U.S. Marines In Iraq, 2004-2008: ANTHOLOGY AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

U.S. Marines in the Global War on Terrorism

U.S. Marines In Iraq, 2004-2008: ANTHOLOGY AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Schlosser

Cover: U.S. Marines from Company C, 1st Battalion, 3d Marines, on patrol in Fallujah during Operation al-Fajr ("Dawn") in November 2004. The operation, also known as Phantom Fury, was conducted to clear and secure the city in order to prevent it from becoming a center for insurgent activities in Iraq's al-Anbar Province.

(Photo by LCpl Daniel J. Klein)

U.S. MARINES IN IRAQ, 2004-2008
ANTHOLOGY AND
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Compiled with an Introduction by
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Det One: U.S. Marine Corps U.S. Special Operations Command Detachment, 2003-2006

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Foreword

This anthology presents a collection of 21 articles describing the full range of U.S. Marine Corps operations in Iraq from 2004 to 2008. During this period, the Marines conducted a wide variety of kinetic and non-kinetic operations as they fought to defeat the Iraq insurgency, build stability, and lay the groundwork for democratic governance.

The selections in this collection include journalistic accounts, scholarly essays, and Marine Corps summaries of action. Our intent is to provide a general overview to educate Marines and the general public about this critical period in the history of the U.S. Marine Corps, the United States, and Iraq. Many of the conclusions are provisional and are being updated and revised as new information and archival resources become available. The accompanying annotated bibliography provides a detailed overview of where current scholarship on this period currently stands.

The editor of this anthology, Nicholas J. Schlosser, earned his doctorate in history from the University of Maryland in 2008 and has worked as a historian with the Marine Corps History Division since 2009. His research examines U.S. Marine Corps operations during Operation Iraqi Freedom, focusing on irregular warfare, counterinsurgency operations, and the al-Anbar Awakening.

We thank the editors of *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, Foreign Affairs, Marine Corps Gazette, Military Review, Parameters, New York Times, Survival, Vanity Fair,* Osprey Publishing, Potomac Books, William Langewiesche, and the Center for Naval Analysis for permission to reprint articles. Their cooperation has helped make this anthology possible.

Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer
Director of Marine Corps History

Preface

The aim of this collection is to provide readers with an overview of how the U.S. Marine Corps confronted the tasks of fighting an insurgency and rebuilding Iraq in its support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2004 through 2008. The period is one of considerable significance in the history of the Marine Corps as it fought in the intense battles of Fallujah, conducted counterinsurgency operations, provided security for elections, and helped build alliances with local tribes in what has come to be known as the al-Anbar Awakening.

The following selections provide a broad overview of all of these events and operations. They include articles on fighting irregular warfare, selections on large-scale kinetic operations such as the battles for Fallujah, and essays on civil affairs operations and the al-Anbar Awakening. The entries in Part I provide contextual information for readers, presenting a broad overview of the events of the Iraq conflict from 2004 through 2008. The selections in Part II explore the theory and doctrine of counterinsurgency. Part III focuses on U.S. Marine Corps operations from 2004 through 2005, with particular attention on the 2004 battles in Fallujah and counterinsurgency operations conducted throughout Iraq's al-Anbar Province in 2005. Part IV explores civil-military operations and the building of alliances with the tribes of the al-Anbar Province against terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda in Iraq. Part V provides perspectives on the restoration of stability to al-Anbar and thoughts on the consequences of the Awakening on the future of Iraq. The volume concludes with appendices presenting additional information on the commanders and their units, a list of abbreviations that appear in the anthology, a chronology of events, and an annotated bibliography.

This book would not have been possible without the contributions of numerous individuals at the Marine Corps History Division, including Chief Historian Charles D. Melson, Senior Editor Kenneth H. Williams, Chief Warrant Officer-4 Timothy S. McWilliams, Lieutenant Colonel Kurtis P. Wheeler, Paul W. Westermeyer, Thomas M. Baughn, Annette D. Amerman, Wanda J. Renfrow, W. Stephen Hill, James M. Caiella, and Colin M. Colbourn. Ms. Renfrow and Mr. Williams edited the volume, with layout and design by Mr. Hill. External to the History Division, we thank Carter A. Malkasian, Aaron B. O'Connell, and Bruce I. Gudmundsson for their input.

Dr. Nicholas J. Schlosser
Marine Corps History Division

Table of Contents

Foreword iii

Preface v

Introduction: U.S. Marines in Iraq, 2004-2008 1

Part I: The Iraqi Insurgency, 2004-2007 13

Counterinsurgency in Iraq: May 2003-January 2007
Carter A. Malkasian 15

Iraq's Civil War
James D. Fearon 29

Part II: Counterinsurgency and Irregular Warfare—Observations and Principles 37

Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company–Level Counterinsurgency
David Kilcullen 39

Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq
Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, USA 49

Making Revolutionary Change: Airpower in COIN Today
Major General Charles J. Dunlap Jr., USAF 61

Part III: U.S. Marines, Counterinsurgency, and Urban Warfare in Iraq 73

The Massacre That Wasn't
Major Alfred B. "Ben" Connable 75

I Marine Expeditionary Force Summary of Action
Commander, U.S. Marine Forces Central Command 83

Operation Al Fajr: The Battle of Fallujah—Part II
Lieutenant General John F. Sattler and Lieutenant Colonel Daniel H. Wilson 95

Who Won the Battle of Fallujah?
Jonathan F. Keiler 105

II Marine Expeditionary Force Summary of Action
U.S. Marine Forces, Central Command 111

Efforts to Counter the IED Threat
Colonel Eric T. Litaker 129

Rules of Engagement
William Langewiesche 133

Part IV: Building Iraqi Forces, the al-Anbar Awakening, and the Quest to Restore Stability to Iraq 155

The Combined Action Platoon in Iraq
First Lieutenant Jason R. Goodale and First Lieutenant Jonathan F. Webre 157

Will Iraqization Work?
Carter A. Malkasian 161

The Anbar Awakening
Austin G. Long 179

Anbar Awakens: The Tipping Point
Major Niel Smith, USA, and Colonel Sean B. MacFarland, USA 195

Ramadi: From the Caliphate to Capitalism
Andrew Lubin 205

Daily Diary of an al-Qaeda Sector Leader
Abu-Tariq 211

Part V: Stability, Progress, and the Future 217

American Exit Increases Optimism in Falluja
Timothy Williams 219

The Price of the Surge: How U.S. Strategy is Hastening Iraq's Demise
Steven N. Simon 223

When to Leave Iraq: Today, Tomorrow, or Yesterday?
Colin H. Kahl and William E. Odom 233

Appendices

Appendix A
Command List 239

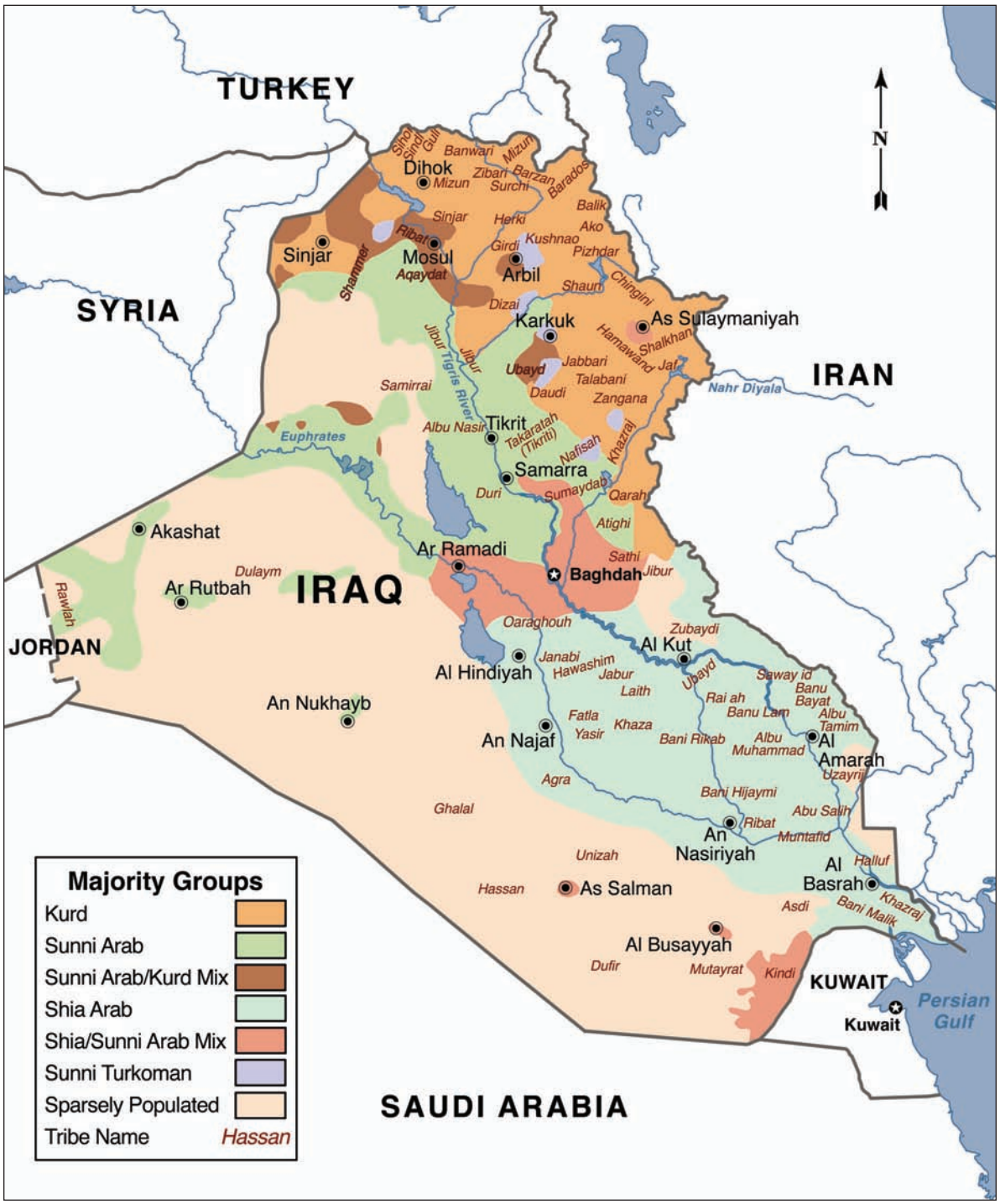
Appendix B
Unit List 245

Appendix C
Selected Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations 257

Appendix D
Chronology of Events, 2004-2008 261

Appendix E
Annotated Bibliography 269

Iraq
International boundary
Province (muḥāfaẓah) boundary
National capital
Province (muḥāfaẓah) capital
Expressway
Road
Railroad
0 50 100 Kilometers
0 50 100 Miles
Lambert Conformal Conic Projection, SP 12°N/38°N
Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.
TURKEY
SYRIA
IRAN
SAUDI ARABIA
KUWAIT
JORDAN
Caspian Sea
Persian Gulf
Lake Urmia
Tigris
Euphrates
Nahr al Khābūr
Great Zab
Little Zab
Nahr Diyālā
Nahr al Gharrāf
Shatt al Arab
Rūd-e Kārūn
Rūdkhāneh-ye Sīmareh
Wādī al Bāṭīn
Diyarbakır
Batman
Kurtalan
Hakkāri
Orūmīyeh
Tabrīz
Marāgheh
Mīāneh
Zanjān
Mahābād
Saqqez
Sanandaj
Hamadān
Kermānshāh
Borūjerd
Khorramābād
Dezfūl
Āhvāz
Khorramshahr
Ābādān
Umm Qaṣr
Al Fāw
Al Jahra'
Kuwait
Ra's al Khafjī
Ḥafar al Bāṭīn
Rafḥā'
Ar'ar
Ar Ruṭbah
Akāshāt
Dayr az Zawr
Al Qā'im
Ḥadīthah
Al Ḥasakah
Al Qāmishlī
Ṣanlı Urfa
Cizre
Zakho
DAHŪK
Dihōk
'Aqrah
Al Ḥuqnah
Sinjār
Mosul
Arbīl
ARBĪL
Rāyāt
Qal'at Dīzah
AS SULAYMĀNĪYAH
As Sulaymānīyah
Halabjah
NĪNAWĀ
Karkūk
AT TA'MĪM
Bayjī
Tikrīt
ṢALĀḤ AD DĪN
Sāmarrā'
Khānaqīn
DĪYĀLĀ
Ba'qūbah
Mandalī
Īlām
Buḥayrat al Qādisīyah
Buḥayrat ath Tharthār
Buḥayrat al Ḥabbānīyah
Buḥayrat ar Razāzah
AL ANBĀR
Ar Ramādī
Al Fallūjah
Al Ḥabbānīyah
Baghdad
BAGHDĀD
WĀSIṬ
Al Kūt
BĀBIL
Karbalā'
Al Hindīyah
Al Ḥillah
KARBALĀ'
An Nukhayb
An Najaf
Ad Dīwānīyah
AL QĀDISĪYAH
Al Ḥayy
Al 'Amārah
MAYSĀN
DHĪ QĀR
An Nāṣirīyah
AN NAJAF
As Samāwah
As Salmān
AL MUTHANNĀ
Al Buṣayyah
Al Baṣrah
Az Zubayr
AL BAṢRAH
Al Jahra'
Kuwait
Dam
canal
Tigris
Euphrates
Nahr al Gharrāf
Nahr Diyālā
Great Zab
Little Zab
Buḥayrat Dahūk
Buḥayrat al Qādisīyah
Buḥayrat ath Tharthār
Buḥayrat al Ḥabbānīyah
Buḥayrat ar Razāzah
De Facto Boundary
Rūd-e Kārūn
Rūdkhāneh-ye Sīmareh
Wādī al Bāṭīn
N


TURKEY
SYRIA
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IRAQ
JORDAN
SAUDI ARABIA
KUWAIT
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Dihok
Mizun
Sinjar
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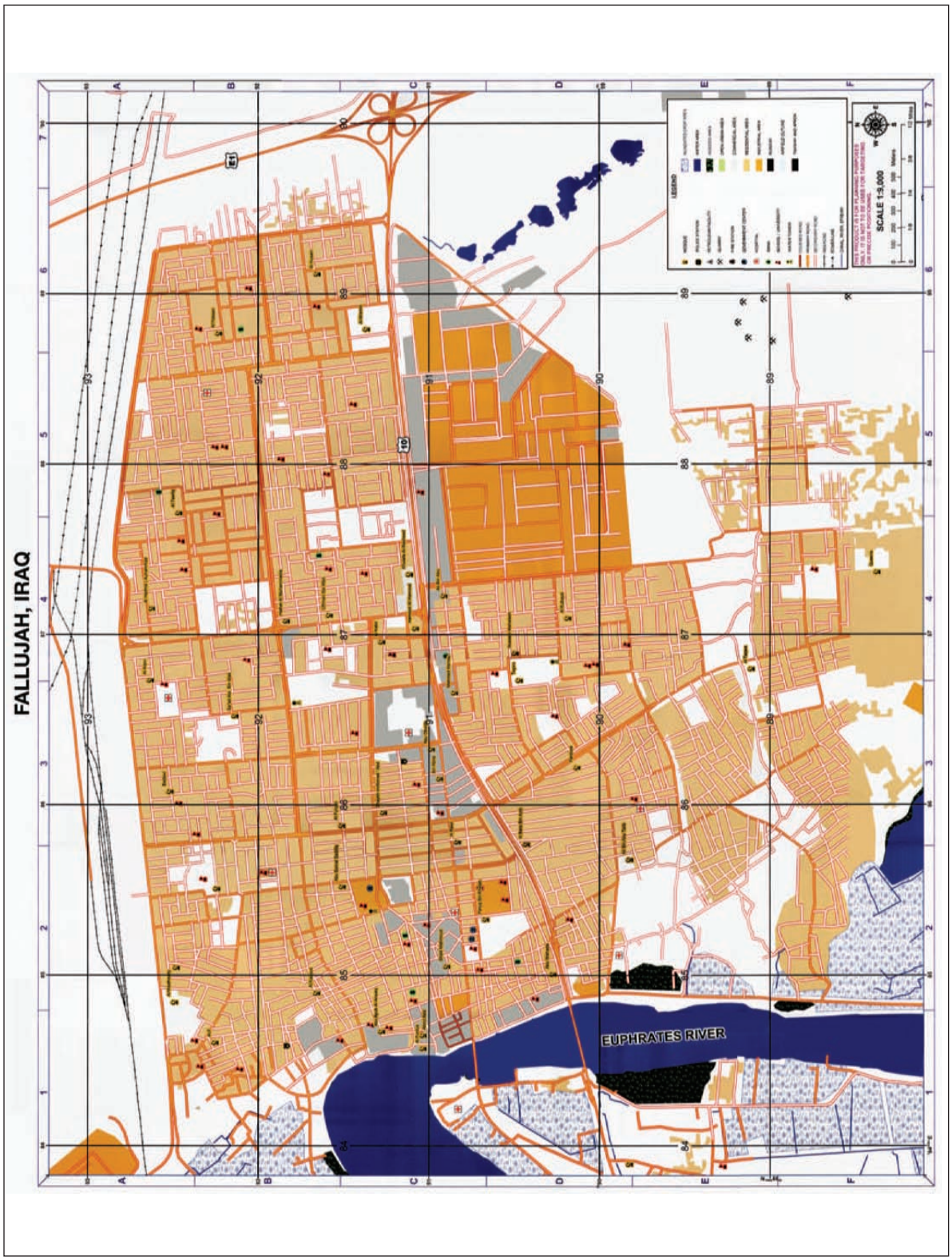
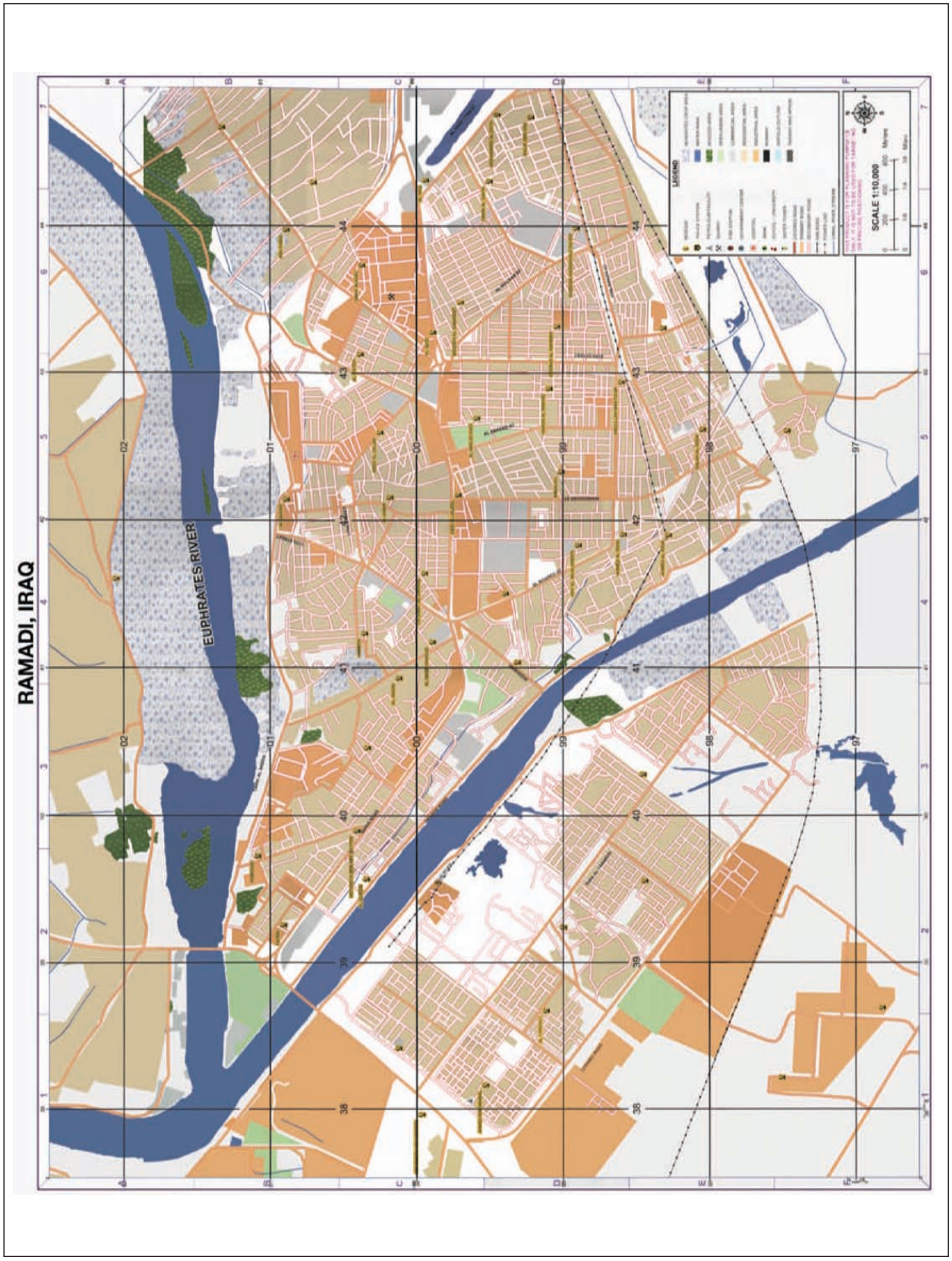
Arbil
Karkuk
As Sulaymaniyah
Tikrit
Samarra
Akashat
Ar Ramadi
Ar Rutbah
Baghdah
Al Kut
Al Hindiyah
An Nukhayb
An Najaf
Al Amarah
An Nasiriyah
Al Basrah
As Salman
Al Busayyah
Kuwait
Persian Gulf
Euphrates
Tigris River
Majority Groups
Kurd
Sunni Arab
Sunni Arab/Kurd Mix
Shia Arab
Shia/Sunni Arab Mix
Sunni Turkoman
Sparsely Populated
Tribe Name
Hassan


FALLUJAH, IRAQ
EUPHRATES RIVER
LEGEND
SCALE 1:3,000


RAMADI, IRAQ
EUPHRATES RIVER
LEGEND
SCALE 1:10,000

Introduction: U.S. Marines in Iraq, 2004-2008

When the U.S. Marine Corps began its second deployment to Iraq in the spring of 2004, the Middle Eastern country was in a state of turmoil. An insurgency opposing to the U.S. presence had raged since the summer of 2003, stalling the Coalition Provisional Authority's efforts to rebuild Iraq and lay the foundations for creating a democratic state. The basic elements needed for building a state—internal security, economic stability, and basic government structures—were in disarray. By 2008 however, observers were beginning to make more optimistic pronouncements.[1] Violence was on the decline, democratic institutions were emerging, and many commentators were anticipating a time when the number of U.S. forces in Iraq could be reduced.

Over the course of the four years from the time that the Marines had begun their second deployment, the Corps contributed to a wide range of efforts to make such hopeful pronouncements possible. The following collection provides readers with an account of these events.

This anthology serves a number of purposes. First, it is an early chronicle of U.S. Marine Corps operations in Iraq from 2004 through 2008. Second, the collection presents a narrative of, and commentary on, the most important events of this period. Finally, the articles provide readers with a window into the most important issues and challenges that the Marines faced during the years following their redeployment to Iraq in 2004.

The War in Iraq

The second war between the United States and Iraq can be divided into two distinct phases. The first, lasting a little over a month from March to April 2003, ended with the collapse of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime and the institution of a civilian authority responsible for rebuilding the country and helping to prepare it for self rule along democratic lines.[2] The second phase, beginning almost immediately after the collapse of the regime, was a general insurgency that opposed the Coalition forces. During the course of this insurgency, Iraq erupted into sectarian conflict. The insurgency reached its peak in 2006, leading many to label the conflict a civil war. Although the violence would significantly decline due to developments outlined in this volume, at the time of publication of this anthology, Iraq remains a fragile state with an uncertain future, hindered by internal division and weak civic institutions.

