Choosing Victory:
A Plan for Success in Iraq
Interim Report

Frederick W. Kagan

Resident Scholar,
The American Enterprise Institute

Victory Is Possible

- 1.4 million troops under arms / 140,000 in Iraq
- America contained ethno-religious conflict and civil war in Bosnia and Kosovo—we can do so in Iraq
- American resources are great: 300 million people, $12 trillion in GDP compared to 25 million Iraqis, $100 billion Iraqi GDP in a country the size of California
- Success requires effort and will, but we need not choose to lose

Victory Is Vital

- The U.S. must prevail in Iraq to secure our vital national interests
- Failure in Iraq will likely lead to:
  - Widespread regional conflict
  - Humanitarian catastrophe
  - Terrorist sanctuaries
  - Further radicalization of the Muslim World
  - Loss of American credibility globally
  - Damage to the morale of the U.S. military

Iraq Is at a Critical Point

- The political process alone has failed to stem insurgency and violence

- Transferring the burden of establishing peace to the Iraqi Security Forces is failing

- U.S. will to continue the struggle is breaking

- Rising sectarian violence in Iraq is undermining the government and the ISF

- If violence is not quickly contained, the political process and the ISF can be destroyed

Security First

- Securing the population is the prerequisite for:
  - Ending the insurgency and sectarian killing
  - National reconciliation
  - Recruiting a balanced Iraqi Army
  - Effectively training the ISF
  - Economic development and reconstruction
  - Free and effective national Iraqi government
  - Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of Iraqi militias

Proposal: Victory through Security

- Endstate is free and secure Iraq

- Acceptable increase in troops in Iraq:
  - Creates security in Baghdad by Fall '07
  - Creates options for future operations in Iraq

Success is Possible

- Success is compatible with a volunteer military
- Proposal will not break the Army or the Marines
- Dramatic improvement in Iraq can occur in one year
- It does not require unacceptable bargains with hostile regimes
- It will lead to a free and secure Iraq able to maintain itself with its own forces

Other Approaches Will Fail

- Rapid withdrawal will trigger the collapse of the Iraqi military, a dramatic and immediate increase in violence, and regional chaos

- Iran and Syria support violence in Iraq, but do not control it

- Negotiating with Iran and Syria will not stop violence

- Training Iraqi units takes too long—violence is accelerating beyond the ability of the Iraqi military to control
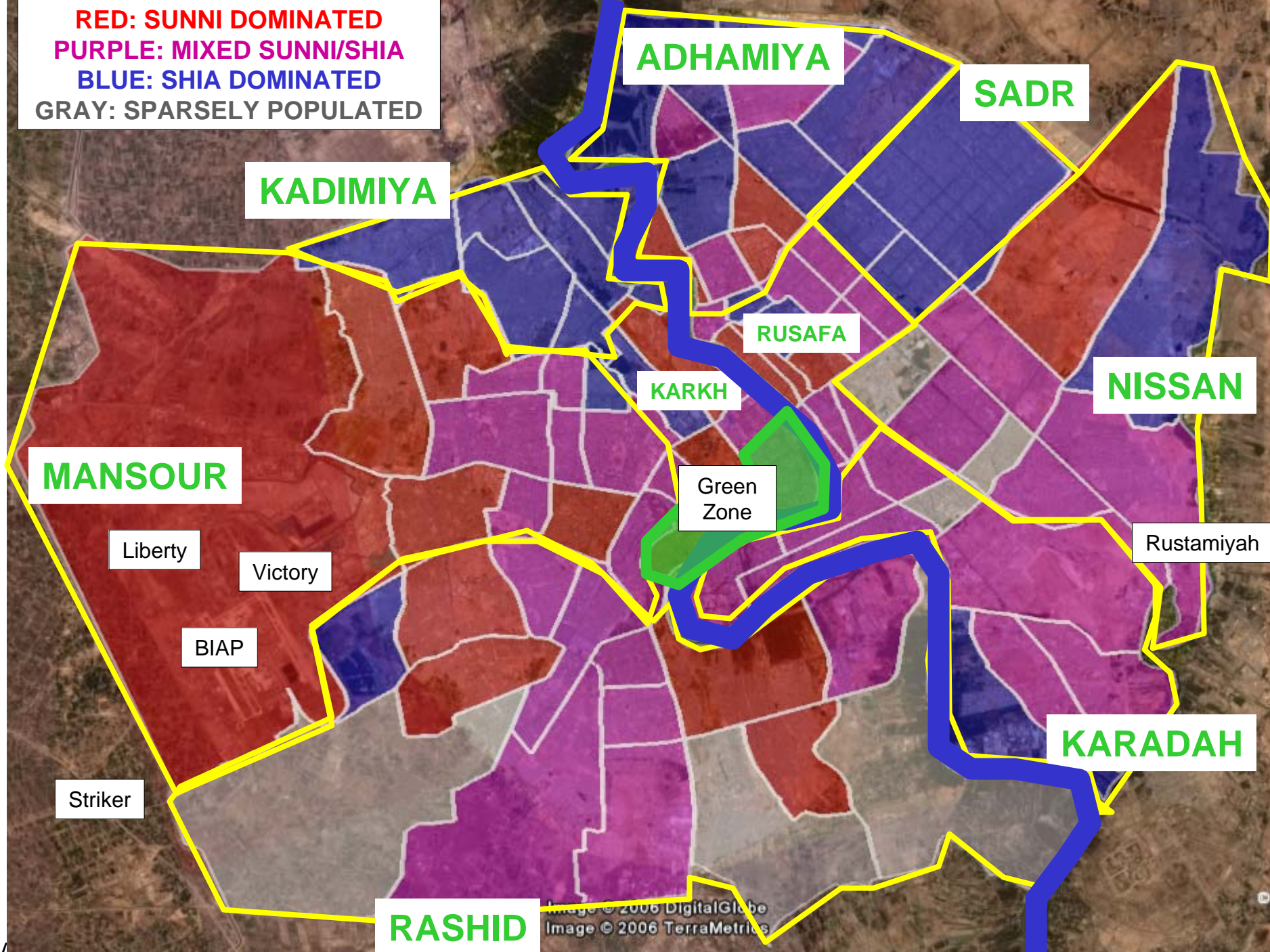
A New Approach Can Succeed

