. Thus, the drop in numbers is not as significant as it first appears.

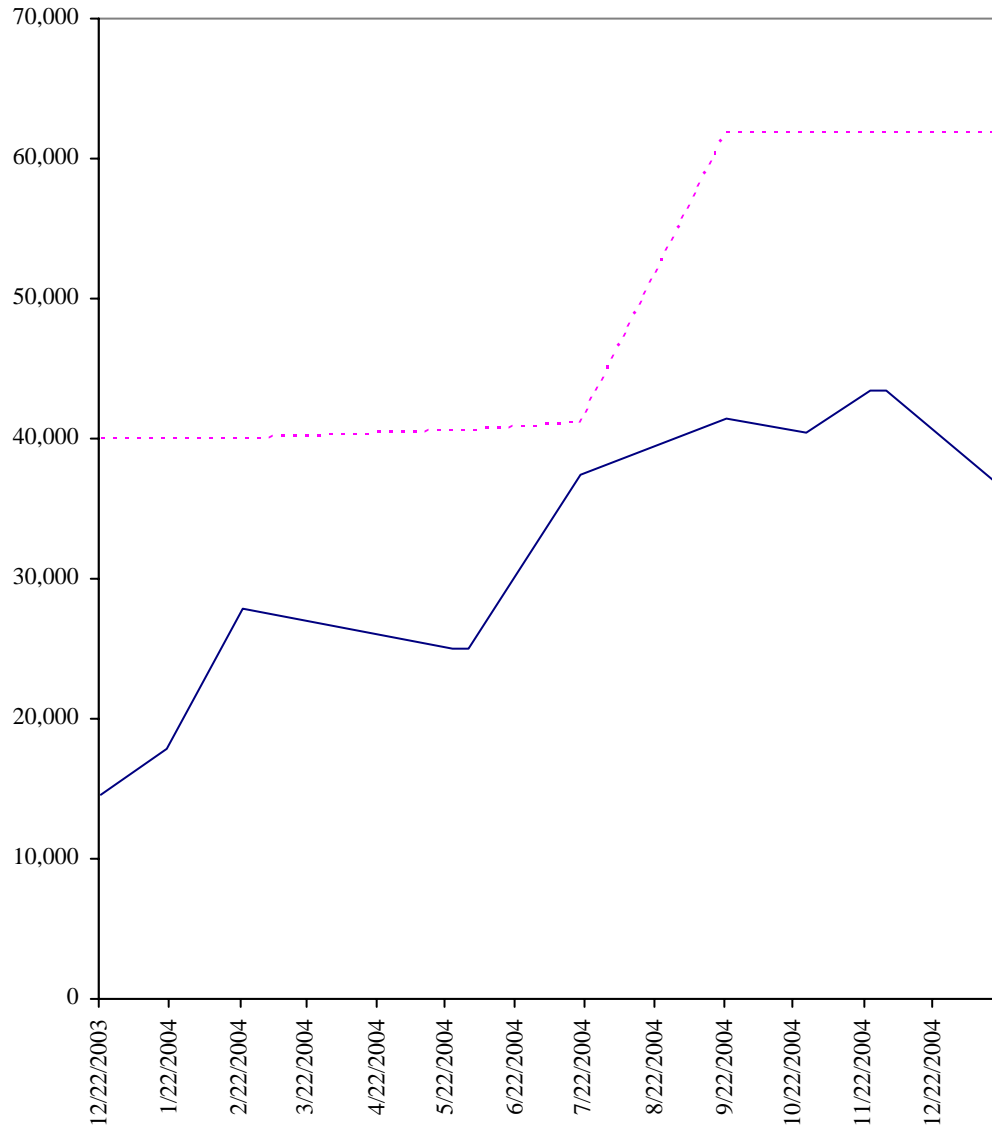
Figure 1.17
Trends in Iraqi Army vs. Required Total over Time as of 01/05



	22-Dec-03	20-Jan-04	23-Feb-04	25-May-04	1-Jun-04	20-Jul-04	22-Sep-04	27-Oct-04	24-Nov-04	1-Dec-04	19-Jan-05
— Army manning	400	1,100	3,997	6,702	6,702	2,917	4,789	4,507	2,713	2,713	7598
..... IIF manning						1,473	1,928	1,794	2,894	2,894	5884
— IIF & Army						4390	6717	6301	5607	5607	13482
— Total req'd	40,000	40,000	40,000	35,000	35,000	33,589	33,589	33,589	33,589	33,589	30785

Source: Weekly Status Report available at http://www.defenselink.mil/la/iraq_stat.html, <http://www.defendamerica.mil>, and inquiries to MNSTC-1. These numbers include those in training and on hand up until July when numbers indicating those trained/equipped became available. The graph utilizes the figures available at the end of each month. Months have been omitted when data were not available. The “total required” column lists the total number of soldiers required by the army up until the creation of the Intervention Force. Following the creation of the Intervention Force, the “total required” column includes the soldiers needed by the regular army and the Intervention Force.

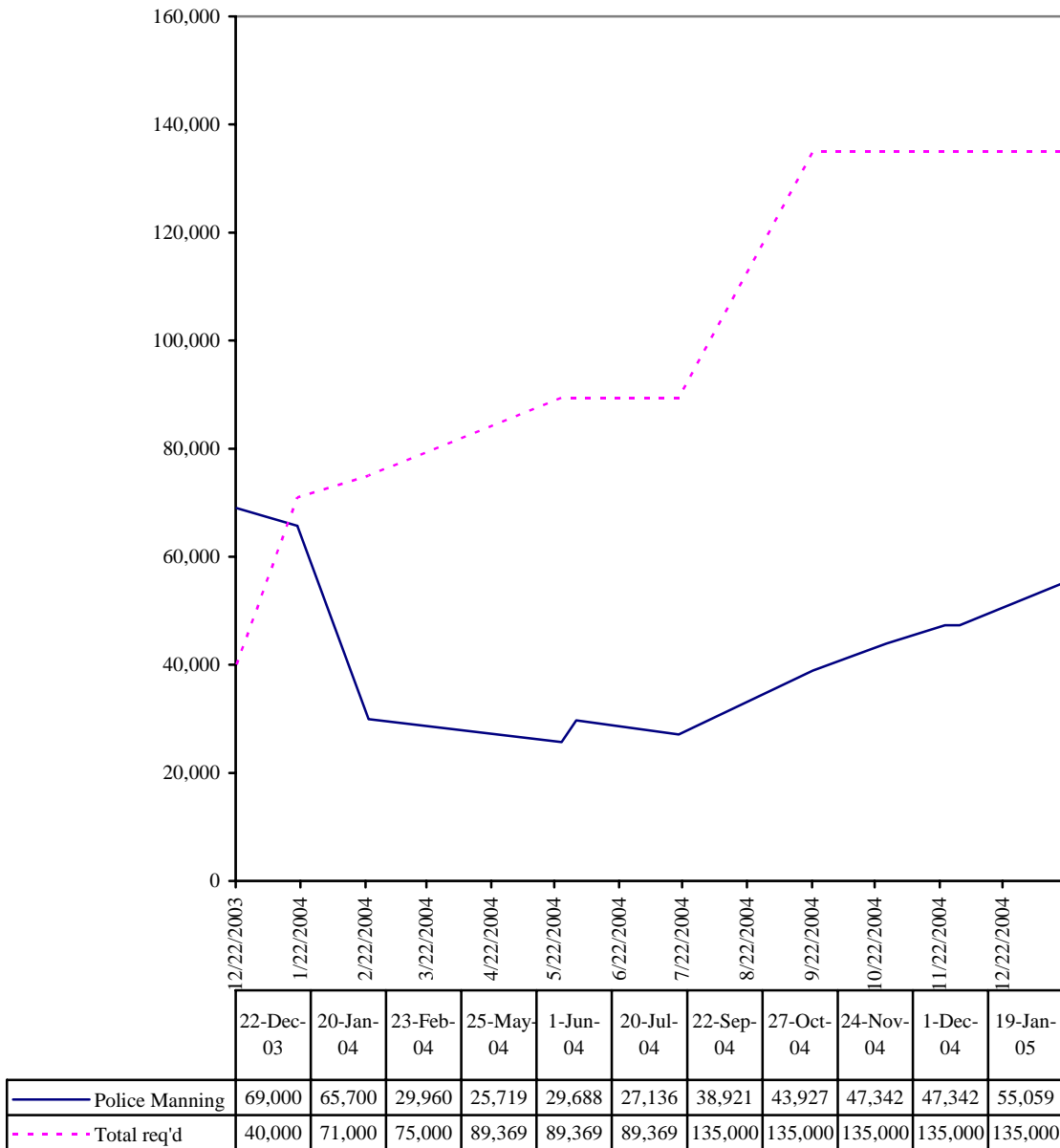
Figure 1.18
Trends in Iraqi Guard vs. Required Total over Time as of 01/05



	22-Dec-03	20-Jan-04	23-Feb-04	25-May-04	1-Jun-04	20-Jul-04	22-Sep-04	27-Oct-04	24-Nov-04	1-Dec-04	19-Jan-05
— Guard man.	14,600	17,800	27,854	24,974	24,974	37,371	41,461	40,457	43,445	43,445	36,827
- - - Total req'd	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,556	40,556	41,088	61,904	61,904	61,904	61,904	61,904

Source: Weekly Status Report available at http://www.defenselink.mil/la/iraq_stat.html and <http://www.defendamerica.mil>. This graph includes those in training and on hand as breakouts are unavailable. It utilizes the figures available at the end of each month. Months have been omitted when data were not given.

Figure 1.19
Trends in Iraqi Police vs. Required Total over Time as of 01/05



Source: Weekly Status Report available at http://www.defenselink.mil/la/iraq_stat.html, <http://www.defendamerica.mil>, and data provided by MNSTC-1. The numbers for police up until 23 February reflect police reported as being on duty, not those on duty and trained as breakouts are unavailable prior to February.

The number since 23 February reflects the number trained and equipped and from 27 October the total number trained reflects those trained and equipped either through the 8-week or 3-week program. Thus, the apparent drop in numbers from January to February is not as drastic as it first appears.

X. The Evolving Nature of the Insurgency

The present level of the threat in Iraq is all too real, and Iraqi Interim Government claims that some 16 of Iraq's provinces are secure are clearly untrue. There is a significant level of security in 12 provinces, and the US and IIG have won significant victories in Najaf and Fallujah. General John Abizaid, commander of the US Central Command, said that the four provinces with particularly difficult security situations are western Baghdad, Al Anbar, Nineveh and Saahuddin.⁵⁵ Yet, even in areas where insurgents operate and have significant local influence, populations are divided and are rarely under insurgent control. Moreover, if one looks at the total population of all the scattered cities and areas where insurgents and terrorists largely dominate, it does not exceed 6-9% of Iraq's total population.

The battle of Fallujah in November 2004 is a particularly striking example of a tactical victory. It is reported to have killed some 1,200 insurgents and led to the capture of nearly 2,000, at the cost of 54 American and eight Iraqi lives.⁵⁶ The loss of the city has deprived Sunni insurgents and terrorist groups of their one true sanctuary inside Iraq. However, Fallujah remains a troubled city, and insurgents are still active at low levels in parts of Fallujah.

US-run detention centers are nearing capacity, with the number of captured insurgents reaching the highest levels since March 2004. According to the Washington Post, the US has roughly 7,900 "security detainees" in captivity. Maj. Gen. William H. Bradenburg, commander of US detention operations in Iraq, declared that US and Iraqi forces are arresting an average of 50 suspected insurgents every day, with the 2005 average approaching 70 arrest per day.⁵⁷

At the same time, the Iraqi Interim Government and US can scarcely claim that they are clearly moving towards victory. The number of incidents has declined somewhat since Fallujah, but major insurgent attacks have occurred in Baghdad, Mosul, Karbala, and Najaf. The US lost 24 men and 60 were wounded in one attack on a mess tent in Mosul on December 21, 2004.⁵⁸ Some 68 Iraqis were killed in attacks in Karbala and Najaf a few days earlier, and some 175 wounded.⁵⁹ The Sunni triangle, the area along the Tigris, and the "triangle of death" south of Baghdad are all areas of intense Sunni insurgent activity, and the stability of Shi'ite and Kurdish areas remains uncertain.

Estimates on the number of insurgents vary widely. Most US military estimates range between 8,000 and 12,000, perhaps reaching as high as 20,000 when the ranks swell. Iraqi intelligence officials, on the other hand, believe the figure is closer to 200,000, with a core of 40,000 fighters and another 160,000 "active" supporters. The true figure may fall somewhere in between, but the exact number is largely irrelevant as long as the insurgency enjoys popular sympathy.

Iraq faces three elections during 2005: the January 30th legislative election, the constitutional referendum, and full national election at the end of the year. Insurgents will have every incentive to create as much political turmoil as possible, as well as continue their attacks on the Iraqi government, economy, intelligentsia, security forces, and the Coalition.

There is no way to quantify how the development of Iraqi military, security, and police forces has kept pace with the development of effective Iraqi government forces. In any case, numerical comparisons are largely pointless. The ratio of security forces to insurgents sometimes has to reach levels of 12:1 through 30:1 in order to provide security in a given area, while in other cases, a small number of security forces can decapitate a movement or cell and end it. Intangibles like the battle for political perceptions and “hearts and minds” are often far more critical than the numbers of insurgents and defenders.

Some things are clear. As Chapter IV described, threat forces have evolved, as well as Iraqi military, security, and police forces. The insurgents and terrorists have grown in capability and size, although serious fighting in Fallujah, Mosul, and Samarra may have reduced their capabilities towards the end of the year. The insurgents have also learned a great deal about how to use their weapons, build more sophisticated IEDs, plan attacks and ambushes, improve their security, and locate and attack targets that are both soft and that produce political and media impact.

US and Iraqi efforts to thwart insurgent attacks – while tireless – are met with hollow victories. As one US Marine specializing in counterinsurgency in Iraq recently noted, “Seizing the components of suicide bombs (or IED making material) is like making drug seizures, comforting, but ultimately pointless. There will always be more. Both sides are still escalating to nowhere.”

The Dominant Role of Iraqi Sunni Arab Insurgents

The insurgency seems to remain largely Iraqi and Sunni dominated. Some 35 Sunni Arab groups have made some kind of public announcement or claimed responsibility for terrorist or insurgent attacks – although many may be little more than cells and some may be efforts to shift the blame for attacks or make the insurgent movement seem larger than it is. An overwhelming majority of those captured or killed have been Iraqi Sunnis, as well as something like 90-95% of those detained.

These insurgents have suffered significant tactical defeats since early 2004, notably in Najaf, Baghdad, Samarra, Fallujah, and Mosul. Nevertheless, US and Iraqi government attempts to root out the insurgency have so far only had limited impact. There is no evidence that the number of insurgents is declining as a result of Coalition and Iraqi attacks to date. The number of insurgent attacks has been consistently high since the spring of 2004, although the pattern fluctuates over time.

Insurgent cadres have steadily become more experienced, adapting tactics and methods of attack as fast as Coalition can counter them. Coalition troops reported that insurgents in Fallujah utilized an improved RPG in efforts to counter armored vehicles. The fighting in September-November of 2004 has shown they are developing networks with some form of central command, planning, and financing.

The insurgency works with criminal elements for effective looting and sabotage campaigns. The insurgents and their criminal allies also understand the limits of Coalition ability to cover the given areas and the Coalition’s vulnerabilities. Many patterns of Coalition, Iraqi government, and Iraqi forces activity are easily observed and have become predictable. Bases can often be observed and are vulnerable at their entrances to

rocket and mortar attacks, and along their supply lines. There are many soft and relatively soft small isolated facilities. Aid projects are easy to infiltrate and to target when nearing completion. NGO or contractor headquarters are easily observable targets. Infrastructure and energy facilities are typical of targets that have long lines of pipes or wires and many vulnerable links. The media has to be increasingly careful and defensive, as do emergency workers and medical teams. Any nation is inevitably filled with soft or vulnerable targets that insurgents can choose at will, and experienced insurgents and terrorists will always target these vulnerabilities.