The collapse of the Ba'athist regime was marked by confusion and instability. On 28 and 30 April 2003, mass protests in Fallujah provoked soldiers of the U.S. Army's 82d Airborne Division to fire into the gatherings, killing more than a dozen civilians.[3] In mid-May 2003, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), L. Paul Bremer III, made a series of decisions that proved to have significant consequences for the future of Iraq and the presence of the United States there. The first was Coalition Provisional Authority order number 1, "De-Ba'athification of Iraqi Society." The order purged thousands of experienced civil servants from their posts.[4] Bremer then dissolved the Sunni-dominated Iraq Army. In doing so, the Coalition Provisional Authority hindered reconstruction efforts by removing the one major national force that could maintain security. This action also disenfranchised thousands of soldiers, driving many of the former members of the army underground to take up arms against the Coalition.[5]

The insurgency against the U.S.-led Coalition cannot be understood without examining the critical impact that de-Ba'athification had on Iraqi society. Initially, the George W. Bush administration dismissed the insurgents as

Ba'athist "dead-enders."[6] As Lieutenant Colonel Ahmed S. Hashim, USA, has noted, however, the insurgency had much deeper roots that transcended Ba'athist ideology. The U.S. decision to end the Sunni ascendency and build a Shi'a-dominated federation led many Sunnis to fear retribution, disenfranchisement, and marginalization. The Sunnis' refusal to accept their loss of status, coupled with an increasingly "muscular" response to insurgent attacks on the part of the United States, fanned the flames of the uprising.[7] A broad collection of nationalists, former Ba'athists, and Islamic fundamentalists coalesced around the goal of ending the occupation and removing the United States from Iraq. At the same time, radical groups affiliated with al-Qaeda, the most prominent of which was the Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's al-Qaeda in Iraq, sought to build a Sunni-dominated Islamic state. In pursuing their goals, the fundamentalist organizations purposely targeted not only American troops, but also Iraq's Shi'a population.[8]

By the summer of 2003, Iraq was in the grip of a general insurgency. The Coalition Provisional Authority, undermanned in both troops to provide security and civilians to help rebuild the country's infrastructure and civil institutions, was ill-equipped to confront the challenge. The U.S. response was uncoordinated, with all of the major units in the country employing different approaches. Major General Raymond T. Odierno's 4th Infantry Division, USA, favored large-scale sweeps and liberal use of artillery, while Major General David H. Petraeus's 101st Airborne Division, USA, conducted a more measured counterinsurgency that focused on securing the population, using foot patrols through the major urban center of the division's area of operations, the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. While Petraeus's approach ultimately proved more effective, relieving forces were substantially smaller.[9]

It was in this context that the Marines of the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) redeployed to Iraq in March 2004. During this period, the majority of Marines deployed were responsible for stability and reconstruction operations throughout Iraq's vast western al-Anbar Province as Multi National Force-West (MNF-W).

The Marines and Irregular Warfare

The U.S. Marine Corps has a legacy of fighting insurgencies that dates back to the Philippine Insurrection at the turn of the 20th century.[10] Since that struggle, Marines have conducted counterinsurgency operations (also called small wars or irregular warfare) in Central America, the Caribbean, and Vietnam. By the 1930s, members of Congress and the Department of the Navy began to see military intervention and the waging of these small wars as the Marine Corps' primary mission.[11] Nevertheless, the legacy of the Marine Corps' experience in Central America, Vietnam, and other regions is elusive. Historian Allan R. Millett noted about the Corps' experience in the 1920s that "as the U.S. Army had learned in an earlier era, pacification campaigns were not popular in the United States."[12] The Marines were often deployed as if they were auxiliaries of the Department of State, sent to unstable states to restore order. Ultimately, the Corps' involvement in Central America during the 1920s and 1930s was overshadowed by the legacy of large-scale operations and battles of World War II and the Korean War. The failures in Vietnam also overshadowed a number of Marine Corps counterinsurgency innovations used during that conflict, such as the Combined Action Program. By 2003, the Marine Corps was largely known for large-scale maneuver operations and amphibious landings, not for its involvement in small wars.

Nevertheless, the Marine Corps has a long tradition of not only battling insurgencies, but also conceiving and implementing important contributions to counterinsurgency doctrine. The *Small Wars Manual*, first published in 1935 and revised in 1940, synthesized nearly half a century of experience in combating insurgencies. It proved prescient in its assessment of the nature and character of irregular warfare. When considered alongside the recently published Army and Marine manual, *Counterinsurgency*, drawn up

during the years immediately following the outbreak of the Iraqi insurgency, the similarities are striking. Both stress the primacy of the political dimension to counterinsurgencies.[13] Both manuals emphasize the need to understand the culture of the local population and contend that cultural immersion and understanding are critical requirements for waging successful counterinsurgency operations. Consequently, both documents point to the importance of conducting effective civil-military operations.[14]

The general argument pervading both the Marine Corps' *Small Wars Manual* and *Counterinsurgency* is that the military must not engage the enemy in insurgencies in the same way that it would battle the enemy during regular warfare. Small wars are a decidedly different type of warfare and require a different array of principles and techniques from those used in regular warfare. This principle echoed through essays and articles on irregular warfare published between 2004 and 2008. For example, the primary goal of David Kilcullen's essay "Twenty-Eight Articles" was to overturn preconceptions. Among his assertions were that "rank is nothing; talent is everything," "small is beautiful," "local forces should mirror the enemy, not ourselves," and "fight the enemy's strategy, not his forces."[15] Similarly, General Petraeus argued in an article published in 2006 that commanders need "to remember the strategic corporals and strategic lieutenants, the relatively junior commissioned or noncommissioned officers who often have to make huge decisions, sometimes with life-or-death as well as strategic consequences, in the blink of an eye."[16] At the same time, counterinsurgency theorists also argued that a back-to-basics, boots-on-the-ground approach was not the only means for waging counterinsurgency operations. In an essay on air power and its utility in irregular warfare, Major General Charles J. Dunlap Jr., USAF, noted that precision bombing and technologically advanced, unmanned drones could play a critical role in supporting native forces and acquiring intelligence.[17]

The dialogue that has taken place in publications such as *Marine Corps Gazette, U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, Parameters,* and *Military Review* over the past six years has focused on the need to overcome the tendencies and preconceptions of conventional warfare and to embrace a type of combat operations radically different from large-scale regular warfare. This debate has dominated military thinking since the end of conventional warfare operations in Iraq in 2003.

The period from 2004 through 2008 was marked by innovation and adaptation. As Carter A. Malkasian relates in his overview of the insurgency in Iraq, the U.S. efforts in Iraq have gone from heavy-handed tactics favoring liberal use of firepower and search-and-destroy operations to small-scale security operations that focus on foot patrols, intelligence gathering, and engaging the Iraqi population.[18] During this period, U.S. forces have developed a variety of strategies and tactics for combating insurgencies, including building civic institutions and forging alliances with regional tribes.

The selections in Part III of this anthology, "U.S. Marines, Counterinsurgency, and Urban Warfare in Iraq," show that counterinsurgency, though waged on a smaller scale, is no less violent, dangerous, or decisive than large-scale maneuver warfare. Nowhere was this clearer than during the two battles of Fallujah.

In the words of Malkasian, the Iraqi insurgency would "explode" during the spring and summer of 2004. Anti-Coalition attacks, which numbered around 200 a week at the beginning of 2004, jumped to 500 a week during the summer.[19] Two major events, both of which involved the Marines of I MEF, marked this transition. The first was the first battle of Fallujah, fought in Sunni-dominated al-Anbar Province in April of 2004. The second was the Mahdi uprising, led by the Shi'a cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Shortly after the beginning of I MEF's redeployment, four U.S. contractors from the security firm Blackwater USA were murdered and their bodies mutilated in the city of Fallujah. Although I MEF's commander, Lieutenant General James T. Conway, argued against a large-scale retaliatory assault on the city, higher headquarters ordered I MEF to launch an offen-

sive against the city to clear it of insurgents.[20] Within days, public outrage throughout Iraq against civilian casualties led the U.S. government to halt the offensive. Within weeks, the city became a stronghold for insurgent operations.

The first battle of Fallujah demonstrated Kilcullen's dictum that destroying enemy combatants does not necessarily destroy the insurgency. Carter A. Malkasian's piece, "Signaling Resolve, Democratization, and the First Battle of Fallujah," and Major Alfred B. "Ben" Connable's "The Massacre that Wasn't" argue that first Fallujah illustrates the difference between counterinsurgency and regular warfare operations. In his essay, Malkasian considered the serious setback dealt the U.S. military when it suspended operations against insurgents in Fallujah. Despite its superior military force, he believes that the U.S. suffered a critical defeat in April 2004. Malkasian argues that this was due to the lack of consideration for the nonmilitary factors needed to succeed against an insurgency:

> U.S. civilian and military leaders were not mistaken regarding the importance of signaling resolve. However, these leaders were mistaken that military force alone was the best course for signaling resolve. Military force can escalate violence by oppressing the population. Resolve will not be signaled if the costs of escalation preclude an offensive's completion.[21]

Thus, echoing the language of the *Small Wars Manual* and anticipating that of the *Counterinsurgency* manual, Malkasian contends that a mixture of military and nonmilitary tactics must be deployed to achieve political victory against an insurgency. Military force cannot achieve victory when fighting an insurgency unless it is combined with a respect for how that military operation is understood and perceived by both the enemy and civilian population as a whole.

One challenge that Malkasian argues Marines were initially unprepared for was combating the insurgents' information offensive. As Connable's essay illustrates, the information battlefield was a critical theater of the struggle for Fallujah. Taking full advantage of the Internet and world media, the insurgency was able to use stories of civilian casualties incurred in the battle to inflame opinion throughout Iraq, and the world, against the Marine offensive.[22] Both Connable and Malkasian agree that the failure to win the information war crippled the Marine offensive, despite its superior military force. Outrage among Iraqis, the Iraqi provisional government, and Great Britain, pressured Bremer to halt the operation out of fear that continuing it would destroy the still-fragile reconstruction efforts in the country.

A steady increase in violence against Coalition forces in Iraq continued in the summer of 2004. In August, Marines from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit, with support from U.S. Army and Iraqi Army units, defeated al-Sadr's militia forces in an-Najaf and opened the way for a negotiated settlement between al-Sadr and the Shi'a cleric Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani.[23] At the same time, insurgents in Anbar continued to transform Fallujah into a base of operations and stronghold. It became increasingly apparent that a second offensive would be necessary. In November, I MEF, under its new commander, Lieutenant General John F. Sattler, launched a second assault, drawing upon the lessons from the first engagement there.

The second battle of Fallujah, fought in November and December 2004, demonstrated the Marine Corps' ability to learn from past experience and adapt. For example, the Marines skillfully used psychological operations to encourage the residents to vacate the city before the attack began.[24] As a result, fewer than 500 residents remained when the Marines began their assault on 8 November with Operation Phantom Fury, renamed Operation al-Fajr (Dawn) at the behest of the Iraqi government. The fighting was the most intense faced by the Marines up to this point in the war. As Lieutenant General Sattler and Lieutenant Colonel Daniel H. Wilson recounted, "The fighting was intense, close, and personal, the likes of which has been experienced on just a few occa-

sions since the battle of Hue City in the Vietnam War."[25] By December, the city had been cleared of insurgents and secured. By January, residents were already returning to Fallujah.

Yet despite the clear victory against the insurgency, the legacy of both battles was mixed. As Jonathan F. Keiler relates in "Who Won the Battle of Fallujah?," the two battles demonstrated the paradoxical nature of counterinsurgency operations. In answering the question posed by his title, he notes the distinction between tactical and strategic victories:

> Was the battle of Fallujah a victory or a defeat? The Marine Corps' military operations in urban terrain doctrine recognizes that tactical success does not necessarily translate to strategic victory. It notes the Israeli's tactical victory in Beirut was a strategic defeat—and observes the same about the Battle of Hue in the Vietnam War, when Marines defeated an enemy that sought to put up a good fight but never expected to win.[26]

Seeing both battles of Fallujah as a continuous struggle for the city, Keiler concludes that the victory in Fallujah was a Pyrrhic one, commenting that "the Battle of Fallujah was not a defeat—but we cannot afford many more victories like it."[27] Marines achieved a major victory against the insurgency in November 2004. But in many ways, it was a battle that had to be fought because of the inability to achieve a sustainable victory in April 2004.

The battles of Fallujah represent some of the largest and most intense fights of the Iraq War. However, as the unit summaries produced by the II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) during its tour from the winter of 2005 to the winter of 2006 demonstrate, counterinsurgency often entailed much smaller operations and did not always involve combat. Throughout 2005, II MEF conducted a number of critical operations such as Matador, Iron Fist, and Steel Curtain aimed at neutralizing insurgents, securing Iraq's western border, and preventing insurgent fighters from crossing from Syria and Jordan into Iraq. Marine units helped build Iraqi security forces, forged relationships with local leaders, and participated in the construction of democratic institutions. At the same time, Marines developed new means to confront the rudimentary, yet lethal, weapons used by insurgents, such as the improvised explosive device (IED). Colonel Eric T. Litaker's essay explores one of these developments, the IED Working Group. As Litaker argues, the challenge of the IED is not just one confronted by engineers, but also intelligence operatives. Most importantly, Litaker contends that there is no single method for confronting these explosive devices. "There is no 'silver bullet' in sight. For the foreseeable future, the key to defeating the IED threat will almost certainly be a combination of technology, [tactics, techniques, procedures], and an offensive mindset."[28] The lack of a "silver bullet" in many ways characterizes counterinsurgency operations as a whole.

The urban battlefield during an insurgency is marked by tension, confusion, and uncertainty. It is often difficult to determine friend from foe and civilians from insurgents. The stresses and consequences of fighting an urban insurgency are illustrated by the events in Haditha. On 5 November 2005, insurgents attacked a Marine convoy from Company K of the 3d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, in the town of Haditha. In the course of the attack, a land mine destroyed a Humvee, killing one Marine and seriously wounding two others. The progression of subsequent events is still unclear, although in the end, Marines from Company K killed 24 Iraqi civilians.[29] William Langewiesche's examination considers the complexities and ambiguities of the incident, exploring the morning's events in close detail.[30] His study weighs the intense challenges and stresses of conducting counterinsurgency operations. As he writes, casting accusations and blame only blur and confuse attempts to reconstruct what occurred:

> The events that followed will never be reconstructed completely, no matter what the courts may find. Through the dust and noise on that Haditha street, they played

> out in a jumble of semi-autonomous actions, complicated by perceptions that had been narrowed by the attack and further confused by the ambiguities associated with fighting a guerrilla war on foreign ground. Some of the Marines may have suspected that a line had been crossed, and that crimes might have been committed, but in the urgency of the moment it would have seemed less likely then than it seems now, and even today the principal view of those involved is anger that the accusations are cheap, and that Kilo Company has been unfairly singled out.[31]

As of this writing, the court proceedings involving the Haditha case are ongoing. A report produced by the U.S. military in 2007 concluded that Marine commanders had been negligent in adequately and publicly investigating the events.[32] At the same time, seven of the eight Marines charged for the incident have either been acquitted or had the charges against them dropped.[33]

The important consequence of Haditha was its impact upon the overall U.S. counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq. Even though it was the exception and not the rule to the behavior and efforts of the Marine Corps throughout Anbar Province, isolated incidents such as Haditha (and their treatment in the mass media) were a critical setback to U.S. efforts in Iraq. The failure of U.S. commanders in Iraq to effectively and openly investigate the incident further damaged U.S. forces in the eyes of the Iraqi people. As the field manual *Counterinsurgency* asserted, "At its core, COIN [counterinsurgency] is a struggle for the population's support."[34] Incidents such as Haditha threatened to undermine this goal.

In 2006, the insurgency against the Coalition forces escalated to a level that many have described as a civil war. On 22 February 2006, al-Qaeda in Iraq bombed the Askariya Mosque in Samarra. The structure, also known as the "Golden" Mosque, was a sacred site of considerable significance for Shi'a Muslims. By attacking it, al-Qaeda hoped to spark sectarian violence in the region. Shi'a militias retaliated against Sunni insurgents in Baghdad.[35] Political scientist James D. Fearon equated the civil war with similar sectarian conflicts in Turkey and Lebanon and noted the complicity of the Iraqi government in the conflict. "As the ethnic cleansing of Baghdad proceeds, the weak Shiite-dominated government is inevitably becoming an open partisan in a nasty civil war between Sunni and Shiite Arabs."[36] In Iraq, Sunnis and Shi'a fought for dominance in the country. Meanwhile, outside forces such as al-Qaeda in Iraq, Iran, and Syria sought to establish their own spheres of influence in the fractured state. The United States quickly became just one of an array of actors in a conflict that was becoming increasingly more complex and violent.

In early 2007, President Bush announced a change in U.S. policy in Iraq. Known as "the surge," the strategy called for a significant increase in U.S. forces in Iraq and a new commander, counterinsurgency expert General Petraeus.[37] For the Marines and soldiers in the Anbar Province, however, the surge did not have the same impact as it did in the rest of Iraq. For Multi National Force-West, the most significant development after 2005 was not the surge, but the al-Anbar Awakening.

Initially, the United States focused its efforts on rebuilding the Iraqi Army as a means of restoring security to the country. One means for achieving this was the combined action program, or CAP. Developed by the Corps in the 1960s to build effective military forces in South Vietnam, the program had been phased out when Marines left Southeast Asia in 1971. Combining a platoon of Marine advisors with two squads of Iraqi soldiers, the CAP was a unique approach to building an Iraqi military. In their article, "The Combined Action Platoon in Iraq," First Lieutenant Jason R. Goodale and First Lieutenant Jonathan F. Webre recount the development of one such force in 2004, the 3d Platoon, Company G, Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, Regimental Combat Team 7.[38]

The building of an Iraqi Army ultimately proved to be a less effective means of what came to be called Iraqization than U.S. com-

manders had hoped. Many Sunnis avoided serving in the Shi'a-dominated army for fear of marginalization and discrimination. The creation of professional police forces proved to be a more fruitful means of Iraqization, particularly among the tribal groups in al-Anbar Province.[39] Despite the potential that strengthening local police units could weaken national unity, the construction of regional units helped overcome Sunni fears of marginalization and disenfranchisement.

As Austin G. Long relates in his essay, "The Anbar Awakening," Iraq's tribes have constituted an important element in Iraqi and Anbari political culture and society since the rule of the Ottomans.[40] Under the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate, the Hashemite monarchy, and the Ba'athist dictatorship, Anbar Province was dominated by familial groups ranging from households to clans to tribes. At different times throughout Iraq's history, Iraq's rulers forged power-sharing agreements with these tribes as a means of securing the loyalty and support of the Anbar Province. By the time of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, the tribal system was in a state of decline. However, with the overthrow the Ba'athist regime in 2003 and the collapse of centralized state authority during the occupation, the tribes of Anbar quickly filled the power vacuum in the region.

Initially, many of the tribes in al-Anbar Province participated in the insurgency. However, a rivalry emerged between fundamentalist religious groups such as al-Qaeda in Iraq and the Anbar tribes for control of the province. Seeing the tribes' local, provincial outlook to be at odds with their own anti-nationalist, religiously radical goals, al-Qaeda in Iraq made an attempt to undermine the tribes' power.[41] Al-Qaeda in Iraq attempted to take over the chief sources of revenue in the region—smuggling and banditry—and waged a campaign of intimidation and murder against tribal leaders. Meanwhile, by 2006, domestic opinion in the United States had turned decisively against the U.S. presence in Iraq. Many local leaders feared that a potentially imminent U.S. withdrawal would leave them vulnerable to al-Qaeda.

Thus, a collection of factors came together in 2006 that made change possible. With al-Qaeda in Iraq's power growing, many of the Anbar tribal leaders concluded that the United States was the lesser of the two evils and consequently began to forge alliances with U.S. forces in order to expel the fundamentalist fighters from the province. One of the chief instigators of this alliance was Sheikh Abdul Sattar Abu Risha of the Albu Risha tribe. Launching a general campaign against the al-Qaeda fighters in September of 2006, Sattar formed the Anbar Salvation Council, which became the prototype for Awakening councils created throughout Anbar Province. A detailed picture of these developments, from both Iraqi and U.S. military perspectives (with an emphasis on the roles played by U.S. Marines), can be found in a two-volume set of interviews published by Marine Corps University Press in 2009.[42]

In the capital of the Anbar Province, ar-Ramadi, the 1st Brigade of the U.S. Army 1st Armored Division, a joint unit under Multi National Force-West, forged alliances with the major tribal groups in the region and encouraged them to serve in the local police forces. These efforts are described in articles by Andrew Lubin and by the 1st Brigade's commanding officer, Colonel Sean B. MacFarland, USA (with Major Niel Smith, USA).[43]

The Anbar Awakening demonstrates the full scope of successful counterinsurgency strategy. On one hand, attempts to encourage members of the Anbari tribes to serve in the local police forces represented efforts at engagement and building provincial security forces. By focusing on regional, rather than national, forces, the U.S. was able to create a security and intelligence apparatus more in tune with and trusted by the local populace.[44] On the other hand, this could not have been accomplished without operations eliminating insurgent military forces conducted by units such as the 1st Battalion of the 6th Marines. Throughout the fall of 2006, the unit targeted areas of Ramadi under the control of al-Qaeda in Iraq, established regular foot patrols, built an intelligence gathering apparatus, and established the broadcast service Voice of

Ramadi as a means of providing accurate information about U.S. and Iraqi efforts against al-Qaeda in Iraq.[45] The Marines of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, thus conducted kinetic and non-kinetic operations concurrently, demonstrating that effective counterinsurgency relies on a synergy between the outside military force and regional soldiers and civilians.

By 2008, Anbar Province had largely been secured, a marked difference from the situation in 2005-2006 when it was one of the most dangerous and violent regions in the country. A diary recovered from an al-Qaeda in Iraq fighter describes the sudden collapse of support once enjoyed by the group.[46] In the course of a month, the fighter relates how his organization lost a substantial number of members and the basic resources to continue fighting. He attributes the cause for this decline to the Awakening councils. Cities like Fallujah, once the stronghold of the insurgency, became symbols of progress. As Timothy Williams wrote in the *New York Times* in October 2008:

> This month, as the last American marines prepare to leave Camp Falluja, the sprawling base a few miles outside of town where many of the American troops who fought the two battles were stationed, Falluja has come to represent something unexpected: the hope that an Iraqi town once at the heart of the insurgency can become a model for peace without the United States military.[47]

Such an optimistic appraisal was due largely to the agreements forged between Marines, soldiers, and Iraqi tribes throughout Anbar Province. An observer looking at Iraq in 2008 had reason to be optimistic. Violent attacks were down, and a semblance of stability had returned to the country for the first time since the 2003 invasion. Nevertheless, the "surge" and Awakening were not without their critics. Scholars such as Steven N. Simon have noted that while the strategies employed by the United States may have brought short-term stability, the United States may have sacrificed long-term prospects for Iraqi unity in pursuing them.[48] Writing on the tribal alliances in a mid-2008 article, Simon asserted that they may have reduced violence, but that they "had done so by stoking the three forces that have traditionally threatened the stability of Middle Eastern states: tribalism, warlordism, and sectarianism."[49] Simon argued that a new, multinational strategy that favors "reconciliation from above" as opposed to the bottom-up approach of the Anbar alliances is necessary if the United States is to preserve Iraq as a state and not allow it to succumb civil war.

Not all analysts share Simon's pessimistic outlook. Colin H. Kahl and William E. Odom, in response to Simon's piece, observed that "tribalism will not be subdued in a couple of years, or even a couple of decades."[50] However, even though they argue that Simon "ultimately draws the wrong lessons for U.S. policy moving forward," Kahl and Odom were in agreement that the prospects for Iraq's future remain uncertain.[51] Referring to Iraq's sectarian divides, the authors contended in their mid-2008 piece that "these divides are unlikely to be bridged by any means other than a civil war fought to a decisive conclusion. This reality indicates that Iraq's eventual rulers are not now in the Green Zone, and when they one day occupy the capital, all foreign elements will be gone."[52] Thus, while the Anbar Awakening and surge did much to restore order and stability to Iraq, there is little agreement on what the consequences of these strategies will be over time.