- We must make every effort to secure the population of Baghdad rapidly
- Baghdad is now the center of gravity of this conflict
- We must act at once to improve security there
- Strategy must change from training Iraqis to restoring security-a vital American interest
- Political solutions must accompany this effort, but security is the essential precondition for any forward progress in Iraq

Caveats

- The proposal for establishing security that follows is an example, not an operational plan.
- The proposal is based on open-source information about the current situation in Iraq.
- The purpose is to show that establishing security is possible with available resources.
- Military commanders will adjust it to changing circumstances on the ground.
- Numbers of troops and timelines are approximate.

The Challenges

RED: SUNNI DOMINATED
PURPLE: MIXED SUNNI/SHIA
BLUE: SHIA DOMINATED
GRAY: SPARSELY POPULATED

ADHAMIYA

SADR

KADIMIYA

RUSAFA

KARKH

NISSAN

MANSOUR

Green Zone

Rustamiyah

Liberty

Victory

BIAP

KARADAH

Striker

RASHID

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◆● OCT/NOV VIOLENCE

ADHAMIYA

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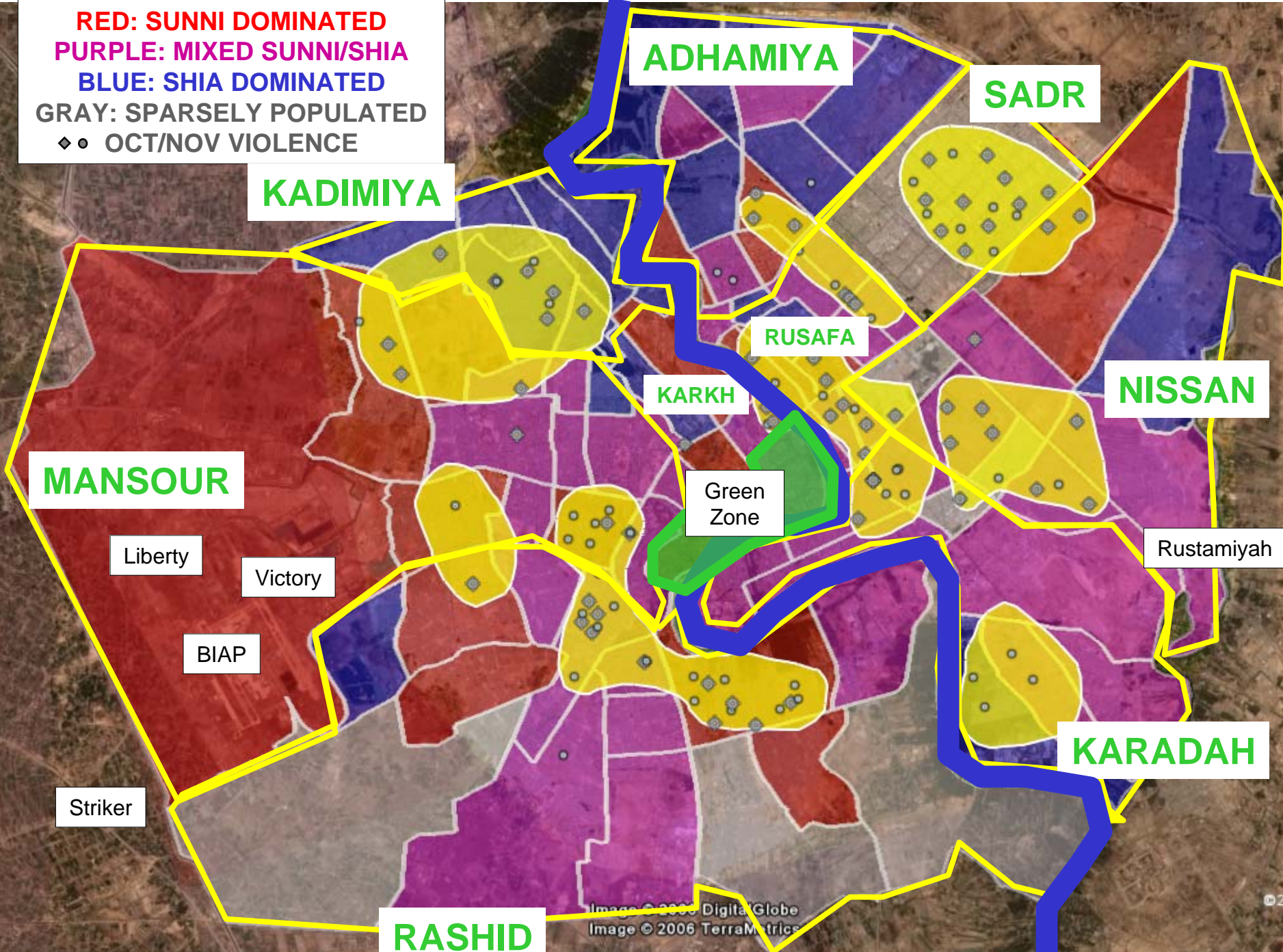
KARADAH

RASHID

As of Dec 13, 2006

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Shia Fighters

Jaysh al-Mahdi and other Sadrists
Objectives:

- Rivalry with other Shia factions for mastery of the Iraqi government post-Coalition withdrawal and imposition of Shia sharia law. To do so, they must conserve their fighting power after conventional defeat in 2004 and thus do not seek direct confrontation with the Coalition/ISF.