The problem is broader. As has been touched upon in Chapter IV, the insurgents have good sources within the Iraqi Interim Government and forces, Iraqi society and sometimes in local US and Coalition commands. This is inevitable, and little can be done to stop it. Iraq simply lacks the resources and data to properly vet all of the people it recruits. Many Iraqis only work for the government or in the Iraqi forces because they cannot find other employment. They may, in fact, quietly sympathize with the insurgents. Workers in US and government facilities, and in various aid and construction projects, are even harder to vet. Men who do support the government are vulnerable to threats against the families, kidnappings, and actual murders of friends and relatives.

US human intelligence is improving but is hurt badly – as are civil, military and other efforts – by high turnover and rotations. Most Iraqi networks serving the US in hostile areas have serious quality and loyalty problems, while others either use their positions to settle scores or misinform Coalition troops.

The Sunni insurgents are divided into a complex mix of Sunni nationalists, pro-Ba'ath/ex-regime, Sunni Iraqi Islamists, outside Islamic extremists, foreign volunteers with no clear alignment, and paid or politically motivated criminals. Most now seem organized so that their cadres are in relatively small cells, some as small as 2 or 3 men. These cells can recruit or call in larger teams, but the loss of even a significant number of such cells may not cripple a given group, and several Sunni groups operate in most areas.

There are no reliable estimates of the numbers of such insurgents, or breakdown by motivation and group. There also are no recent polls that provide a clear picture of how many Iraqi Arab Sunnis support the insurgents, although some ABC polls indicated that the number was well over 33% by the spring of 2004. Many members of the Sunni clergy have become steadily more supportive of the insurgency since that time, and battles like Fallujah have inevitably helped to polarize Sunni opinion.

US officials kept repeating estimates of total insurgent strengths of 5,000 from roughly the fall of 2003 through the summer of 2004. In October, they issued a range of 12,000 to 16,000 but have never defined how many are hard core and full time, and how many are part time, and US experts would be the first to indicate that any such numbers are guesstimates. They also are careful to note that they are uncertain as to whether the numbers are increasing or decreasing with time as a result of US and Iraqi operations versus increases in the political and other tensions that lead Iraqi Arab Sunnis to join the insurgents.

While some US officers have talked about the battle of Fallujah in November 2004 as a tipping point, many US experts are cautious. They feel the insurgents did lose a key sanctuary, suffered more than 1,000 killed, and lost significant numbers of prisoners and

detainees. They also lost some significant leaders and cadres. Many insurgents and insurgent leaders seem to have left Fallujah before the fighting, however, and many others escaped.

Various insurgent groups were able to attack in other areas like Mosul, Ramadi, Samarra, Baquba, Balad, Bajii, Tall Afar, and Hawija during the fighting in Fallujah, and seem to have planned to disperse and to shift their operations before the fighting in Fallujah began.⁶⁰ The fighting in Mosul was particularly severe, and the US military reported a total of 130-140 attacks and incidents a day.⁶¹ While the Coalition and Iraqi forces did capture large numbers of weapons and supplies, few experts – if any – feel that the insurgents face any near term supply problems given the numbers of weapons looted from Iraq's vast arms depots during and after the fighting that brought down Saddam.

Many of the Sunni insurgent groups seem to have a significant degree of independence, but it is clear that many cooperate in at least some operations, and that some have effective central leadership and coordination. One serious question is how much influence various Ba'ath groups have. As is discussed later, both US and Iraqi Interim Government officials – such as the MNF commander General Casey and Iraqi Defense Minister Hazan Shaalan – believe that Ba'ath leaders in Syria coordinate with at least some of the Ba'ath sympathizers.

These Ba'ath groups are not generally “former regime loyalists,” but rather Sunni nationalists involved in a struggle for current power. This has allowed them to broaden their base and establish ties to Islamic groups as well. They benefit from the fact that they began to organize – at least a crude level – before the invasion began, and have since steadily tightened their organization and purged suspect members. According to one report, they held a major meeting at Al Hasaka in April or May of 2004 to tighten their structure. Field leaders reportedly include Mohammed Younis al-Ahmad, a former aide to Saddam Hussein, and Ibrahim Sabawi, Hussein's half brother and a former security director. They also benefit from the fact that key elements of the leadership of the Iraqi 5th Corps are still in Mosul.⁶²

In many cases, US military officials see evidence of secular Hussein loyalists cooperating with extreme Islamists. In Mosul, Ba'athists work with Salafists to attack American troops and derail the election process.⁶³ While the two groups have conflicting visions and aspirations for Iraq's future, their short-term goal is the same: instability and insecurity.

US experts talk of informal networks, using tools like the Internet, to coordinate operations and exchange data on tactics, targets, and operations. There is evidence of such exchanges between cells in Iraq and outside groups including those in Afghanistan. Insurgent groups also use the media to get near-real-time information on what other groups and cells are doing and to find out what tactics produce the maximum political and media impact.

The Sunni insurgent groups are concentrated in Sunni-populated areas like the “Sunni Triangle,” the Al Ansar Province to the west of Baghdad, and the so-called “Triangle of Death” to the southeast of Baghdad. As a result, four of Iraq's provinces have both a major insurgency threat and a major insurgent presence. Sunni insurgents have also repeatedly shown since the battle of Fallujah that they can strike in ethnically mixed and

Shi'ite-dominated cities like Baghdad, Mosul and Basra. They have also operated in Kurdish areas. No province is safe from occasional attack, and attacks are only part of the story.

There is continuing sabotage of key targets like Iraq's oil facilities, and a constant campaign of intimidation, disappearances, and "mystery killings." Even cities that were supposedly liberated before the battle of Fallujah, like Samarra, have been the source of enough continuing attacks to force the redeployment of large numbers of Iraqi security and police forces and elements of key US counterinsurgency units like Task Force 1-26.⁶⁴

As is the case with so many other types of reporting, the US no longer provides detailed data on the frequency and types of insurgent attacks, or on the locations. The private organizations that try to do this produce interesting results, but results that are often suspect. What US official sources have said is that:

- Some 40-60 towns and cities have been scene of attacks each week since late August. Many are outside the "Sunni Triangle" and Al Ansar Province.
- The most violent city in terms of number of major incidents has been Baghdad, with 20-40 attacks a week.
- Mosul is second with 4-13 major attacks per week.
- The level of attacks in Basra has been relatively low by comparison, but peaks of 7 attacks per week have occurred in Basra and its environs.

One broader problem is that the various Sunni insurgent groups ultimately have a non-negotiable agenda. They cannot bring back Arab Sunni minority rule or the Ba'ath; they cannot regain the level of power, wealth, and influence they once had. They cannot reestablish the form of largely secular rule that existed under Saddam, or reestablish Iraq as a country that most Arabs see as "Sunni."

Richard Armitage, the US Deputy Secretary of State, recently commented on the insurgency and its lack of realistic political goals: "In Algeria, the so-called insurgents, or in Vietnam, the so-called insurgents, they had ... a program and a positive view. ... In Iraq that's lacking ... they only have fear to offer. They only have terror to offer. This is why they're so brutal in their intimidation."⁶⁵

At the same time, however, Sunni insurgent elements appear increasingly capable and well organized, and their broad strategy – though maybe not politically tenable in the near term – is to establish themselves as *the* dominant political and military force within the Sunni community.⁶⁶ They successfully present themselves as the only legitimate alternative to the occupation, even if they fail to provide a popular agenda.

An understanding of these political realities may eventually drive some towards moving into the non-violent political process in Iraq. In practice, however, such insurgent groups have a much better vision of what they oppose than what they are for, and they have limited interest in pragmatic realpolitik. Many will do everything, and sometimes anything, they can to drive the Coalition out and break up the peaceful political process almost regardless of the damage done to Iraq and to Sunni areas. Some will move on to join the most extreme Islamist movements. There are no clear limits to the willingness of at least some Sunni Arab insurgent elements to escalate, even if this means trying to drive the nation into a civil war they cannot win. Some are likely to escalate even further as

their situation becomes more threatened. It seems almost certain that many cadres and leaders of such groups and cells cannot be persuaded, only defeated.

Outside Islamist Groups and Volunteers

Other key insurgent elements include Arab and Islamist groups with significant numbers of foreign volunteers like the one led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. It is unlikely that such foreign volunteers make up more 10% of the insurgent force, and probably only make up around 5%. US officials concede that there may be fewer than 1,000 foreign fighters in Iraq.⁶⁷ They are not an organized force, they come from a wide range of countries, often with little or no training, and the overwhelming majority has only a limited history of affiliation with any organized Islamist or extremist group.⁶⁸ Some are, however, considerably better organized. A number of groups claim affiliation with Zarqawi, but it is unknown how closely tied many of these groups are to Zarqawi. It is likely that some of them can only claim him as an inspiration.

Views differ sharply over the size of Zarqawi's movement, its alignment and ties to Bin Laden and Al Qaeda, and how many of its current "fighters" are Iraqi vs. non-Iraqi. Some press estimates went as high as 10,000 before the fighting in Fallujah. It seems more likely that Zarqawi's movement now consists of a series of cells, with a limited central organization. They probably total less than 1,000 full and part time men and probably with a core strength of no more than several hundred. Nevertheless, Zarqawi's movement has been extremely effective at striking at targets with high media and political impact, particularly in the form of suicide bombings and beheadings.

In October 2004, Zarqawi publicly pledged allegiance to Bin Laden and changed the name of his organization from Al Tawhid wal Jihad (Unity and Holy War) to Al Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers. While there is no evidence that the two men have ever met or even directly communicated, Bin Laden issued a statement in December 2004 confirming Zarqawi as the "Emir" of Al Qaeda in Iraq. Even so, it remains unclear as to what – if any – organizational or financial support Bin Laden provides Zarqawi's organization.

Movements like the Army of Ansar al-Sunna, which claimed responsibility for the attack on the US mess tent in Mosul in December 2004 and for many other suicide attacks, present the problem of seeming to have a mix of links to Zarqawi and possibly Al Qaeda. They seem to be largely Iraqi, but their mix of Sunnis and Kurds is uncertain, as is the extent to which the group and its cells are at least partly a legacy of Ansar al-Islam – an active Islamist group that reportedly provided sanctuary for Zarqawi before the war. In November 2004, Ansar al-Sunna claimed that it had twice collaborated with Zarqawi's group and another group known as the Islamic Army in Iraq.

On January 10, 2005, Prime Minister Allawi announced that Izz al-Din Al-Majid, a chief Zarqawi financier, was arrested in Fallujah in early December 2004. Al Majid had more than \$35 million in his bank accounts and controlled \$2 to \$7 billion of former regime assets stolen from Iraqi government accounts. His objective, according to interrogators, was to unite the insurgent groups Ansar al-Sunna, Jaysh Muhammad, and the Islamic Resistance Army.

The insurgency does appear to be coalescing. Many analysts suggest that the insurgent coalition spans beyond Iraq's Sunni tribal structure – that Ba'athists and their former adversaries, such as the Salafists and the Kurds, are finding a common cause with foreign fighters.⁶⁹ Yet, it still remains unclear how much communication and cooperation exists between the various movements.

This inability to characterize many Islamist movements, and the fact that successful suicide bombings and other attacks can have a major political and media impact even if they serve little clear military purpose, illustrates the fact that outside threats must be measured in terms of effectiveness and not numbers. In practice, the insurgents can choose the place and time of the attack, focus on targets with key political and media impact, and have an effect even if they fail to achieve the purpose of their attack but create visible explosions or kill innocent civilians.

The insurgents often have excellent intelligence from sources within the Iraqi government, Iraqi forces, the Iraqis supporting Coalition forces and government activities, and Iraqi industry. This enables them to locate soft targets, hit at key points in terms of Iraq's economy and aid projects, and time their attacks to points of exceptional vulnerability. In practice, it also allows them to pick weak and vulnerable elements of the Iraqi military, security, and police forces and often produce significant casualties. At the same time, in many areas they can use intimidation, threats, kidnappings, and selective murders and assassinations to paralyze or undercut Iraqi units. This means a comparatively small number of core insurgents can bypass or attack the developing Iraqi forces with considerable success.

Like the Iraqi Sunni Arab Insurgents, outside groups have also improved their ability to take advantage of the fact that media coverage of the fighting, particularly by Arab satellite television, provides a real time picture of what tactics and weapons work, what strikes have most media and political impact, and often what targets are vulnerable. This "Al Jazeera Effect" substitutes for many elements of a C⁴I system. At the same time, confronting this confusing array of threats is made more difficult without general Iraqi loyalty and stand-alone Iraqi forces.

These groups also pose a particular threat because they have no clear boundaries or limits. Iraq is a theater of operation for far broader causes, and a vision of Sunni Islam that rejects Shi'ites and even rejects Sunnis that dissent from the extremists. So far, such groups have generally been careful to avoid open splits with Shi'ite insurgents, and some even cooperated with Sadr and his militia. They have, however, carried out mass attacks and bombings on Shi'ites, and they have no natural limits on the means of violence against those they regard as enemies of Islam. If anything, they ultimately gain the most if the Sunni and Shi'ite worlds divide, if Iraq becomes the continuing scene of violence between the US and Arabs, if US forces remain tied down, and if their actions create as much regional instability as possible.

Hence, the January 30, 2005 election is the primary target for every Sunni insurgent movement. Insurgents fear that a relatively secure and successful election would cement Shi'ite dominance in Iraq and would signal the demise of both the Islamist and Ba'athist visions for the future of Iraq. On December 29, 2004, Ansar al-Sunna declared, "All polling stations and those in them will be targets for our brave soldiers."⁷⁰ Similarly, the

Islamic Army in Iraq warned in mid-January 2005, "Do not allow polling stations in your neighborhood because they put your lives in danger. Do not also interfere with the employees who work in these voting centers, as they will be killed. Keep away from these places as they will be attacked." On January 23, 2005, Zarqawi released an audiotape saying, "We have declared an all-out war on this evil principle of democracy and those who follow this wrong ideology."⁷¹

The Uncertain Status of the Shi'ites

The risk of civil war in Iraq seems limited, although it cannot be dismissed. Iraqi Arab Shi'ites resent the US presence, but most seem to realize that the fact they are 60% of the population will give them political dominance *if* Iraq is secure enough so that its new political system divides up power according to the size of given factions.

Moqtada al-Sadr now *seems* to be committed to participating in Iraq's political process. His Mehdi Army did, however, present a serious threat to Coalition and government forces in Najaf, in Sadr City in Baghdad, and in other Shi'ite areas in the south during much of the summer of 2004. Sadr's Mehdi Army continues to exist despite its apparent retreat from Najaf following the ceasefire negotiated by Sistani. It is widely believed to have reconstituted a large percentage of itself in the Baghdad slum of Sadr City. It has scarcely been disbanded or disarmed. In practice, Sadr's movement also controls Sadr City more than the government does, and is active in poorer Shi'ite areas throughout the country.

The Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and the faction of Abdul Aziz al-Hakim also have a powerful militias. Al Dawa, the Badr Corps, and the Iraqi Hezbollah remain potential security problems. Both Iraq's Sunni interim president, Ghazi al-Yahwar, and King Abdullah of Jordan have both sounded warnings about the risks of Shi'ite dominance in the January 30, 2005 elections and possible Iranian influence.⁷² These warnings may well be exaggerated. Iraqi Shi'ites are Iraqi nationalists, not tools of Iran, and neither Iraqi Shi'ite clerics – aside from the Sadr faction – nor most of the Shi'ite population support a clerical role in politics. The Shi'ite factions are also scarcely united. Sadr is believed to have been responsible for the assassination of Al Khoi right after the fall of Saddam Hussein and for the killing of Muhammad Bakr al-Hakim, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim's brother, in August 2003.

Yet, no one can predict how stable Iraq's political structure will be after the January 30, 2005 election. It is not clear that Sadr and other Shi'ite elements will hold together, or that other splits will not occur during 2005. Iraq must deal with forging and approving a constitution and with moving towards general elections at the end of the year without any clear picture of what political leaders, political parties, and power sharing arrangements will emerge in the process.