The Selections

The story of the U.S. Marine Corps in Iraq from 2004 through 2008 is one of change and adaptation. The Iraq insurgency and the Coalition reconstruction efforts constituted new challenges that necessitated innovations. Some of these, such as the Combined Action Program and engagement with the local populace, drew upon the Corps' long tradition of irregular warfare and counterinsurgency. Others, such as use of the mass media and the Internet, looked to the future. The stability and security achieved in

Iraq by 2008 is a testament to the efforts and innovations of Marines and soldiers alike throughout Iraq, and in Anbar Province especially.

This collection has been assembled for Marines, national security advisers, scholars, and general readers to provide them with a preliminary resource on the Corps' experience in Iraq in the 2004-2008 time frame. The selections highlight the challenges, innovations, and accomplishments of the Corps as Marines fought to establish security and stability in western Iraq.

As this anthology is being assembled, U.S. forces are still stationed in Iraq. Furthermore, the prospects for the country's future remain uncertain. Assumptions about the causes, course, and consequences of the Iraq War continue to be questioned and revised at an almost daily rate. Much of the official documentary record remains classified. Events such as the Haditha shootings of November 2005 are still being investigated, and the ability to acquire adequate information about them is hindered by legal proceedings. As a consequence, much of the analysis and many of the conclusions herein are provisional. The pieces presented here nevertheless provide an early look into these events.

The selections are not confined to academic works, but include a wide range of texts, ranging from scholarly analyses of the war in Iraq (Malkasian, Fearon, and Long), articles published in military journals (Petraeus, Connable, Sattler and Wilson, Keiler, Litaker, Lubin, Petraeus, Goodale, Dunlap, Smith and MacFarland, and Kilcullen), and articles written for a mass audience (Langewiesche, Williams, Simon, and Kahl and Odom). The collection also presents several documents, including two official action summaries produced by I Marine Expeditionary Force and II Marine Expeditionary Force and a diary recovered from a member of al-Qaeda in Iraq. Appendixes includes a chronology of events, a list of units deployed as part of the Multi National Force-West between 2004 and 2006, and an annotated bibliography, which covers the most relevant literature to date on the Marine Corps in Iraq from 2004 through 2008. It is the hope of the editor that these resources will be of value to readers as they seek to learn about the experiences of the U.S. Marines in Iraq and their contributions to the Coalition efforts in that country.

Notes

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3. Carter A. Malkasian, "Counterinsurgency in Iraq," in Daniel Marston and Carter A. Malkasian, eds., *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare* (New York: Osprey Publishing, 2008), 243.

4. "Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 1: De-Ba'athification of Iraqi Society," 16 May 2003 (online at http://www.iraqcoalition.org/regulations/20030516_CPAORD_1_De-Ba_athification_of_Iraqi_Society_.pdf); Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 159.

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6. Ahmed S. Hashim, *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 18.

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11. Allan R. Millett, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 261.
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13. U.S. Marine Corps, *Small Wars Manual* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 11, para. 1:7; U.S. Army (FM 3-24) and U.S. Marine Corps (MCWP 3-33.5), *Counterinsurgency* (Washington DC: Department of the Army and Marine Corps Combat Development Command, 2006), p. 1-1, para. 1:3.
14. *Small Wars Manual*, pp. 41-47 para. 1:28-1:31; MCWP 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, pp. 2-1—2-4, para. 2:1-2:14.
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16. LtGen David H. Petraeus, "Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq," *Military Review*, Jan-Feb06, 2-12.
17. MajGen Charles J. Dunlap Jr. (USAF), "Making Revolutionary Change: Airpower in COIN Today," *Parameters* 38 (Summer 2008): 52-66.
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20. According to LtGen Conway in a 2005 interview, "I went to certain levels in the chain of command to try to determine where this was coming from. . . . I felt the Army could be fairly heavy-handed, and I wanted to make sure this just wasn't CJTF-7 telling us we had to attack. In fact, it came from higher than that." CWO-4 Timothy S. McWilliams and LtCol Kurtis P. Wheeler, eds., *Al-Anbar Awakening*. Volume 1: *American Perspectives: U.S. Marines and Counterinsurgency in Iraq, 2004-2009* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University Press, 2009), 50.
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34. MCWP 3-33.5, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-28.
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36. James D. Fearon, "Iraq's Civil War," *Foreign Affairs*, Mar-Apr07, 2.
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39. Carter A. Malkasian, "A Thin Blue Line in the Sand," *Democracy*, Summer 2007, 48-58. See also Malkasian, *Will Iraqization Work?* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, 2007).
40. Austin G. Long, "The Anbar Awakening," *Survival*, Apr-May08, 67-94.
41. Ibid., 77.
42. McWilliams and Wheeler, *Al-Anbar Awakening*. Volume 1: *American Perspectives*; Col Gary W. Montgomery and CWO-4 Timothy S. McWilliams, eds., *Al-Anbar Awakening*. Volume 2: *Iraqi Perspectives: From Insurgency to Counterinsurgency in Iraq, 2004-2009* (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps University Press, 2009).
43. Andrew Lubin, "Ramadi: From the Caliphate to Capitalism," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Apr08, 54-61; Maj Niel Smith (USA) and Col Sean B. MacFarland (USA), "Anbar Awakens: The Tipping Point," *Military Review*, Mar-Apr08, 41-52. See also the interview with MacFarland in McWilliams and Wheeler, *Al-Anbar Awakening*, 1:177-85, as well as interviews with two

Marines assigned to MacFarland's team, LtCol William M. Jurney (1:187-99) and Maj Daniel R. Zappa (1:201-10).

44. For a summary of how these forces were created, see the PowerPoint presentation created by Capt Davis Patriquin reproduced in Smith and MacFarland, "Anbar Awakens," 48.

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Part I: The Iraqi Insurgency, 2004-2007

Within months of the Coalition's victory against Iraqi forces and the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime in April 2003, the U.S. forces and their allies suddenly faced a general insurgency that sought to end the foreign occupation of the country. U.S. administrative policies and its military response to the insurgency only exacerbated the movement. The Coalition Provisional Authority focused on empowering Iraq's Shi'a majority at the expense of the formerly dominant Sunni minority. Fearing disenfranchisement and a loss of status in the new Iraqi state, many Sunnis joined the insurgency. The heavy-handed response of U.S. units such as the 4th Infantry Division (USA) to insurgent attacks further inflamed hostility to the U.S. presence in the country.

In the spring of 2004, Marines from the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), commanded by Lieutenant General James T. Conway, redeployed to Iraq where they assumed responsibility for providing security to Iraq's western al-Anbar Province. At this time, the insurgency constituted the single greatest obstacle to stability in Iraq, and the Marines of I MEF soon were engaged in battles with insurgents in the cities of Fallujah and an-Najaf. The insurgency encompassed a hodgepodge of different groups, including former Ba'athists, secular nationalists, religious extremists, and foreign groups such as al-Qaeda in Iraq. The insurgency was not entirely a Sunni movement, as Shi'a groups such as those led by religious extremist Muqtada al-Sadr rose up against Coalition troops in Najaf in the summer of 2004. Taking full advantage of their urban environment, insurgents used an array of tactics against American forces, including remote-activated land mines, rocket-propelled grenades, and suicide bombers. Supply convoys became especially vulnerable. Furthermore, insurgent groups became particularly adept at deploying the mass media to build an anti-American consensus and generate sympathy for their cause.

By 2006, the insurgency had transformed from a general uprising against the Coalition forces into a sectarian conflict between Sunni and Shi'a forces. The Coalition devised and implemented a number of strategies and tactics to combat the threats, ranging from large-scale use of firepower and force to conducting counterinsurgency operations and building local security forces. For a range of reasons, some of these efforts succeeded while others failed. U.S. Marines were involved in several of these operations and played leading roles in a number of critical battles against the Iraqi insurgency, including Najaf, Ramadi, and the two battles for Fallujah.

The following two selections present an overview of the insurgency and conflict that many came to label civil war in Iraq. Carter A. Malkasian's essay, "Counterinsurgency in Iraq: May 2003-2007," provides an excellent survey of the major events that shaped the insurgency and U.S. efforts to combat the threat between 2003 and 2007. James D. Fearon's article, "Iraq's Civil War," examines how the Iraqi insurgency transformed into a religious civil war, focusing on the complexities of a conflict that involved the United States and its Coalition allies and Iraq's Sunni and Shi'a populations.

Counterinsurgency in Iraq: May 2003-January 2007

by Carter A. Malkasian
Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare, 2008

The United States' campaign in Iraq marked its second major counterinsurgency campaign in 40 years. The U.S. military attempted to adapt to the situation it found in Iraq, drawing upon lessons from history and its own operations. However, in the first four years of the conflict, it could not suppress the insurgency, which prompted President George W. Bush to revise his strategy in January 2007.

The reasons behind the lack of progress from May 2003 to January 2007 may not be clear for some time, if at all. To some extent, American attempts to adapt neglected the sectarian divisions in Iraq. The key elements of the U.S. strategy—democratization and the construction of a national (and consequently predominantly Shi'a) army—did nothing to placate the Sunni minority, who backed the insurgency and sought to preserve their political power against both the occupation and the emerging Shi'a government. This strategy did not make success impossible before 2007, but it certainly made it harder to suppress the violence.

The Outbreak of the Insurgency

The insurgency in Iraq broke out over the summer of 2003, following the Coalition's lightning victory over Saddam Hussein's standing forces in March and April.[1] Sunni Arabs, who lived primarily in Baghdad and western and northern Iraq, represented the overwhelming majority of the insurgents. In general, the insurgents sought to compel the United States, viewed as an occupier, to withdraw from Iraq; and to recapture some of the political power and economic benefits that the Sunnis had lost to the Shi'a Arabs with the demise of Saddam Hussein's

regime.[2] U.S. plans for democracy promised to place the Shi'a, representing 60 percent of the population, in the most powerful political position. The large role played by exiled Shi'a leaders on the newly constructed Iraqi Governing Council (an interim advisory body), the dissolution of the old Iraqi Army (which Sunnis had largely officered), and the prohibition of members of the Ba'ath Party from working in the government (de-Ba'athification) exacerbated the Sunni feeling of marginalization. An extreme element of the insurgency, the al-Qaeda-affiliated network of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, wanted to create their own Islamic state within Iraq that might be able to support Al-Qaeda's activities elsewhere in the region. Zarqawi purposefully targeted Shi'a in order to draw reprisals upon the Sunnis and instigate a civil war.[3] Zarqawi's network, later known as al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), held the allegiance of the foreign fighters and Iraqi terrorists of most concern to the United States.

In the summer of 2003, the United States had 150,000 military personnel (in five divisions) in Iraq, which together with 13,000 personnel from the United Kingdom and other allied countries (in two divisions) formed Combined Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF-7), under the command of Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez. The allied forces were known as the "Coalition."

Ambassador Paul Bremer controlled the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), which was responsible for governing Iraq and guiding its progression toward democracy, a foremost goal of the Bush administration. Many U.S. leaders, including Bremer, believed that democracy represented a natural antidote to the extremism of Zarqawi and other terrorists. Furthermore, the most respected Shi'a religious leader, Ayatollah Ali Sistani, with strong popular Shi'a backing, pressured Bremer to hold direct elections as soon as possible.[4]

The United States and its military were unprepared to confront the insurgency that developed. Since the end of the Vietnam War, both the U.S. Army and Marine Corps had focused on learning rapid maneuver and combined arms in order to fight a conventional war, instead of the patrolling, bottom-up intelligence collection and minimization of force generally considered necessary for successful counterinsurgency. Training, such as at the Army's National Training Center in the California desert, dealt with defeating conventional mechanized opponents. No comprehensive doctrine existed for counterinsurgency. Expecting to fight a conventional war, the U.S. Army fielded armored and mechanized battalions that were heavy on M1A1/M1A2 Abrams tanks and M2A2 Bradley fighting vehicles, but light on infantry (armored and mechanized battalions contained 500 to 600 personnel). Such organization made it difficult to thoroughly patrol or interact with the population. The Marines were somewhat better off; their battalions contained 900 infantry: every battalion had a team dedicated to human intelligence collection; and there had been intensive training for urban combat since the late 1990s.

Neither Major General Sanchez nor General John Abizaid, commander of Central Command, promulgated a plan to counter the insurgency. When confronted with insurgent attacks, the five U.S. divisions reacted differently, but with a tendency toward conventional-style operations and heavy-handed tactics. Units conducted raids based on scant intelligence and applied firepower loosely. Operating north of Baghdad around Samarra and Tikrit (S'alah-ah-din Province), Major General Raymond Odierno's 4th Infantry Division acquired a reputation for heavy-handedness. Instead of trying to secure the population, his commanders launched large-scale sweeps to roll up insurgents and Ba'athist leaders, fired artillery blindly to interdict insurgent activity ("harassment and interdiction fires"), purposefully detained innocents to blackmail their insurgent relatives, and leveled homes to deter people from supporting the insurgents.[5] Such actions further alienated the Sunni population. Other divisions operated in a similar pattern. In Fallujah, troops from the 82d Airborne Division, feeling threatened, fired into mass gatherings on both April 28 and 30, 2003, killing 13 civilians and wounding 91. In November, Sanchez conducted a series of sweeps and air strikes, such as Operation *Iron Hammer,* meant to crush the

insurgents. Major General Charles Swannack, the commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, said: "This is war. . . We're going to use a sledgehammer to crush a walnut."[6]

The operations of Major General David Petraeus' 101st Airborne Division, working in the north of Iraq (Ninewa Province), diverged from this trend. Petraeus considered securing the population to be the key to effective counterinsurgency and concentrated his entire division in Mosul, the largest population center (1.8 million) in the province. Determined to minimize harm to the population, before approving any operations he would ask his commander, "Will this operation take more bad guys off the street than it creates by the way it is conducted?"[7] Rather than undertaking large sweeps, his troopers operated out of outposts in the heart of the city and focused on collecting detailed actionable intelligence for raids against insurgent leadership. Meanwhile, Petraeus interacted with the Sunni elements of society, even holding his own local elections to draw them into the political process. Insurgent attacks stayed low during the division's tenure. Unfortunately, the following unit boasted only a third of the 101st's manpower, and the situation deteriorated.

The one method that characterized all U.S. operations was high-value targeting. Elite special operating forces enjoyed carte blanche to capture and kill insurgent leaders. The conventional forces let the same tactic drive their operations. Every battalion, brigade, and division developed a high-value targeting list detailing the most wanted insurgents in their area of operations. Intelligence collection assets were devoted to finding insurgent leaders.

It is worth noting that the British, who controlled the Coalition forces around Basrah, al-Amarah, and an-Nasiriyah, adopted a more circumspect approach than the Americans. Applying the lessons of a half-century of counterinsurgency, the British patrolled in small units, rigorously collected intelligence, and used firepower sparingly. In general, British and other Western European forces tried to maintain a light footprint in cities to avoid upsetting the locals. As early as September 2003, British generals made the development of local Iraqi forces a priority. For example, in 2004, the entire Argyll & Sutherland Battalion was dedicated to training them. Some of the first effective Iraqi units appeared in the British operating area.[8] Unfortunately, the light approach toward securing the population would later allow militias to gain control of the city, which would have negative side effects in 2007.

The First Battle of Fallujah and the Mahdi Uprising

For the most part, small-scale roadside bombings, mortar shelling, and fleeting skirmishes characterized insurgent activity in 2003. By early 2004, the insurgency was gaining strength. Poor strategic decisions made it explode.

The I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) took over al-Anbar Province from the 82d Airborne Division in March 2004. On March 31, insurgents and people in Fallujah murdered four American civilian contractors and hung their bodies from a bridge over the Euphrates. Against the advice of Major General James Mattis and Lieutenant General James Conway (the Marine commanders), the Bush administration ordered an offensive to clear Fallujah. Determined to signal their resolve, they made the decision with little consultation with the Iraqi Governing Council and allowed insufficient time (just days) to evacuate civilians, gather intelligence, and construct a public relations campaign to mitigate the negative effects of attacking a Sunni city.[9] Indeed, instructions from Sanchez, Abizaid, and Rumsfeld endorsed harsh military action, thereby de-emphasizing the importance of minimizing civilian casualties.[10] Of the four Iraqi battalions assigned to the assault, only 70 Iraqi soldiers from the 36th Commando Battalion accompanied the 2,000 Marines (two reinforced infantry battalions) that led the offensive, hardly lessening Sunni feelings of oppression.

The ensuing offensive ignited widespread Sunni outrage. Viewing it as an attack on their society, Sunnis poured into Fallujah from other Sunni cities. When the Marines stepped off, they encountered heavy resistance from roughly 2,000

insurgents. Insurgents coordinated mortars, volleys of rocket-propelled grenades, and machine-gun fire in defense of their positions. Marine commanders risked prohibitive casualties unless they reverted to using artillery, air strikes, and tanks as per their conventional combined arms doctrine. Such firepower was applied selectively but, nevertheless, civilians died (the Iraqi Ministry of Health estimated 220 for the first two weeks of fighting).[11] Insurgent propaganda and Arab media exploited these casualties to inflame opposition to the Coalition. The Coalition had no response. The Iraqi Governing Council came under tremendous pressure to stop the fighting. Sunni members threatened to resign if Bremer did not initiate cease-fire negotiations. With the democratization process in jeopardy, on April 9, the U.S. government halted the offensive.[12] Fighting around the Marine bridgehead persisted until April 30, when Conway pulled the Marines out of the city.

At the same time that Fallujah exploded, a Shi'a uprising shook Coalition control over southern Iraq and threatened to ignite a national resistance. The Shi'a did not oppose the Coalition to the same extent that the Sunnis did, largely because their leaders now held power. However, most Shi'a still wanted the occupation to end. Muqtada Sadr, a radical young Shi'a cleric with a widespread following who had not been given a role in the Coalition's political process, tapped into this vein. His militia, Jaysh al-Mahdi, was organized around poor, young Shi'a males throughout the country. On April 4, he called the militia into the streets when Bremer shut down one of his newspapers and arrested one of his lieutenants. Thousands of Jaysh al-Mahdi attacked Coalition and Iraqi compounds in Najaf, an-Nasiriyah, al-Kut, Baghdad, al-Amarahm, and even Kirkuk. Fighting spread to Basrah, Karbala, and Hillah. Over the next few months, the Coalition fought to regain control of the southern cities. The only exceptions were in Basrah and al-Amarah, where British patrols and British-advised Iraqi forces quelled the uprising.

As a result of the Mahdi uprising and the first battle of Fallujah, attacks throughout the country jumped from just under 200 per week in the first three months of 2004 to over 500 per week in the summer.[13] Fallujah grew into an insurgent base of operations and staging ground for attacks elsewhere in the country. Additionally, in Samarra, Ramadi, Baqubah, and Baghdad, insurgents exerted control over the population and massed in groups of 20 or more for attacks on the Coalition. The insurgency enjoyed widespread popular support among the Sunni population. Sunnis perceived that the insurgents had won a great victory in Fallujah, forcing an embarrassing withdrawal upon the United States. A poll in late April 2004 found that 89 percent of Iraqis considered the Coalition to be an occupying force.[14] Fighting with Jaysh al-Mahdi in Najaf (the holiest Shi'a city) and Sadr City (a Shi's neighborhood in Baghdad) temporarily ended in June, but Sadr and his forces maintained control of the two urban areas.

The breadth of violence made it abundantly clear that the Coalition could not secure Iraq without more numbers. Abizaid and the American commanders had been looking to the Iraqis to supply those numbers, rather than request U.S. reinforcements, which was not considered politically feasible and might deepen the perception of occupation among the Iraqi population. Since the dissolution of the old Iraqi Army, the Coalition had focused on creating locally based forces, known as the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (renamed the Iraqi National Guard after June 2004), to help provide security within Iraq while a new Iraqi Army was built.

Success in developing the Iraqi National Guard and other local forces depended entirely on the attitudes of the local population. National Guard battalions based on the Kurdish militia (*peshmerga*) or Shi'a militias, performed adequately. Battalions based on Sunnis did not. Disaffected from the Iraqi government and angry at the Coalition, at this stage in the war, Sunnis generally sympathized with the insurgency and had no intention of fighting their fellow tribesmen or family members.

There is little doubt that the U.S. military could have done a better job advising and training the Iraqis. Few commanders embedded advisers with local forces. Yet, at this time, even

when Americans did, Sunnis remained reluctant to fight. One of Mattis' most progressive ideas was to adapt the combined action program (CAP) of the Vietnam War to Iraq. A platoon in every Marine battalion was trained to operate within an indigenous unit. Each had received a month of special training in Arabic, Arab culture, and Soviet weapons handling. Three of Mattis' seven Marine infantry battalions embedded their CAP platoons with local forces. U.S. Special Forces also attempted to build local Sunni forces, cultivating a relationship with the warlike Albu Nimr tribe west of Ramadi. All this effort, however, yielded few results. In a quarter of all engagements, Sunni units with advisers fled or even surrendered. For example, during fighting in the town of Hit in October 2004, elements of the 503d Iraqi National Guard Battalion, operating directly alongside Marines, fled from positions defending the city bridge.[15] Most Sunni National Guard and police forces refused to work with advisers at all, let alone contribute to Coalition operations. By the end of October 2004, only two companies of the original seven National Guard battalions established in al-Anbar had not deserted or sided with the insurgency.

The failure of local forces, combined with widespread insurgent activity, caused Coalition commanders to look to the Iraqi Army as the answer to their lack of numbers. Conway said at the end of that hard-fought summer: "The situation will change when Iraqi Army divisions arrive. They will engender people with a sense of nationalism. Together with an elected government, they will create stability."[16]

Stemming the Tide

On June 28, 2004, the United States granted Iraq sovereignty and created the Iraqi Interim Government under Prime Minister Ayad Allawi. Shortly thereafter, General George Casey succeeded Sanchez as the commander or Multi National Forces-Iraq (the new Coalition headquarters). Additionally, Petraeus returned to Iraq to command Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) and oversee the creation of the Iraqi security forces (roughly 300,000 men), including 10 Iraqi Army divisions (roughly 120,000 men).

Casey took immediate steps to give the Coalition strategy a purpose hitherto lacking. He wanted to transition authority over security in each province to the Iraqis. For this to occur, Najaf, Baghdad, Fallujah, and other centers of violence would need to be dealt with one by one. As they went about doing so, Casey and his commanders paid careful attention to the mistakes of the past year, taking much more care to tailor military action to political priorities.

The blueprint for better counterinsurgency, and what would become known as the clear-hold-build approach, took form when Sadr unleashed a second uprising in Najaf on August 6, 2004.[17] Casey and Qasim Dawood, Allawi's national security adviser, carefully balanced military and political measures to coerce Sadr into backing down. While the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (augmented by two U.S. Army battalions, four Iraqi battalions, and scores of elite U.S. snipers) battled Sadr's 1,500 fighters, Dawood negotiated with Sistani with the hope of inducing Sistani to intercede and end the fighting. Political negotiations took precedence over the military offensive, which was repeatedly stopped to placate Sistani and ensure that fighting did not endanger the sacred Imam Ali Mosque. After three weeks, Sistani marched into Najaf with thousands of his followers and Sadr agreed to disperse his militia and surrender the mosque. Allawi and Casey immediately poured $70 million in reconstruction and compensation funds into the city. Najaf would remain quiet for the next three years, and Sadr started pursuing power through political means instead of violent ones.

Next, Major General Peter Chiarelli's 1st U.S. Cavalry Division cleaned up Jaysh al-Mahdi resistance in Baghdad, and Major General John Batiste's 1st U.S. Infantry Division reasserted presence in Samaria. The big show was Fallujah, though, where 3,000-6,000 insurgents were ensconced. Casey pressed forward only after the full support of the Iraqi Interim Government had been obtained, which took months and meant that the operation could not take place until after

the U.S. presidential elections in early November. Allawi slowed the pace of planning in order to hold extensive discussions with obstinate Fallujah leaders and other Sunni notables. These discussions exhausted all diplomatic options, placing Allawi in a stronger political position to use force.