- Continue to coerce the withdrawal of Coalition forces through covert indirect attacks on the Coalition and some ISF, and put political and popular pressure agitating for Coalition withdrawal.

- Revenge killings of Sunni militants, and intimidation murder/torture of Sunni civilians to drive them from mixed districts, solidifying their own patronage network within cleared districts.

Badr Corps and other Politically affiliated Militias
Objectives:
- Rivalry with other Shia factions for mastery of the Iraqi government post-Coalition withdrawal and imposition of Shia Sharia law.
- Revenge killings of Sunni militants, and intimidation murder/torture of Sunni civilians to drive them from mixed districts, solidifying their own patronage network within cleared districts.
- Some desire to coerce the withdrawal of Coalition forces through covert indirect attacks, though most are relatively neutral towards the Coalition because they profit from the U.S. supported Iraqi government.

Shia Vigilantes
Objectives:
- Locally oriented groups primarily oriented towards protecting the Shia civilian population.
- Some elements also want to drive out Sunni civilians from mixed neighborhoods.
- Support, passively or with limited assistance, other larger Shia militant objectives.

Sunni Fighters

Al-Qaida in Iraq and Affiliated Iraqi Islamists:

Objectives:

- Coerce Coalition withdrawal through Coalition casualties and destabilization
- Discredit and defeat Iraqi Security Forces, partially through mass-casualty attacks
- Incite a sectarian civil war through mass casualties amongst Shia Civilians.
- Emerge victorious from an Iraqi civil war and wreak vengeance on the Shia.
- After victory, establish the rule of the Sharia and use Iraq as a base to overthrow other regional governments.

Sunni Baathist/Military:
Objectives:
- Coerce Coalition withdrawal through inflicting Coalition casualties and disrupting efforts at creating a viable Iraqi government.
- Restore Sunni supremacy and protect the Sunni population against Shia ascendancy.
- Within the group, some are focused on local goals of protections/Sunni control, others have wider aspirations of a return to Sunni dominance through confrontation with Shia militias.