Shi'ite splits are possible, as are sectarian and ethnic splits, and these could put new burdens on Iraq's forces, and potentially paralyze or divide key elements, as was the case in Lebanon. What is more serious, however, is that Shi'ite politics might respond over time to constant Sunni insurgent bombings and attacks by striking back at the Sunnis, rather than seeking to include them. Shi'ite political leaders have generally been careful to avoid this so far, but the preaching in mosques has become more polarized, and popular tension is growing. Certainly, this fault line widens after attacks like the

bombings in Karbala and Najaf on December 20, 2004. These attacks demonstrate that some Sunni Arab and Islamist extremist insurgents are certain to continue to try to exploit the sectarian rift in as bloody and violent a form as possible.

The Kurds and Other Minorities

The two major Kurdish parties, the Barzani and Talibani factions, retain powerful militias. The Kurds represent a faction that is now considerably more powerful relative to other Iraqi factions in military and security terms than their 15% of the population. Iraqi security and stability depends on finding a power-sharing arrangement that gives the Kurds incentives to be part of the political process just as much as it does on developing such arrangements for the Arab Sunnis.

There is no reason such a compromise cannot be found. Unfortunately, however, Iraq has a long history of not finding it on any lasting basis. Saddam Hussein's legacy left many areas where Kurds were forcibly expelled and Sunni Arabs and minorities were given their homes and property.

There has already been serious tension in areas like Kirkuk and Mosul. There has also been some armed violence between Kurds, Arabs, and Turkomans, as well as struggles over "soft" ethnic cleansing in the North, and there may be more violence in the future. Many experts feel that the only reason Kirkuk has been relatively peaceful, and still has something approaching a representative government, is that the Kurds simply are not strong enough relative to the other factions in the city to impose their will by intimidation or force. There are serious tensions between the Kurd, the Turkomans, and Assyrian Christians, as well as between Kurds and Arabs.

Kurdish unity is always problematic. The Kurds have a saying that, "the Kurds have no friends." History shows that this saying should be, "the Kurds have no friends including the Kurds." The Barzani and Talibani factions have fought on several occasions, and at one point Barzani collaborated with Saddam Hussein when the latter sent troops into the area occupied by Talibani. Their present marriage of convenience has not unified the Kurdish controlled provinces in the north as much as divided them, and it could create future problems for both Kurdish political unity and any agreement on some form of autonomy.

At a local level, there are many small tribal elements as well as numerous "bodyguards." The majority is not hostile, but many could join the fighting if the conflict expands.

The Problems of Iran and Syria

Foreign countries also play a role. General George Casey, the commander of the MNF, is a US officer who has been careful not to exaggerate the threat of foreign interference. Nevertheless, Casey has warned that Syria has allowed Iraqi supporters of Saddam Hussein to provide money, supplies, and direction to Sunni insurgents, and continues to be a serious source of infiltration by foreign volunteers.⁷³

US officials and commanders acknowledge that Syria has made some efforts to improve its border security and reduce infiltration. Syria faces problems because its border forces are relatively weak, they lack training and equipment, and much of the border is only

demarcated by an earthen berm. Iraq also has comparatively few border posts and many isolated posts have been attacked and some have been destroyed or abandoned.⁷⁴

This illustrates a general problem for both Iraq and its neighbors. Iraq's borders total 3,650 kilometers in length. Its border with Iran is 1,458 kilometers, with Jordan 181 kilometers, with Kuwait 240 kilometers, with Saudi Arabia 814 kilometers, with Syria 605 kilometers, and with Turkey 352 kilometers. Most of these borders are desert, desolate territory, easily navigable water barriers, or mountains. Even Iraq's small 58-kilometer coastline is in an area with considerable small craft and shipping traffic and presents security problems.

Since insurgents do not need major shipments of arms, virtually anyone can go in and out moving money and small critical supplies, and volunteers can simply enter as ordinary visitors without equipment. US Customs and Border Protection officers are working to train their Iraqi counterparts and have had moderate success in detaining potential insurgents and arms suppliers, and in breaking up smuggling rings. Yet, even if Iraq's border forces were ready and its neighbors actively helped, border security would be a problem.

Both senior US and Iraqi officials feel that Syria has allowed senior ex-Ba'athist cadres to operate from Syria, helping to direct the Sunni insurgency. These seem to include top level officials under Saddam Hussein such as Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri, one of Saddam's Vice Presidents.

Iran certainly has an active presence in Iraq and has ties to several key Shi'ite political parties. King Abdullah of Jordan has gone so far as to charge that Iran is attempting to rig Iraq's election with up to 1,000,000 false registrations. Some senior Iraqi Interim Government officials clearly see Iran as a direct and immediate threat. The Iraqi Minister of Defense made the following points in a briefing on September 22, 2004:

- Iranian intervention and support of Sadr pose major threats; and some infiltration has taken place across the Syria border.
- Iran is behind Sadr. It uses Iranian pilgrims and sends arms, money, and drugs across border
- Iraq must have strong border defence forces. "If doors and windows are empty, no amount of cleaning will ever get rid of the dust."

In an unusual interview aired on Iraqi TV on January 14, 2005, Muayed Al-Nasseri, commander of Saddam Hussein's "Army of Muhammad," claimed that his group regularly received arms and money from both Syria and Iran. "Many factions of the resistance are receiving aid from the neighboring countries," he said. "We got aid primarily from Iran."⁷⁵ It should be noted, however, that most US and Iraqi officials view these claims with extreme scepticism.

Nevertheless, Prime Minister Allawi has repeatedly expressed his concern over Iran's actions, as have other senior officials. Iran has denied these charges, and American experts seem more concerned with the potential role Iran could play in any Iraqi civil conflict, or once a Shi'ite political majority takes office, than with direct Iranian support of a Shi'ite insurgency.

As General George Casey put it, "I don't see substantial Iranian influence on this particular government that will be elected in January. I see Iran as more of a longer-term

threat to Iraqi security...a long-term threat to stability in Iraq. If you look on the other side, I think Syria is a short-term threat, because of the support they provide to Ba'athist leaders operating inside and outside of Iraq."⁷⁶ The uncertainties surrounding Iran's role, however, can scarcely be ignored.

Inclusion versus Conflict

It is clear that much of the future nature of the insurgency in Iraq depends on the wisdom and pragmatism of Iraq's present and emerging political leaders over the course of the new year, and before, during, and after each of the three elections. So far, they have resisted polarization along ethnic and sectarian lines, but the future is anything but clear, particularly since Iraq is only really developing political leaders and parties. No one knows how a Shi'ite majority will behave or govern.

The key issues for Iraq are whether large numbers of Sunnis that are now neutral or hostile towards the Iraqi Interim Government can be persuaded to join in the political process, and whether some form of stable new balance of power can be found that will make Sunnis accept a political process dominated by the Shi'ites and where the Kurds and other minorities also play a role proportionate to their size. There cannot be a solution to the Sunni insurgency without a political solution that the vast majority of Sunnis at least tolerate and hopefully support.

At the same time, the Iraqi government must show it can actually govern at the local and regional level. The Iraqi military, security, and police forces must reach a level of critical mass where they are large enough to serve the country, large enough to take over most of the burden of maintaining security from the US. They must be effective enough to show that the new Iraqi government is not only legitimate in terms of politics but in terms of force. Political legitimacy is essential to good government, but no government can govern that lacks the force to ensure the security of its population and deal with insurgent and terrorist threats.

There also will almost certainly be at least another year of intensive fighting against Islamist and extreme elements that will reject inclusion in the political process almost regardless of what political system emerges during the coming elections. There are only three ways to deal with Iraq's most hard-line elements: Kill them, imprison them, or drive them out of the country. There is a very real war to fight, and it is still unclear when or if Iraqi forces will really be ready to fight it in anything like the total numbers required.

The Critical Importance of Effective Iraqi Military, Security, and Police Forces

Political and economic events also play a role in the insurgency, and reinforce the need for effective Iraqi forces. The Coalition's persistent inability to deliver a popular political message, its failures to use economic aid effectively, have continued to aid the insurgents. So have the problems in the governance efforts of the Interim Iraqi Government, and its persistent inability to follow up US and Iraqi tactical victories with effective governance, aid, and government activity in areas like Samarra, Mosul, and Fallujah.

The lack of highly visible Iraqi forces, and the fact that US occupiers have both won virtually every such victory and still dominate most security activity have also reinforced the image of a nation where fighting is done by foreigners, non-Muslims, and occupiers.

The end result has been that many Coalition and Iraqi Interim Government tactical victories produce a costly political and military backlash. Even successful military engagements can lead to the creation of as many new insurgents as they kill or capture. The lack of popular support means that many existing insurgents disperse with their weapons or bury their weapons and supplies for later retrieval.

To return to points made earlier, US and Coalition-dominated actions are seen as actions by "occupier" forces; they are a source of constant propaganda and fuel conspiracy theories. Real and imagined civilian casualties, collateral damage, and the impact on civilians and shrines that these engagements cause remain a constant problem.

All of these points reinforce the need to create larger and more effective Iraqi forces as soon as possible, and to give them full force protection and counterinsurgency capability. No one can argue that Iraqi forces can deal with the current level of insurgency and terrorism in the near future. The threat may not be quantifiable in net assessment terms, but it is all too clear that Iraqi forces will remain a fraction of what is needed through at least mid-2005 and probably deep into 2006. They also will not have airpower, significant armor, or modern IS&R support for years to come.

The nature of both the insurgency in Iraq and Iraqi politics makes it all too clear, however, that only Iraqi forces can minimize the anger and resentment at US forces, give the emerging Iraqi government legitimacy, and support efforts to make that government and the Iraqi political system more inclusive. It is also clear that even the segments of Iraqi society that tolerate Coalition forces as a necessity today want them out as quickly as is practical.

XI. Building the Future

There is no easy conclusion to this report. The reporting coming out of Iraq, and particularly MNSTC-I, is considerably more reassuring than the progress reporting that preceded it. The fact remains, however, that the US simply does not provide the basis to draw clear conclusions about the level of progress that is being made.

The trends in Iraqi forces since the fall of 2004 seem positive, but the steady cutbacks and censorship of US reporting makes it impossible to know the truth. US officials often complain about the fact the media does not give them sufficient credibility, but the other side of the coin is that they have not provided enough hard facts to earn such trust and their reporting has gotten worse – not better – with time.

This can be acutely seen when comparing the Iraq Weekly Status Sheets, released by the Department of State, from 19 January 2005 and 9 February 2005. The January sheet lists the manning numbers for 12 different branches of the military and security forces. It also illustrates those considered trained against the eventual number required. The February sheet, however, lists the manning numbers for only six far more general categories and stresses the overall number of trained Iraqi forces. Breakouts of each branch showing those Iraqis that have been trained versus the end manning requirement for each branch have been eliminated.

US experts in Iraq contend that their professed number of “trained and equipped” ISF is as accurate and honest as possible, but they do acknowledge problems in the methodology and standardization of their reporting. US officials hope to focus reporting on the number of trained and equipped units rather than individuals, for in their view, unit capacity and unit readiness are keys to a successful counterinsurgency. At this point, however, the Americans making unit assessments have very different perspectives, and there is insufficient standardization of assessment measures.

In brief, the US government needs to provide the following information on the Iraqi military, security, and police forces to show it has corrected the grave mistakes it made during the first year of the occupation and that the effort to create such forces has the necessary resources and is gathering the proper momentum:

- Plan for force development with well-defined goals and milestones.
- Breakouts of the frequency, location, and character of insurgent attacks and incidents.
- Reporting on Iraqi casualties and losses.
- Meaningful data on the training levels of Iraqi forces, and the size of combat capable elements.
- Updates on the equipment of Iraqi forces.
- Data on the adequacy of the facility effort.
- Accurate data on the status of Iraqi combat activity.
- Summary reporting on Iraqi desertions and defections, and abandonments.
- Meaningful data on the actual funding of the Iraqi security effort.

The present lack of information would be less disturbing if the US had shown earlier that it was providing all of the resources to create effective Iraqi forces, if it did not so consistently downplay the size or the insurgent threat, if it had not set a “dual standard”

that helped make Iraqi forces vulnerable and increased Iraqi casualties, and if it had not provided much of this data earlier in the fighting. It is also remarkably unconvincing to argue that such data are not available or particularly difficult to process in an era of advanced information technology.

Statements by General John Abizaid and Lieutenant-General David Petraeus on Iraqi Training in December 2004

Two senior US officers that have earned credibility have, however, made important statements about the level of progress in creating the forces Iraq needs. In a December 6, 2004 interview, Lieutenant-General David Petraeus, the Commander of MNSTC-I, was questioned about problems in training the Iraqi security and military forces. When pressed whether the problem with the security forces was low morale, infiltration, cowardice, leadership, or intimidation, Petraeus replied, "It's probably all of the above."⁷⁷

Petraeus made it clear, however, that he felt Iraqi security forces were improving despite setbacks like the dissolution of the Mosul police force in late November. He stated:

This is a rollercoaster that we are riding. You have to realize that every day there are going to be bumps, sometimes explosions, sometimes real plunges and the idea is to make darn sure you have got your eye on the horizon and you are still climbing with the rollercoaster over time. And I think that's the case.⁷⁸

US General John Abizaid, the Commander, U.S. Central Command, gave a press conference on December 6, 2004, and highlighted what he considered the achievements and problems within the Iraqi security and military forces. Gen. Abizaid raised the possibility of a reduction in the US troop presence in Iraq should the development of the Iraqi forces allow such a transfer to take place. He expressed concern over the level of militant activity and the apparent dissolution of the police force in Mosul. Commenting on the post-election environment in Iraq, Abizaid stated, "...If the circumstances are such that, as in Afghanistan, the political process leads to better security...and if the Iraqi security forces start to gel in terms of leadership and seasoning in important areas around the country – which I think will happen – then we can talk about reshaping [US] forces."⁷⁹ Abizaid stated that ideally US forces would take on the training of Iraqi security forces as their main mission with providing general security as a secondary mission, one to be undertaken on a lesser scale and when the Iraqis ask for assistance.

If training were to become the primary mission of the US forces in Iraq, Abizaid commented that the US might use less conventional forces and utilize "embedded" trainers and more special operations troops. When asked whether the Iraqi forces could assume more of the security missions by the Iraqi national election date, Abizaid replied:

Iraqi security forces aren't as mature as they need to be for the security environment that's going to exist in the next several months. That doesn't mean that they are not fighting and dying—they are. I think the mid-level chain of command has got to be developed at brigade and division levels in order for the armed forces to develop firmly.

Over time, they will get better. Their equipment is coming in; their organization is developing. I think the Army and National Guard units are going to be challenged over the next several months by an awful lot of fighting. They know it. We know it and what we've got to do is not risk their development by committing them at the wrong time to combat operations.

In places where there is lots of intimidation like Mosul, it's clear that the police are not holding together to the degree we would like them to, so, all these things taken into account make it pretty clear to me that it's a good move for commanders in Iraq to get additional forces to get through the election period. This is the single most important political event that's going to take place in Iraq since [sic] its liberation.⁸⁰

General Abizaid's comments came five days after Iraqi National Security Minister Dr. Qassim Dawood stated that security of the polling centers during the election would be the responsibility of the Iraqi security forces, and of Iraqi society more broadly, and that the US forces would only be called on if the centers faced a major attack.⁸¹ The US Department of Defense indicated that US troop levels would rise to 150,000 in Iraq to help provide security for the national election.

When questioned about Iraqi security force training, Abizaid stated:

"It's an intangible action that I'm not so sure I can predict. When do you reach the tipping point where Iraqi security forces are capable of standing alone without our backup? It will be awhile. I wouldn't want to make a prediction on when that's going to be."

"If Iraqi forces are capable of conducting more combat operations independently, the same levels of U.S. forces won't be necessary."

"You come to a point where the combat multinational portion of the force becomes secondary to the training effort."⁸²

NATO, UN, and Regional Forces are only a Limited Answer

The effort to create effective Iraqi forces is one that the US cannot delegate in any meaningful way; NATO can play a significant role in some aspects of training. There is no practical chance of significant numbers of additional European or NATO combat forces being added to the equation despite French concerns that the presence of NATO military trainers would open the door to combat troops.