New Marine generals, Lieutenant General John Sattler and Major General Richard Natonski, listened to Conway and Mattis about the lessons of the first battle. Measures were taken to lessen the political impact of the firepower needed to defeat so many insurgents. All civilians were encouraged through leaflets, radio announcements, and a whisper campaign to leave the city. In the event, the Coalition would find only 5,000 civilians in the city out of a population of 250,000. Additionally, Sattler prepared to preempt insurgent propaganda with his own press releases, enabling him to take the initiative in shaping the news stories. Finally, in order to lessen the image of occupation, Sattler and Natonski, in parallel with Allawi, pressed for Iraqi Army units to accompany American forces in the assault.[18] The 1st Iraqi Intervention Force Brigade and 3d Iraqi Army Brigade joined the 1st Marine Regiment, 7th Marine Regiment, and U.S. Army Blackjack Brigade for the operation.

The offensive, known as Operation al-Fajr, kicked off on November 7, 2004, following months of air strikes on insurgent defenses and command and control nodes. Coalition tactics within Fallujah were those of a straightforward conventional battle. Four Marine infantry battalions methodically cleared out the insurgent defenders in the wake of two U.S. Army armored battalions that spearheaded the assault. As in the first battle, the strength of insurgent defenses compelled the Marines to call in artillery fire or close air support. Marine squads aggressively cleared buildings, making use of grenades, AT-4 rocket launchers with thermobaric warheads, and, most of all, well-drilled urban combat tactics. By the end of December, the insurgent resistance had come to an end. Roughly 2,000 insurgents were killed, wounded, or detained in the course of the battle.[19]

After the battle, the Coalition initiated an intensive effort to work with the leaders of Fallujah and rebuild the city. The State Department representative, Kael Weston, worked hand in hand with political and religious leaders. They built a city government and motivated the people of Fallujah to participate in the political process. Approximately 65 to 80 percent of the city's population participated in three electoral events of 2005. Over 2005 and 2006, the Iraqi government provided a total of $180 million in compensation for damage to homes while the Coalition engaged on major water, sewage, health, and power projects. One thousand to two thousand Marines continued to operate in the city, alongside roughly 1,500 soldiers of the Iraqi Army. When sectarian violence broke out in Baghdad in 2006, Sunnis fled to Fallujah because they considered it the safest Sunni city in Iraq.

Counterinsurgency Reforms

With Baghdad and Fallujah secure, Casey turned to improving the Iraqi security forces. In late 2004, Casey conducted a review of his campaign plan. The review, guided by the counterinsurgency expert Kalev Sepp, concluded that the formation of the Iraqi Army needed to be accelerated. Nowhere was the need for more forces clearer than in Mosul, where security collapsed outright in November 2004 after one Stryker battalion was sent to Fallujah. Insurgents coordinated attacks against police stations and 5,000 police surrendered en masse, forcing the Coalition to reassert its presence in the city. Rather than deploy more U.S. forces to Iraq, the answer was thought to lie with the Iraqi Army. Najaf, Baghdad, Samarra, and Fallujah showed that, when properly advised, the predominantly Shi'a and partly Kurdish Iraqi Army would stand and fight. The planners viewed the Iraqi Army as the linchpin of effective counterinsurgency. From their perspective, the Iraqi Army could both provide vital manpower and gather intelligence better than Coalition forces. Plus, Iraqi soldiers would not be perceived as occupiers, undercutting a major cause of the insurgency. It was thought that the Iraqi Army could eventually shoulder the burden of counterinsurgency

operations, allowing the Coalition to withdraw. Accordingly, Casey directed Coalition forces to shift their focus from fighting insurgents to training Iraqis.

The Coalition and Interim Iraqi Government wanted the Iraqi Army to be a national force that integrated Kurds, Shi'a, and Sunni. Few Sunnis joined, though, and the army became mainly Shi'a. In order to accelerate Iraqi Army development, MNF-I (Casey's headquarters) created the transition team concept—10 to 12 advisers embedded into every Iraqi Army battalion, brigade, and division. Additionally, Marine and Army battalions partnered with Iraqi battalions (roughly 500 soldiers) in order to assist in their operations and training. Eventually, the Iraqi battalion would operate independently, with only its advisers working with it daily.

In parallel to developing the Iraqi Army, General Casey and Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad made every effort to ensure that the democratization process took hold. The CPA's transitional administrative law (TAL) scheduled three electoral events for 2005: the election of a transition government in January responsible for drafting the constitution; a referendum on the constitution in October; and the election of a permanent government in December. The establishment of a legitimate democratic government was considered central in cutting support for the insurgents and building cooperation across the sectarian communities.[20]

As the Iraqi Army developed and democratization pressed forward, Casey shifted his attention to securing Iraq's borders. Iraqi politicians considered this essential to stopping the flow of Sunni foreign fighters into the country; plus, according to Sepp and other counterinsurgency experts, blocking foreign assistance was part of effective counterinsurgency. The two major operations that ensued refined the clear-hold-build approach of 2004 and showcased improved U.S. counterinsurgency techniques.

The first was the clearing of Tal Afar in September 2005 (Operation Restoring Rights). Tal Afar, a city of 250,000 people located 40 miles from Syria, had been used by AQI (al-Qaeda in Iraq) as a staging ground for foreign fighters entering Iraq since early 2005. The 3d Armored Reconnaissance Regiment (3d ACR), under Colonel H. R. McMaster, and two brigades of the 3rd Iraqi Army Division carried out the assault on the city. McMaster had directed that civilians be evacuated from the town in order to allow his forces to use artillery and attack helicopters to overcome insurgent makeshift fortifications. Groups of perhaps hundreds of insurgents massed to counterattack the advancing U.S. and Iraqi forces, but the Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles tore them apart.[21]

After the battle, McMaster positioned his soldiers in 29 outposts throughout the city to hold the cleared areas. From these outposts, his forces saturated Iraqi neighborhoods with patrols. Once civilians had returned to the city, the use of force was minimized. Second Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, killed no civilians at all, which won the appreciation of the locals. Building intelligence on insurgents was made easier through the cooperation of the significant Shi'a minority in Tal Afar.[22] Similarly, McMaster could recruit a police force because the Shi'a were willing to serve, whereas the Sunnis still considered the Iraqi Army and police to be their enemy.[23]

The second operation was the clearing of al-Qa'im (Operation Steel Curtain) in November 2005. After the second battle of Falujah, insurgents affiliated with AQI had fled to al-Qa'im, a city of 200,000 that lies on the Euphrates River at the Syrian border, and turned it into a base of operations. Two reinforced Marine infantry battalions (2,500 Marines) and one Iraqi battalion (roughly 500 soldiers) cleared the city from November 5 to 16, killing roughly 100 insurgents.[24]

Like Tal Afar, the operations after the battle were more important than the battle itself. Lieutenant Colonel Dale Alford, commander of 3d Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, dispersed his Marines into small sub-units, integrating them thoroughly with the Iraqi Army brigade. Every platoon lived and worked with an Iraqi platoon in one of 12 outposts. The platoons conducted intensive satellite patrolling both day and night. Living close to the population generated intelli-

gence and forced the Marines to learn how to interact with them.[25] Even more important was the determination of the Albu Mahal tribe to keep AQI out. AQI had impinged upon their traditional control over the al-Qa'im area, causing the tribe to align itself with the Coalition after having fought as insurgents over the previous two years. Within three months of the completion of Operation Steel Curtain, the Albu Mahal had devoted 700 tribesmen to the resident Iraqi Army brigade and 400 to a newly established police force.[26]

Off the battlefield, Casey took steps to institute the lessons learned since mid-2004. These included setting up a counterinsurgency academy at Taji (just north of Baghdad) that all incoming regimental and battalion commanders had to attend for eight days. Additionally, Casey personally went to every division and brigade to brief them on his strategic vision.

In the United States, the Army and Marine Corps revamped their services training programs. The emphasis of the Marine Corps' combined arms exercise program at Twentynine Palms, California, and the U.S. Army's National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, changed from testing units against a Soviet-style conventional opponent to testing them against insurgents. Furthermore, in 2006, the U.S. Army set up a 60-day training program for its advisers at Fort Riley, Kansas. Finally, Petraeus and Mattis (now both in charge of their respective services' training establishments in the United States) together sponsored a new counterinsurgency manual (Field Manual 3-24) for the Army and Marine Corps that was issued in December 2006.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice contributed to the reforms by transferring the concept of provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs) from Afghanistan, where they had performed fairly well, to Iraq. Manned by State Department diplomats, workers from USAID (United States Agency for International Development), agricultural experts, and engineers, PRTs focused on providing economic assistance and developing local governmental bodies within each province.

Unfortunately, Tal Afar and al-Qa'im masked problems that still existed in U.S. counterinsurgency. At the same time as al-Qa'im was being mopped up, Marines in Haditha killed 24 civilians after being hit with a roadside bomb. Major General Eldon Bargewell, who investigated the incident, reported:

> The most remarkable aspect of the follow-on action with regard to the civilian casualties from the [November 19] Haditha incident was the absence of virtually any kind of inquiry at any level of command into the circumstances surrounding the deaths.[27]

While this incident was extreme, the use of air strikes, the detainment of innocent civilians, the occupation of homes, and checkpoints shooting at oncoming vehicles ("escalation of force incidents") were common. A later poll by the U.S. Army Surgeon General cited widespread attitudes within both the Marines and Army that devalued Iraq life. Almost a third of the respondents said officers had not made it clear that harming civilians was unacceptable.[28]

Other problems existed in the counterinsurgency effort as well. Some commanders still focused on mechanized sweeps or air assaults that never held an area after it had been cleared. Some battalions were shifted from actively patrolling urban areas to operating out of large U.S. bases, reducing their ability to work with the people.

The inconsistency, of the U.S. reform effort derived from the decentralized command and control structure developed for conventional war. Part of the doctrine was to delegate as much decision-making authority as possible to prevent any pause in operational tempo. Consequently, brigade and battalion commanders enjoyed a freedom to conduct operations as they saw fit. The system might have worked if commanders had been thoroughly trained in counterinsurgency. Instead, commanders often reverted to their conventional training and conducted operations that were too methodical or heavy-handed. The commanders that instituted real change within their units, such as Petraeus and Alford, were the ones who were more directive with their subordinates.

High-value targeting remained the one tactic

truly consistent throughout the U.S. forces. The detainment or death of a key leader undoubtedly disrupted insurgent operations. However, raids to capture insurgent leaders tended to disturb Iraqi homes and sweep up innocent Iraqis, which only increased local resentment. City council meetings regularly featured complaints about raids. Furthermore, capturing or killing an insurgent leader rarely caused insurgent operations to fall apart, even in a local area. Indeed, the killing of Zarqawi himself in an air strike on June 7, 2006 caused no discernible drop, in attack levels or long-term injury to AQI's organizational abilities.

Worst of all, the centerpiece of Casey's strategy was not performing well. The U.S. strategy depended upon the Iraqi Army taking over security duties. By early 2006, the Iraqi Army had grown to 10 divisions that actively participated in operations. Nevertheless, they could not suppress insurgent activity. This was partly because of deficiencies in their advising, training, and equipping. For example, 10 to 12 advisers were shown to be too few to train an Iraqi battalion plus go on tactical operations with them. On top or that, they were often reservists or national guardsmen rather than the most capable active-duty personnel. However, the real problem lay in the army's Shi'a ethnicity. In Sunni areas, the population viewed the Iraqi Army as a Shi'a occupation force and refused to provide the intelligence necessary to eradicate insurgents. Polling in 2006 found that 77 to 90 percent of the respondents in al-Anbar Province considered the government to be illegitimate. A majority considered the Iraqi Army to be a threat.[29] Other polls obtained similar results for the Sunnis overall.[30] In Ramadi, at the height of the sweltering summer, locals refused to take free water offered by Iraqi soldiers (some angrily poured it on the ground) and did not stop insurgents from bombing mobile clinics devised by the resident army brigade to render medical care to the people.

Shi'a ethnicity also posed a problem in Shi'a or mixed areas. Some soldiers and officers had connections to Shi'a militia and many admired Sadr. Consequently, Iraqi Army units often turned a blind eye to militia attacks on Sunnis in Baghdad and Diyala Provinces, the sectarian battlegrounds. Worse, the special police commandos (later known as the National Police), the paramilitary force of the Ministry of Interior, were heavily influenced by the Badr Corps (a Shi'a militia) and actively participated in ethnic cleansing.

Civil War

The sectarian divide between the Sunni and Shi'a communities widened during 2005 as the new Iraqi government took shape. The October 2005 referendum passed a constitution allowing for federalism, which threatened to deny the Sunnis a share of oil profits, polarizing the two communities. Sunnis voted en masse in December, but as a means of maximizing political representation rather than in support of a system that promised power to the Shi'a majority. The election of a Shi'a majority in the legislative body (the Council of Representatives) left the Sunnis discontented. Polls found that the majority of Sunnis did not consider the new democratic government to be legitimate and preferred that a strong leader take charge of Iraq.[31]

On February 22, 2006, AQI bombed the Askariya (Golden) Mosque in Samarra, a Shi'a holy site. Zarqawi had long been trying to instigate sectarian violence through suicide bombings in Shi'a areas. The Golden Mosque bombing was the spark that caused the Shi'a militia—Jaysh al Mahdi and the Badr Corps—to retaliate against the Sunni community in Baghdad, murdering suspected insurgents and eventually pressing Sunnis out of mixed neighborhoods. Over 30,000 civilians fled their homes in the month after the bombing. In turn, more Sunnis took up arms to defend themselves and their families.

The U.S. leadership did not recognize that the two pillars of its counterinsurgency strategy—democratization and developing the Iraqi Army—could not circumvent the civil war. Neither Casey nor Abazaid wanted to call for U.S. reinforcements. They firmly believed doing so would only reinforce Iraqi dependency on the United States. Also, according to Casey, American reinforcements could inflame the

insurgency. He noted, "We are the rationale for the resistance and a magnet for the terrorists," and persisted with plans to start withdrawing U.S. brigades by the end of the year.[32] The Bush administration did not object to this decision because it helped avoid domestic criticism of the war.[33]

Accordingly, Casey relied on the Iraqi Army to provide the numbers to quell sectarian violence, especially inside Baghdad. With the Iraqi Army ineffective, the Coalition lost control of the capital. Shi'a militias murdered scores of Sunnis while AQI set off devastating car bombs in Shi'a neighborhoods (over 100 civilians could be killed in a single day). Lieutenant General Chiarelli, now Casey's operational commander, launched two operations to regain control of the city: Operation *Together Foward I* (June 14-July 20, 2006) and Operation *Together Forward II* (August 8-October 24, 2006). In the former, U.S. and Iraqi soldiers set up security checkpoints, established a curfew, and increased their patrolling and high-value targeting efforts. In the latter operation, 15,000 U.S. soldiers cleared disputed neighborhoods block by block. The role of holding the neighborhoods fell to the Iraqi Army. Incapable of gathering intelligence on Sunni insurgents and often unwilling to confront the Shi'a militias, the Iraqi soldiers could not provide security. Indeed, only 1,000 of the 4,000 Iraqi Army reinforcements even showed up.[34] On October 19, Major General William Caldwell, the Coalition spokesman, acknowledged that Operation Together Forward II had failed. During its duration, attacks rose 22 percent.[35] Attacks on civilians by Shi'a militias and Sunni insurgents had quadrupled, with over 1,000 dying each month.[36]

The situation throughout Iraq deteriorated as well. Attacks grew from 70 per day in January 2006 to 180 per day in October. The situation was particularly bad in al-Anbar. The I Marine Expeditionary Force fought for months with hardened AQI cadres to clear Ramadi, the capital of al-Anbar, without any positive results. In Basrah, the hands-off British approach left Shi'a militias (Jaysh al Mahdi, the Badr Corps, and the Fadhila Party) vying for control of the city. The militias escalated sectarian attacks on the city's sizeable Sunni minority in the wake of the Golden Mosque bombings, largely expelling them.

Sectarian violence undermined attempts at reconciliation between the Sunni and Shi'a communities. Sunni leaders felt even more marginalized from the government. A Fallujah city leader said at a city council meeting:

> We want to participate in government but what are the results; What are the benefits? We know the results. It is total failure. We still see the killing in the streets. Baghdad is in chaos. Iran's hands are everywhere.[37]

That summer, Fallujah city leaders told Marine officers that if the United States would not act against the "Iranians," then the Sunnis must be allowed to defend themselves.[38] Indeed, 34 percent of Sunnis considered attacks on Iraqi government forces to be acceptable; only 1 percent of Shi'a felt the same way.[39] Shi'a leaders, including Prime Minister Nuri al Maliki's new government, considered militias merely a form of protection against the real threat to Iraq—the Ba'athists and AQI. The growth of the Iraqi Army (as well as the Badr Corps and Jaysh al-Mahdi) and majority control over the new democratic government gave Shi'a leaders little reason to compromise. Consequently, they rejected serious attempts at political reconciliation or restraining attacks upon the Sunnis.[40]

The most promising event of 2006 was the rise of certain Sunni tribes in al-Anbar against al-Qaeda in Iraq. This had little to do with U.S. counterinsurgency tactics. The Coalition had long been trying to motivate the tribes and traditional Sunni entities, such as the former military, to fight AQI, exemplified by the efforts of Special Forces teams and Mattis' CAP platoons. It was not until it became clear that AQI was taking over the economic and political sources of power within society that tribes, many of which had formerly been part of the insurgency, started to turn. The first had been the Albu Mahal in al-Qa'im in 2005. The tide truly turned in

September 2006, though, when Shaykh Abd al-Sittar Bezia Ftikhan al Rishawi openly announced the formation of a tribal movement, Sahawa al-Anbar, opposed to AQI. Sittar's movement backed local police forces. Because they were Sunni, the local community would give the police intelligence, enabling them to kill or detain more insurgents than the Iraqi Army. The number of police actively involved in operations grew from fewer than 1,000 in early 2006 to over 7,000 in early 2007. By April, the police had managed to suppress insurgent activity in Ramadi and most of the key tribes of al-Anbar had aligned with Sittar's movement.

A New Commander and a New Strategy

The civil war forced a major change in U.S. strategy. The Republican defeat in the midterm elections, followed by the Iraq Study Group report, made it impossible for Bush to ignore the deteriorating situation. The Iraq Study Group, a team of "prominent former US policy-makers—including former Secretary of State James Baker, former Senator Lee Hamilton, and former Director of Central Intelligence Robert Gates—recommended placing greater effort in expanding and training the Iraqi security forces, particularly the Iraqi Army. The group also called for benchmarks to measure the progress of the Iraqi government toward political reconciliation, and negotiating with Iraq's neighboring countries.

Bush announced his new strategy on January 10, 2007. While he acknowledged the main recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, the focus of the new strategy was reinforcing the 140,000 U.S. personnel in Iraq with another 20,000-25,000 in five brigade combat teams and two Marine infantry battalions, known as "the surge."

To execute the surge, Bush replaced Casey, due to leave Iraq in a few months, with Petraeus. Upon taking command on February 10, Petraeus incorporated the best lessons from Tal Afar, al-Qa'im, and the new counterinsurgency manual into the security plan for Baghdad (Operation Fard al-Qanun). More than 50 small outposts (joint security stations) manned by Iraqi police, Iraqi Army, and U.S. soldiers were emplaced throughout the city. His top priority was protecting the people rather than building the Iraqi Army (although that remained a critical task). In his view, the point of the surge was to create a breathing space in the violence, particularly in Baghdad, in which political reconciliation could take place. Petraeus wrote to his troops on March 19:

> Improving security for Iraq's population is . . . the over-riding objective of your strategy. Accomplishing this mission requires carrying out complex military operations and convincing the Iraqi people that we will not just "clear" their neighborhoods of the enemy, we will also stay and help "hold" the neighborhoods so that the "build" phase that many of their communities need can go forward.[41]

Conclusion

Nearly four years of undiminished insurgent activity forced a change in American strategy in Iraq in 2007. The United States had made a serious attempt at adapting—shown by the subordination of military offensives to political priorities, the adoption of the clear-hold-build approach, the establishment of advisory teams, and the creation of provincial reconstruction teams. Yet shortcomings remained, especially in regard to minimizing the use of force and, more importantly, adjusting to the impact of the sectarian divide. The two pillars of U.S. strategy—democratization and the building of a national and integrated Iraqi Army—did not match the sectarian realities of Iraq. The democratization process put the Sunnis in a position in which they stood to gain more by waging war than accepting the outcome of the political process. The election of a legitimate government based on a Shi'a majority actually encouraged Sunnis to fight.

Nor was the Iraqi Army, Casey's main effort, suited to maintaining stability. The sectarian divide meant that Sunnis would not provide the Iraqi Army with the intelligence necessary to suppress insurgent activity. Conversely, the

army's own sectarian sympathies made it a poor instrument for keeping Shi'a militias in line.

Consequently, gaining ground between 2003 and 2007 was a matter of fundamentally reorienting the whole American strategy, not just learning new tactics or making a few wiser political decisions. This is not to say that the U.S. war effort was doomed, but that the failure to structure strategy around the sectarian divide was a major reason for the difficulties experienced before 2007. Whether such a reorientation was a realistic option is a separate question. Abandoning democracy surely would have incurred disapproval from domestic and international political audiences, not to mention the Shi'a majority in Iraq. And placing less reliance on the Iraqi Army may not have been possible, given the small size of the U.S. military presence and the absence of large numbers of locally recruited Sunni forces until 2006. Indeed, even during the surge, the Iraqi Army remained essential to U.S. counterinsurgency efforts.

In terms of the larger history of counterinsurgency, Iraq highlights the effect that social or political constraints, in this case the sectarian divide, have on the success of attempts to adapt and on the kind of strategy that will be most effective. Other factors—such as the presence of a capable commander, an institutional willingness to adapt, or experience in fighting insurgencies—certainly play a role in effective counterinsurgency, but any successful strategy must conform to the social and political environment in which a conflict is ensconced.

Notes

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1. For information on the conventional war, see Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006).
2. For background on the history of Iraq, including its sectarian divisions, see Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004).
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Iraq's Civil War

by James D. Fearon
Foreign Affairs, March-April 2007

No Graceful Exit

As sectarian violence spiked in Baghdad around last Thanksgiving [2006], Bush administration spokespeople found themselves engaged in a strange semantic fight with American journalists over whether the conflict in Iraq is appropriately described as a civil war. It is not hard to understand why the administration strongly resists the label. For one thing, the U.S. media would interpret a change in the White House's position on this question as a major concession, an open acknowledgment of dashed hopes and failed policy. For another, the administration worries that if the U.S. public comes to see the violence in Iraq as a civil war, it will be even less willing to tolerate continued U.S. military engagement. "If it's a civil war, what are we doing there, mixed up in someone else's fight?" Americans may ask.

But if semantics could matter a lot, it is less obvious whether they should influence U.S. policy. Is it just a matter of domestic political games and public perceptions, or does the existence of civil war in Iraq have implications for what can be achieved there and what strategy Washington should pursue?

In fact, there is a civil war in progress in Iraq, one comparable in important respects to other civil wars that have occurred in postcolonial states with weak political institutions. Those cases suggest that the Bush administration's political objective in Iraq—creating a stable, peaceful, somewhat democratic regime that can survive the departure of U.S. troops—is unrealistic. Given this unrealistic political objective, military strategy of any sort is doomed to fail almost regardless of whether the administration goes with the "surge" option, as President George W. Bush has proposed, or shifts toward a pure training mission, as advised by the Iraq Study Group.

Even if an increase in the number of U.S. combat troops reduces violence in Baghdad and so buys time for negotiations on power sharing in the current Iraqi government, there is no good reason to expect that subsequent reductions would not revive the violent power struggle. Civil wars are rarely ended by stable power-sharing agreements. When they are, it typically takes combatants who are not highly factionalized and years of fighting to clarify the balance of power. Neither condition is satisfied by Iraq at present. Factionalism among the Sunnis and the Shiites approaches levels seen in Somalia, and multiple armed groups on both sides appear to believe that they could wrest control of the government if U.S. forces left. Such beliefs will not change quickly while large numbers of U.S. troops remain.