Sunni Vigilantes:
Objectives:
- Locally oriented groups primarily oriented towards protecting the Sunni civilian population.
- Some elements also want to drive out Shia civilians from mixed neighborhoods. Support, passively or with limited assistance, other larger Sunni militant objectives.
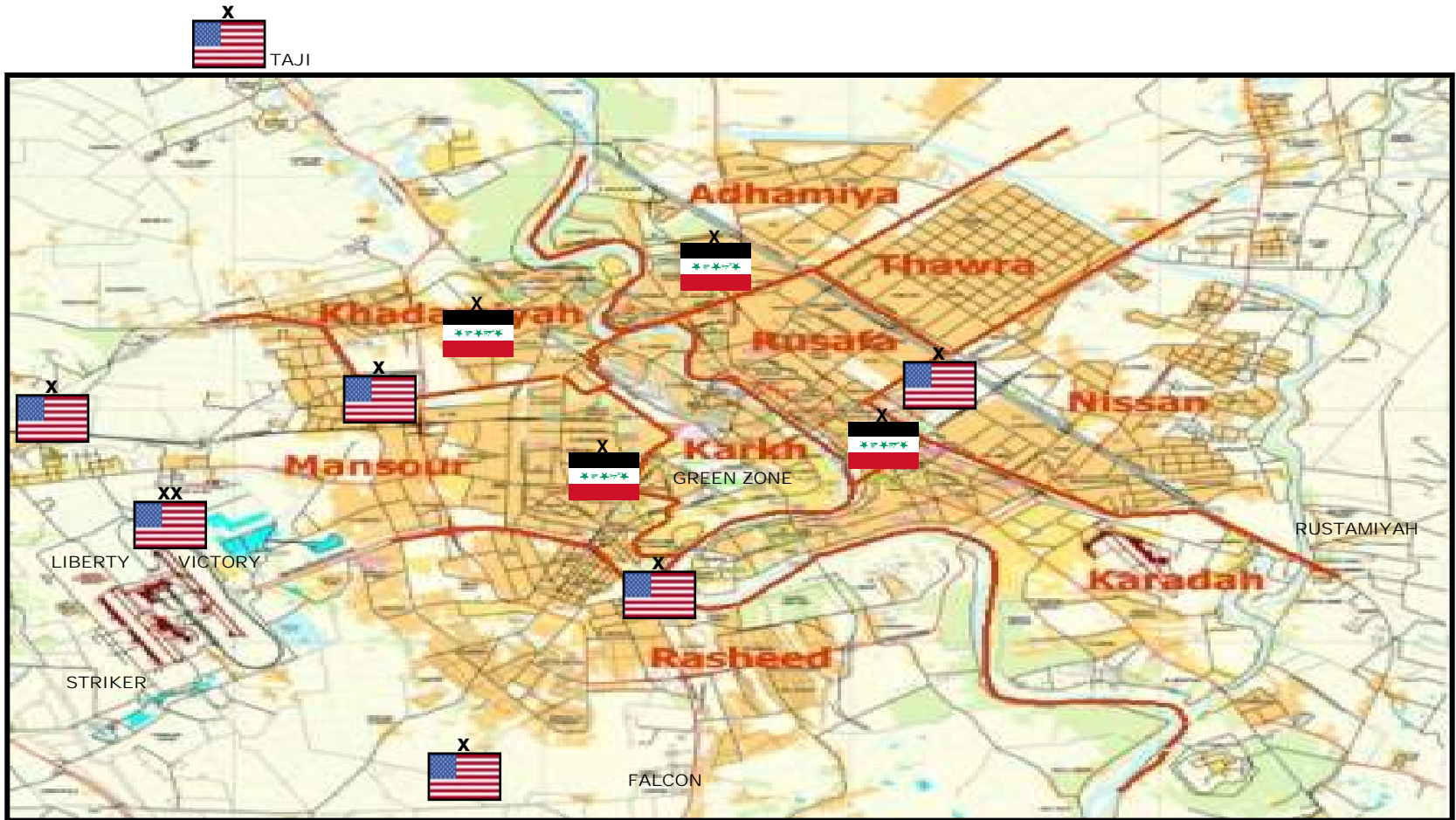
A Course of Action
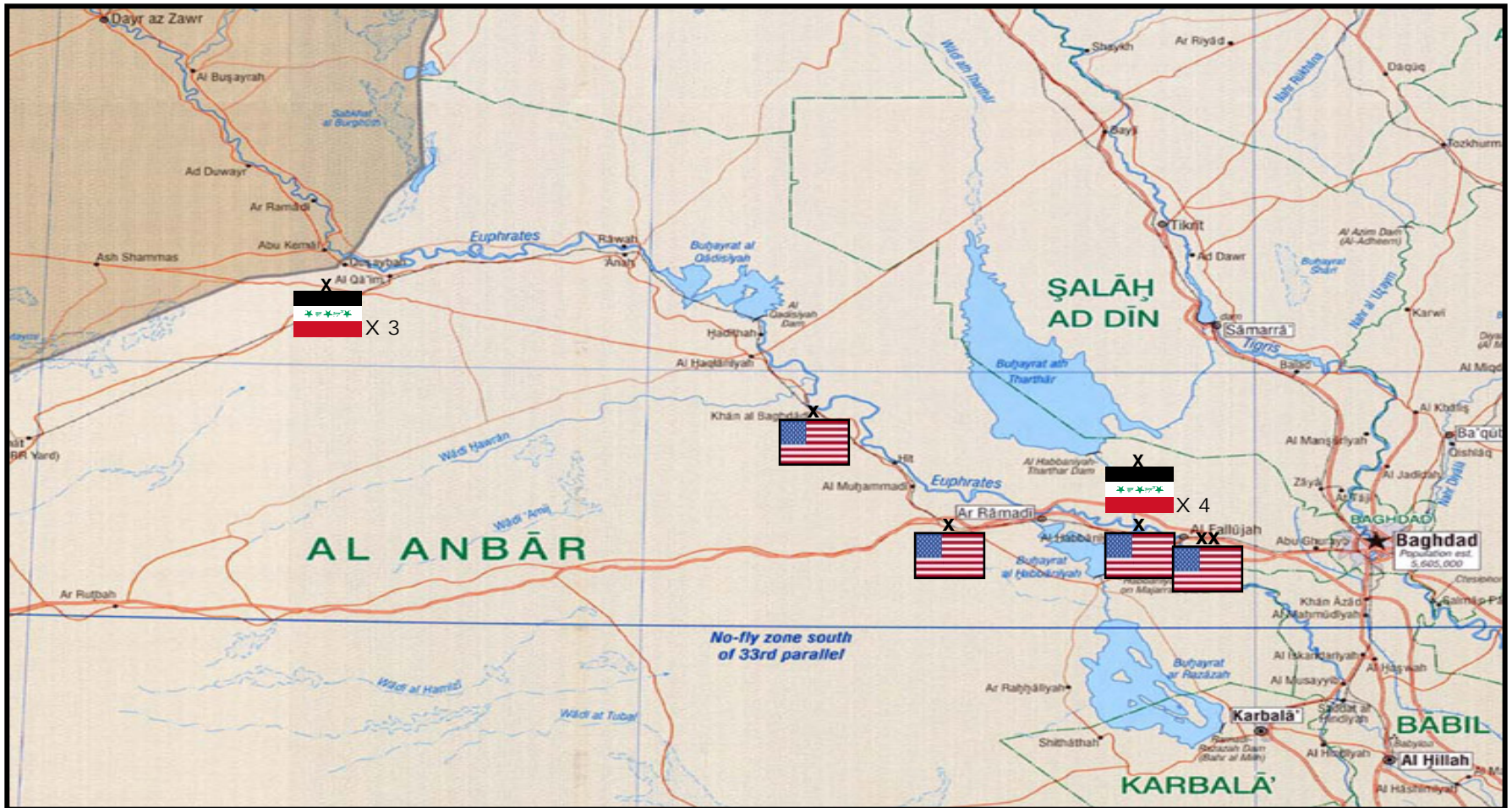
Phases of the Operation

- Phase I: Deploy (by March)
- Phase II: Prepare (by June)
- Phase III: Clear critical terrain (by Sept.)
- Phase IV: Hold cleared areas and transition to Iraqi control