The US Department of Defense announced on September 22, 2004, that NATO would provide further training to Iraqi security forces at the request of the Iraqi Interim Government. The training largely consists of the creation of a permanent training center at Ar Rustamiya to train mid-level and senior security personnel to face the ongoing challenges. NATO has selected US General David Petraeus to lead this effort.

NATO began its first eight-week training program for Iraqi security personnel on October 2. The course takes place at the Joint Warfare Center in Norway and currently involves the training of 19 mid and upper level Iraqi officials from the military, Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of the Interior.

On October 4, General James Jones, NATO's top commander, announced that up to 3,000 NATO troops could be involved in the training of the Iraqi security forces. The trainers, however, are unlikely to arrive prior to the Iraqi elections. Five days later, NATO committed to sending 300 trainers but not until the end of the year. This agreement was formalized on December 9, 2004, with Poland, Hungary, and the Netherlands agreeing to send military trainers. France, Belgium, Greece, Spain, and Luxembourg refused to send any trainers to Iraq. This 300-man team will slowly create academies in Baghdad and Zahko near Turkey. This effort should strengthen the inchoate Staff and War Colleges.

UN forces could be useful in a few selective roles. They could be used to provide direct security for UN and election personnel. If the international community does not do this task, the US or Iraqis will have to do it. It could consume up to a brigade in strength – there are some 20,000 polling areas – and the election period is not one when the US and Iraq will want to pull that size force from ongoing operations. It is doubtful that foreign forces would be able to guard the Iraqi elections or even a small number of UN election observers effectively.

The UN would be of little help militarily. It has no military forces and is unable to recruit different forces. The UN as a whole lacks the support needed for such a mission and it has no readiness to become involved in a counterinsurgency campaign.

Neighbouring countries are not a panacea either. They cannot provide the necessary combat-ready forces in a sustainable form. The presence of neighbouring countries' troops would present serious internal political liabilities. Troops from Iran could inflame the Shi'ite issue, Saudi Arabia is dealing with its own bout of insurgents, Syria would present Sunni and Ba'ath Party conflicts, Turkey would be problematic due to the Kurdish question, and Jordan is already doing what it can without openly supporting the US and inviting internal turmoil given the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Even if the Iraqi political repercussions were less severe, other Arab and Islamic forces cannot deploy with the necessary speed and lack the ability to sustain their forces in the field. Once more, such efforts would inevitably be seen as efforts to bail the US out of a war that had no public supporters. The domestic within these countries would be intense, to say the least.

Additional US and Coalition Troops are a Limited Answer as Well

Even the best possible elections cannot by themselves make the new Iraqi government legitimate in Iraqi eyes. Iraqis need to be seen as steadily taking over the security role. The visible US and Coalition presence will have to decrease and thousands of additional foreign troops would make such an effort very difficult.

Furthermore, the presence of more US and other Coalition military personnel in Iraq without the consummate area skills, experience, specialized abilities, and ability to provide effective training would be counterproductive. The more untrained and inexperienced forces on the street or in contact with Iraqis, the greater the hostility of the Iraqi people and the greater the likelihood of a tactical error that inflames the populace.

It is also important to note that the US is exhausting the ability to create, rotate, and retain the skilled forces that actually help in combat and specialized missions, and will soon have rotated a million men and women through Iraq – including those rotated more than once. This makes a good case for a larger worldwide pool of US forces. This would ease the strain of rotations and combat duties on the existing number of actives and reservists. A strong case can also be made for the ongoing efforts to reorganize the US army to create more combat units available for rapid deployment and for reorganizing all US forces in terms of training and structure to support asymmetric warfare, armed nation building, and stability operations.

However, increasing end-strength will take years to payoff in terms of providing the kind of forces needed in Iraq, and it cannot in any way get around the fact that Americans are seen as occupiers more than as allies, and that Iraqis will become increasingly hostile until Iraqi forces largely replace at least the visible day-to-day presence of US security forces and can at least take the lead in combat operations.

For Iraqis and by Iraqis

Clearly, the critical variable is the ability and willingness of Iraqi military and security forces to largely – if not totally – replace US and other Coalition forces no later than the end of 2006. As earlier noted, it has been clear since mid-2003 that Iraqis bitterly resent US domination of the military security effort, and polls in 2004 put hostility at well above the 80% level. At the same time, poll after poll shows that Iraqis see physical security as the most important single issue in their lives, followed by economic and educational security. The solution is to create strong Iraqi military security forces as soon as possible, and to keep up the effort regardless of any near term problems and reversals. This either has to be made to work or Iraq does exactly equal Vietnam: Coalition military victories become irrelevant.

General George W. Casey Jr., the top US commander in Iraq, spoke to this point in late January 2005. He stated:

Can I sit here and look you in the eye and say that the Iraqi security forces, guaranteed 100 percent, are going to be able to defeat this insurgency themselves? Of course not....[But] we cannot stay here forever in the numbers that we are here now; I firmly believe that. The Iraqis have to take ownership of this.⁸³

US experts in Iraq point to the success of the January 30, 2005 election as evidence of their progress in training Iraqi security forces. According to these American experts, some 130,000 ISF performed well on election day, securing over 5,200 polling sites with two rings of security. Many of these forces came on line as late as December 2004 and January 2005. US officials admit that many of these forces are not prepared to directly confront the insurgents, but they feel that the training effort is moving in the right direction. According to Americans on the ground, Iraqis are increasingly training Iraqis, almost exclusively so on the military side.

The US has corrected some aspects of its initial mistakes, but it may be moving too slowly in creating forces that can provide real security and deal with the insurgency problem. There are serious tradeoffs in force quality if the training, force building, and equipment effort is rushed. The end result could be a failed force. At the same time, the US must work out longer term plans and force goals with the Iraqi Interim Government that go far beyond 28,000 man armed forces, and the roughly 90,000- to 100,000-man total of military, paramilitary, and National Guard that are currently planned. This may well mean scaling up a much larger training and equipment program over time.

Changes in Strategy?

As the US and Coalition forces prepared for the January 30 election, there were strong hints that the US strategy and military role in Iraq could be under review.

Lieutenant General John R. Vines, the commander of the 18th Airborne Corps, is scheduled to assume command of US ground forces in Iraq in February 2005. In an

interview, Vines asserted that the main mission for the US military following the January 30th elections will be to train Iraqi military and security forces. To this end, Vines suggested that up to 10,000 US military advisers could be assigned to Iraqi military and police units.⁸⁴ The commander of US forces in northern Iraq, Brig. Gen. Carter Ham, stated that, “The shifting of emphasis to developing Iraqi security forces as the first priority seems right. Shifting primary responsibility for conduct of counter-insurgency operations to Iraqi forces is necessary and proper.”⁸⁵

These advisers may be drawn from forces not yet deployed in Iraq, effectively meaning that US personnel levels may increase by 10,000 soldiers, though up to 50% of US forces in Iraq could be shifted to take on a training role.⁸⁶ The advisers would have the ability to call for US air support and backup forces and would have access to US intelligence. It is important to note that the number of advisers suggested by Vines is higher than what was previously reported.⁸⁷ Up until now, an Army Reserve Unit from Rochester, New York, the 98th Training Division, has been the main body from which advisers have been drawn.⁸⁸

The creation and roles of these advisers would, in the words of several military commanders, represent “a sea change in methods.”⁸⁹ The establishment of these advisers would take into account the lessons learned in Afghanistan and would seek to address a paucity of mid-level Iraqi leadership in Iraq’s forces, especially the military. Gen. John Abizaid indicated in an interview in late January that he felt that close relationships between US forces and indigenous troops made efforts in Afghanistan more successful than those in Iraq. He commented that embedded advisers could foster a similar relationship, likely improving efforts to strengthen Iraq forces.

It does not appear likely, however, that a similar program will be put in place for the Iraqi police. This is significant as the Iraq police are under constant harassment and intimidation and units have completely dissolved in Samarra and Mosul when put under pressure. An adviser program for the Iraqi military, while potentially beneficial, would not address this problem.

Perhaps the most significant indication that US strategy in Iraq could be changing is the announcement that retired four-star General Gary Luck has been appointed to lead an assessment of US operations in Iraq. The Department of Defense stated that the purpose of General Luck’s mission is to examine the efforts to strengthen the Iraqi security and military forces. Some reports suggest that Luck’s mandate may be far more wide-ranging, extending to an evaluation of the entire US strategy in Iraq, though the Defense Department ardently denies this.⁹⁰

In her Senate confirmation testimony, Condoleezza Rice described General Luck’s mission and the progress of Iraqi security forces. She stated:

We think that, among those people, there clearly continue to be questions about on-duty time, that is, people who don’t report for duty. And so this is being looked at. We are trying to provide for some of these units mentors who can help, trying to provide leadership from the Iraqis themselves that can help these people. But this is the reason Gary Luck has gone out, at Secretary Rumsfeld’s direction, to take a hard look at the training program to see what General Petraeus...what he’s been able to achieve; to work with the Iraqis to address some of these problems of leadership and morale and desertion in the armed forces and in the police forces; and to look at some of the equipping of the police forces.⁹¹

It is not yet clear what impact General Luck's team or Lt. Gen. Vines' assumption of command will have on Iraqi security and military force training. It is clear, however, that the Department of Defense has realized that it is vital to put an Iraqi face on the security and military missions. Utilizing embedded US troops as opposed to entire US units jointly patrolling with Iraqi troops is likely to lower the US profile and quell a degree of the anti-American sentiment. As of now, the Iraqis take part in about 1,200 patrols with US forces a week, while US-led Coalition forces lead 12,000 patrols a week.⁹² The Department of Defense wants the Iraqis to assume the bulk of those patrols as quickly as possible.

Early reports indicate that Gen. Luck is satisfied with the progress Lt. Gen. Petraeus has made. One unattributed defense official was quoted as saying, "Luck's assessment in general is that he feels the commanders have a plan, Petraeus is having an impact, and these forces have a good crack at becoming more and more capable over time."⁹³

Opportunities and Recommendations in the Security Area

Creating effective Iraqi forces is not an end in itself. As has been said at the start of this paper, it is only one of six critical steps:

- Establishing a pluralistic Iraqi government capable of both governing and providing security to the people of Iraq, and finding a new balance of political power acceptable to Arab Shi'ite, Arab Sunni, the Kurds, Turkomans, and other minorities. Must be capable of effective governance at the local, regional, and national level.
- Creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces capable of bringing security to the entire country, of eventually replacing all Coalition forces, and capable of conducting effective operations while winning the support of the vast majority of the Iraqi people.
- Providing effective aid, debt and reparations relief, and Iraqi economic reform efforts that – coupled with effective security – move the nation back on the path to stable economic development where wealth and economic growth are distributed in ways that meet the needs of all of Iraq's people.
- Developing a new national consensus that legitimizes Iraq's post Saddam government and social structure, and that can find a "golden mean" between the different goals and expectations of its different ethnic and religious elements. In so doing, it may be helpful to ensure that at least part of Iraqi oil revenues are classified as national property — as opposed to the property of provincial governments — to be distributed throughout the country, especially to Sunni dominated regions with very little oil reserves.
- Finding a new balance of relationships with Iraq's neighbors that will ensure that they do not threaten Iraq, or interfere in its affairs, while making it clear that Iraq no longer poses a threat to any neighboring state.
- Preventing the establishment of terrorist enclaves within Iraqi borders which would challenge the rule of law, continue to threaten the nascent government, and provide terrorists a base within striking distance of allies and important oil-related sites.

Building effective Iraqi military and security forces is only one of the elements necessary to implementing a successful strategy in Iraq – one that can meet both US strategic needs and the needs of the Iraqi people. It is, however, an element that is critical to the creation of a legitimate government in Iraq, and to establishing the stability and security vital to Iraq's political and economic development.

The report has documented a tragic US failure to develop and implement such a strategy during the first year of the US occupation in Iraq. It is a failure to understand the strategic situation in Iraq and the realities of Iraqi politics. It is a failure at every level to prepare for a coordinated US effort at nation building. It is a failure by the US military to prepare for the military aspects of stability operations, and by the US State Department to recognize the need to create effective police forces. It is a failure to react to the growing reality of the insurgency in Iraq and for the need for Iraqi military, security, and police forces that could be true partners in fighting that threat.

The end result was to leave many Iraqi forces without anything approaching adequate organization, training, equipment, and facilities. For political and other reasons, the Administration, CPA, and US command emphasized quantity over quality to the point where unprepared Iraqis were sent out to die. The end result was far more of an abuse of the troops concerned than any shortfalls in providing suitable equipment to US forces.

The other side of this story, however, is the series of changes in the way the US is preparing Iraqi forces that have taken place since the spring of 2004, and that may well correct these mistakes and create the kind of Iraqi forces that are vital to both Iraq's future and any successful reductions in US forces and US withdrawals from Iraq. It is not clear that these steps can overcome the legacy of past neglect and failure, but they do offer serious hope if the Administration, the US Congress, and the US military fully recognize and support the US training mission and Iraq's evolving military, security, and police forces.

The Need for Specific Changes in US Policy and Actions

This report has shown that US and the Iraqi governments have made significant progress since the summer of 2004. Effective Iraqi forces are now taking the field and some have proven themselves in combat. If the US is to be properly effective in carrying out this mission, however, there is still much to be done. If Iraqi military, security, and police forces are to be created at anything like the levels of strength and competence that are required, the US needs to take – or reinforce – the following steps:

US POLICY PRIORITIES

- Accept the fact that success in Iraq is dependent on US ability to create effective Iraqi police, security, and counterinsurgency forces as soon as possible, and that this a top priority mission. US forces can win every clash and encounter and still decisively lose the war after the war.
- Make it fully clear to the Iraqi people and the world that the US recognizes that Iraqis must both replace US and Coalition forces in visibility and eventually take over almost all missions.
- Keep reiterating that the US will set no deadlines or fixed limits on its military effort, and will support Iraq until it is ready to take over the mission and the insurgents are largely defeated.
- Make it clear that the US and Britain will not maintain post insurgency bases in Iraq, and that they will stay only as long as the Iraqi government requests and needs their support.
- Accept the need for a true partnership with the Iraqis and for giving them the lead and ability to take command decisions at the national, regional, and local levels as soon as they are ready. Make nation building real.
- Accept the reality that the US cannot find proxies to do its work for it. NATO may provide token aid in training, but will not provide major aid or training on the required scale. Other countries may provide politically useful contingents, but US, British, and Iraqi forces must take all major

action. Stop provoking a pointless confrontation within NATO over levels of troops and training aid that the US simply will not get. Concentrate on the mission at hand.⁹⁴

PRIORITIES FOR IRAQI FORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Develop a coherent and practical plan for creating the kind of Iraqi forces that can stand on their own and largely or fully replace Coalition forces as independent units. Implement the plan as quickly as possible. Give Iraqi military, security, and police forces the equipment and facilities they need to take on insurgents without US or other support and reinforcement.
- Implement General Luck's plan to strengthen Iraqi forces with large numbers of US advisors as soon as possible, but clearly plan to phase out advisors and eliminate Iraqi dependence on such advisors as soon as is practicable.
- Keep constant pressure on the Iraqi government to improve its effectiveness at the central, regional, and local level in supporting Iraqi forces and in providing aid and governance efforts that match the deployment and mission priorities of the security and police forces. Push the Iraqi government towards unified and timely action, towards promoting competence and removing incompetent personnel.
- Prepare and execute a transition plan to help the new Iraqi government that emerges out of the January 30, 2005 elections understand the true security priorities in the country, and ensure it acts as effectively as possible in developing effective governance and efforts to create Iraqi forces.
- Resist US and Iraqi government efforts to rush force development in ways that emphasize quantity over quality, and continue the focus on leadership, creating effective units, and ensuring that training and equipment are adequate to the task.
- Make efforts to ensure that the ethnic and religious makeup of all facets of the Iraqi military and security forces are ethnically and religiously diverse to prevent any one group or religion from feeling persecuted by the rest.
- Pay careful attention to the merger of the Army and National Guard, which risks creating a larger and lower quality force, rather than the effective forces that are needed.
- Focus on the importance of political security. Security for both Iraqi governance and Iraqi elections must come as soon and as much as possible from Iraqi forces. Iraqi forces will not be ready to undertake such missions though mid 2005 and probably well into 2006, but they must be given the highest possible visibility in the roles where they are most needed. They will not be ready for the January 30, 2005 election, but careful planning will be necessary to make them ready for the Constitutional referendum, and full national election at the end of 2005.
- Create command, communications, and intelligence systems that can tie together the Iraqi, US, and British efforts, and that will give the new Iraqi government and forces the capability they need once the US leaves.
- Make the supporting economic aid effort as relevant to the counterinsurgency campaign as possible, and link it to the development of Iraqi government and security activity effort in the field. The aid effort must become vastly more effective in insurgent and high threat areas. One of the most senior officers pointed out as early as mid-2003 that, "Dollars are more effective than bullets. Physical security is only a prelude to economic security."
- Take a much harder look at the problems in Iraqi governance at the central, regional, and local level. Force the issue in ensuring suitable Iraqi government coordination, responsiveness and action. Tie aid carefully to the reality of Iraqi government civil efforts to put government in the field and follow-up military action with effective governance.
- Carefully review US military doctrine and guidance in the field to ensure that Iraqi forces get full force protection from US commanders, and suitable support, and that USA forces actively work with, and encourage, Iraqi units as they develop and deploy.