As the ethnic cleansing of Baghdad proceeds, the weak Shiite-dominated government is inevitably becoming an open partisan in a nasty civil war between Sunni and Shiite Arabs. As a result, President Bush's commitment to making a "success" of the current government will increasingly amount to siding with the Shiites, a position that is morally dubious and probably not in the interest of either the United States or long-term regional peace and stability. A decisive military victory by a Shiite-dominated government is not possible anytime soon given the favorable conditions for insurgency fought from the Sunni-dominated provinces. Furthermore, this course encourages Sunni nationalists to turn to al-Qaeda in Iraq for support against Shiite militias and the Iraqi army. It also essentially aligns Washington with Tehran against the Sunni-dominated states to the west.

As long as the Bush administration remains absolutely committed to propping up the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki or a

similarly configured successor, the U.S. government will have limited leverage with almost all of the relevant parties. By contrast, moving away from absolute commitment—for example, by beginning to shift U.S. combat troops out of the central theaters—would increase U.S. diplomatic and military leverage on almost all fronts. Doing so would not allow the current or the next U.S. administration to bring a quick end to the civil war, which most likely will last for some time. But it would allow the United States to play a balancing role between the combatants that would be more conducive to reaching, in the long run, a stable resolution in which Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish interests are well represented in a decent Iraqi government. If the Iraqis ever manage to settle on the power-sharing agreement that is the objective of current U.S. policy, it will come only after bitter fighting in the civil war that is already under way.

War Records

A civil war is a violent conflict within a country fought by organized groups that aim to take power at the center or in a region, or to change government policies. Everyday usage of the term "civil war" does not entail a clear threshold for how much violence is necessary to qualify a conflict as a civil war, as opposed to terrorism or low-level political strife. Political scientists sometimes use a threshold of at least 1,000 killed over the course of a conflict. Based on this arguably rather low figure, there have been around 125 civil wars since the end of World War II, and there are roughly 20 ongoing today. If that threshold is increased to an average of 1,000 people killed per year, there have still been over 90 civil wars since 1945. (It is often assumed that the prevalence of civil wars is a post-Cold War phenomenon, but in fact the number of ongoing civil wars increased steadily from 1945 to the early 1990s, before receding somewhat to late-1970s levels.) The rate of killing in Iraq—easily more than 60,000 in the last three years—puts the conflict in the company of many recent ones that are routinely described as civil wars (for example, those in Algeria, Colombia, Guatemala, Peru, and Sri Lanka). Indeed, even the conservative estimate of 60,000 deaths would make Iraq the ninth-deadliest civil war since 1945 in terms of annual casualties.

A major reason for the prevalence of civil wars is that they have been hard to end. Their average duration since 1945 has been about 10 years, with half lasting more than seven years. Their long duration seems to result from the way in which most of these conflicts have been fought: namely, by rebel groups using guerrilla tactics, usually operating in rural regions of postcolonial countries with weak administrative, police, and military capabilities. Civil wars like that of the United States, featuring conventional armies facing off along well-defined fronts, have been highly unusual. Far more typical have been conflicts such as those in Algeria, Colombia, Sri Lanka, and southern and western Sudan. As these cases illustrate, rural guerrilla warfare can be an extremely robust tactic, allowing relatively small numbers of rebels to gain partial control of large amounts of territory for years despite expensive and brutal military campaigns against them.

The civil war in Iraq began in 2004 as a primarily urban guerrilla struggle by Sunni insurgent groups hoping to drive out the United States and to regain the power held by Sunnis under Saddam Hussein. It escalated in 2006 with the proliferation and intensification of violence by Shiite militias, who ostensibly seek to defend Shiites from the Sunni insurgents and who have pursued this end with "ethnic cleansing" and a great deal of gang violence and thuggery.

This sort of urban guerrilla warfare and militia-based conflict differs from the typical post-1945 civil war, but there are analogues. One little-discussed but useful comparison is the violent conflict that wracked Turkish cities between 1977 and 1980. According to standard estimates, fighting among local militias and paramilitaries aligning themselves with "the left" or "the right" killed more than 20 people per day in thousands of attacks and counterattacks, assassinations, and death-squad campaigns. Beginning with a massacre by rightists in the city of Kahramanmaras in December 1978, the left-right conflicts spiraled

into ethnic violence, pitting Sunnis against Alawites against Kurds against Shiites in various cities.

As in Iraq today, the organization of the Turkish combatants was highly local and factionalized, especially on the left; the fighting often looked like urban gang violence. But, also as in Iraq, the gangs and militias had shady ties to the political parties controlling the democratically elected national parliament as well. (Indeed, one might describe the civil conflicts in Turkey then and in Iraq now as "militarized party politics.") Intense political rivalries between the leading Turkish politicians, along with their politically useful ties to the paramilitaries, prevented the democratic regime from moving decisively to end the violence. Much as in Iraq today, the elected politicians fiddled while the cities burned. Fearing that the lower ranks of the military were becoming infected with the violent factionalism of the society at large, military leaders undertook a coup in September 1980, after which they unleashed a major wave of repression against militias and gang members of both the left and the right. At the price of military rule (for what turned out to be three years), the urban terror was ended.

Especially if the United States withdraws from Iraq, the odds are good that a military coup in which some subset of the Iraqi army leadership declares that the elected government is not working and that a strong hand is necessary to impose order will result. It is unlikely, however, that a military regime in Iraq would be able to follow the example of the one in Turkey in the early 1980s. The Turkish military was a strong institution with enough autonomy and enough loyalty to the Kemalist national ideal that it could act independently of the divisions tearing the country apart. Although the army favored the right more than the left, Turkish citizens saw it as largely standing apart from the factional fighting—and thus as a credible intervenor. By contrast, the Iraqi army and, even more, the Iraqi police force appear to have little autonomy from society and politics. The police look like militia members in different uniforms, sometimes with some U.S. training. The army has somewhat more institutional coherence and autonomy, but it is Shiite-dominated and has few functional mixed units. Some evidence suggests that high-level figures in the army are facilitating, if not actively pursuing, ethnic cleansing. Accordingly, a power grab by a subset of the army leadership would be widely interpreted as a power grab by a particular Shiite faction—and could lead the army to break up along sectarian and, possibly, factional lines.

What happened in Lebanon in 1975-76 may offer better insights into what is likely to happen in Iraq. As violence between Christian militias and Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] factions started to escalate in 1975, the Lebanese army leadership initially stayed out of the conflict, realizing that the army would splinter if it tried to intervene. But as the violence escalated, the army eventually did intervene—and broke apart. Lebanon then entered a long period of conflict during which an array of Christian, Sunni, Shiite, and PLO militias fought one another off and on (as much within sectarian groups as between them). Syrian and Israeli military involvement sometimes reduced and sometimes escalated the violence. Alliances shifted, often in surprising ways. The Syrians, for example, initially sided with the Christians against the PLO.

A similar scenario is already playing out in Iraq. Whether U.S. forces stay or go, Iraq south of the Kurdish areas will probably look more and more like Lebanon during its long civil war. Effective political authority will devolve to regions, cities, and even neighborhoods. After a period of ethnic cleansing and fighting to draw lines, an equilibrium with lower-level, more intermittent sectarian violence will set in, punctuated by larger campaigns financed and aided by foreign powers. Violence and exploitation within sects will most likely worsen, as the neighborhood militias and gangs that carried out the ethnic cleansing increasingly fight among themselves over turf, protection rackets, and trade. As in Lebanon, there will probably be a good deal of intervention by neighboring states—especially Iran—but it will not necessarily bring them great strategic gains. To the contrary, it may bring them a great deal of grief, just as it has the United States.

Learning to Share?

When they do finally end, civil wars typically conclude with a decisive military victory for one side. Of the roughly 55 civil wars fought for control of a central government (as opposed to for secession or regional autonomy) since 1955, fully 75 percent ended with a clear victory for one side. The government ultimately crushed the rebels in at least 40 percent of the 55 cases, whereas the rebels won control of the center in 35 percent. Power-sharing agreements that divide up control of a central government among the combatants have been far less common. By my reckoning, at best, 9 of the 55 cases, or about 16 percent, ended this way. Examples include El Salvador in 1992, South Africa in 1994, and Tajikistan in 1997.

If successful power-sharing agreements rarely end civil wars, it is not for lack of effort. Negotiations on power sharing are common in the midst of civil wars, as are failed attempts, often with the help of outside intervention by states or international institutions, to implement such agreements. The point of departure for both the Rwandan genocide in 1994 and the rebel attack that ended it, for example, was the failure of an extensive power-sharing agreement between the Rwandan government, Hutu opposition parties, and the Tutsi insurgents.

Power-sharing agreements rarely work in large part because civil wars cause combatants to be organized in a way that produces mutually reinforcing fears and temptations: combatants are afraid that the other side will use force to grab power and at the same time are tempted to use force to grab power themselves. If one militia fears that another will try to use force to win control of the army or a city, then it has a strong incentive to use force to prevent this. The other militia understands this incentive, which gives it a good reason to act exactly as the first militia feared. In the face of these mutual, self-fulfilling fears, agreements on paper about dividing up or sharing control of political offices, the military, or, say, oil revenues are often just that—paper. They may survive while a powerful third party implicitly threatens to prevent violent power grabs (as the United States has done in Iraq), but they are likely to disintegrate otherwise.

The Bush administration has attempted to help put in place an Iraqi government based on a power-sharing agreement among Shiite, Sunni, and Kurdish leaders, but it has done so in the midst of an escalating civil war. The historical evidence suggests that this is a Sisyphean task. The effective provision of security by an intervening power may even undermine the belief that the government could stand on its own without the third party's backing. U.S. military intervention in Iraq is thus unlikely to produce a government that can survive by itself whether the troops stay 10 more months or 10 more years.

Could Iraq in 2007 be one of the rare cases in which power sharing successfully ends a civil war? Examining earlier such cases suggests that they have two distinctive features that make power sharing feasible. First, a stable agreement is typically reached only after a period of fighting has clarified the relative military capabilities of the various sides. Each side needs to come to the conclusion that it cannot get everything it wants by violence. For example, the Dayton agreement that divided power among the parties to the Bosnian war required not only NATO intervention to get them to the table and enforce the deal but also more than three years of intense fighting, which had brought the combatants essentially to a stalemate by the summer of 1995. (Even then, the agreement would not have held, and the government would surely have collapsed, if not for a continued third-party guarantee from NATO and effective sovereign control by the Office of the High Representative created under Dayton.)

Second, a power-sharing deal tends to hold only when every side is relatively cohesive. How can one party expect that another will live up to its obligations if it has no effective control over its own members? Attempts to construct power-sharing deals to end civil wars in Burundi and Somalia, for example, have been frustrated for years by factionalism within rebel groups. Conversely, the consolidation of power by one rebel faction can sometimes enable a peace agreement—as occurred prior to the deal that

ended the first war between Khartoum and southern Sudanese rebels in 1972.

Neither of these conditions holds for Iraq. First, there are many significant (and well-armed) Sunni groups that seem to believe that without U.S. troops present, they could win back control of Baghdad and the rest of the country. And there are many Shiites, including many with guns, who believe that as the majority group they can and will maintain political domination of Iraq. Moreover, among the Shiites, Muqtada al-Sadr seems to believe that he could wrest control from his rivals if the United States left. Indeed, if the United States withdraws, violence between Shiite militias will likely escalate further. Open fighting between Shiite militias might, in turn, reaffirm the Sunni insurgents' belief that they will be able to retake power.

Second, both the Sunnis and the Shiites are highly factionalized, at the national political level and at the level of neighborhood militias and gangs. Shiite politicians are divided into at least four major parties, and one of these, Dawa (the party of Prime Minister Maliki), has historically been divided into three major factions. Sadr is constantly described in the U.S. media as the leader of the largest and most aggressive Shiite militia in Iraq, but it has never been clear if he can control what the militias who praise his name actually do. The Iraqi Sunnis are similarly divided among tribes outside of Baghdad, and the organizational anarchy of Sunni Islam seems to make group-wide coordination extremely difficult.

If Maliki had the authority of a Nelson Mandela, and a party organization with the (relative) coherence and dominance of the African National Congress in the anti-apartheid struggle, he would be able to move more effectively to incorporate and co-opt various Sunni leaders into the government without fear of undermining his own power relative to that of his various Shiite political adversaries. He would also be better able to make credible commitments to deliver on promises made to Sunni leaders. As it is, intra-Shiite political rivalries render the new government almost completely dysfunctional. Its ministers see their best option as cultivating militias (or ties to militias) for current and coming fights, extortion rackets, and smuggling operations.

Tragically, more civil war may be the only way to reach a point where power sharing could become a feasible solution to the problem of governing Iraq. More fighting holds the prospect of clarifying the balance of forces and creating pressures for internal consolidation on one or both sides, thereby providing stronger grounds for either a victory by one side or a stable negotiated settlement. Should the latter eventually come into view, some sort of regional or international peacekeeping force will almost surely be required to help bring it into being. The Iraq Study Group report is quite right that Washington should be setting up diplomatic mechanisms for such eventualities, sooner rather than later.

Balancing Act

Hopefully, this analysis is too pessimistic. Perhaps Iraq's elected politicians will muddle through, and perhaps the Iraqi army will, with U.S. support, develop the capability and motivation to act effectively and evenhandedly against insurgents and militias on all sides. The optimistic scenario is so unlikely, however, that policy makers must consider the implications if civil war in Iraq continues and escalates.

Suppose that the ethnic cleansing of Baghdad continues and Sunni insurgent groups and Shiite militias continue to fight one another, U.S. troops, and civilians. If the Bush administration sticks to its "stay the course toward victory" approach, of which the surge option is the latest incarnation, it will become increasingly apparent that this policy amounts to siding with the Shiites in an extremely vicious Sunni-Shiite war. U.S. troops may play some positive role in preventing human rights abuses by Iraqi army units and slowing down violence and ethnic cleansing. But as long as the United States remains committed to trying to make this Iraqi government "succeed" on the terms President Bush has laid out, there is no escaping the fact that the central function of U.S. troops will be to backstop Maliki's government or its successor. That security gives

Maliki and his coalition the ability to tacitly pursue (or acquiesce in) a dirty war against actual and imagined Sunni antagonists while publicly supporting "national reconciliation."

This policy is hard to defend on the grounds of either morality or national interest. Even if Shiite thugs and their facilitators in the government could succeed in ridding Baghdad of Sunnis, it is highly unlikely that they would be able to suppress the insurgency in the Sunni-majority provinces in western Iraq or to prevent attacks in Baghdad and other places where Shiites live. In other words, the current U.S. policy probably will not lead to a decisive military victory anytime soon, if ever. And even if it did, would Washington want it to? The rise of a brutal, ethnically exclusivist, Shiite-dominated government in Baghdad would further the perception of Iran as the ascendant regional power. Moreover, U.S. backing for such a government would give Iraqi Sunnis and the Sunni-dominated countries in the Middle East no reason not to support al-Qaeda as an ally in Iraq. By spurring these states to support Sunni forces fighting the Shiite government, such backing would ultimately pit the United States against those states in a proxy war.

To avail itself of more attractive policy options, the Bush administration (or its successor) must break off its unconditional military support for the Shiite-dominated government that it helped bring to power in Baghdad. Washington's commitment to Maliki's government undermines U.S. diplomatic and military leverage with almost every relevant party in the country and the region. Starting to move away from this commitment by shifting combat troops out of the central theaters could, accordingly, increase U.S. leverage with almost all parties. The current Shiite political leadership would then have incentives to try to gain back U.S. military support by, for example, making more genuine efforts to incorporate Sunnis into the government or reining in Shiite militias. (Admittedly, whether it has the capacity to do either is unclear.) As U.S. troops departed, Sunni insurgent groups would begin to see the United States less as a committed ally of the "Persians" and more as a potential source of financial or even military backing. Washington would also have more leverage with Iran and Syria, because the U.S. military would not be completely bogged down in Baghdad and Anbar Province—and because both of those countries have a direct interest in avoiding increased chaos in Iraq.

Again, none of this would make for a quick end to the civil war, which will probably last for some time in any event. But it would allow the United States to move toward a balancing role that would be more conducive to ultimately gaining a stable resolution in which Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish interests are represented in a decent Iraqi government.

Despite the horrific violence currently tearing Iraq apart, in the long run there is hope for the return of a viable Iraqi state based on a political bargain among Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish leaders. Indeed, they may end up cooperating on terms set by a constitution similar to the current one—although only after a significant period of fighting. The basis for an Iraqi state is the common interest of all parties, especially the elites, in the efficient exploitation of oil resources. Continued civil war could persuade Shiite leaders that they cannot fully enjoy oil profits and political control without adequately buying off Sunni groups, who can maintain a costly insurgency. And civil war could persuade the Sunnis that a return to Sunni dominance and Shiite quiescence is impossible. Kurdish leaders have an interest in the autonomy they have already secured but with access to functioning oil pipelines leading south.

There are, of course, other possible outcomes of continued civil war in Iraq, including a formal breakup of the country or a decisive victory south of the Kurdish areas by a Sunni- or Shiite-dominated military organization that would impose a harsh dictatorship. Insofar as the United States can influence the ultimate outcome, neither of these is as good a long-term policy objective as a power-sharing agreement. As the Iraq Study Group has argued, attempting to impose some kind of partition would probably increase the killing. In addition, there are no obvious defensible borders to separate Sunnis

from Shiites; the Sunnis would not rest content with an oil-poor patch of western Iraq; it is not clear that new Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish states would be much more peaceful than Iraq is at present; and there would be considerable economic inefficiencies from making three states from one in this area. It is conceivable that civil war will someday lead the combatants in Iraq to agree on Iraq's partition anyway, but this is a decision for Iraqis rather than outsiders to make.

Most civil wars end with a decisive military victory—and this one may as well—but a decisive military victory and political dictatorship for some Sunni or Shiite group is even less appealing as a long-term U.S. policy objective. A decisive military victory for a Shiite-dominated faction would favor both Iran and al-Qaeda, and a decisive victory for Sunni insurgents would amount to restoring oppressive minority rule, a major reason for the current mess.

Two less extreme outcomes would be much better for most Iraqis, for regional peace and stability, and for U.S. interests in the region. The first would be a power-sharing agreement among a small number of Iraqi actors who actually commanded a military force and controlled territory, to be stabilized at least initially by an international peacekeeping operation. The second would be the rise of a dominant military force whose leader had both the inclination and the ability to cut deals with local "warlords" or political bosses from all other groups. Neither outcome can be imposed at this point by the United States. Both could be reached only through fighting and bargaining carried out primarily by Iraqis.

To facilitate either outcome, the U.S. government would have to pursue a policy of balancing, using diplomatic, financial, and possibly some military tools to encourage the perception that no one group or faction can win without sharing power and resources. A balancing policy might be pursued from "offshore," implemented mainly by supplying monetary and material support to tactical allies, or "onshore," possibly drawing on air strikes or other forms of U.S. military intervention originating from bases in Iraq or close by. The mechanics would necessarily depend on a complicated set of diplomatic, political, and military contingencies. The important point is that the only alternative to some form of balancing policy would be to support decisive victory by one side or the other, which would probably be undesirable even in the unlikely event that victory came soon.

Even if the coming "surge" in U.S. combat troops manages to lower the rate of killing in Baghdad, very little in relevant historical experience or the facts of this case suggests that U.S. troops would not be stuck in Iraq for decades, keeping sectarian and factional power struggles at bay while fending off jihadist and nationalist attacks. The more likely scenario is that the Bush administration's commitment to the "success" of the Maliki government will make the United States passively complicit in a massive campaign of ethnic cleansing. Standing back to adopt a more evenhanded policy in the civil war already in progress is a more sensible and defensible course. To pursue it, the Bush administration or its successor would first have to give up on the idea that a few more U.S. brigades or a change in U.S. tactics will make for an Iraq that can, in President Bush's words, "govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself" once U.S. troops are gone.

Notes

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Part II: Counterinsurgency and Irregular Warfare—Observations and Principles

The first part of America's war with Iraq was characterized by large-scale maneuver operations as U.S. combat units sped across the Iraqi desert to unseat Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime. This phase was relatively brief, lasting only a few weeks. The general insurgency against the U.S. presence in Iraq has lasted significantly longer.

The need to defeat the Iraq insurgency and bring order and stability to the country provoked a debate within the U.S. military about the best and most effective means to conduct counterinsurgency operations. While the U.S. armed services, and the Marine Corps in particular, had a long tradition of conducting such operations, the transition from maneuver combat to irregular warfare was nevertheless a difficult one that required radical changes in how to assess and confront enemy forces. The initial reaction of many units was to make liberal use of heavy firepower to destroy the insurgent forces. However, this tactic endangered Iraqi civilians and threatened to provoke even more opposition to the U.S. presence in the country. Other American commanders championed tactics that focused on protecting the civilian population and building local infrastructures and civic institutions. Other leaders, such Multi National Force-Iraq commander General George W. Casey Jr., USA, favored building local Iraqi forces to prosecute counterinsurgency operations, thus permitting a drastic reduction of U.S. forces.

The period from 2004 to 2008 saw the production of a number of works aimed at developing new strategies and tactics for combating insurgencies. These works presented broad principles and strategies that drew on century's old concepts about the nature of irregular warfare and the best way of battling insurgencies. David Kilcullen's "Twenty-Eight Articles," for example, made a conscious decision to draw upon one of the first modern theorists of insurgencies in the Middle East, British Colonel T. E. Lawrence. Kilcullen's article, modeled after Lawrence's own article, "Twenty-Seven Articles"[1] aims to demonstrate the critical differences between irregular warfare and maneuver warfare, while also stressing the need to understand the culture and circumstances of the area of operations.

In 2006, the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps published a new doctrine, *Counterinsurgency* (Field Manual 3-24/Marine Corps Publication 3-33.5). The commanders who directed the creation of the manual, Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, USA, Lieutenant General James N. Mattis, and Lieutenant General James F. Amos, were all division commanders during Operation Iraqi Freedom II who advocated counterinsurgency tactics based on respecting local culture and customs, engaging and protecting the population, building local institutions, and using highly mobile patrols to hunt down and kill insurgents without resorting to large-scale use of firepower. General Petraeus's 2006 article, "Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq," draws on his experience as the commander of the 101st Airborne Division in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. The article outlines a number of principles that would help shape the new counterinsurgency manual. Kilcullen's and Petraeus's articles are reprinted below.

As military thinkers developed new approaches to counterinsurgency doctrine, the question of air power was often overlooked. With insurgents operating out of often densely population urban centers, aerial bombardment, no matter how accurate, often threatened killing civilians and causing excessive damage. As a consequence, many commanders perceived the use of airpower as an unnecessary risk that would cause a rift between the local population and U.S. forces and enflame the insurgency. In "Making Revolutionary Change: Airpower in COIN Today," Major General Charles A. Dunlap Jr., USAF, nevertheless argues that air power can and should play a role in effective counterinsurgency operations. Focusing on unmanned aerial vehicles and the logistical support air power can provide to the combat zone, Dunlap makes the argument that air power constitutes a critically overlooked component of irregular warfare.

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1. T.E. Lawrence, "Twenty-Seven Articles," *The Arab Bulletin*, 20 August 1917 (online at http://www.bu.edu/mzank/Jerusalem/tx/lawrence.htm).

Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency

by David Kilcullen
Marine Corps Gazette, July 2006

Your company has just been warned for deployment on counterinsurgency operations in Iraq or Afghanistan. You have read David Galula, T. E. Lawrence, and Sir Robert Thompson. You have studied Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, and now understand the history, philosophy, and theory of counterinsurgency. You watched *Black Hawk Down* and *The Battle of Algiers*, and you know this will be the most difficult challenge of your life. But what does all of the theory mean at the company level? How do the principles translate into action—at night, with the global positioning system down, the media criticizing you, the locals complaining in a language you don't understand, and an unseen enemy killing your people by ones and twos? How does counterinsurgency actually happen?