Baghdad Now

Five U.S. Brigades operating in BAGHDAD

Two U.S. Brigades operating N and S

Four IA Brigades of 6th IA DIV

Al Anbar Now
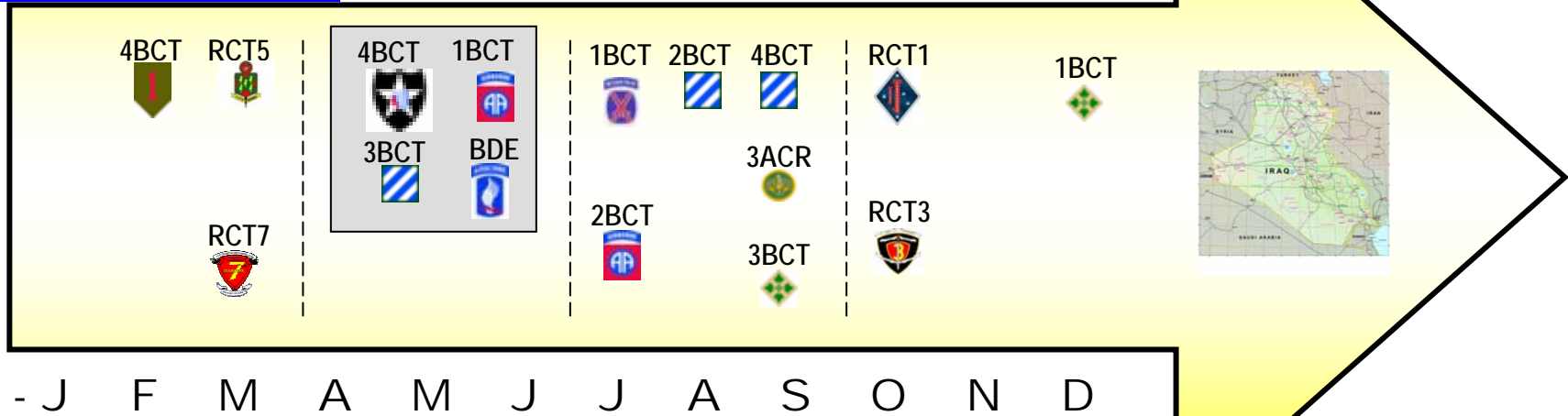

Two Regimental Combat Teams

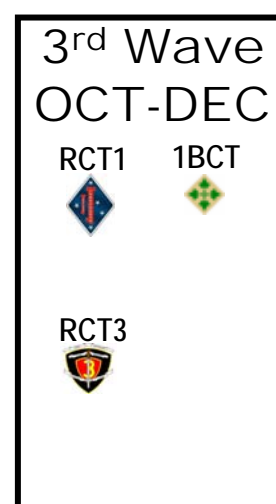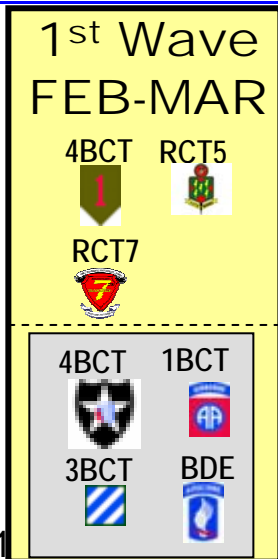**One U.S. Brigade**

Four Brigades in IA 1st DIV (Not Certified)

Three Brigades in IA 7th DIV (Not Certified)