- Reexamine the present equipment and facilities program to see if it will give all elements of Iraqi forces the level of weapons, communications, protection, and armor necessary to function effectively in a terrorist/insurgent environment. Ensure a proper match between training, equipment, facilities, and US support in force protection.
- Provide full reporting on Iraqi casualties and not simply US and Coalition forces. Fully report on the Iraqi as well as the US role in press reports and briefings. Treat the Iraqis as true partners and give their sacrifices the recognition they deserve.

THE NEED FOR CREDIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

- Start talking honestly about the threat. Admit the scale of Iraqi Sunni insurgency efforts. Be honest about the scale and nature of the foreign threat, and the complex mix of groups involved, rather than placing too much emphasis on Al Qaeda. Provide objective reporting on the role of outside powers like Iran and Syria, without exaggeration.
- Provide public and honest weekly reporting. Use transparency to force the issues so no one can delay or hide a future lack of progress. Prove to the Iraqi people, the American people and Congress that there is real and not simply cosmetic success.
- Provide honest data on the Iraqi training effort that distinguishes serious training from token training.
- Provide similar data on facilities and equipment. Map the areas where such aid has been fully provided, and Iraqi forces have taken over the mission. Substitute frankness and transparency for propaganda.
- Force accountability on the system. Ruthlessly demand that all contract terms be met, make it clear that contract disputes will not be tolerated, and take the trouble to fire any US military and federal employees who delay contract and aid efforts.

Many serious problems remain in every aspect of the Iraqi force development program, but the more one considers the history of this program as described in this report, the more it is clear that pursuing the right program consistently and with the right resources can succeed.

The Broader Lessons for US Policy and Planning

At the same time, the analysis in this report shows that the US has broader lessons to learn. It is difficult to review the data in this report without concluding that the US failed the Iraqi people and the Iraqi forces it was trying to create for more than a year. These failures were partly failures driven by inexperience and by the wrong kinds of planning and doctrine.

The US military was unprepared at the senior command level for counterinsurgency, and especially for serious partnership and interoperability with the new Iraqi forces it was seeking to create. The civil aid effort was organized around creating the wrong kind of police forces for a kind of nation building that could only take place in a far more permissive environment. Creating effective police and security forces for high-risk environments is a mission for which the State Department and USAID are unprepared and which should be part of an integrated effort linking the creation of effective military, security, and police forces.

No one who talked to the US advisors who served in the field from the earliest days of the advisory mission to the present can have anything other than respect for what they

tried to do, and for their deep concern for the forces they were training. The advisory teams saw the Iraqis as both partners and as people.

At higher levels, however, the US government and the US military were slow to react, focusing on US forces and US priorities. The end result was that the US effectively exploited a situation where Iraqis had no economic choice other than to volunteer, and the US sent them unprepared into the field. The fact these forces then had failure after failure was inevitable, and the fact that some died as a result of US incompetence and neglect was the equivalent of bureaucratic murder. The men did not fail the system; the system failed the men.

The US now has every possible incentive to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces. This is the only practical way to “win” in Iraq, cut the size of US commitments, and establish a government the Iraqis see as legitimate. The US certainly understands this at the command level in Iraq and in MNSTC-I, and seems to now understand it at the policy and command level in Washington as well.

What is not clear is whether all the necessary resources are really being provided, and whether a comprehensive and realistic plan exists to ensure that Iraqi military, security, and police forces develop as they should. General Luck’s plan to strengthen Iraqi forces with American advisors is a useful step, but only if it leads to Iraqi forces that become fully independent and which can replace US and other Coalition forces. As yet, there is no strategy or plan that shows the US will give Iraqi forces the heavier equipment they need to fight and survive, the facilities they need to be protected, the communications required, or any of the other essential tools that will create truly independent and self-sufficient forces. Such a plan is the sine qua non of any effective US strategy and plan for Iraq. The fact it still does not exist in any public form – if at all -- is a devastating indictment of US leadership and credibility,

The problem is not simply American. Major problems have emerged in the inability of the Iraqi Interim Government to follow up on US and Iraqi military and security efforts and to establish effective governance in the field. The reprogramming of US aid to serve military and security interests is a vital start, but it is totally unclear that a broader plan exists to recast the US economic aid effort to achieve the security and stability that is a critical precondition to longer term aid efforts.

The US not only needs a workable strategy and plan for the development of Iraqi forces that can operate independently and replace US and other Coalition forces as soon as is feasible, it needs one that is integrated into an overall plan for every aspect of US military, advisory, and aid activity in Iraq. This is another key lesson of the US experience in both Afghanistan and Iraq. No one can ignore the ad hoc nature of day-to-day reality, but this is no excuse for not being able to tie all US government efforts together around some common Interagency effort and maintain a focus on a common plan and strategy.

Finally, the history of the US effort to create Iraqi forces is a warning that Americans at every level need to think about what alliance and interoperability really mean in creating allied forces for this kind of nation building and warfare. Iraq is only one example of how vital a role such forces must play in many forms of asymmetric warfare. What is equally clear is that Americans must understand that they have a moral and ethical responsibility

to the forces they are creating, and are not simply creating a useful expedient. The only truly important force numbers in this report count men, not things or dollars.

Appendix A

Chronology of Events Involving Iraqi Security Forces*

May 23, 2003—Paul Bremer issues Order No. 2, The Dissolution of Entities, dissolving the old Iraqi armed forces.

September 12—US troops of the 82nd Airborne Division accidentally kill ten Iraqi policemen in the city of Fallujah. Fallujah's residents promise a wave of violence against US troops.

October 2003—Estimates indicate that the Iraqi security forces will number some 170,000.

October 9—A car laden with explosives slams into a Baghdad police station. Ten Iraqis are killed.

October 27—The headquarters of the Red Crescent and three Baghdad police stations are hit in the same day by four coordinated suicide bombs. 43 die and more than 200 wounded in the bloodiest day since the fall of Hussein's government.

November 2003—Estimates for the necessary manning of the Civil Defense Corps rise from 25,000 to 40,000 troops. Estimates for the necessary manning of the Border Police rise from 11,800 to 25,700.

November 4—US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld states that over 100,000 Iraqi security forces have been trained.

December 14—17 Iraqis are killed when a suicide car bomber runs into a police station near Baghdad.

January 25, 2004—Iraqi policemen in Ramadi are attacked on two separate occasions. Seven Iraqi police die.

January 31—9 Iraqis are killed and 43 others wounded when a suicide bomber runs his car into a police station in Mosul.

February 10—55 Iraqis are killed and approximately 65 are wounded when a car bomb explodes outside a police station in Iskandariya. Many of the dead were applying for jobs as policemen. When the Iraqi police chief, Ahmed Ibrahim, arrives, the gathered crowd nearly riots while chanting anti-American slogans.

February 11—A gathering of Iraqi Army recruits are attacked in central Baghdad by a suicide car bomber. 47 are killed and at least 50 more wounded.

February 14—Approximately 70 insurgents stage a daring raid on the headquarters of both the police and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps in Fallujah in a bid to free many of their cohorts. Up to 70 prisoners escape and a number were seen fleeing with the insurgents. 15 policemen and four Lebanese and Iranian insurgents were killed.

February 23—A car bomb detonates outside of a Kirkuk police station, killing at least ten and wounding more than 35 Iraqis.

March 9—Two American CPA officials and their Iraqi translator are killed intentionally by Iraqi policemen 70 miles south of Baghdad. These are the first American civilian deaths in Iraq.

March 23—In Kirku and Hilla, 11 Iraqi policemen are shot and killed in two separate attacks.

April 2004—Available Iraqi Army forces drop from 5,600 to 2,400. The available Civil Defense Forces drop from 34,700 to 23,100.

April 5—US Marines lay siege to Fallujah following the murder and desecration of four American security contractors in the city. Several Iraqi battalions refuse to fight in either Fallujah or Sadr City.

April 21—Several suicide bombs explode outside of a number of police facilities in the area of Basra. Crowds assault the Coalition forces trying to reach the wounded with stones. At least 68 are killed by the bombs.

April 30—The siege of Fallujah ends at the urging of Iraqi politicians. The Fallujah Brigade, a cobbled-together militia led by former Iraqi army officers, is formed to rid the city of foreign fighters.

May 7—Four Iraqi police officers are killed when their squad car is ambushed by insurgents in Mosul.

June 6—A police station and military base around Baghdad are bombed—21 Iraqis are killed in the attacks.

June 10—Moqtada al-Sadr's Mehdi Army takes control of a Najaf police station in direct violation of the ceasefire agreement between Sadr and the US. Sadr's forces free the prisoners and loot the station.

June 14—Multiple suicide bombings aimed at Iraqi police kill dozens of civilians in Baghdad.

June 17—41 are killed and approximately 142 are injured when suicide car bombers detonate outside a military recruitment center and a city council building in Baghdad.

June 24—Sunni insurgents launch a series of coordinated attacks on Iraqi security forces in Fallujah, Baghdad, Mosul, Ramadi, and Baquba. At least 70 Iraqis are killed.

July—The Civil Defense Corps disbands and is replaced by the National Guard. The Intervention Force is established with an end manning goal of 6,600. The Special Operations Force is established with an end manning goal of 1,600 troops. The Coastal Defense Force is established with an end manning goal of 400 as is the Air Corps, with an end manning goal of 500.

July 16—Australia deploys the Iraqi Army Training Team consisting of 50 soldiers with the task of training a full brigade of Iraqi soldiers.

July 28—A car bomb kills 70 Iraqis outside of a police recruiting center in Baquba.

August—US marines arrest the Al Anbar Province's police chief, on charges of corruption.

August 3—Insurgent attacks in Baquba, Baghdad, and the Al Anbar Province kill six US troops and approximately three Iraqi National Guardsmen.

September—Prime Minister Allawi and President Bush both state that there are 100,000 fully trained and equipped Iraqis providing security in Iraq. NATO ambassadors agree to send 200 trainers to help rebuild the Iraqi army. The First Infantry Division arrests a senior commander of the Diyala Province's Iraqi National Guard, alleging that he maintained ties to insurgents. The end manning goal of the Iraqi National Guard increases from 41,000 to 61,900 as does the end manning goal for Border Enforcement, from 16,300 to 32,000. The end manning goal for the Iraqi police increases from 90,000 to 135,000.

September 6—7 US soldiers and three Iraqi soldiers are killed by a car bomb outside of Fallujah.

September 10—The Fallujah Brigade disbands without having secured the city. A small riot breaks out as people leave a mosque. Iraqi police fire into the crowd killing two people and injuring five. Aides to al-Sadr claim that the dead and injured were unarmed.

September 14—12 policemen are killed in Baquba by a drive by shooter. 47 Iraqis are killed and 114 are wounded by a car bomb outside a military recruitment area. The recruits were forced to stand outside blast absorbing concrete barriers. The ensuing crowd curses the US and blames US warplanes for the attack. Elements associated with Abu Musab Zarqawi claim credit for both attacks.

September 17—13 are killed by a suicide car bomb near a police checkpoint in Baghdad.

September 18—A suicide car bomb kills 19 and wounds 67 more in Kirkuk. The bomber targeted a crowd of young men seeking employment with the Iraqi National Guard.

September 19—A car bomb aimed at a joint Iraqi-US patrol near Samarra kills one Iraqi soldier, one Iraqi civilian, and wounds seven others.

September 21—An insurgent abandons a car loaded with explosives near the Iraqi National Guard recruiting center in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad. No one was hurt.

September 22—The Iraqi National Guard center in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad is hit by a suicide car bomb that kills at least 11 and wounded an unknown number. Recruits had gathered around the center and were apparently the target.

September 23—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld testifies that since May 1, 2003, 721 Iraqi personnel have died providing their country with security.

September 25—Seven Iraqi National Guard applicants die in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad at the hands of insurgents. A US army soldier faces 25 years in jail for his part in the death of an Iraqi National Guardsman in Adwar in May. An Iraqi police captain, Salman Turki al-Shamani, is killed by insurgents near Baquba.

September 26—Two suicide car bombers try to drive into a base used by US Marines and Iraqi National Guardsmen in Karma, near Fallujah. When challenged, they detonate the cars. No injuries are reported.

October—The Highway Patrol and the Dignitary Protection service are established with end manning goals of 1,500 and 500 men each.

October 1—3,000 US and 2,000 Iraqi forces launch an assault on the approximately 500 militants controlling the city of Samarra, an area 60 miles north of Fallujah. Estimates now indicate that the Iraqi security forces will need to number some 346,700 men, double the estimate from October 2003.

October 4—General James Jones, NATO's commander, announces that up to 3,000 NATO troops could be involved in the training of Iraqi security forces. US and Iraqi forces take Samarra, killing 100 militants. Iraqi units fight with distinction and capture 24 suspected foreign fighters. Three car bombs, two in Baghdad and one in the west, kill at least 26 people and wound more than 100 others. Iraqi security forces fight a gun battle in downtown Baghdad after one of the blasts. One of the suicide bombers rams a recruiting center for Iraqi plainclothes policemen.

October 5—An estimated 3,000 US and Iraqi troops begin a campaign designed to wrest control of insurgent-held areas of the Babil Province. Iraqi Special Forces play a prominent role in the subsequent raids.

October 6—A suicide bomber drives an explosives-laden vehicle into an Iraqi checkpoint at the Iraqi national guard encampment near Anah, 160 miles northwest of Baghdad. Approximately 1,200 members of the 202nd Iraqi National Guard, 7th Army Battalion, and 1st Ministry of Interior commando battalion are designated to stay in Samarra. The governor pledges to send 1,500 additional police officers.

October 9—11 Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed and six others injured during an insurgent attack on the National Guard compound located in Karabilah, near the Syrian border. NATO declares its commitment to sending 300 military trainers to Iraq after stiff resistance, especially from France. The program is unlikely to be in place until the end of the year.

October 10—Iraqi National Guardsmen assist in a border operation that results in the deaths of two insurgents or smugglers. At least 10 Iraqis die in explosions near the oil ministry and police academy.

October 12—In Ramadi, a joint force of US and Iraqi troops arrests a Sunni cleric, Sheik Abdul Aleem Saïdy, and his son. Iraqi police in Sadr City continue buying heavy weapons from al-Sadr's militia forces.

October 15—A suicide car bomber narrowly misses a unit of Iraqi police on patrol, killing 10 bystanders.

October 19—Four Iraqi national guardsmen are killed and 80 are injured in a mortar attack 80 miles north of Baghdad. Insurgents unsuccessfully try to assassinate Col. Mohamed Essa Baher, the commander of the 507th Iraqi National Guard Battalion. Baher had identified a financier allegedly a part of the Zarqawi terror network the day before the attack.