There are no universal answers, and insurgents are among the most adaptive opponents you will ever face. Countering them will demand every ounce of your intellect. But be comforted; you are not the first to feel this way. There are tactical fundamentals you can apply to link the theory with the techniques and procedures you already know.

What is Counterinsurgency?

If you have not studied counterinsurgency theory, here it is in a nutshell. It is a competition with the insurgent for the right and the ability to win the hearts, minds, and acquiescence of the population. You are being sent in because the insurgents, at their strongest, can defeat anything weaker than you. But you have more combat power than you can or should use in most situations. Injudicious use of firepower creates blood feuds, homeless people, and societal disruption that fuels and perpetuates the insurgency. The most beneficial actions are often local politics, civic action, and beat-cop behaviors. For your side to win, the people do not have to like you, but they must respect you, accept that your actions benefit them, and trust your integrity and ability to deliver on promises, particularly regarding their security. In this battlefield, popular perceptions and rumor are more influential than the facts and more powerful than 100 tanks.

Within this context, what follows are observations from collective experience—the distilled essence of what those who went before you learned. They are expressed as commandments, for clarity, but are really more like folklore. Apply them judiciously and skeptically.

Preparation

Time is short during predeployment, but you will never have more time to think than you have now. Now is your chance to prepare yourself and your command.

Article 1. Know your turf. Know the people, topography, economy, history, religion, and culture. Know every village, road, field, population group, tribal leader, and ancient grievance. Your task is to become the world expert on your district. If you don't know precisely where you will be operating, study the general area. Read the map like a book; study it every night before sleep, and redraw it from memory every morning until you understand its patterns intuitively. Develop a mental model of your area—a framework in which to fit every new piece of knowledge you acquire. Study handover notes from predecessors; better still, get in touch with the unit in-theater and pick their brains. In an ideal world, intelligence officers and area experts would brief you. This rarely happens. Even if it does, there is no substitute for personal mastery. Understand the broader "area of influence." This can be a wide area, particularly when insurgents draw on "global" grievances. Share aspects of the operational area among pla-

toon leaders and noncommissioned officers; have each individual develop a personal specialization and brief the others. Neglect this knowledge and it will kill you.

Article 2. Diagnose the problem. Once you know your area and its people, you can begin to diagnose the problem. Who are the insurgents? What drives them? What makes local leaders tick? Counterinsurgency is fundamentally a competition between many groups, each seeking to mobilize the population in support of their agenda. Counterinsurgency is always more than two sided, so you must understand what motivates the people and how to mobilize them. You need to know why and how the insurgents are getting followers. This means you need to know your real enemy, not a cardboard cutout. The enemy is adaptive, resourceful, and probably grew up in the region where you will operate. The locals have known him since he was a boy. How long have they known you? Your worst opponent is not the psychopathic terrorist of Hollywood; it is the charismatic "follow me" warrior who would make your best platoon leader. His followers are not misled or naïve. Much of his success is due to bad government policies or security forces that alienate the population. Work this problem collectively with your platoon and squad leaders. Discuss ideas, explore the problem, understand what you are facing, and seek a consensus. If this sounds "unmilitary," get over it. Once you are in-theater, situations will arise too quickly for orders or even commander's intent. Corporals and privates will have to make snap judgments with strategic impact. The only way to help them is to give them a shared understanding, then trust them to think for themselves on the day.

Article 3. Organize for intelligence. In counterinsurgency, killing the enemy is easy. Finding him is often nearly impossible. Intelligence and operations are complementary. Your operations will be intelligence driven, but intelligence will come mostly from your own operations, not as a "product" prepared and served up by higher headquarters. So you must organize for intelligence. You will need a company S-2 intelligence section—including analysts. You may need platoon S-2s and S-3s (operations), and you will need a reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) element. You will not have enough linguists—you never do—but consider carefully where best to employ them. Linguists are battle-winning assets, but like any other scarce resource, you must have a prioritized "hump plan" in case you lose them. Often during predeployment preparations the best use of linguists is to train your command in basic language skills. You will probably not get augmentation for all of this, but you must still do it. Put the smartest Marines in the S-2 section and the R&S squad. You will have one less rifle squad, but the intelligence section will pay for itself in lives and effort saved.

Article 4. Organize for interagency operations. Almost everything in counterinsurgency is interagency. And everything important—from policing to intelligence to civil-military operations to trash collection—will involve your company working with civilian actors and local indigenous partners you cannot control but whose success is essential for yours. Train the company in interagency operations. Get briefings from the State Department, aid agencies, and the local police or fire brigade. Train point men in each squad to deal with the interagency. Realize that civilians find rifles, helmets, and body armor intimidating. Learn how not to scare them. Ask others who come from that country or culture about your ideas. See it through the eyes of a civilian who knows nothing about the military. How would you react if foreigners came to your neighborhood and conducted the operations you planned? What if somebody came to your mother's house and did that? Most importantly, know that your operations will create temporary breathing space, but long-term development and stabilization by civilian agencies will ultimately win the war.

Article 5. Travel light and harden your combat service support (CSS). You will be weighed clown with body armor, rations, extra ammunition, communications gear, and 1,000 other things. The enemy will carry a rifle or rocket propelled grenade, a *shemagh* (a traditional Arab head scarf worn as protection from bright sunlight, sun glare, and blowing sand in the desert), and a water bottle if he is lucky. Unless you ruthlessly lighten your load and enforce a culture of speed and mobility,

the insurgents will consistently outrun and outmaneuver you. But in lightening your load, make sure you can always "reach back" to call for firepower or heavy support if needed. Also, remember to harden your CSS. The enemy will attack your weakest points. Most attacks on coalition forces in Iraq in 2004 and 2005, outside of preplanned combat actions like the two battles of Fallujah or Operation Iron Horse, were against CSS installations and convoys. You do the math. Ensure that your CSS assets are hardened, have communications, and are trained in combat operations. They may do more fighting than your rifle squads.

Article 6. Find a political/cultural adviser. In a force optimized for counterinsurgency, you might receive a political/cultural adviser at company level—a diplomat or military foreign area officer who is able to speak the language and navigate the intricacies of local politics. Back on planet Earth, the division commander will get a political/cultural advisor. You will not, so you must improvise. Find a political/cultural adviser from among your people, perhaps an officer, perhaps not. (See Article 8.) Someone with people skills and a "feel" for the environment will do better than a political science graduate. Don't try to be your own cultural adviser. You must be fully aware of the political and cultural dimension, but this is a different task. Also, don't give one of your intelligence people this role. They can help, but their task is to understand the environment. The political adviser's job is to help shape it.

Article 7. Train the squad leaders and then trust them. Counterinsurgency is a squad and platoon leader's war, and often a private Marine's war. Battles are won or lost in moments. Whoever can bring combat power to bear in seconds on a street corner will win. The commander on the spot controls the fight. You must train the squad leaders to act intelligently and independently without orders. If your squad leaders are competent, you can get away with average company or platoon staffs. The reverse is not the case. Training should focus on basic skills—marksmanship, patrolling, security on the move and at the halt, and basic drills. When in doubt, spend less time on company and platoon training and more time on squad training. Ruthlessly replace leaders who do not make the grade. But once people are trained, and you have a shared operational "diagnosis," you must trust them. We talk about this, but few company or platoon leaders really trust their people. In counterinsurgency, you have no choice.

Article 8. Rank is nothing; talent is everything. Not everyone is good at counterinsurgency. Many people don't understand the concept, and some who do can't execute it. It is difficult, and in a conventional force only a few people will master it. Anyone can learn the basics, but a few "naturals" do exist. Learn how to spot these people and put them in positions where they can make a difference. Rank matters far less than talent; a few good men under a smart junior noncommissioned officer can succeed in counterinsurgency where hundreds of well-armed Marines under a mediocre senior officer will fail.

Article 9. Have a game plan. The final preparation task is to develop a game plan—a mental picture of how you see the operation developing. You will be tempted to try to do this too early. But wait. As your knowledge improves, you will get a better idea of what needs to be done and of your own limitations. Like any plan, this plan will change once you hit the ground and may need to be scrapped if there is a major shift in the environment. But you still need a plan, and the process of planning will give you a simple, robust idea of what to achieve, even if the methods change. This is sometimes called "operational design." One approach is to identify basic stages in your operation. For example, establish dominance, build local networks, and marginalize the enemy. Make sure you can easily transition between phases, both forward and backward in case of setbacks. Just as the insurgent can adapt his activity to yours, you must have a simple enough plan to survive setbacks without collapsing. This plan is the "solution" that matches the shared "diagnosis" you developed earlier. It must be simple and known to everyone.

The Golden Hour

You have deployed, completed reception and staging, and (if you are lucky) attended the in-

country counterinsurgency school. Now it is time to enter your sector and start your tour. This is the golden hour. Mistakes made now will haunt you for the rest of the tour, while early successes will set the tone for victory. You will look back on your early actions and cringe at your clumsiness. So be it, but you must act.

Article 10. Be there. The first rule of deployment in counterinsurgency is to be there. You can almost never outrun the enemy. If you are not present when an incident happens, there is usually little you can do about it. So your first order of business is to establish presence. If you cannot do this throughout your sector, then do it wherever you can. Establishing presence demands a residential approach—living in your sector, in close proximity to the population, rather than raiding into the area from remote, secure bases. Movement on foot, sleeping in local villages, night patrolling, all of these seem more dangerous than they are. These actions establish links with the locals who see you as real people they can trust and do business with, not as aliens who descend from an armored box. Driving around in an armored convoy—day-tripping like a tourist in hell—degrades situational awareness, makes you a target, and is ultimately more dangerous.

Article 11. Avoid knee-jerk responses to first impressions. Don't act rashly; get the facts first. The violence you see may be part of the insurgent strategy, it may be various interest groups fighting it out, or it may be people settling personal vendettas. Or, it may just be daily life. "Normality" in Kandahar is not the same as in Kansas. So you need time to learn what normality looks like. The insurgent commander also wants to goad you into lashing out at the population or making a mistake. Unless you happen to be on the spot when an incident occurs, you will have only secondhand reports and may misunderstand the local context or interpretation. This fragmentation and "disaggregation" of the battlefield—particularly in urban areas—means that first impressions are often highly misleading. Of course, you cannot avoid making judgments. But if possible, check them with an older hand or a trusted local. If you can, keep one or two officers from your predecessor unit for the first part of the tour. Try to avoid a rush to judgment.

Article 12. Prepare for handover from day one. Believe it or not, you will not resolve the insurgency on your watch. Your tour will end, and your successors will need your corporate knowledge. Start handover folders, in every platoon and specialist squad, from day one. Ideally, you would have inherited these from your predecessors, but if not, you must start them. The folders should include lessons learned, details about the population, village and patrol reports, updated maps, photographs—anything that will help newcomers master the environment. Computerized databases are fine, but keep good backups and ensure that you have a hard copy of key artifacts and documents. This is boring, tedious, and essential. Over time you will create a corporate memory that keeps your people alive.

Article 13. Build trusted networks. Once you have settled into your sector, your next task is to build trusted networks. This is the true meaning of the phrase "hearts and minds," which comprises two separate components. "Hearts" means persuading people that their best interests are served by your success; "minds" means convincing them that you can protect them and that resisting you is pointless. Note that neither concept has to do with whether people like you. Calculated self-interest, not emotion, is what counts. Over time, if you successfully build networks of trust, these will grow like roots into the population, displacing the enemy's networks, bringing him out into the open to fight you, and seizing the initiative. These networks include local allies, community leaders, local security forces, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other friendly or neutral non-state actors in your area, and the media. Conduct village and neighborhood surveys to identify needs in the community and then follow through to meet them, build common interests, and mobilize popular support. This is your true main effort; everything else is secondary. Actions that help build trusted networks serve your cause. Actions—even killing high-profile targets—that undermine trust or disrupt your networks help the enemy.

Article 14. Start easy. If you were trained in maneuver warfare you know about surfaces and gaps. This theory applies to counterinsurgency as

much as any other form of maneuver. Don't try to crack the hardest nut first. Don't go straight for the main insurgent stronghold, try to provoke a decisive showdown, or focus efforts on villages that support the insurgents. Instead, start from secure areas and work gradually outward. Do this by extending your influence through the locals' own networks. Go with, not against, the grain of local society. First win the confidence of a few villages and then see with whom they trade, intermarry, or do business. Now win these people over. Soon enough the showdown with the insurgents will come. But now you have local allies, a mobilized population, and a trusted network at your back. Do it the other way around and no one will mourn your failure.

Article 15. Seek early victories. In this early phase your aim is to stamp your dominance in your sector. Do this by seeking an early victory. This will probably not translate into a combat victory over the enemy. Looking for such a victory can be overly aggressive and create collateral damage, especially since you really do not yet understand your sector. Also, such a combat victory depends on the enemy being stupid enough to present you with a clear-cut target, a rare windfall in counterinsurgency. Instead, you may achieve a victory by resolving long-standing issues your predecessors have failed to address or co-opting a key local leader who has resisted cooperation with your forces. Like any other form of armed propaganda, achieving even a small victory early in the tour sets the tone for what comes later and helps seize the initiative, which you have probably lost due to the inevitable hiatus entailed by the handover/takeover with your predecessor.

Article 16. Practice deterrent patrolling. Establish patrolling methods that deter the enemy from attacking you. Often our patrolling approach seems designed to provoke, then defeat, enemy attacks. This strategy is counterproductive; it leads to a raiding, day-tripping mindset or, worse, a bunker mentality. Instead, practice deterrent patrolling. There are many methods for deterrent patrolling, including "multiple" patrolling where you flood an area with numerous small patrols working together. Each is too small to be a worthwhile target, and the insurgents never know where all of the patrols are, making an attack on any one patrol extremely risky. Other methods include so-called "blue-green" patrolling where you mount daylight overt humanitarian patrols that go covert at night and hunt specific targets. Again, the aim is to keep the enemy off balance and the population reassured through constant and unpredictable activity that, over time, deters attacks and creates a more permissive environment. A reasonable rule of thumb is that one- to two-thirds of your force should be on patrol at any time, day or night.

Article 17. Be prepared for setbacks. Setbacks are normal in counterinsurgency, as in every other form of war. You will make mistakes, lose people, or occasionally kill or detain the wrong person. You may fail in building or expanding networks. If this happens, don't lose heart. Simply drop back to the previous phase of your game plan and recover your balance. It is normal in company counterinsurgency operations for some platoons to be doing well, while others do badly. This is not necessarily evidence of failure. Give local commanders the freedom to adjust their posture to local conditions. This freedom creates elasticity that helps you survive setbacks.

Article 18. Remember the global audience. One of the biggest differences between the counterinsurgencies our fathers fought and those we face today is the omnipresence of globalized media. Most houses in Iraq have one or more satellite dishes. Web bloggers; print, radio, and television reporters; and others are monitoring and commenting on your every move. When the insurgents ambush your patrols or set off a car bomb, they do so not to destroy one more track, but because they want graphic images of a burning vehicle and dead bodies for the evening news. Beware of the "scripted enemy" who plays to a global audience and seeks to defeat you in the court of global public opinion. You counter this tactic by training people to always bear in mind the global audience, assume that everything they say or do will be publicized, and befriend the media. Document everything you do. Have a video or photographic record, or an independent witness, wherever possible. This documentation

makes it harder for the enemy to put negative "spin" on your actions with disinformation. Get the press on your side, help them get their story, and trade information with them. Good relationships with nonembedded media—especially indigenous media—dramatically increase your situational awareness and help get your message across to the global and local audience.

Article 19. Engage the women; beware of the children. Most insurgent fighters are men. But in traditional societies, women are hugely influential in forming the social networks that insurgents use for support. Co-opting neutral or friendly women through targeted social and economic programs builds networks of enlightened self-interest that eventually undermine the insurgents. You need your own female counterinsurgents, including interagency people, to do this effectively. Win the women and you own the family unit. Own the family and you take a big step forward in mobilizing the population. Conversely, though, stop your people from fraternizing with local children. Your troops are homesick; they want to drop their guard with the kids. But children are sharp-eyed, lacking in empathy, and willing to commit atrocities that their elders would shrink from. The insurgents are watching. They will notice a growing friendship between one of your people and a local child and either harm the child as punishment or use him against you. Similarly, stop throwing candies or presents to children. It attracts them to your vehicles, creates crowds the enemy can exploit, and leads to children being run over. Harden your heart and keep the children at arm's length.

Article 20. Take stock regularly. You probably already know that a "body count" tells you little, because you usually cannot know how many insurgents there were to start with, how many moved into the area, how many transferred from supporter to combatant status, or how many new fighters the conflict has created. But you still need to develop metrics early in the tour and refine them as the operation progresses. They should cover a range of social, informational, military, and economic issues. Use metrics intelligently to form an overall impression of progress—not in a mechanical "traffic light" fashion. Typical metrics include percentage of engagements initiated by our forces versus those initiated by insurgents, longevity of friendly local leaders in positions of authority, number and quality of tip-offs on insurgent activity that originate spontaneously from the population, and economic activity at markets and shops. These mean virtually nothing as a snapshot. Trends over time are the true indicators of progress in your sector.

Groundhog Day

Now you are in "steady state." You are established in your sector, and people are settling into that "groundhog day" mentality that hits every unit at some stage during every tour. It will probably take people at least the first third of the tour to become effective in the environment, if not longer. Then in the last period you will struggle against the short-timer mentality. So this middle part of the tour is the most productive. But keeping the flame alive and bringing the local population along with you takes immense leadership.

Article 21. Exploit a "single narrative." Since counterinsurgency is a competition to mobilize popular support, it pays to know how people are mobilized. In most societies there are opinion makers—local leaders, pillars of the community, religious figures, media personalities, and others who set trends and influence public perceptions. This influence—including the pernicious influence of the insurgents—often takes the form of a single narrative—a simple, unifying, easily expressed story or explanation that organizes people's experience and provides a framework for understanding events. Nationalist and ethnic historical myths, or sectarian creeds, provide such a narrative. The Iraqi insurgents have one, as do al-Qaeda and the Taliban. To undercut their influence you must exploit an alternative narrative, or better yet, tap into an existing narrative that excludes the insurgents. This narrative is often worked out for you by higher headquarters, but only you have the detailed knowledge to tailor the narrative to local conditions and generate leverage from it. For example, you might use a nationalist narrative to marginalize foreign fighters in your area, or a narrative of national redemption

to undermine former regime elements that have been terrorizing the population. At the company level you do this in baby steps by getting to know local opinion makers, winning their trust, learning what motivates them, and building on this trust to find a single narrative that emphasizes the inevitability and rightness of your ultimate success. This is art, not science.

Article 22. Local forces should mirror the enemy, not ourselves. By this stage you will be working closely with local forces, training or supporting them, and building indigenous capability. The natural tendency is to build forces in our own image with the aim of eventually handing our role over to them. This is a mistake. Instead, local indigenous forces need to mirror the enemy's capabilities and seek to supplant the insurgent's role. This does not mean they should be "irregular" in the sense of being brutal or outside proper control. Rather, they should move, equip, and organize like the insurgents but have access to your support and be under the firm control of their parent societies. Combined with a mobilized population and trusted networks, this allows local forces to "hardwire" the enemy out of the environment, under top cover from you. At the company level, this means that raising, training, and employing local indigenous auxiliary forces (police and military) are valid tasks. These tasks require high-level clearance, of course, but if support is given, you should establish a company training cell. Platoons should aim to train one local squad and then use that squad as a nucleus for a partner platoon. Company headquarters should train an indigenous leadership team. This mirrors the "growth" process of other trusted networks and tends to emerge naturally as you win local allies who want to take up arms in their own defense.

Article 23. Practice armed civil affairs. Counterinsurgency is armed social work, an attempt to redress basic social and political problems while being shot at. This situation makes civil affairs a central counterinsurgency activity, not an afterthought. It is how you restructure the environment to displace the enemy from it. In your company sector, civil affairs must focus on meeting basic needs first and then progress up Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs as each successive need is met. A series of village or neighborhood surveys, regularly updated, is an invaluable tool to help understand the population's needs and track progress in meeting them over time. You need intimate cooperation with interagency partners here—national, international, and local. You will not be able to control these partners. Many NGOs, for example, do not want to be too closely associated with you because they need to preserve their perceived neutrality. Instead, you need to work on a shared diagnosis of the problem, building a consensus that helps you self-synchronize. Your role is to provide protection, identify needs, facilitate civil affairs, and use improvements in social conditions as leverage to build networks and mobilize the population. Thus, there is no such thing as impartial humanitarian assistance or civil affairs in counterinsurgency. Every time you help someone, you hurt someone else—not the least the insurgents. So civil and humanitarian assistance personnel will be targeted. Protecting them is a matter not only of close-in defense, but also of creating a permissive operating environment by co-opting the beneficiaries of aid—local communities and leaders-to help you help them.

Article 24. Small is beautiful. Another natural tendency is to go for large-scale, mass programs. In particular, we have a tendency to template ideas that succeed in one area and transplant them into another, and we tend to take small programs that work and try to replicate them on a larger scale. Again, this strategy is usually a mistake. Often programs succeed because of specific local conditions of which we are unaware, or because their very smallness kept them below the enemy's radar and helped them flourish unmolested. At the company level, programs that succeed in one district often also succeed in another (because the overall company sector is small), but small-scale projects rarely proceed smoothly into large programs. Keep programs small. Small scale makes them cheap, sustainable, low key, and (importantly) recoverable if they fail. You can add new programs—also small, cheap, and tailored to local conditions—as the situation allows.

Article 25. Fight the enemy's strategy, not his

forces. At this stage, if things are proceeding well, the insurgents will go over to the offensive. Yes, the offensive because you have created a situation so dangerous to the insurgents, by threatening to displace them from the environment, that they have to attack you and the population to get back into the game. Thus it is normal, even in the most successful operations, to have spikes of offensive insurgent activity late in the campaign. This activity does not necessarily mean you have done something wrong (though it may—it depends on whether you have successfully mobilized the population). At this point the tendency is to go for the jugular and seek to destroy the enemy's forces in open battle. This strategy is rarely the best choice at the company level, because provoking major combat usually plays into the enemy's hands by undermining the population's confidence. Instead, attack the enemy's strategy. If he is seeking to recapture the allegiance of a segment of the local population, then co-opt them against him. If he is trying to provoke a sectarian conflict, go over to "peace enforcement mode." The permutations are endless, but the principle is the same—fight the enemy's strategy, not his forces.

Article 26. Build your own solution—only attack the enemy when he gets in the way. Try not to be distracted or forced into a series of reactive moves by a desire to kill or capture the insurgents. Your aim should be to implement your own solution—the game plan you developed early in the campaign and then refined through interaction with local partners. Your approach must be environment-centric (based on dominating the whole district and implementing a solution to its systemic problems) rather than enemy centric. This means that, particularly late in the campaign, you may need to learn to negotiate with the enemy. Members of the population that support you also know the enemy's leaders (they may have grown up together in the small district that is now your company sector), and valid negotiating partners sometimes emerge as the campaign progresses. Again, you need close interagency relationships to exploit opportunities to co-opt segments of the enemy. This helps you wind down the insurgency without alienating potential local allies who have relatives or friends in the insurgent movement. At this stage, a defection is better than a surrender, a surrender is better than a capture, and a capture is better than a kill.

Getting Short

Time is short, and the tour is drawing to a close. The key problem now is keeping your people focused, preventing them from dropping their guard, and maintaining the rage on all of the multifarious programs, projects, and operations that you have started. In this final phase, the previous articles still stand, but there is an important new one.

Article 27. Keep your extraction plan secret. The temptation to talk about home becomes almost unbearable toward the end of a tour. The locals know you are leaving and probably have a better idea than you of the generic extraction plan. Remember, they have seen units come and go. But you must protect the specific details of the extraction plan, or the enemy will use this time as an opportunity to score a high-profile hit, recapture the population's allegiance by scare tactics that convince them they will not be protected once you leave, or persuade them that your successor unit will be oppressive or incompetent. Keep the details secret, within a tightly controlled compartment in your headquarters. And resist the temptation to say goodbye to local allies. You can always send a postcard from home.