Force Flow – 2007

Planned Force Flow

4BCT	RCT5		4BCT	1BCT		1BCT	2BCT	4BCT		RCT1		1BCT

3BCT   BDE

3ACR

RCT7

2BCT

RCT3

3BCT

2007 - J   F   M   A   M   J   J   A   S   O   N   D

Proposed Force Flow

1st Wave FEB-MAR

4BCT   RCT5

RCT7

Accelerated

4BCT   1BCT

3BCT   BDE

2nd Wave JUL-SEP

2BCT   4BCT

1BCT   3ACR

2BCT   3BCT

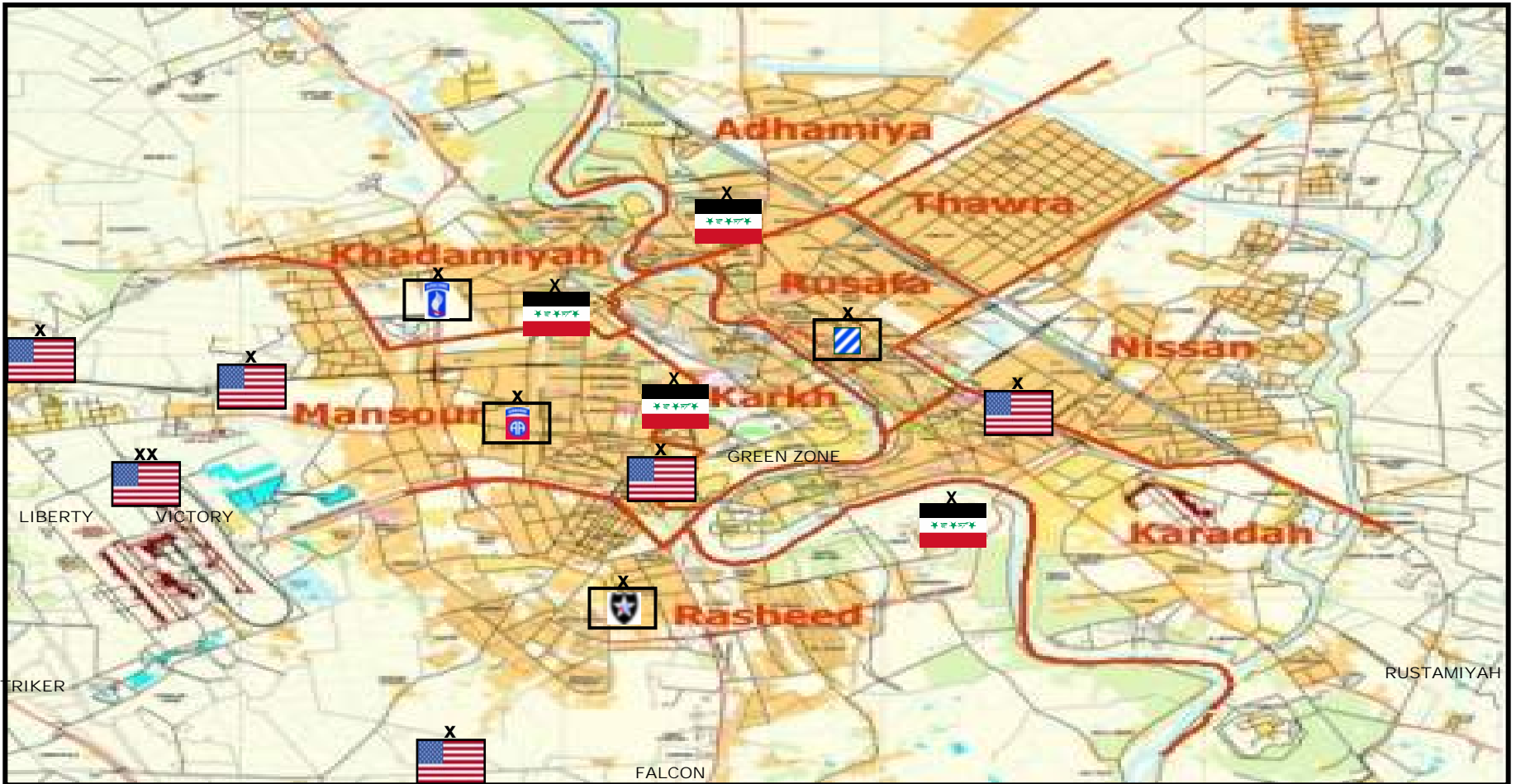**3rd Wave OCT-DEC**

RCT1   1BCT

RCT3

Extend rotations to 15 months for 15 Army BCT's

Extend rotations to To 12 months for 4 USMC RCT's

As of Dec 1

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Proposed Baghdad Disposition

Four to Five Additional U.S. Brigades operating in BAGHDAD

Two U.S. Brigades operating N and S

Four IA Brigades of 6th IA DIV

As of Dec 13, 2006

Proposed Al Anbar Disposition

Two Additional Regimental Combat Teams

Possibly One Additional U.S. Brigade

Four Brigades in IA 1st DIV (Not Certified)

Three Brigades in IA 7th DIV (Not Certified)

BCT and Troop Counts

Date	BCTs Baghdad	Combat Troops Baghdad	Combat Troops Outside of Baghdad	Total BCTs Iraq	Total Combat Troops Iraq
December 2006	5	17,500	35,000	15	52,500
March 2007	Up To 10	35,000	42,000	22	77,000
September 2007	Up To 12	42,000	42,000	24	84,000

Potential Branches during Operations
What Might Change?

Option 1: Deploy operational reserve to address new violence in other districts of Baghdad

Option 2: Deploy operational reserve to address violence outside of Baghdad

Option 3: Bring in operational reserve to reinforce/exploit security operations within planned area of operations

Potential Sequels in 1st QTR 08
What next?

Option 1: Disarm Shi'a militias

Option 2: Continue training and support mission

Option 3: Secure population in Western Iraq

Option 4: Secure population in Northern Iraq

Areas Outside of Baghdad

- Robust forces in al-Anbar increase control in province and secure routes to Baghdad
- Brigades in Taji and Iskandariyah protect perimeter of Baghdad and disrupt enemy safehavens around the city
- Proposal provides a substantial reserve
- Proposal does not draw existing forces from other regions into Baghdad

Enemy Responses

Phase I: Deploy

Most Likely: Counter IO efforts.

Most Dangerous: Sectarian cleansing by all sides stepped up and Extremists fortify sectarian zones.

Counter: Clear message that security operations are underway that protect all Baghdadis. Step up civil security focus of existing units in Baghdad.

Phase II: Isolate

Most Likely: Extremists "surge" with more suicide bombings and a murder campaign against civilians. Locals go to ground and focus on indirect attacks (IEDs, Indirect Fire, and civilian attacks). Some militants displace to safer districts, or may flee Baghdad entirely. All militant groups continue to infiltrate Iraqi police and Army forces.

Most Dangerous: Extremist cells generate high violence and intimidation before the U.S. forces have the ability to develop effective security measures. Positive perception of the government and hopes for security discredited. Extreme violence against civilians, driving tens of thousands of Baghdadis out of mixed neighborhoods.

Counter: Existing units step up patrolling in non-focus areas in Baghdad. Tell the nation and Iraq that high casualties are the effect of enemy actions, but that we are taking the fight to the enemy. Be prepared for humanitarian efforts in support of displaced population.

Enemy Responses

Phase III: Clear

Most Likely: Extremists "surge" with more suicide bombings and murder campaigns against civilians. Moderates decrease attacks and civilian violence. Only militants within cleared territories directly confront Coalition/Iraqi Forces.

Most Dangerous: Radicalized armed groups converge violently upon Coalition and Iraqi forces (the "Tet Offensive"). All mixed neighborhoods not secured with robust Coalition presence become sites of mass casualty bombings and murder. Iraqi Security forces are corrupt and comply. Spectacular attacks occur in other Iraqi cities. Enemy assassinates high profile political figures or destroys symbolic religious sites.

Counter: Rapid, thorough clearing operations and strong leave-behind presence in each cleared district combats enemy surge attacks. Increase protection of high value targets.