October 23—Three minibuses filled with 49 Iraqi recruits for the 16th Iraqi Army Battalion, 7th Army Brigade are ambushed by insurgents dressed as Iraqi police. All 49, as well as 3 accompanying civilians, are killed. The ambush takes place as the recruits leave a training base in Kirkush, 15 miles

from the Iranian border and northeast of Baghdad. This is the singlemost deadly insurgent ambush to date. Several Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed by a car bomb at a checkpoint south of Samarra. At least four are killed. Another car bomb kills between 10 and 16 Iraqi policemen at a checkpoint outside of the Marine base in Al Asad in the Anbar Province.

October 25—An Iraqi national security aide declares that up to 5% of Iraq's security forces are most likely infiltrated by insurgents.

October 26—Prime Minister Allawi blames the US and its Coalition allies for the massacre of the 49 Iraqi army recruits. Iraq's interior minister, Falah al-Naqib, announces a new campaign to rid the police force of corrupt and ineffective members. The militant group, the Army of Ansar al-Sunna, claims responsibility for the murder of 11 Iraqi National Guardsmen it had captured on the road between Hilla and Baghdad.

October 28—Two senior Iraqi police officers are killed near Latifiya, south of Baghdad, allegedly by the Army of Ansar al-Sunna.

October 30—Iraqi police officers allegedly fired indiscriminately on civilians after an attack on an American convoy south of Baghdad. Reportedly, the police direct their fire on three minibuses and three vans, killing 14 and wounding 10.

November 2—A car bomb intended for an Iraqi security convoy kills four Iraqi civilians and wounds 12 Iraqi National Guardsmen in Mosul. NATO begins its first eight-week training course for security personnel at its Joint Warfare Centre in Norway. 19 mid to high-level officials from the Iraqi military, Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of the Interior attend.

November 3—Three decapitated bodies of Iraqi National Guardsmen are found underneath the 14th of July Bridge in Baghdad. A group calling itself the Brigades of the Iraqi Honorables claims responsibility for killing the three men. Ansar al-Sunna posts pictures of another decapitation on the Internet, claiming that the victim is Maj. Hussein Shanoun, an officer in the new Iraqi army.

November 6—More than 15 Iraqi police officers are killed by a series of closely coordinated assaults against police stations in Samarra. In addition, an Iraqi National Guard Commander, Abdel Razeq Shaker Garmali, is among those killed in Samarra.

November 7—Insurgents launch an attack against a police station in the town of Haditha, taking 21 policemen hostage. The insurgents kill all of them execution-style. In another attack on a police station in the town of Haqlaniya, insurgents kill the head of security in western Iraq, Brigadier Shaher al-Jughafi. Unknown gunmen kill Iraqi police Col. Abdul Adim Abed in the Mualmeen neighborhood of Baquba. The director of security in Sulaimaniyah, Brigadier Sarkout Hassan Jalal, claims that Islamic militants regularly smuggle recruits from Iran into Iraq and on to Fallujah and other "hotspots." The Iraqi government declares a state of emergency for 60 days with the exception of the northern Kurdish regions. The declaration coincides with the beginning stages of an assault on the restive city of Fallujah. Iraqi commandos from the 36th Iraqi Commando Battalion supported by US Marines take control of Fallujah's main hospital just prior to the declaration.

November 8—The battle for Fallujah begins. Approximately 10,000 US troops and 2,000 Iraqi forces confront 3,000 to 5,000 insurgents. Iraqi commandos seize a hospital and a railway station. The hospital was the focal point of erroneous casualty reports following the first assault on Fallujah.

November 9—Two police stations in Baquba are attacked. One police officer is killed and eight are wounded. Reportedly, the police stand their ground and fight well. Elsewhere, a suicide car bomb strikes an Iraqi National Guard base north of Kirkuk, killing at least three. Prime Minister Allawi visits Camp Fallujah and gives a speech in front of the assembled Iraqi forces. The prime minister's speech is met with praise and cheers.

November 10—Insurgents loot and strip an Iraqi National Guard base in the town of Hammam al-Alil. The National Guard battalion stationed there falls apart when attacked, leaving the base, armory and all, to the militants. Two members of the Iraqi security forces are reported killed in action in Fallujah. Prime Minister Ayad Allawi places Maj. Gen. Abdul Qader Mohammed Jassim, the Iraqi ground forces commander in Fallujah, in control of the Western Anbar province until a civilian authority can

be appointed. In Fallujah, the 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force begins operations against the insurgents in Fallujah on its own and controls one part of the city by itself. The 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade aids US forces in bringing the Hydra Mosque under control. The 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, and the Iraqi Police Service's Emergency Response Unit see action. The 5th Battalion, 3rd Brigade helps US forces subdue insurgents in the Al Tawfiq Mosque. The 6th Battalion, 3rd Brigade mans vehicle checkpoints with US forces in the heart of Fallujah.

November 11—An Iraqi police vehicle and an American convoy are attacked by a suicide car bomber in central Baghdad. Nineteen people are killed. In Mosul, reports indicate that insurgents openly roam the streets and repeatedly attack police stations and government facilities. The insurgents, numbering between 400 and 500, split into groups of 15-20 to carry out attacks. Several police stations are burned to the ground despite pleas from imams via mosque loudspeakers. Insurgents seize control of six to seven police stations for the better part of an hour. When they are repelled, the fighters seize vehicles, weapons, body armor, radios, and uniforms. One senior police officer, the brother of Mosul's police chief, is shot dead in his front yard. Fighters attack the Iraq Media Network. Brigadier General Carter Ham, commander of Task Force Olympia, states that he has never seen the level of command and control exhibited by the insurgents prior to today. Ten Iraqi National Guard troops die in the fighting. In response, US soldiers and members of the Iraqi National Guard raid southern portions of the city. In Fallujah, US and Iraqi forces seize control of 70% of the city. A total of nine Iraqi security force members are wounded.

November 12—The 1st battalion of the new Iraqi army encounters stiff resistance in the Jolan section of Fallujah. Brigadier Abdul Hussain Mahmoud Badar arrives in the Maysan province to take command of the Iraqi National Guard 73rd Brigade. Badar flees the same day, having been verbally threatened by individuals who claimed to be actively involved in the insurgency.

November 13—Iraqi Interim Prime Minister Allawi declares Fallujah liberated. Insurgents launch two attacks on an Iraqi National Guard base near Mosul, killing two guardsmen and wounding 21.

November 14—A total of six Iraqi military personnel are reported killed and more than 40 wounded in the fighting in Fallujah. Reports indicate that Iraqis are taking over the screening process for police recruits and are firing thousands for incompetence or inaction. Iraqi sources state that such competence or corruption in the police led to the death of the 49 recruits last month. Reports indicate the firing of the police chiefs in both Samarra and Mosul following waves of insurgent attacks. The same reports state that Iraqi military officials have raised the recruiting age from 17 to 20, require a letter of approval from a local community council for each recruit, require that recruits must have a family member in the service to be eligible, and that committees will be sent to recruits' neighborhoods to investigate their morality.

November 15—Insurgents attack two police stations in Baquba. Elements are believed to have belonged to Saddam Hussein's intelligence apparatus. It appears that there are a few foreign fighters, mostly Syrians, mixed in. Fighting continues in Mosul. The Iraqi Interior Minister reports that in one unidentified Iraqi city, a wounded Iraqi police officer was taken from his bed, dismembered, and that his remains were strung up in the city square.

November 16—Militants fight with National Guardsmen from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in the northern Mosul neighborhood of al-Ta'mim. Three guardsmen are hurt and at least two insurgents are killed. US officials state that between 1,000 and 2,000 insurgents have been killed in Fallujah, with an additional 1,000 detained.

November 17—Brig. Gen. Carter Ham states that Mosul is back under US and Iraqi control. Insurgents fire mortar rounds on the al-Ahrar police station within the city. The Iraqi Interior Ministry states that it is investigating reports that 31 security force recruits may have been kidnapped in Rutbah. The Iraqi police in Karbala indicated that they believed that they may have been taken. NATO unanimously agrees to increase the number of military trainers in Iraq from 65 to approximately 400. These trainers require around 1,600 supporting staff and will not serve in a combat role. Reports indicate that new personnel will be in place in the next six weeks.

November 18—Militants detonate a car bomb in Baghdad outside the emergency Yarmouk police station in the west of the city. Two civilians die. Reports indicate that insurgents in Baghdad are

lining one particular street with police uniforms in an effort to intimidate future recruits. Shelling and sporadic fighting continues in the southern outskirts of Fallujah. In Mosul, a mortar attack in the western portion of the city wounds five Iraqi soldiers. Iraqi commandos, backed by US troops, prepare to storm rebel-held parts of the city. Two Iraqi National Guard officers are publicly beheaded in the city by a group claiming allegiance to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

November 19—A suicide car bomber rams an Iraqi police checkpoint in Maysalon Square in east Baghdad. The attack kills five police officers and wounds four others. Elsewhere in Baghdad, worshippers outside a mosque protest the assault on Fallujah. Some of the protestors fire on Iraqi National Guardsmen who subsequently return fire. A police convoy traveling through the city is hit by a suicide car bomber, killing one policeman and a bystander and wounds five others. In Fallujah, the commander of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force states that the assault had “broken the back of the insurgents” in the city. He reports that 51 US troops and eight Iraqi troops had been killed and that an additional 425 US troops and 43 Iraqi troops were wounded. He states that approximately 1,200 insurgents were killed, 25-30 civilians were being treated for injuries, and that he knew of no civilian deaths caused by the fighting. Insurgents attack a police station in Muqdiya with mortars, killing a police officer. In Mosul, reports indicate that residents are growing uneasy with the presence of Kurdish National Guardsmen in the city.

November 20—Unidentified assailants kill an Iraqi National Guard recruit in a drive by shooting near Baquba. He was on his way to a training center when he was attacked. Iraqis find the bodies of eight Iraqi policemen some 15 miles west of Mosul. US forces reportedly detain three Iraqi National Guardsmen who were working for the insurgency. Reports indicate that approximately 15 Iraqi Army troops were killed in the last 24-36 hours.

November 21—Militants attack a convoy ferrying Iraqi National Guardsmen in Ramadi. The insurgents kill nine guardsmen and wound an additional 17. In Mosul, US troops discover the bodies of nine Iraqi soldiers who had been shot execution style. Attackers kill the police chief and his driver in the town of Khalis. An Internet statement from a group purportedly affiliated with Abu Musab Zarqawi appears claiming that the group had killed 17 Iraqi National Guardsmen from Kisik.

November 23—Approximately 5,000 US, British, and Iraqi troops launch an offensive dubbed Plymouth Rock in locales south of Baghdad in an effort to pacify the restive area. Reports indicate that the main elements involved are Iraqi SWAT forces supported by the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit. The campaign begins with early morning raids in the town of Jabella in the Babil province which net 32 suspected militants. Elsewhere, interim defense minister Hazem Sha’alan tells reporters that he cannot provide safety for voters in candidates in the upcoming election. He states that Iraqis don’t understand elections and that they are not aware of the candidates. Sh’alan accuses a “vile coalition” within interim Prime Minister Allawi’s government of obstructing the flow of funds to former soldiers’ pensions and to the new Iraqi army. In Baghdad, insurgents attack the deputy chief of Baghdad’s Major Crime Unit, Col. Ziyaa Hamed’s, car. In Baquba, gunmen attack a convoy carrying Iraqi security forces, killing three of them. US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld states in a press briefing that, though Iraqi forces took part in a supporting role, they performed well in recent operations in Fallujah.

November 24—Iraqi interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi attends the graduation of 2,500 troops of the Iraqi Intervention Force at the Numaniyah military base near Kut, south east of Baghdad. The graduates will form the 2nd Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force and are specially trained in counterinsurgency tactics. US Lt-Gen. David Petraeus states that they will be operational within two weeks and that the 3rd Brigade should be ready by the end of December. In Mosul, militants attack Iraqi Gen. Rashid Flaih, the head of the Iraqi commando unit in the city. Flaih is unhurt.

November 25—US troops and Iraqi National Guardsmen launch raids on suspect buildings in the west side of Mosul. Reports indicate that some 11 dead Iraqi soldiers were found in and around Mosul. They were bound and shot in the back of the head. Iraqi Minister of State, Qasim Dawood, states in a press conference that Colonel Fawas Armoot was chosen as Ramadi’s police chief. Dawood declares that soldiers in Fallujah have discovered a rudimentary chemical and biological weapon facility that was being run by insurgents. The minister states that Iraqi police have captured five foreign terrorists, Libyan, Tunisian, and Syrian, trying to cross the border into Iraq.

November 26—US troops and Iraqi National Guardsmen continue to conduct operations in Mosul. The forces raid one mosque run by an imam who is suspected of being an insurgent leader. The Iraqis perform well though they encounter no enemy fire. Two executed Iraqi soldiers are dumped at a busy traffic circle in downtown Mosul. US forces believe that soldiers are being kidnapped at taxi stands when they return home on leave.

November 27—Three Iraqi police officers die in a bombing attack. The location of the attack remains unclear.

November 28—Iraqi police detain two men and a vehicle packed with explosives in the Al-Jadriya neighborhood of Baghdad. In Baquba, militants fire mortars at the Al-Wahda police station, wounding a police officer. Militants storm a police station in Samarra, stealing several police vehicles and looting the armory. Iraqi police fail to confront them. US and Iraqi forces launch land and amphibious raids to the south of Baghdad, killing 17 militants and capturing 32. In Basra, British and Iraqi troops surround the headquarters of the southern regional Iraq National Guard after Brigadier General Diaa al-Kadhimi refused to step down as commander in favor of Salah al-Maliki.

November 29—A car bomb near Ramadi explodes, killing four Iraqi police officers and wounding three others. Three Iraqi National Guardsmen are injured as well. In a separate attack in Baghdadi, 120 miles northwest of Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonates his car at a police checkpoint, killing seven Iraqi police and National Guardsmen. The blast injures an additional nine security personnel. Brig. Gen. Kadhimi continues his standoff in Basra. Reports indicate that at least 50 pro interim government or security force personnel have been killed in Mosul in the last 10 days. The police chief states that no police are on active patrol because the city remains too dangerous. The US and Iraqi National Guard strike a deal with Mosul police to move back in to several of the police stations that were seized or looted during the beginning of the Fallujah campaign. The police agree to man some of the more dangerous stations by mid-December. Reports indicate that Iraqi security forces have abandoned Tal Afar. The governor of Najaf, Adnan al-Zurufi, announces that his security chief has been arrested by police in connection with a plot to assassinate the governor and several other top regional officials.

November 30—In the Babil Province south of Baghdad, Iraqi and US forces captures 14 suspected militants and discovers three arms caches. Near Iskandariyah, the Iraqi SWAT team and the Iraqi Specialized Special Forces capture several high value suspects in separate operations. In Najaf, the 11th US MEU commander declares that Iraqi security forces have formally assumed control of the entire province and have the ability to conduct limited operations on their own.

December 2—Iraqi National Security minister Dr. Qassim Dawood states that securing the polling centers for the Iraqi election will be left to the Iraqi security forces and Iraqi society as a whole. He declares that the US forces will only be called upon if a polling center faces a major insurgent attack.

December 3—Gunmen shoot and kill sixteen Shi'ite Iraqi police officers, laying siege to a police station in the Baghdad neighborhood of Saydiya. Sources believe that the area harbors militants who fled Fallujah prior to the US and Iraqi attack on the city. In a separate attack at the other end of the city, insurgents ram a suicide car bomb into a crowd outside of a Shi'ite mosque, close to a nearby police station. 14 die and a gun battle ensues between the Iraqi police and the insurgents who fire on the police station. In Mosul, three police stations are attacked, though no immediate casualty reports are available. An Iraqi National Guard captain is assassinated in Karbala

December 4—A suicide car bomber kills at least 18 Kurdish militiamen when he rams his car into their bus in Mosul. More than 16 are wounded. Another suicide bomber rams a police station in Baghdad near the Green Zone. The attack kills eight officers and wounds more than 38. Gunmen attack a police station in the Ghazaliya neighborhood in Baghdad. Another police station is attacked by militants in Samarra. Both attacks are repulsed, with two officers wounded in Samarra.