Four 'What Ifs'

The articles above describe what should happen, but we all know that things go wrong. Here are some "what ifs" to consider.

What if you get moved to a different area? You prepared for Ramadi and studied Dulaim tribal structures and Sunni beliefs. Now you are going to Najaf and will be surrounded by al-Hassan and Unizzah tribes and Shi'a communities. But that work was not wasted. In mastering your first area, you learned techniques you can apply—how to "case" an operational area or how to decide what matters in the local societal structure. Do the same again. This time the

process is easier and faster. You have an existing mental structure and can focus on what is different. The same applies if you get moved frequently within a battalion or brigade area.

What if higher headquarters doesn't "get" counterinsurgency? Higher headquarters is telling you that the mission is to "kill terrorists" or is pushing for high-speed armored patrols and a base camp mentality. They just do not seem to understand counterinsurgency. This is not uncommon since company grade officers today often have more combat experience than senior officers. In this case, just do what you can. Try not to create expectations that higher headquarters will not let you meet. Apply the adage "first do no harm." Over time you will find ways to do what you have to do. But never lie to higher headquarters about your locations or activities. They own the indirect fires.

What if you have no resources? Yours is a low-priority sector. You have no linguists, the aid agencies have no money for projects in your area, and you have a low priority for funding. You can still get things done, but you need to focus on self-reliance, keeping things small and sustainable, and ruthlessly prioritize effort. Local community leaders are your allies. They know what matters to them more than you do. Be honest with them, discuss possible projects and options with community leaders, and get them to choose what their priorities are. Often they will find the translators, building supplies, or expertise that you need and will only expect your support and protection in making their projects work. And the process of negotiation and consultation will help mobilize their support and strengthen their social cohesion. If you set your sights on what is achievable, the situation can still work.

What if the theater situation shifts under your feet? It is your worst nightmare. Everything has gone well in your sector, but the whole theater situation has changed and invalidates your efforts. Think of the first battle of Fallujah, the al-Askariya shrine bombing, or the Sadr uprising. What do you do? Here is where having a flexible, adaptive game plan comes in. Just as the insurgents drop down to a lower posture when things go wrong, now is the time to drop back a stage, consolidate, regain your balance, and prepare to expand again when the situation allows. But, see Article 28. If you cede the initiative, you must regain it as soon as the situation allows, or you will eventually lose.

Conclusion

This then is the tribal wisdom, the folklore that those who went before you have learned. Like any folklore it needs interpretation and contains seemingly contradictory advice. Over time, as you apply unremitting intellectual effort to study your sector, you will learn to apply these ideas in your own way and will add to this store of wisdom from your own observations and experience. So only one article remains. If you remember nothing else, remember this one.

Article 28.Whatever else you do, keep the initiative. In counterinsurgency, the initiative is everything. If the enemy is reacting to you, you control the environment. Provided you mobilize the population, you will win. If you are reacting to the enemy—even if you are killing or capturing him in large numbers—then he is controlling the environment, and you will eventually lose. In counterinsurgency, the enemy initiates most attacks, targets you unexpectedly, and withdraws too fast for you to react. Do not be drawn into purely reactive operations. Focus on the population, build your own solution, further your game plan, and fight the enemy only when he gets in the way. This strategy gains and keeps the initiative.

Notes

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Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq

by Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, USA
Military Review, January-February 2006

The Army has learned a great deal in Iraq and Afghanistan about the conduct of counterinsurgency operations, and we must continue to learn all that we can from our experiences in those countries.

The insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan were not, in truth, the wars for which we were best prepared in 2001; however, they are the wars we are fighting and they clearly are the kind of wars we must master. America's overwhelming conventional military superiority makes it unlikely that future enemies will confront us head on. Rather, they will attack us asymmetrically, avoiding our strengths—firepower, maneuver, technology—and come at us and our partners the way the insurgents do in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is imperative, therefore, that we continue to learn from our experiences in those countries, both to succeed in those endeavors and to prepare for the future.

Soldiers and Observations

Writing down observations and lessons learned is a time-honored tradition of Soldiers. Most of us have done this to varying degrees, and we then reflect on and share what we've jotted down after returning from the latest training exercise, mission, or deployment. Such activities are of obvious importance in helping us learn from our own experiences and from those of others.

In an effort to foster learning as an organization, the Army institutionalized the process of collection, evaluation, and dissemination of observations, insights, and lessons some 20 years ago with the formation of the Center for Army Lessons Learned.[1] In subsequent years, the other military services and the Joint Forces Command followed suit, forming their own lessons learned centers. More recently, the Internet and other knowledge-management tools have sped the processes of collection, evaluation, and dissemination enormously. Numerous products have already been issued since the beginning of our operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and most of us have found these products of considerable value as we've prepared for deployments and reviewed how different units grappled with challenges our elements were about to face.

For all their considerable worth, the institutional structures for capturing lessons are still dependent on soldiers' thoughts and reflections. And soldiers have continued to record their own observations, particularly in recent years as we have engaged in so many important operations. Indeed, my own pen and notebook were always handy while soldiering in Iraq, where I commanded the 101st Airborne Division during our first year there (during the fight to Baghdad and the division's subsequent operations in Iraq's four northern provinces), and where, during most of the subsequent year-and-a-half, I helped with the so-called "train and equip" mission, conducting an assessment in the spring of 2004 of the Iraqi security forces after their poor performance in early April 2004, and then serving as the first commander of the Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq and the NATO Training Mission-Iraq.

What follows is the distillation of a number of observations jotted down during that time. Some of these observations are specific to soldiering in Iraq, but the rest speak to the broader challenge of conducting counterinsurgency operations in a vastly different culture than our own. I offer 14 of those observations here in the hope that others will find them of assistance as they prepare to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan or in similar missions in the years ahead.

Fourteen Observations

Observation Number 1 is *"Do not try to do too much with your own hands."* T. E. Lawrence offered this wise counsel in an article published

in *The Arab Bulletin* in August 1917. Continuing, he wrote: "Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is. It may take them longer and it may not be as good as you think, but if it is theirs, it will be better."[2]

Lawrence's guidance is as relevant in the 21st century as it was in his own time in the Middle East during World War I. Like much good advice, however, it is sometimes easier to put forward than it is to follow. Our Army is blessed with highly motivated soldiers who pride themselves on being action oriented. We celebrate a "can do" spirit, believe in taking the initiative, and want to get on with business. Yet, despite the discomfort in trying to follow Lawrence's advice by not doing too much with our own hands, such an approach is absolutely critical to success in a situation like that in Iraq. Indeed, many of our units recognized early on that it was important that we not just perform tasks for the Iraqis, but that we help our Iraqi partners, over time enabling them to accomplish tasks on their own with less and less assistance from us.

Empowering Iraqis to do the job themselves has, in fact, become the essence of our strategy—and such an approach is particularly applicable in Iraq. Despite suffering for decades under Saddam, Iraq still has considerable human capital, with the remnants of an educated middle class, a number of budding entrepreneurs, and many talented leaders. Moreover, the Iraqis, of course, know the situation and people far better than we ever can, and unleashing their productivity is essential to rebuilding infrastructure and institutions. Our experience, for example, in helping the Iraqi military reestablish its staff colleges and branch-specific schools has been that, once a good Iraqi leader is established as the head of the school, he can take it from there, albeit with some degree of continued Coalition assistance. The same has been true in many other areas, including in helping establish certain Army units (such as the Iraqi Army's 9th Division (Mechanized), based north of Baghdad at Taji, and the 8th Division, which has units in five provinces south of Baghdad) and police academies (such as the one in Hillah, run completely by Iraqis for well over six months). Indeed, our ability to assist rather than do has evolved considerably since the transition of sovereignty at the end of late June 2004 and even more so since the elections of 30 January 2005. I do not, to be sure, want to downplay in the least the amount of work still to be done or the daunting challenges that lie ahead; rather, I simply want to emphasize the importance of empowering, enabling, and assisting the Iraqis, an approach that figures prominently in our strategy in that country.

Observation Number 2 is that, in a situation like Iraq, the liberating force must *act quickly, because every army of liberation has a half-life* beyond which it turns into an army of occupation. The length of this half-life is tied to the perceptions of the populace about the impact of the liberating force's activities. From the moment a force enters a country, its leaders must keep this in mind, striving to meet the expectations of the liberated in what becomes a race against the clock.

This race against the clock in Iraq has been complicated by the extremely high expectations of the Iraqi people, their pride in their own abilities, and their reluctant admission that they needed help from Americans, in particular.[3] Recognizing this, those of us on the ground at the outset did all that we could with the resources available early on to help the people, to repair the damage done by military operations and looting, to rebuild infrastructure, and to restore basic services as quickly as possible—in effect, helping extend the half-life of the army of liberation. Even while carrying out such activities, however, we were keenly aware that sooner or later, the people would begin to view us as an army of occupation. Over time, the local citizenry would feel that we were not doing enough or were not moving as quickly as desired, would see us damage property and hurt innocent civilians in the course of operations, and would resent the inconveniences and intrusion of checkpoints, low helicopter flights, and other

military activities. The accumulation of these perceptions, coupled with the natural pride of Iraqis and resentment that their country, so blessed in natural resources, had to rely on outsiders, would eventually result in us being seen less as liberators and more as occupiers. That has, of course, been the case to varying degrees in much of Iraq.

The obvious implication of this is that such endeavors—especially in situations like those in Iraq—are a race against the clock to achieve as quickly as possible the expectations of those liberated. And, again, those expectations, in the case of Iraqi citizens, have always been very high indeed.[4]

Observation Number 3 is that, in an endeavor like that in Iraq, *money is ammunition.* In fact, depending on the situation, money can be more important than real ammunition—and that has often been the case in Iraq since early April 2003 when Saddam's regime collapsed and the focus rapidly shifted to reconstruction, economic revival, and restoration of basic services. Once money is available, the challenge is to spend it effectively and quickly to rapidly achieve measurable results. This leads to a related observation that the money needs to be provided as soon as possible to the organizations that have the capability and capacity to spend it in such a manner.

So-called CERP (Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Program) funds—funds created by the Coalition Provisional Authority with captured Iraqi money in response to requests from units for funds that could be put to use quickly and with minimal red tape—proved very important in Iraq in the late spring and summer of 2003. These funds enabled units on the ground to complete thousands of small projects that were, despite their low cost, of enormous importance to local citizens.[5] Village schools, for example, could be repaired and refurbished by less than $10,000 at that time, and units like the 101st Airborne Division carried out hundreds of school repairs alone. Other projects funded by CERP in our area included refurbishment of Mosul University, repairs to the Justice Center, numerous road projects, countless water projects, refurbishment of cement and asphalt factories, repair of a massive irrigation system, support for local elections, digging of dozens of wells, repair of police stations, repair of an oil refinery, purchase of uniforms and equipment for Iraqi forces, construction of small Iraqi Army training and operating bases, repairs to parks and swimming pools, support for youth soccer teams, creation of employment programs, refurbishment of medical facilities, creation of a central Iraqi detention facility, establishment of a small business loan program, and countless other small initiatives that made big differences in the lives of the Iraqis we were trying to help.

The success of the CERP concept led Congress to appropriate additional CERP dollars in the fall of 2003, and additional appropriations have continued ever since. Most commanders would agree, in fact, that CERP dollars have been of enormous value to the effort in Iraq (and in Afghanistan, to which the concept migrated in 2003 as well).

Beyond being provided money, those organizations with the capacity and capability to put it to use must also be given reasonable flexibility in how they spend at least a portion of the money, so that it can be used to address emerging needs—which are inevitable. This is particularly important in the case of appropriated funds. The recognition of this need guided our requests for resources for the Iraqi security forces "train and equip" mission, and the result was a substantial amount of flexibility in the 2005 supplemental funding measure that has served that mission very well, especially as our new organization achieved the capability and capacity needed to rapidly put to use the resources allocated to it.[6]

Observation Number 4 reminds us that *increasing the number of stakeholders is critical to success.* This insight emerged several months into our time in Iraq as we began to realize that more important than our winning Iraqi hearts and minds was doing all that we could to ensure that as many Iraqis as possible felt a stake in the success of the new Iraq. Now, I do not want to downplay the importance of winning hearts and minds for the Coalition, as that extends the half-life I described earlier, something that is of obvious desirability. But more important was the idea

of Iraqis wanting the new Iraq to succeed. Over time, in fact, we began asking, when considering new initiatives, projects, or programs, whether they would help increase the number of Iraqis who felt they had a stake in the country's success. This guided us well during the time that the 101st Airborne Division was in northern Iraq and again during a variety of initiatives pursued as part of the effort to help Iraq reestablish its security forces. And it is this concept, of course, that undoubtedly is behind the reported efforts of the U.S. Ambassador in Iraq to encourage Shi'a and Kurdish political leaders in Iraq to reach out to Sunni Arab leaders and to encourage them to help the new Iraq succeed.

The essence of **Observation Number 5**—that we should *analyze costs and benefits of operations before each operation*—is captured in a question we developed over time and used to ask before the conduct of operations: "Will this operation," we asked, "take more bad guys off the street than it creates by the way it is conducted?" If the answer to that question was, "No," then we took a very hard look at the operation before proceeding.

In 1986, General John Galvin, then Commander in Chief of the U.S. Southern Command (which was supporting the counterinsurgency effort in El Salvador), described the challenge captured in this observation very effectively: "The . . . burden on the military institution is large. Not only must it subdue an armed adversary while attempting to provide security to the civilian population, it must also avoid furthering the insurgents' cause. If, for example, the military's actions in killing 50 guerrillas cause 200 previously uncommitted citizens to join the insurgent cause, the use of force will have been counterproductive."[7]

To be sure, there are occasions when one should be willing to take more risk relative to this question. One example was the 101st Airborne Division operation to capture or kill Uday and Qusay. In that case, we ended up firing well over a dozen antitank missiles into the house they were occupying (knowing that all the family members were safely out of it) after Uday and Qusay refused our call to surrender and wounded three of our soldiers during two attempts to capture them.[8]

In the main, however, we sought to carry out operations in a way that minimized the chances of creating more enemies than we captured or killed. The idea was to try to end each day with fewer enemies than we had when it started. Thus we preferred targeted operations rather than sweeps, and as soon as possible after completion of an operation, we explained to the citizens in the affected areas what we'd done and why we did it.

This should not be taken to indicate that we were the least bit reluctant about going after the Saddamists, terrorists, or insurgents; in fact, the opposite was the case. In one night in Mosul alone, for example, we hit 35 targets simultaneously, getting 23 of those we were after, with only one or two shots fired and most of the operations requiring only a knock on a door, vice blowing it down. Such operations obviously depended on a sophisticated intelligence structure, one largely based on human intelligence sources and very similar to the Joint Interagency Task Forces for Counter-Terrorism that were established in various locations after 9/11.

That, logically, leads to **Observation Number 6**, which holds that *intelligence is the key to success*. It is, after all, detailed, actionable intelligence that enables "cordon and knock" operations and precludes large sweeps that often prove counterproductive. Developing such intelligence, however, is not easy. Substantial assets at the local (i.e., division or brigade) level are required to develop human intelligence networks and gather sufficiently precise information to allow targeted operations. For us, precise information generally meant a 10-digit grid for the target's location, a photo of the entry point, a reasonable description of the target, and directions to the target's location, as well as other information on the neighborhood, the target site, and the target himself. Gathering this information is hard; considerable intelligence and operational assets are required, all of which must be pulled together to focus (and deconflict) the collection, analytical, and operational efforts. But it is precisely this type of approach that is essential to

preventing terrorists and insurgents from putting down roots in an area and starting the process of intimidation and disruption that can result in a catastrophic downward spiral.

Observation Number 7, which springs from the fact that civil affairs are not enough when undertaking huge reconstruction and nation-building efforts, is that *everyone must do nation-building*. This should not be taken to indicate that I have anything but the greatest of respect for our civil affairs personnel, because I hold them in very high regard. I have personally watched them work wonders in Central America, Haiti, the Balkans, and, of course, Iraq. Rather, my point is that when undertaking industrial-strength reconstruction on the scale of that in Iraq, civil affairs forces alone will not suffice; every unit must be involved.

Reopening the University of Mosul brought this home to those of us in the 101st Airborne Division in the spring of 2003. A symbol of considerable national pride, the university had graduated well over a hundred thousand students since its establishment in 1967. Shortly after the seating of the interim governor and province council in Nineveh Province in early May 2003, the council's members established completion of the school year at the university as among their top priorities. We thus took a quick trip through the university to assess the extent of the damage and to discuss reopening with the chancellor. We then huddled with our civil affairs battalion commander to chart a way ahead, but we quickly found that, although the talent inherent in the battalion's education team was impressive, its members were relatively junior in rank and its size (numbering less than an infantry squad) was simply not enough to help the Iraqis repair and reopen a heavily-looted institution of over 75 buildings, some 4,500 staff and faculty, and approximately 30-35,000 students. The mission, and the education team, therefore, went to one of the two aviation brigades of the 101st Airborne Division, a brigade that clearly did not have "Rebuild Foreign Academic Institutions" in its mission essential task list. What the brigade did have, however, was a senior commander and staff, as well as numerous subordinate units with commanders and staffs, who collectively added up to considerable organizational capacity and capability.

Seeing this approach work with Mosul University, we quickly adopted the same approach in virtually every area—assigning a unit or element the responsibility for assisting each of the Iraqi Ministries' activities in northern Iraq and also for linking with key Iraqi leaders. For example, our signal battalion incorporated the civil affairs battalion's communications team and worked with the Ministry of Telecommunications element in northern Iraq, helping reestablish the local telecommunications structure, including assisting with a deal that brought a satellite downlink to the central switch and linked Mosul with the international phone system, producing a profit for the province (subscribers bore all the costs). Our chaplain and his team linked with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the engineer battalion with the Ministry of Public Works, the division support command with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the corps support group with the Ministry of Education, the military police battalion with the Ministry of Interior (Police), our surgeon and his team with the Ministry of Health, our staff judge advocate with Ministry of Justice officials, our fire support element with the Ministry of Oil, and so on. In fact, we lined up a unit or staff section with every ministry element and with all the key leaders and officials in our AOR, and our subordinate units did the same in their areas of responsibility. By the time we were done, everyone and every element, not just civil affairs units, was engaged in nation-building.

Observation Number 8, recognition of the need to *help build institutions, not just units*, came from the Coalition mission of helping Iraq reestablish its security forces. We initially focused primarily on developing combat units—army and police battalions and brigade headquarters—as well as individual police. While those are what Iraq desperately needed to help in the achievement of security, for the long term there was also a critical need to help rebuild the institutions that support the units and police in the field—the ministries, the admin and logistical support units,

the professional military education systems, admin policies and procedures, and the training organizations. In fact, lack of ministry capability and capacity can undermine the development of the battalions, brigades, and divisions, if the ministries, for example, don't pay the soldiers or police on time, use political rather than professional criteria in picking leaders, or fail to pay contractors as required for services provided. This lesson underscored for us the importance of providing sufficient advisors and mentors to assist with the development of the security ministries and their elements, just as we provided advisor teams with each battalion and each brigade and division headquarters.[9]

Observation Number 9, *cultural awareness is a force multiplier*, reflects our recognition that knowledge of the cultural "terrain" can be as important as, and sometimes even more important than, knowledge of the geographic terrain. This observation acknowledges that the people are, in many respects, the decisive terrain, and that we must study that terrain in the same way that we have always studied the geographic terrain.

Working in another culture is enormously difficult if one doesn't understand the ethnic groups, tribes, religious elements, political parties, and other social groupings—and their respective viewpoints; the relationships among the various groups; governmental structures and processes; local and regional history; and, of course, local and national leaders. Understanding of such cultural aspects is essential if one is to help the people build stable political, social, and economic institutions. Indeed, this is as much a matter of common sense as operational necessity. Beyond the intellectual need for the specific knowledge about the environment in which one is working, it is also clear that people, in general, are more likely to cooperate if those who have power over them respect the culture that gives them a sense of identity and self-worth.

In truth, many of us did a lot of "discovery learning" about such features of Iraq in the early months of our time there. And those who learned the quickest—and who also mastered some "survival Arabic"—were, not surprisingly, the most effective in developing productive relationships with local leaders and citizens and achieved the most progress in helping establish security, local governance, economic activity, and basic services. The importance of cultural awareness has, in fact, been widely recognized in the U.S. Army and the other services, and it is critical that we continue the progress that has been made in this area in our exercises, military schools, doctrine, and so on.[10]

Observation Number 10 is a statement of the obvious, fully recognized by those operating in Iraq, but it is one worth recalling nonetheless. It is that *success in a counterinsurgency requires more than just military operations*. Counterinsurgency strategies must also include, above all, efforts to establish a political environment that helps reduce support for the insurgents and undermines the attraction of whatever ideology they may espouse.[11] In certain Sunni Arab regions of Iraq, establishing such a political environment is likely of greater importance than military operations, since the right political initiatives might undermine the sanctuary and assistance provided to the insurgents. Beyond the political arena, other important factors are economic recovery (which reduces unemployment, a serious challenge in Iraq that leads some out-of-work Iraqis to be guns for hire), education (which opens up employment possibilities and access to information from outside one's normal circles), diplomatic initiatives (in particular, working with neighboring states through which foreign fighters transit), improvement in the provision of basic services, and so on. In fact, the campaign plan developed in 2005 by the Multi National Force-Iraq and the U.S. embassy with Iraqi and Coalition leaders addresses each of these issues.

Observation Number 11—*ultimate success depends on local leaders*—is a natural reflection of Iraqi sovereignty and acknowledges that success in Iraq is, as time passes, increasingly dependent on Iraqi leaders-at four levels:

❖ Leaders at the national level working together, reaching across party and sectarian lines to keep the country unified, rejecting short-term expedi-

ent solutions such as the use of militias, and pursuing initiatives to give more of a stake in the success of the new Iraq to those who feel left out;

❖ Leaders in the ministries building the capability and capacity necessary to use the tremendous resources Iraq has efficiently, transparently, honestly, and effectively;

❖ Leaders at the province level resisting temptations to pursue winner-take-all politics and resisting the urge to politicize the local police and other security forces, and;

❖ Leaders in the security forces staying out of politics, providing courageous, competent leadership to their units, implementing policies that are fair to all members of their forces, and fostering loyalty to their army or police band of brothers rather than to specific tribes, ethnic groups, political parties, or local militias.

Iraqi leaders are, in short, the real key to the new Iraq, and we thus need to continue to do all that we can to enable them.

Observation Number 12 is the admonition to *remember the strategic corporals and strategic lieutenants,* the relatively junior commissioned or noncommissioned officers who often have to make huge decisions, sometimes with life-or-death as well as strategic consequences, in the blink of an eye.

Commanders have two major obligations to these junior leaders: first, to do everything possible to train them before deployment for the various situations they will face, particularly for the most challenging and ambiguous ones; and, second, once deployed, to try to shape situations to minimize the cases in which they have to make those hugely important decisions extremely quickly.

The best example of the latter is what we do to help ensure that, when establishing hasty checkpoints, our strategic corporals are provided sufficient training and adequate means to stop a vehicle speeding toward them without having to put a bullet through the windshield. This is, in truth, easier said than it is done in the often chaotic situations that arise during a fast-moving operation in such a challenging security environment. But there are some actions we can take to try to ensure that our young leaders have adequate time to make the toughest of calls—decisions that, if not right, again, can have strategic consequences.

My next-to-last observation, **Number 13**, is that *there is no substitute for flexible, adaptable leaders.* The key to many of our successes in Iraq, in fact, has been leaders—especially young leaders—who have risen to the occasion and taken on tasks for which they'd had little or no training,[12] and who have demonstrated enormous initiative, innovativeness, determination, and courage.[13] Such leaders have repeatedly been the essential ingredient in many of the achievements in Iraq. And fostering the development of others like them clearly is critical to the further development of our Army and our military.[14]

My final observation, **Number 14**, underscores that, especially in counterinsurgency operations, *a leader's most important task is to set the right tone*. This is, admittedly, another statement of the obvious, but one that nonetheless needs to be highlighted given its tremendous importance. Setting the right tone and communicating that tone to his subordinate leaders and troopers are absolutely critical for every leader at every level, especially in an endeavor like that in Iraq.