Enemy Responses
Phase IV: Hold and Build

Most Likely: Attacks shift to mass casualty efforts that cannot be easily blocked – especially in the form of VBIED and suicide bombers. Degraded capabilities within Baghdad drive extremists to softer targets elsewhere in Iraq or to any remaining unsecured zones of Baghdad.

Most Dangerous: Insurgents focus operations on secured zones, increasing casualties to levels higher than before the start of security operations. Diversionary attacks made in other major Iraqi urban areas attempt to force a reduction of efforts in Baghdad.

Counter: Continue to develop local intelligence to root out any cells that have gone to ground within cleared districts. Improve ISF/Coalition force protection measures within districts. Actively patrol cleared areas by all forces to deny attacks. As necessary, use operational reserve to address problems either within cleared areas or in other areas in Baghdad and/or region.

Jaysh al-Mahdi and Other Sadrists

Most Likely:

- Denounce increased troops and operations in political forums, possibly including mass demonstrations.
- Avoid conventional confrontation with Coalition/ISF but continue indirect attacks.
- Continue murder campaign against Sunni militants and civilians, taking advantage of Sunni weakness.
- Conduct campaign of intimidation and neighborhood cleansing. Deny responsibility for murders.
- Carve out areas dominated by their faction, including against other Shia factions.

Most Dangerous:

- Become engaged in a direct confrontation with Coalition/ISF.
- Take advantage of reduced Sunni militant presence to murder Sunni leaders and create mass intimidation within cleared areas.
- Conduct covert killings of rival/innocent Shia with the intent of portraying murders as Sunni provocations.
- Displace militant operations to other Coalition/ISF targets in Shia dominated zones.

Other Shia Fighters

Badr Corps and smaller militias affiliated with Shia political factions:
Most Likely:
- Continue to conduct murder campaign against Sunni militants and civilians.
- Make political protests over Shia casualties.

Most Dangerous:
- Provoked by Sunni mass-casualty attack or assassination of key leader, join together with rival Shia factions for "revenge" assault on Sunni civilians.
- Displace violence outside of Baghdad against other Coalition targets in Iraq.

Shia Self-Defense Groups:
Most Likely:
- Avoid direct confrontation with Coalition/ISF.
- Remain in neighborhood.
- Target Sunni elements in mixed neighborhoods.

Most Dangerous:
- Go to ground in secure neighborhoods.
- Aid other Shia groups in low-grade attacks against security elements.

Al-Qaida in Iraq and Affiliated Iraqi Islamists:

- **Most Likely COA:**
  - Avoid direct confrontation with Coalition, continue indirect attacks (IED/VBIED)
  - Displace to insecure Sunni neighborhoods within Baghdad
  - Displace out of Baghdad and continue the fight in Baquba/Ramadi/Mosul
  - Use outside safe havens to continue to conduct attacks, in and out of secured zones
  - Suicide bombings against soft, mass-casualty targets
  - Depict operations as an "assault" on the Sunni
  - Continue sectarian cleansing through murder and intimidation
- **Short Term Most Dangerous COA:**
  - Surge in for a final, maximum fight against the "last effort" of the Coalition
  - Significantly raise coalition casualties and spike civilian casualties
  - Force Sunni withdrawal from Iraqi political institutions
  - Force Sunni regional diplomatic pressure
  - High profile Shia leader assassination / Destruction of Shia symbolic sites
- **Long Term Most Dangerous:**
  - Go to ground to weather the heaviest security operations
  - Later resurface in "secured" zones to continue a mass casualty attacks.

Other Sunni Fighters

Baathist/Military Nationalists:

- **Most Likely:**
  - Steady-state attacks on Coalition/Iraqi forces.
  - Displace to insecure Sunni neighborhoods within Baghdad
  - Displace out of Baghdad and continue the fight in Baquba/Ramadi/Mosul
  - Use outside safe havens to continue to conduct attacks, in and out of secured zones
  - Retaliation attacks on Shia militias
  - Depict Operations as an "assault" on the Sunni
  - Continue sectarian cleansing through murder and intimidation
- **Most Dangerous:**
  - Pitched conventional fights against clearing operations
  - Surge IED/VBIED attacks on Coalition
  - Force Sunni withdrawal from Iraqi political institutions
  - Force Sunni regional diplomatic pressure
  - Significantly raise coalition casualties and spike civilian casualties

Sunni Vigilantes:

- **Most Likely:**
  - Avoid direct confrontation with Coalition/ISF
  - Remain in neighborhood and perpetrate revenge killings on Shia when possible
  - Target Shia in mixed neighborhoods
- **Most Dangerous:**
  - Go to ground in secure neighborhoods.
  - Aid other Sunni groups in low-grade attacks against forces providing security

Reconstruction Efforts

- Reconstruction is a vital part of stabilizing and securing the Iraqi population
- Reconstruction compensates for disruption caused by clear-and-hold operations
- Reconstruction is an incentive for future cooperation
- Reconstruction must have a local Iraqi government face, but American or international auditors should oversee disbursal of funds to ensure that designated funds are properly distributed

Reconstruction, Tier I

- Every clearing operation should be accompanied by a set, fully funded reconstruction package

- Restore essential services immediately: sewer, water, electricity, and trash removal services

- Commanders should be granted authority and money to distribute funds and oversee the execution of reconstruction efforts, aided by appropriate US Government agencies

Reconstruction, Tier II

- The U.S. must develop a set of positive incentives to encourage continued Iraqi cooperation with the establishment and maintenance of security

- Funds should be set aside for reconstruction efforts that would offer a significant improvement in the quality of life of neighborhoods that provide such cooperation

- The U.S. should attempt to raise such funds from coalition members withdrawing their troops from Iraq and from Iraq's neighbors, but should provide the funds if these sources fail

- Even large reconstruction efforts are cheap compared to continued fighting!