December 5—Insurgents ram a suicide car bomb into an Iraqi National Guard checkpoint near Bayji and follow the explosion up with small arms fire. Three Guardsmen are killed and 18 are wounded. In Samarra, gunmen attack an Iraqi army patrol, killing one soldier and wounding four more. Two Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed and four are wounded in Latifiyah in an insurgent attack.

December 6—A statement from the US Customs and Border Protection officers and their Iraqi counterparts indicates that they caught more than 40 terrorists arming insurgents within Iraq. The statement reveals that the officers, working closely with Iraqis, broke up an Iraqi smuggling ring.

December 7—A roadside bomb explodes south of Baghdad, killing three Iraqi National Guardsmen and wounding an additional 11. General John Abizaid, commander of US CENTCOM, declares that the Iraqi security and military forces are behind schedule in their training. He states that the indigenous forces will not be able to secure the country for the January election and that more US troops will temporarily be needed. He suggested that there would be more embedded US trainers and that more special operations forces might need to be created.

December 8—The police chief of Samarra's home is attacked by insurgents. Reportedly, the police chief resigned following the attack. Unconfirmed reports state that a police station within the city was overrun by insurgents. In Ramadi, militants detonate a bomb near a police station. No injuries are reported. One Iraqi policeman claimed that half of Ramadi's policemen had failed to report for duty because of threats and intimidation.

December 9—NATO formally agrees to increase its training staff in Baghdad from 60 officers to 300. Poland, Hungary, and the Netherlands agree to contribute forces. France, Germany, Belgium, Greece, Spain, and Luxembourg refuse. The German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, states adamantly that no Germans will go to Iraq. A US-backed Iraqi National Guard patrol is ambushed in Mosul. The casualties are uncertain though it is believed that at least one Guardsman is killed.

December 10—Militants try to attack an Iraqi National Guard patrol in Samarra with mortars. The attack leaves the Guardsmen unscathed but kills two civilians. In Baquba, four Iraqi national Guardsmen are injured when a roadside bomb explodes by their patrol car. Insurgents attack them with small arms after the explosion.

December 11—Insurgents ambush a police patrol car on a road between Baiji and Tikrit. Two officers die and three are wounded. One of those killed is reportedly Brig. Gen. Razzaq Karim Mahmud, a senior police commander. In the town of Hit, militants attack a minibus carrying a contingent of Iraqi National Guardsmen. Seven Guardsmen are killed.

December 12—Reports indicate that more than 160 bodies, many members of the Iraqi National Guard, have been found in and around Mosul since November 12th. South of Baghdad, 72 suspected militants are seized by US Marines and Iraqi security forces near the Euphrates River. Insurgents attack a police station near Mahmudiya. Iraqi National Guardsmen and Iraqi police successfully repel the attackers and suffer no losses. They uncover a car bomb across the street from the station and US forces detonate it. Officials attribute recent success by Iraqi forces in the area to the removal of a senior National Guard officer in November who, it was discovered, had been supplying insurgents with information. He was directly implicated in the murders of 12 Iraqi National Guardsmen.

December 14—In central Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonates a bomb at an entrance to the Green Zone. Three Iraqi National Guardsmen die and 12 people are wounded. The bombing is the second attack on the same entrance in two days and comes a day and a year after Saddam Hussein's capture. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's Al-Qaeda in Iraq group claims responsibility for both attacks. US and Iraqi forces continue to fight insurgents in northern Mosul and in the western Anbar province. Two Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed and five wounded in a battle with insurgents near Dijail. In Samarra, Iraqi police report that three children were killed in the crossfire during a firefight between US forces and Iraqi forces and insurgents.

December 16—A roadside bomb explodes in western Baghdad, killing three Iraqi National Guardsmen. The Iraqi Minister of Defense, Hazim Al-Shaalani, orders the Iraqi forces to secure the churches and places of worship for the coming holiday.

December 18—Militants in Samarra fire mortar rounds at an election office located in a youth center. One Iraqi dies and eight others are evacuated to a hospital by members of the Iraqi National Guard who respond to the attack. Elsewhere in Samarra, Iraqi commandos seize bomb-making material and take into custody three insurgents during a raid. In Mosul, Iraqi National Guardsmen engage militants in a gun battle in the western part of the city, killing three insurgents.

December 20—A driver throws a hand grenade at a police station in Karbala. No injuries are reported and the driver is arrested.

December 21—A suicide bomber detonates his explosives at a U.S. military base mess tent near Mosul, killing 22 and wounding 72 more. The attack hits a dining hall where US soldiers, Iraqi National Guardsmen, and Iraqi civilians are having lunch. 3 Iraqi security forces personnel are killed. The suicide bomber is believed to be a Saudi allied with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi named Abu Omar al-Mosuli, and apparently he had acquired an Iraqi military uniform. After the attack, indigenous insurgent groups claim that the suicide bomber was not affiliated with Zarqawi and was a native Iraqi. Najaf's police chief, Ghaleb al-Jazaeri, states that an Iraqi in custody confessed to having received training in a camp in Syria under the supervision of a Syrian military officer. The Iraqi reportedly took part in a bombing in Najaf in early December which killed 54 people. Syria denies having trained any insurgents.

December 23—141 Iraqi police officers graduate from six specialty training courses given at the Adnan Training Center. The one to two week courses are designed to bolster the regular eight week training courses and focus particularly on basic criminal investigation, supervision, executive leadership, and kidnapping/hostage rescue.

December 25—In Mosul, a roadside bomb explodes, destroying an Iraqi National Guard bus. Five Guardsmen die and three are wounded. Reportedly, Iraqi civilians threw rocks at the burning vehicle after the attack.

December 26--Col. Yassin Ibrahim Jawad, a high-ranking police officer, is killed in southern Baghdad. Gen. Babakir Shawkat Zebari states that the bombing of the mess tent in Mosul was not perpetrated by a member of the Iraqi military or security forces. He further states that President Bush's criticisms of Iraqi forces, primarily that some would not fight and that some had deserted, were erroneous.

December 28—Insurgents attack and destroy the Um Kashifa police station near Tikrit. 12 Iraqi police officers are killed. In a separate attack near Tikrit, militants attack a police checkpoint killing one officer and wounding two others. Police checkpoints south of Tikrit are attacked, killing five Iraqi police officers and wounding three more. 13 Iraqi police officers are shot execution-style at one of the stations. US Maj. Neal O'Brien, spokesman for the 1st Infantry Division, states that despite the attack, the Iraqi security forces in Tikrit are performing quite well. One soldier cites nearly 2 ½ months of relative quiet in the city as proof. An Iraqi employed at the city hall states that 25 members of the Iraqi National Guard resigned after the attacks. An elaborate ambush on Iraqi National Guard troops takes place south of Baquba. It starts with a roadside bomb that wounds three Iraqi National Guardsmen near the Maffrak traffic circle in the Mualemeen neighborhood. A second roadside bomb is found and a disposal team comes to remove it. A suicide car bomber then drives through the security cordon, killing a civilian and 26 others. Insurgents in Baghdad detonate a car bomb near the home of Maj. Gen. Moudher al-Mula, an Iraqi National Guard commander, in an assassination attempt. He escapes unhurt, though several bystanders are killed. In a separate attack in the western Baghdad district of Ghaziliya, insurgents lure Iraqi police officers into an explosive-laden home and then blow up the house, killing seven police officers and wounding two others. In Mosul, militants fire from a mosque at a joint US-Iraqi military patrol, wounding one Iraqi National Guardsman. Near Samarra, five Ministry of the Interior commandos are wounded by an IED.

December 29—Iraqi Defense Minister Hazim Al-Shaalán announces that the Iraqi National Guard will be incorporated into the Iraqi Army on the anniversary of Army Day on January 6, 2005. He states that forces totaling a division in size will all be graduating on that day. An Iraqi official states that Iraqi security forces have captured a key member of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's organization in the city of Mosul. Abu Marwan allegedly directed attacks in the city and was responsible for purchasing weapons and training the various terrorist cells.

December 31—Five Iraqi National Guardsmen are wounded near Baiji when a car bomb explodes near their patrol vehicle. Two civilians are killed.

January 1—Militants claiming loyalty to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi release a video showing the execution of five Iraqis believed to be Iraqi border guards. The insurgents warn that the same fate will befall any Iraqis who join the military and security services.

January 2—22 Iraqi National Guardsmen die north of Baghdad in the city of Balad when their bus is hit with a car bomb. Four Iraqi police officers die in an ambush in Samarra and another is wounded. Insurgents shoot and kill the police chief in the town of Jebala. Reports indicate more than 1,000 Iraqi military and security force members have died since September.

January 3—A car bomb detonates outside Iraqi Interim Prime Minister Allawi's political party headquarters, killing three police officers. Four Iraqi National Guardsmen die in a suicide car bomb explosion in Dijail, near the site of the bombing of the Iraqi National Guard bus the day before. In Tall Afar, one Iraqi police officer dies and two are injured when an explosion occurs while they investigate a decapitated body. Insurgents had booby-trapped the body with explosives. Six Iraqi National Guardsmen die in Tikrit when two roadside bombs explode. In Baiji, insurgents kill a police major and captain in a drive-by shooting.

January 4—Iraqi police backed by US forces conduct a large raid in Diali. Iraq forces claim to have captured "an important terrorist." Some suggest that it is Abu Musab al-Zarqawi but US forces fervently deny this. In Baghdad, a suicide truck bomb explodes, killing eight Iraqi police commandos while wounding at least 60 other people. Near Baquba, three Iraqi National Guardsmen die in a bomb attack.

January 5—At least two newly-graduated Iraqi police are killed when a suicide car bomber rams his vehicle into a crowd of people. At least eight other people are killed and 44 wounded. Insurgents kill Col. Khalefeh Ali Hassan, security chief for Iraq's Independent Election Commission, in a drive-by shooting in Diyala Province. A suicide car bomber tries to strike a joint US-Iraqi military convoy in western Baghdad but succeeds only in killing Iraqi civilians.

January 6—Iraq celebrates Army Day, the 84th anniversary of the founding of the army in 1921.

January 8—In Ramadi, Col. Jassim al-Kharbeet, a member of the police force, is killed by gunmen. In the Anbar province, Brig. Abid Ahmed al-Assafi is assassinated by militants.

January 10—Gen. Amer Nayef, the deputy police chief of Baghdad, and his son, Lt. Khaled Amer, are assassinated by insurgents in the al Dora neighborhood of southern Baghdad. Also in the southern part of the city, a suicide bomber rams his vehicle into the main gate of the al-Mada'en police station, killing three Iraqi police officers. Reports indicate that the attacker's car was painted to resemble a police car or might have in fact been a stolen one. In Samarra, the city's deputy police chief, Brig. Mohammed Mudhafar Al-Badri, is killed in a drive-by shooting. A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle in front of the entrance to an Iraqi security forces base in Rubai'a, 105 miles northwest of Mosul. Four Iraqi security personnel die. In Basra, a suicide bomber attacks a police station. In a coordinated attack, another bomber targets a police internal affairs office in Basra. The ensuing blasts kill only the bombers.

January 11—Insurgents detonate a car bomb near a police station in Tikrit. Six Iraqi policemen die. In Mosul, insurgents attack a US-Iraqi convoy delivering heaters and supplies to a nearby school. The attackers detonate a car bomb close to the convoy and fire weapons from a mosque. Three Iraqi soldiers die and six are wounded.

January 12—In Mosul, militants detonate a car bomb next to an Iraqi National Guard patrol. The attack kills two Guardsmen and wounds two more. An Iraqi soldier discovers a weapons cache in Kadasia while on joint patrol with US soldiers. The uncovered munitions would have provided enough explosives for 35 IEDs.

January 13—Insurgents in Baqubah detonate a roadside bomb as an Iraqi police patrol passes. Six officers are wounded and one dies. Militants kill an Iraqi National Guard captain in Qaim.

January 14—38 Iraqi prisoners escape from the Abu Ghraib prison. Iraqi guards almost immediately recapture 10 of the detainees. The prisoners managed to loosen their bonds and overpower the nearby police and guards, fatally shooting one police officer. The Iraqi authorities set up checkpoints in the

Sa'alam neighborhood of western Baghdad to try and apprehend the prisoners. It is believed that two Egyptians are among the escaped. Reportedly, Iraqi police officers may have facilitated their escape as the prisoners were moved at night and with little security—conditions that are extremely unusual. Three Kurdish troops die fighting against insurgents alongside Iraqi National Guard forces in Mosul. Militants detonate a car bomb outside a Shi'ite mosque in Khan Bani Saad. Four Iraqi policemen die in the blast along with three civilians. A bus carrying 15 Iraqi National Guardsmen on their way to a US base is ambushed near the western city of Hit. The Guardsmen are abducted by unknown assailants and the bus is burned. Iraqi soldiers and multinational forces arrest two suspected insurgents and uncover a bomb making plant during a raid in Duluiyah. The raid uncovers 500 kilograms of ammonium nitrate and 55 gallons of diesel fuel, ingredients used in the powerful car bombs made by insurgents.

January 16—Gunmen assassinate an Iraqi police captain and two government auditors in Kut. Militants dressed in Iraqi police uniforms open fire on Shiite political candidate Salama Khafaji's car in central Baghdad. She is unharmed and the attackers flee. The Iraqi Defense Ministry releases a statement declaring that Iraqi forces killed 35 insurgents near Fallujah over the weekend. An Iraqi National Guard commander in Baquba states that a majority of the city will go to the poles to vote in the January 30th elections. Approximately 900 Iraqi soldiers assigned to the 8th Brigade, 3rd Division graduate from basic military training. The soldiers were trained at the Al Kasik Military Training Base and will join the 3rd Division in pre-election patrols in the Ninewa Province.

January 17—Insurgents ambush a bus in Buhruz carrying Iraqi soldiers with rifles and rocket-propelled grenades, killing at least seven soldiers. In Baiji, a suicide car bomber rams a checkpoint. Seven Iraqi police officers die. Reportedly, guerillas attack Iraqi police stations in Sharqat and Dawr. A spokesman for Interim Prime Minister Allawi states that a man, Izz al-Din Al-Majid, captured in early December by Iraqi security forces was trying to unify Ansar Al-Sunna, Jaysh Muhammad, and the Islamic Resistance Army, three insurgent groups.

January 18—Four suicide car bombs explode in Baghdad within 90 minutes. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims credit for all four bombs. One bomber detonates his vehicle near the al-Alahi hospital in central Baghdad, killing five Iraqi policemen. Another bomber targets a control point south of the Baghdad International Airport. Two Iraqi security guards die and three are wounded. Reportedly, another bomb was headed for an army garrison and the final bomb was destined for a bank where police officers tend to congregate. Col. Mike Murray, commander of the US 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry states that all four bombers failed to reach their intended targets because of the efforts of the Iraqi military and security forces. 12 miles north of Hilla, insurgents detonate a car bomb, killing one Iraqi policeman and wounding two others. In Tikrit, militants launch several attacks which kill five Iraqi policemen and wound four others. Another Iraqi policeman dies near Baqubah and three more are wounded during a mortar attack on a police station. The 204th Iraqi army battalion conducts several raids that net Hashum Mehdi Hussein Al Tai and Ahsan Abd Ali Khadhim Al Obaydi in Khalis. Reportedly, the two men were the primary leaders of the Khalis insurgency. 670 Iraqi Intervention Force soldiers graduate from training at the Taji Military Training Base. Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi states that he has been talking to US commanders in the field about ways to speed up the training and equipping of Iraqi soldiers. In her confirmation testimony before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, former National Security Adviser and future Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice states that there are 120,000 fully trained and equipped Iraqi soldiers.

January 20—An Iraqi police official estimates that 250 suicide attackers with 150 car bombs are prepared to strike during the Iraqi elections. His estimate was based on a series of interrogations of captured insurgents. Militants try to seize the Al Salam Hospital in Mosul, but Iraqi forces prevent them from doing so. Hospital workers and patients flee the scene.

January 21—Insurgents lob grenades at an Iraqi police river patrol in northern Baghdad. Four officers are injured. In Hit, 15 militants storm a police station, order the Iraqi policemen out, steal their equipment and two police cars, and then blow up the building. No officers are injured. Iraqi Intervention Force soldiers repel insurgent attacks on the Mosul train station. Reports indicate that \$300 million in American currency was taken from Iraq's Central Bank and put on a plane for Lebanon earlier in January. Critics claim that there is no indication why this money was sent and for

what purpose. Aides to Iraqi Defense Minister Hazim al-Shalaan state that the money was rushed to arms dealers in an effort to quickly supply Iraqi forces with the equipment needed to fight the insurgency. The aides refuse to list the names of the dealers, citing concerns for the dealers' safety. Iraq's national security adviser was unaware of the transfer and it is unclear whether the money came from Iraqi or American sources.

January 22—Gunmen ambush and kill Muwthana Salman, an Iraqi intelligence officer, in Baqubah. US military and Iraqi police forces arrest one of the top insurgent suspects. Retired four-star Army general Gary E. Luck, sent by the Pentagon two weeks ago to assess the training efforts in Iraq, states that the US must speed up the training process while bolstering the Iraqi security and military forces.

January 23—An insurgent group led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi posts a video on the Internet showing an Iraqi National Guard colonel being shot in the head. The colonel had been kidnapped in Mosul. Reports indicate that the US may be attempting to bring back much of Saddam's former army in an effort to bolster the fledgling Iraqi military and security forces.

January 24—The Iraqi Ministry of the Interior announces that it has made several significant arrests of insurgents in and around Ramadi. Among them is Abu Omar Al Kurdi, the man Iraqi government officials claim was behind 75% of the car bombs in Baghdad in 2003. The Iraqi government states that he is a top bomb maker and recruiter, and was one of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's top men in the Baghdad area. General Babakir, head of the Iraqi military, states that he foresees Iraqi military and security forces numbering 150,000 by summer 2005. Additionally, he foresees US troops pulling out of the cities and operating only one or two major bases by the end of 2005.

January 25—Four Iraqi policemen from the Muthana station are gunned down in the Rashad neighborhood of Baghdad by insurgents. Reportedly, the gunmen pointedly ask if the individuals are police before they start firing. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a police colonel and his 5-year-old daughter are shot to death while driving. In the southeastern portion of the city, gun battles between insurgents and Iraqi police kills three officers.

January 26—Two car bombs target Iraqi security and military forces. One bomb explodes outside of a police station in the town of Riyadh, killing three Iraqi police. Insurgents detonate the second bomb outside of the mayor's office in the same town. Two Iraqi soldiers die. In Baquba, militants launch assaults on the offices of the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Iraqi Patriotic Gathering Alliance. The resulting battle kills one Iraqi policeman.

January 27—In Sinjar, 17 miles southwest of Mosul, a suicide tractor bomber detonates his vehicle outside of the offices of the Kurdish Democratic Party. Four Iraqi soldiers and a guard die in the explosion. Nine soldiers and three guards are wounded. In Baquba, a suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle as an Iraqi police convoy passes by the Diyala provincial governor's office. An Iraqi police lieutenant dies in the attack and three other officers are wounded. The bombing takes place at the same time the governor was expected to arrive for a Peace Day meeting. The meeting was aimed at bringing together Ba'ath figures, insurgents, and interim political figures to discuss options for making the elections peaceful and successful. The governor is unhurt. Militants launch rockets at the home of Deputy Interior Minister for Police Affairs, Maj. Gen. Hikmat Moussa. No one is hurt by the attack. Insurgents detonate a roadside bomb targeting Iraqi police on patrol near the Al-Shaab Stadium in the eastern part of Baghdad. The explosion fails to injure anyone.

January 28—A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle outside of the al-Dora police station in southern Baghdad, killing four people and wounding two more.

January 30—The Iraqi elections take place. 44 people are killed in insurgent attacks, but the number of casualties and attacks is far below the expected number. One Iraqi policeman, Abdul Amir, is killed in Baghdad when a suicide bomber walks up to him outside of a polling station and detonates his explosives. Reportedly, Amir wrapped his arms around the bomber and dragged him away from the polling station before he could utilize his explosives.

February 2—Militants stop a convoy of Iraqi army recruits near Kirkuk and force 12 of them to lie in the street. The gunmen shoot the recruits and then run their bodies over.

February 3—Five police and one National Guardsman are killed in an insurgent attack on a road south of Baghdad.

February 5—In Basra, a roadside bomb explodes, killing four Iraqi National Guardsmen on patrol. Two Iraqi soldiers die in an explosion in Samarra. An insurgent group posts a video on the Internet depicting the murder of seven Iraqi National Guardsmen.

February 6—Gunmen attack a police station in Mahawil. 14 insurgents, 5 Iraqi National Guardsmen, and 17 Iraqi police die. Iraqi security forces announce that they had captured Khamis Masin Farhan, a former Iraqi general, on December 20th in Baiji. Iraqi officials maintain that he assisted in a number of insurgent attacks.

February 7—Iraqi police officers and National Guardsmen note an increase in tips from the general public concerning the insurgency in the week following the election.

February 8—In Baquba, a car bomb explodes outside of the provincial police headquarters, killing 15 recruits and wounding 17 more. In Mosul, a suicide bomber detonates his explosives inside the grounds of the Jumhuri Teaching Hospital. 12 Iraqi policemen die and four others are wounded. Witnesses say the bomber called police over to him prior to detonating his explosives. A group affiliated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims credit for the hospital bombing.

February 9—A suicide bomber in Baghdad detonates his explosives in the middle of a crowd outside of the Iraqi National Guard headquarters at the Muthana airfield. 22 people die and 30 are wounded. Three police officers die in Baghdad during a firefight in the Ghazaliya neighborhood. Iraqi security forces claim that they have captured a militant involved in beheadings in and around Mosul.

February 10—Four Iraqi policemen die in Samarra when a roadside bomb explodes. A police colonel, Riad Al-Yawi, attached to the Oil Ministry is abducted by gunmen loyal to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in southern Baghdad. Police and insurgents wage a fierce battle in the town of Salman Pak, southeast of Baghdad. 10 policemen and 20 insurgents are killed. At least 65 policemen are wounded. Police capture two Saudis and three Iranians. An Iraqi army driver is shot dead in Balad.

February 11—Four bodies, believed to be Iraqi policemen, are found in Haswa, south of Baghdad. In Baquba, a police officer dies in a driveby shooting.

February 12—A suicide car bomb targeting an Iraqi National Guard patrol detonates, killing 13 and wounding 40 in Balad Ruz. It fails to injure any Guardsmen. A group affiliated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims credit for the attack. In Mosul, the bodies of six Iraqi National Guardsmen and six Kurdish security Guards are dumped in separate parts of the city.

February 15—Iraqi officials state that Iraqi security forces had captured two brothers who served as Iraqi intelligence agents in the Hussein regime. Sabah Nouri Milhim and Riyah Nouri Milhim were captured sometime in January and are suspected of training, supplying, and financing insurgents in Fallujah and Baghdad. It is believed that they had a large role in the countless attacks on Iraqi security forces in Baghdad.

*The information concerning the establishment of each branch of the Iraqi armed services and the end-strength objectives is located in a report by GlobalSecurity.Org and can be found at www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/iraq-corps3.htm

¹ For a discussion of the futility of placing too much emphasis on NATO, see “NATO Fails to Agree on Iraq Training Mission,” *Washington Post*, July 29, 2004, p. A-18.

² Paul Bremer, “The Right Call,” *Wall Street Journal*, January 12, 2005, p. A10.

³ Transcript of December 21, 2004 interview with Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage with pan-Arab print reporters. Issued by the office of the Spokesman. Quote from p. 13.

⁴ Based on a slide show provided by Zogby International in March 2004.

⁵ "Most Iraqis Say Life Is Good Now, Poll Finds", David Charter, *London Times*, 17 March 2004, p.

⁶ "Polls: Iraqis Out of Patience", Cesar G. Soriano and Steven Komarow, *USA Today*, 29 April 2004, p. 1.

⁷ Quoted in Amy S. Klamper, "Former Iraq Administrator See Decades-Long US Military Presence," Government Executive, February 6, 2004. www.govexec.com.

⁸ Bing West and Owen West, "A Thin Blue Line: Why Iraqi Cops are Struggling," October 7, 2004, www.westwrite.com.

⁹ Sharon Behn, "General Assails CPA Bureaucracy as Unresponsive," Washington Times, July 1, 2004, p. 12.

¹⁰ CPA report "Working Papers: Iraq Status," July 13, 2004. p. 15. The budget data imply, but do not explicitly state, that such "projects" are actually operating expenses.

¹¹ Yochi J. Dreazen, "For Many Iraqis, A New Daily Fear: Wave of Kidnapping," Wall Street Journal, July 22, 2004, p. 1.

¹² Yochi J. Dreazen, "For Many Iraqis, A New Daily Fear: Wave of Kidnapping," Wall Street Journal, July 22, 2004, p. 1.

¹³ Doug Struck, "Iraqi Security Has Come Far, with Far to Go," Washington Post, August 1, 2004, p. A18.

¹⁴ Whatever the mistakes of the CPA, the status of the effort to create effective Iraqi forces became progressively more uncertain after the transfer of sovereignty. The totals issued by the US government as of 13 July 2004 suddenly began to count both manpower fully trained in academies or with full military training, and manpower in the rushed programs that can be a matter of days or a few weeks as being part of the same total.

The US stopped issuing meaningful public information on the equipment and training effort, and cut the content of the Iraq Weekly Status Report to the point where it had limited value without providing meaningful data at the MNSTC-I web site (<http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil>). The end result is that there is no way to relate what was happening to a meaningful picture of actual requirements and the measures of accomplishment that were provided became the kind of empty, self-congratulatory statements typical of public relations exercises.

As for total manning and equipment levels, the US initially provided reasonably detailed data on progress in training and equipping Iraqi forces. As time went on, however, such breakouts were eliminated from public US reporting from the Embassy, Department of Defense, and Department of State. The only heading in the Weekly Status Report became "Trained/On-Hand," a heading that seems almost deliberately misleading since it is really just total active strength without the slightest regard to training.

The new figures for trained manpower overstated the training levels for the police and for the border service (DBE), and ignored the fact that the facilities protection service-training program has virtually no training at all. At the end of the day, a far less honest reporting system was established, and one that exaggerated the actual level of training.

¹⁵ Doug Struck, "Iraqi Security Has Come Far, with Far to Go," Washington Post, August 1, 2004, p. A18.

¹⁶ Carol J. Williams, "Iraqis More Eager to Help Police," Los Angeles Times, July 23, 2004.

¹⁷ Doug Struck, "Iraqi Security Has Come Far, with Far to Go," Washington Post, August 1, 2004, p. A18.

¹⁸ Office of the Inspector General, Coalition Provisional Authority, "July 30, 2004 Report to Congress," Appendix, Table E.1.

¹⁹ <http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/mission.htm>

²⁰ Department of Defense, Iraq Weekly Status Report, September 22, 2004.

²¹ The money allocated to total obligations had only put \$2,325 million into the start of the pipeline. Office of the Inspector General, Coalition Provisional Authority, Report to Congress, October 30, 2004. p. 59.

²² The Deputy DoD OIG for Inspections and Policy is about to being a joint project with the DoS OIG to cover all phases of the training effort for the Iraqi police forces. This should be extended to cover Iraqi military and security forces.

²³ Department of Defense, Iraq Weekly Status Report, November 3, 2004 and information provided from MNSTC-I.

²⁴ Karl Vick, "Insurgents Kill 17 Iraqi Civilians; U.S. Army Site Targeted; Soldiers, Guardsmen Slain Elsewhere," Washington Post December 6, 2004. p. A-18.

²⁵ USCENTCOM, News Release, November 13, 2004.

²⁶ http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/facts_troops.htm, accessed November 11, 2004 and December 18, 2004.

²⁷ Rowan Scarborough, "Sunni Role in Military in Iraq Falls Short of Goal," Washington Times, January 24, 2005, p. 1.

²⁸ Anthony Shadid, "Troops Move to Quell Insurgency in Mosul," Washington Post, November 17, 2004, p. 1.

²⁹ Tom Squitieri and C. Mark Brinkley, "Long Way to Go Before Iraqis Take Over Security," USA Today, December 14, 2004, p. 1.

³⁰ Quoted in Bassem Mroue, "Top Iraqi General Says Bush Misinformed About Soldiers," Associated Press, December 26, 2004.

³¹ Tom Squitieri and C. Mark Brinkley, "Long Way to Go Before Iraqis Take Over Security," USA Today, December 14, 2004, p. 1.

³² <http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/press.htm>, 5-12-04

³³ US Embassy in Iraq, Iraq Year in Review, 2004 Fact Sheet, "Iraqi Security Forces-3."

³⁴ Dan Murphy, "Iraqi Police Take Brunt of Attacks," The Christian Science Monitor, January 11, 2005.

³⁵ See http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/new_iraq.html

³⁶ Iraq Weekly Status Report, Department of Defense, Iraq Weekly Update -20041208.pdf

³⁷ Steven Weisman and Joel Brinkley, "Rice Sees Iraq Training Progress But Offers No Schedule for Exit," New York Times, January 19, 2005, p. 1.

³⁸ US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 12, 2005, p. 5.

³⁹ US Embassy in Iraq, Iraq Year in Review, 2004 Fact Sheet, "Iraqi Security Forces-3." and US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 12, 2005, p. 5

⁴⁰ Josh White, "Iraqis' Readiness Disputed in Hearing," Washington Post, January 20, 2005, p. A04.

⁴¹ US Embassy in Iraq, Iraq Year in Review, 2004 Fact Sheet, "Iraqi Security Forces-3." and US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 12, 2005, p. 5

⁴² Quoted in John Hendren, "U.S. to overhaul Training of Iraqi Forces," Los Angeles Times, January 20, 2005.

⁴³ AFP News Agency, Baghdad Bureau, January 24, 2005.

⁴⁴ Quoted in John F. Burns, "5 Bomb Attacks Kill 26 as Vote by Iraqis Nears," New York Times, January 20, 2005, p. A1.

⁴⁵ Data found in MNSTC-I/State Department Iraq Year in Review 2004 Fact Sheet.

⁴⁶ US Embassy in Iraq, Iraq Year in Review, 2004 Fact Sheet, "Iraqi Security Forces-3." and US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 12, 2005, p. 26.

⁴⁷ Josh White, "Deaths of U.S. Contractors Probed; Man Killed with Colleague Complained About Lack of Payment," Washington Post, January 21, 2005, p. A12.

⁴⁸ Dexter Filkins, "Mystery in Iraq as \$300 Million is Taken Abroad," New York Times, January 22, 2005, p. A1.

⁴⁹ Quoted in Dexter Filkins, "Mystery in Iraq as \$300 Million is Taken Abroad," New York Times, January 22, 2005, p. A1.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Dexter Filkins, "Mystery in Iraq as \$300 Million is Taken Abroad," New York Times, January 22, 2005, p. A1.

⁵² John F. Burns, "Tape in Name of Leading Insurgent Declares 'All-Out War' on Iraq Elections and Democracy," New York Times, January 24, 2005, p. A10.

⁵³ Iraq Weekly Status Report, 9 February 2005, released by the US Department of State and available at www.defendamerica.mil.

⁵⁴ Quoted in "Wave of Suicide Bombs Kills at Least 25," posted on www.cnn.com, January 19, 2005.

⁵⁵ General John Abizaid in remarks to the Washington press, January 26, 2005, www.state.gov.

⁵⁶ "Telling the Fallujah Story to the World," IMEF and MNC-I Effects Exploitation Team, 20 November 2004 (Third cut); Bill Gertz, "Foreign Terrorists in Fallujah," Washington Times, December 14, 2004, p. 3.

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