Reconstruction Is Essential

- The U.S. must increase reconstruction aid for Iraq
  - The Commander's Emergency Response Program must be funded at high levels
  - Reconstruction packages must be supplied to all cleared neighborhoods
  - Military commanders should receive authority to disburse reconstruction funds and oversee the execution of reconstruction programs
  - The President must require all relevant agencies to accomplish assigned reconstruction tasks

We Are At War

- Success requires a national commitment
- Some military units will be deployed for longer tours
- Some National Guard units may deploy again sooner than planned
- Equipment must be borrowed from non-deploying active, reserve, and Guard units
- Military industry must be mobilized to make up equipment shortages

The Ground Forces Must Grow

- The President must request a substantial increase in active duty ground forces
  - At least 30K Army and Marines per year for the next two years
  - Vital to offset increased demands on the ground forces in Iraq
  - Vital to provide strategic options in many scenarios beyond Iraq
  - Increases must be permanent
  - The President must call for young Americans to volunteer to defend the nation in a time of crisis

No Substitute for Victory

- Withdrawal will not end the pain
  - Regional ripple effects will require continued U.S. involvement
  - America will likely have to re-engage within a few years on much worse terms
  - There will be no "decent interval"—withdrawal will take place under fire amidst growing violence and atrocities

Success Reclaims the Global Initiative

- Success provides leverage with Iran and Syria
- Success reverses the growing perception of American weakness and unreliability
- Success emboldens our friends and scares our foes
- Success opens strategic options that defeat is foreclosing
- WE CAN WIN IN IRAQ, AND WE MUST

Questions and Answers

Will this surge deprive the United States of the ability to counter potential threats outside Iraq?

- Failure in Iraq emboldens US enemies.

- The surge of forces into Iraq strengthens our position in the Middle East, where the greatest threats to US national security lie.

- Proposed increases in ground forces increase future US capabilities.

Is this a plan for a permanent and unsustainable surge?

No, it is a bridge to three possible landings:

   1)   The security situation improves within 18-24 months and we can begin going home

   2)   We continue to train Iraqi Security Forces much more effectively than we could simply by embedding trainers, because they will be partnered with and fighting with our excellent soldiers. As we help improve the security situation, their quality will also improve, expediting our ability to turn responsibility for maintaining security over to them.

   3)   Within the time-frame of this surge we could bring new active duty formations on line if we began recruiting immediately. Those new formations would ensure relief from the additional strain of the surge.

Will this surge break the army?

- No, we are accelerating the deployments of only 4 BCTs by a matter of weeks
- All units will still have one year between deployments
- Victory increases the morale of soldiers and officers
- Help is on the way – increase in troop end-strength and new and improved equipment
- Losing now will certainly break the force: morale, retention and intermediate readiness will all decrease

Why is proposal better than OTF?

- OTF I surged 7,000; OTF II surged 3,500
- Doubles the combat forces in Baghdad
- U.S. and Iraqi troops partnered will secure neighborhoods and remain in them (U.S. forces departed after clearing neighborhoods in OTF)
- U.S. and ISF partnership will improve ISF unit training and cohesion and develop ISF capacity to operate independently

Why break the Army if we might lose later?

- Army will not break with this proposal

- Withdrawal under secure conditions is preferable to withdrawal under chaotic conditions and spiraling violence

- This plan creates conditions for success in Baghdad and victory in Iraq; withdrawal ensures immediate defeat

More Casualties?

- Yes
- Short-term increase in casualties is not a sign of failure
- As troops actively secure the population the enemy will surge its attacks on coalition troops and Iraqi civilians
- Long term casualties over a nine month period will decrease as the population is secured

What if the current Iraqi government falls?

- The United States is in Iraq to secure U.S. interests
- Executive functions in the Iraqi government remain in emergency cabinet
- ISF forces remain functional and effective
- U.S. supports governance in Iraq, not a particular cabinet coalition
- May create opportunity for National Unity Government

Will the Shia militias get stronger?

- Plan removes the rationale for Shia militias
- Shia militias recruit because of sectarian violence provoked especially by Sunni extremists
- Removing catalyst slows growth of Shia militias
- Militias lose freedom of movement into Sunni areas and cannot engage in sectarian cleansing
- Ending sectarian cleansing ends militia capacity to redistribute services to Shia population and displace government functions

Are we taking the Shia side?

- Sunni media outlets will portray this as sign of U.S. support for Shia people and government
- Protecting the Sunni population and reconstruction will offset this propaganda
- U.S. public statements will focus on anti-criminal, anti-insurgent, anti-terrorist, and protective missions; not aimed at any particular sectarian group
- Engagement with local leaders will address grievances
- U.S. forces will continue to patrol Shia areas

Participants

- Frederick W. Kagan, AEI
- Jack Keane, General, U.S. Army, Retired
- David Barno, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army Retired
- Danielle Pletka, AEI
- Rend al-Rahim, Iraq Foundation
- Joel Armstrong, Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired
- Daniel Dwyer, Major, U.S. Army, Retired
- Larry Crandall
- Larry Sampler, IDA

- Michael Eisenstadt, Washington Institute
- Kimberly Kagan, Georgetown
- Michael Rubin, AEI
- Reuel Gerecht, AEI
- Thomas Donnelly, AEI
- Gary Schmitt, AEI
- Mauro de Lorenzo, AEI
- Vance Serchuk, AEI
- Molly McKew, AEI
- Laura Conniff, AEI
- Jonathan Bronitsky, AEI
- Adrian Myers, AEI

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