If, for example, a commander clearly emphasizes so-called kinetic operations over non-kinetic operations, his subordinates will do likewise. As a result, they may thus be less inclined to seize opportunities for the nation-building aspects of the campaign. In fact, even in the 101st Airborne Division, which prided itself on its attention to nation-building, there were a few mid-level commanders early on whose hearts really weren't into performing civil affairs tasks, assisting with reconstruction, developing relationships with local citizens, or helping establish local governance. To use the jargon of Iraq at that time, they didn't "get it." In such cases, the commanders above them quickly established that nation-building activities were not optional and

would be pursued with equal enthusiasm to raids and other offensive operations.

Setting the right tone ethically is another hugely important task. If leaders fail to get this right, winking at the mistreatment of detainees or at manhandling of citizens, for example, the result can be a sense in the unit that "anything goes." Nothing can be more destructive in an element than such a sense.

In truth, regardless of the leader's tone, most units in Iraq have had to deal with cases in which mistakes have been made in these areas, where young leaders in very frustrating situations, often after having suffered very tough casualties, took missteps. The key in these situations is for leaders to ensure that appropriate action is taken in the wake of such incidents, that standards are clearly articulated and reinforced, that remedial training is conducted, and that supervision is exercised to try to preclude recurrences.

It is hard to imagine a tougher environment than that in some of the areas in Iraq. Frustrations, anger, and resentment can run high in such situations. That recognition underscores, again, the importance of commanders at every level working hard to get the tone right and to communicate it throughout their units.

Implications

These are, again, 14 observations from soldiering in Iraq for most of the first two and a half years of our involvement there. Although I presented them as discrete lessons, many are inextricably related. These observations carry with them a number of implications for our effort in Iraq (and for our Army as well, as I have noted in some of the footnotes).[15]

It goes without saying that success in Iraq—which clearly is important not just for Iraq, but for the entire Middle East region and for our own country—will require continued military operations and support for the ongoing development of Iraqi security forces.

Success will also require continued assistance and resources for the development of the emerging political, economic, and social institutions in Iraq-efforts in which Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and General George Casey and their teams have been engaged with their Iraqi counterparts and have been working very hard.

Lastly, success will require time, determination, and resilience, keeping in mind that following the elections held in mid-December 2005, several months will likely be required for the new government—the fourth in an 18-month period—to be established and functional. The insurgents and extremists did all that they could to derail the preparations for the constitutional referendum in mid-October and the elections in mid-December. Although they were ineffective in each case, they undoubtedly will try to disrupt the establishment of the new government—and the upcoming provincial elections—as well. As Generals John Abizaid and George Casey made clear in their testimony on Capitol Hill in September 2005, however, there is a strategy—developed in close coordination with those in the U.S. embassy in Baghdad and with our interagency, Coalition, and Iraqi partners—that addresses the insurgency, Iraqi security forces, and the other relevant areas. And there has been substantial progress in a number of areas. Nonetheless, nothing is ever easy in Iraq and a great deal of hard work and many challenges clearly lie ahead.[16]

The first six months of 2006 thus will be of enormous importance, with the efforts of Iraqi leaders being especially significant during this period as a new government is seated and the new constitution enters into force. It will be essential that we do all that we can to support Iraq's leaders as they endeavor to make the most of the opportunity our soldiers have given them.

Conclusion

In a 1986 article titled "Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm," General John R. Galvin observed that "an officer's effectiveness and chance for success, now and in the future, depend not only on his character, knowledge, and skills, but also, and more than ever before, on his ability to understand the changing environment of conflict."[17] General Galvin's words

were relevant then, but they are even more applicable today. Conducting counterinsurgency operations in a vastly different culture is exceedingly complex.

Later, in the same article, noting that we in the military typically have our noses to the grindstone and that we often live a somewhat cloistered existence, General Galvin counseled: "Let us get our young leaders away from the grindstone now and then, and encourage them to reflect on developments outside the fortress-cloister. Only then will they develop into leaders capable of adapting to the changed environment of warfare and able to fashion a new paradigm that addresses all the dimensions of the conflicts that may lie ahead."[18]

Given the current situation, General Galvin's advice again appears very wise indeed. And it is my hope that, as we all take time to lift our noses from the grindstone and look beyond the confines of our current assignments, the observations provided here will help foster useful discussion on our ongoing endeavors and on how we should approach similar conflicts in the future-conflicts that are likely to be the norm, rather than the exception, in the 21st century.

Notes

Military Review, January-February 2006, 2-12. Reprinted by permission.

1. The Center for Army Lessons Learned website can be found at <http://call.Army.mil/>.

2. T. E. Lawrence. "Twenty-Seven Articles," *Arab Bulletin* (20 August 1917). Known popularly as "Lawrence of Arabia," T. E. Lawrence developed an incomparable degree of what we now call "cultural awareness" during his time working with Arab tribes and armies, and many of his 27 articles ring as true today as they did in his day. A website with the articles can be found at <www.pbs.org/lawrenceofarabia/revolt/warfare4.html>. A good overview of Lawrence's thinking, including his six fundamental principles of insurgency, can be found in "T. E. Lawrence and the Mind of an Insurgent," *Army* (July 2005): 31-37.

3. I should note that this has been much less the case in Afghanistan where, because the expectations of the people were so low and the abhorrence of the Taliban and further civil war was so great, the Afghan people remain grateful to Coalition forces and other organizations for all that is done for them. Needless to say, the relative permissiveness of the security situation in Afghanistan has also helped a great deal and made it possible for nongovernmental organizations to operate on a much wider and freer basis than is possible in Iraq. In short, the different context in Afghanistan has meant that the half-life of the Army of liberation there has been considerably longer than that in Iraq.

4. In fact, we often contended with what came to be known as the "Man on the Moon Challenge"—i.e., the expectation of ordinary Iraqis that soldiers from a country that could put a man on the moon and overthrow Saddam in a matter of weeks should also be able, with considerable ease, to provide each Iraqi a job, 24-hour electrical service, and so on.

5. The military units on the ground in Iraq have generally had considerable capability to carry out reconstruction and nation-building tasks. During its time in northern Iraq, for example, the 101st Airborne Division had four engineer battalions (including, for a period, even a well-drilling detachment), an engineer group headquarters (which is designed to carry out assessment, design, contracting, and quality assurance tasks), two civil affairs battalions, nine infantry battalions, four artillery battalions (most of which were "out of battery" and performed reconstruction tasks), a sizable logistical support command (generally about 6 battalions, including transportation, fuel storage, supply, maintenance, food service, movement control, warehousing, and even water purification units), a military police battalion (with attached police and corrections training detachments), a signal battalion, an air defense battalion (which helped train Iraqi forces), a field hospital, a number of contracting officers and officers authorized to carry large sums of money, an air traffic control element, some nine aviation battalions (with approximately 250 helicopters), a number of chaplain teams, and more than 25 military lawyers (who can be of enormous assistance in resolving a host of problems when conducting nation-building). Except in the area of aviation assets, the 4th Infantry Division and the 1st Armored Division, the two other major Army units in Iraq in the summer of 2003, had even more assets than the 101st.

6. The FY 2005 Defense Budget and Supplemental Funding Measures approved by Congress provided some $5.2 billion for the Iraqi security force's train, equip, advise, and rebuild effort. Just as significant, it was appropriated in just three categories—Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, and Quick Reaction Funds—thereby minimizing substantially the need for reprogramming actions.

7. General John R. Galvin, "Uncomfortable Wars: Toward a New Paradigm," *Parameters,* 16, no. 4 (Winter 1986): 6.

8. As soon as the "kinetic" part of that operation was complete, we moved into the neighborhood with engineers, civil affairs teams, lawyers, officers with money, and security elements. We subsequently repaired any damage that might conceivably have been caused by the operation, and completely removed all traces of the house in which Uday and Qusay were located, as the missiles had rendered it structurally unsound and we didn't want any reminders left of the two brothers.

9. Over time, and as the effort to train and equip Iraqi combat units gathered momentum, the Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq placed greater and greater emphasis on helping with the development of the Ministries of Defense and Interior, especially after the mission to advise the ministries' leaders was shifted to the command from the embassy's Iraq Reconstruction Management Office in the fall of 2005. It is now one of the command's top priorities.

10. The Army, for example, has incorporated scenarios that place a premium on cultural awareness into its major exercises at the National Training Center and Joint Readiness Training Center. It has stressed the importance of cultural awareness throughout the process of preparing units for deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan and in a comprehensive approach adopted by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. As part of this effort, language tools have been developed: e.g., the Rosetta Stone program available through Army Knowledge Online, and language training will be required; e.g., of Command and General Staff College students during their 2d and 3d semesters. Doctrinal manuals are being modified to recognize the importance of cultural awareness, and instruction in various commissioned and noncommissioned officer courses has been added as well. The Center for Army Lessons Learned has published a number of documents to assist as well. The U.S. Marine Corps has pursued similar initiatives and is, in fact, partnering with the Army in the development of a new Counterinsurgency Field Manual.

11. David Galula's classic work, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (St. Petersburg, FL: Mailer Publishing, 2005) is particularly instructive on this point. See, for example, his discussion on pages 88-89.

12. As I noted in a previous footnote, preparation of leaders and units for deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan now typically includes extensive preparation for the kind of "non-kinetic" operations our leaders are called on to perform, with the preparation period culminating in a brigade combat team mission rehearsal exercise at either the National Training Center or the Joint Readiness Training Center. At each Center, units conduct missions similar to those they'll perform when deployed and do so in an environment that includes villages, Iraqi-American role players, "suicide bombers," "insurgents," the need to work with local leaders and local security forces, etc. At the next higher level, the preparation of division and corps headquarters culminates in the conduct of a mission rehearsal exercise conducted jointly by the Battle Command Training Program and Joint Warfighting Center. This exercise also strives to replicate-in a command post exercise format driven by a computer simulation-the missions, challenges, and context the unit will find once deployed.

13. A great piece that highlights the work being done by young leaders in Iraq is Robert Kaplan's "The Future of America-in Iraq," *latimes.com*, 24 December 2005. Another is the video presentation used by Army Chief of Staff General Peter J. Schoomaker, "Pentathlete Leader: 1LT Ted Wiley," which recounts Lieutenant Wiley's fascinating experiences in the first Stryker unit to operate in Iraq as they fought and conducted nation-building operations throughout much of the country, often transitioning from one to the other very rapidly, changing missions and reorganizing while on the move, and covering considerable distances in short periods of time.

14. In fact, the U.S. Army is currently in the final stages of an important study of the education and training of leaders, one objective of which is to identify additional programs and initiatives that can help produce the kind of flexible, adaptable leaders who have done

well in Iraq and Afghanistan. Among the issues being examined is how to provide experiences for our leaders that take them out of their "comfort zone." For many of us, attending a civilian graduate school provided such an experience, and the Army's recent decision to expand graduate school opportunities for officers is thus a great initiative. For a provocative assessment of the challenges the U.S. Army faces, see the article by U.K. Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster. "Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review* (November-December 2005): 2-15.

15. The Department of Defense (DOD) formally recognized the implications of current operations as well, issuing DOD Directive 3000.05 on 28 November 2005, "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations," which establishes DOD policy and assigns responsibilities within DOD for planning, training, and preparing to conduct and support stability operations. This is a significant action that is already spurring action in a host of different areas. A copy can be found at <www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/html/300005.htm>.

16. A brief assessment of the current situation and the strategy for the way ahead is in Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad's "The Challenge Before Us," *Wall Street Journal*, 9 January 2006, 12.

17. Galvin, 7. One of the Army's true soldier-statesman-scholars, General Galvin was serving as the Commander in Chief of U.S. Southern Command at the time he wrote this article. In that position, he oversaw the conduct of a number of operations in El Salvador and elsewhere in Central and South America, and it was in that context that he wrote this enduring piece. He subsequently served as the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and following retirement, was the dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts.

18. Ibid.

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Making Revolutionary Change: Airpower in COIN Today

by Major General Charles J. Dunlap Jr., USAF
Parameters, Summer 2008

> Much of the reporting on the Iraqi and Afghan wars focuses on the ground dimension . . . . The fact remains, however, that Iraq and Afghanistan are air wars as well, and wars where airpower has also played a critical role in combat.
>
> *Anthony H. Cordesman*[1]

What a difference a year makes. The idea that airpower would be playing a critical role in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars would hardly have been predicted in December 2006, when the Army and Marine Corps issued a completely revised—but airpower "lite"—counterinsurgency (COIN) manual commonly known as Field Manual (FM) 3-24.[2] Complimentary reviews appeared in unlikely venues such as the *New York Times Book Review*.[3] What seems to have captured the imagination of many who might otherwise be hostile to any military doctrine were the manual's much-discussed "Zen-like" characteristics, particularly its popular "Paradoxes" section.[4] This part of the manual contained such trendy (if ultimately opaque) dictums as "sometimes, the more force is used, the less effective it is" and "some of the best weapons for counterinsurgents do not shoot."[5]

These maxims helped create the perception that the new doctrine was a "kinder and gentler" form of COIN that largely eschewed the concept of "killing or capturing" enemy fighters as a means of suppressing an insurgency.[6] Supporting this interpretation is the fact that FM 3-24 favors deploying enormous numbers of forces—20 per 1,000 residents[7]—each of whom, according to the manual, "must be prepared to become . . . a social worker, a civil engineer, a school teacher, a nurse, a boy scout."[8] Further, as popularly understood, the aim of this revamped force was not to confront the insurgents themselves, but rather to win "hearts and minds" of the indigenous population.[9] To do so, the manual prefers a low-tech approach compatible with traditional Army culture that has individual soldiers engaging in close, personal contact with the "target." In FM 3-24's interpretation of COIN, that target is a country's populace.

All of this discussion left little theoretical room for the role of airpower. FM 3-24's examination of airpower is confined to a brief, five-page annex that essentially conceives airpower as aerial artillery. Accordingly, airpower is discouraged not just because the use of force is generally disdained by the popular interpretation of the manual's theory, but also because of the mistaken idea that air-delivered munitions are somehow more inaccurate than other kinds of fires.[10] In perhaps no other area has the manual been proven more wrong by the events of 2007. As this article will outline, the profound changes in airpower's capabilities have so increased its utility that it is now often the weapon of first recourse in COIN operations, even in urban environments. As to weapons' accuracy, by early 2008 Human Rights Watch senior military analyst Marc Garlasco made the remarkable concession that today "air strikes probably are the most discriminating weapon that exists."[11]

It is important to underline that the manual's flawed conclusions about airpower are not the result of nefariousness or service parochialism. Rather, FM 3-24 draws many of its lessons from counterinsurgency operations dating from the 1950s through the 1970s. While this approach is remarkably effective in many respects, it inherently undervalues airpower. The revolutions in airpower capabilities that would prove so effective during 2007 were unavailable to counterinsurgents in earlier eras. The writers of FM 3-24 were stuck with antiquated ideas about what airpower might contribute to a joint COIN effort.

In any event, many welcomed the "kinder and gentler" approach to COIN as being a near-total reversal of the less-than-successful strategy then in effect in Iraq. In early 2007 one of FM 3-24's principal architects, General David H. Petraeus, arrived in Iraq as the senior US commander, and the manual quickly became known as "The Book" on efforts there.[12] Shortly thereafter, some 30,000 additional forces, mostly Army units, "surged" into Iraq. By the end of 2007 the level of violence was significantly reduced.

Was airpower omitted from the operations that produced 2007's successes? Hardly. Of enormous significance is the fact that air strikes in Iraq increased fivefold between 2006 and 2007.[13] In addition, virtually every other aspect of airpower was exploited during the surge with great effect.[14] In short, contrary to the assumptions bred by FM 3-24, ground-force commanders rather unexpectedly embraced airpower's potential and created the modern era's most dramatic revolution in COIN warfare.

This article examines why airpower became critical to COIN operations in 2007, a trend continuing today and one with huge implications for the future. Among other things, it will discuss the revolutions in precision and persistence that have so radically enhanced airpower's value in COIN warfare. It will also outline the strengths and weaknesses of the Air Force's new doctrine on irregular warfare which seeks to capture the service's COIN approach. The author argues that while FM 3-24's surface-force-centric approach to COIN can work, recent experience in Iraq demonstrates that leaders of all services want a more joint and interdependent concept that exploits airpower in all its dimensions. Such an approach can reduce the need for the enormous numbers of U.S. ground forces FM 3-24 entails, freeing them to prepare for other kinds of conflicts. Airpower can help, this article contends, to provide options for decision makers faced with a COIN challenge that capitalize on systems which are also useful in other kinds of conflicts.

FM 3-24 Can Work

It cannot be emphasized enough that there has never been a question as to whether FM 3-24's ground-centric approach could work. It can; its force ratios alone would overwhelm any insurgency, even without implementing any of the manual's "Zen-like" features. The American soldier is, without doubt, the finest infantryman in the world, perhaps in the history of warfare. U.S. ground forces, if deployed in the numbers FM 3-24 dictates, simply cannot be defeated by any insurgency.

The real question, especially when looking to the future, is whether FM 3-24's approach is a practical, sustainable, and optimal strategy for the 21st century. Maintaining large numbers of forces in Iraq has strained the entire U.S. military, especially the ground components. What is worrisome about a strategy so dependent upon "boots-on-the-ground" is that there are nearly 40 countries more populous than Iraq, some of which are failing or already failed states. FM 3-24's force ratios would be unattainable if the United States intervened in many of these nations.

The manual's solution is not just manpower-intensive; it requires a particular kind of manpower that is difficult to recruit, train, and maintain. As already noted, FM 3-24 calls for counterinsurgents who are experts at "soft power" activities. Although the Army recently met its recruiting goals, it has done so by inducting thousands of troops without high school degrees and thousands more requiring "moral waivers" due to otherwise disqualifying factors. While such recruits may make competent general-purpose forces, they are not the prized counterinsurgency professionals described in FM 3-24.

In framing strategy for the future, it is important to evaluate to what extent experience in Iraq has matched the perception of the doctrine. Has the situation improved because soft power techniques won hearts and minds? Or did the exercise of hard power predominate? While thousands of ground troops did surge into Iraq, relatively few were the highly trained counterinsurgents FM 3-24 desires. All the same, important aspects of the manual were implemented with great success. Troops were deployed from their sprawling compounds into scores of small outposts. Sadly, as many predicted, this contributed to 2007 being

the deadliest year of the war for U.S. forces.

Still, the physical presence of the additional forces had the sanguinary effect of stifling insurgent activity in Iraq's most prominent media center, Baghdad, and apparently creating a sense of security and progress beyond the city's limits. Additionally, FM 3-24's tenet of encouraging the reestablishment of the rule of law was markedly advanced by the creation of a secure "Green Zone" for law enforcement and judicial facilities, along with housing for Iraqi personnel and their families.[15]

As important as these developments were (and are) to the COIN effort, there is strong evidence that 2007's successes were attributable to other than the "kinder, gentler" aspects of the manual. Were hearts and minds won? Polls indicate that while Iraqi perceptions of Americans improved somewhat, the overwhelming numbers suggest that the vast majority of the population remains unchanged in their dislike of American forces. For example, 63 percent of Iraqis thought the surge had either made things worse or had no effect, and only four percent gave U.S. forces credit for improved security.[16] Additionally, 79 percent of Iraqis had little or no confidence in American troops, and—amazingly—42 percent still think attacks on American forces are "acceptable."[17]

Yet security did improve. Giving some credence to the soft power techniques that popularized FM 3-24 does not change the fact that there was an extraordinary amount of "killing and capturing" during 2007. Although figures of enemy casualties are hard to verify, in September 2007 military officials told *USA Today* that the number of insurgents killed was already 25 percent ahead of 2006.[18] By the end of the year, some unconfirmed reports indicated the total number killed may have more than doubled compared with the previous year.[19] As regrettable as it may be, killing does seem to suppress violence in locations where "hearts and minds" remain mostly "lost."

Capturing helps too. In Iraq, the number of suspected insurgents captured and detained skyrocketed from 15,000 at the end of 2006 to more than 25,000 during 2007.[20] What makes this number so important is that as late as the fall of 2006, the total number of insurgents then at large was estimated by the Brookings Institution as totaling 20,000 to 30,000.[21] In other words, notwithstanding the chic interpretations of effective COIN doctrine, capturing and imprisoning tens of thousands of Iraqi males seems to have had a profoundly positive effect on reducing violence.

Of course "killing and capturing" were not the only reasons for the decline in violence. Accommodations were made with Sunni and Shia leaders that produced separate sectarian fiefdoms. There is the much-reported "Awakening" in Anbar Province that armed and employed many former insurgents to protect their religiously homogenized territories. Similar offers were extended to other groups with some success. In a real sense, however, violence may have subsided in many of the "protected" areas because the purging of the other sects was already complete. It remains to be seen the degree to which peace came at the price of pluralism, tolerance, and genuine democracy.[22]

Obviously, there are several factors that produced the relative peace Iraq enjoyed by the end of 2007. Nevertheless it is undeniable that, as the Congressional Research Service observed in February 2008, "one of the major shifts [in strategy] has been in the kinetic use of air power."[23]

The Precision and Persistence Revolutions

Why did airpower's COIN utility become so prominent in 2007? The short answer might be captured in developments in two areas that are nothing short of revolutionary: precision and persistence. Together, these elements do not just physically degrade an insurgency's ability to wreak violence; they also can create psychological effects upon insurgents that COIN practitioners are only beginning to understand.

Historian Paul Gillespie labeled precision-guided munitions the "ultimate weapon" in conventional fights, largely because of their vastly increased ability to avoid collateral damage.[24] In fact, he cites a study that concluded only "twenty of twenty-three thousand munitions dropped by

NATO in the 1999 Kosovo campaign caused collateral damage or civilian casualties."[25] Though Gillespie recognizes that even the most precise weaponry has limits with respect to the strategic and political results it can achieve, he nevertheless insists that precision-guided munitions "have changed the modern battlefield, and in the process created a new American way of war."[26]

Changes in munitions themselves complement their newfound accuracy. Some of these have been customized for COIN operations to explicitly mitigate collateral damage,[27] and the results have proven effective. As Lieutenant General Gary L. North explained regarding the small diameter bomb (SDB):[28]

> The SDB is uniquely qualified for urban targets that call for precision accuracy and reduced collateral damage and in close-air-support missions that our aircrews find themselves in during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. We now have the ability to put ordnance in places where collateral damage might be a concern.[29]

The concept of precision is more than the ability of the weapon to hit the right place; it is as much about knowing the right place to strike. That revolution involves advanced concepts of command and control that ever-improving intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities facilitate. With regard to the latter, much of the improvement is not so much in the sensors themselves, but in the length of time the sensors are able to sense.

What has been "game-changing" in this regard is the increased availability of various long-loiter, armed unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) platforms. In the fall of 2007, retired Army General Barry McCaffrey used terms very similar to Gillespie's to describe the astonishing advances in airborne ISR capabilities that are revising the way war is conducted. In essence, General McCaffrey was describing the persistence revolution in ISR when he said:

> We have already made a 100-year war-fighting leap-ahead with MQ-1 Predator, MQ-9 Reaper, and Global Hawk.[30] Now we have loiter times in excess of 24 hours, persistent eyes on target, micro-kill with Hell–fire and 500-pound JDAM [Joint Direct Attack Munition] bombs, synthetic aperture radar, and a host of ISR sensors and communications potential that have fundamentally changed the nature of warfare.[31]

Likewise, in March 2008 defense analyst Loren Thompson told *USA Today* that current UAV assets "present a whole new dimension to detecting and destroying of terrorists' cells."[32] These technological innovations have transformed COIN's all-important intelligence-gathering function. As Thompson said, a UAV is "almost like having your own little satellite over a terrorist cell."[33] Ground commanders realize the value of airborne ISR, and this explains recent reports that cite such assets as General Petraeus's "top hardware priority in Iraq."[34]

ISR developments have major implications for the way airpower is used in COIN. Conventional COIN theory as reflected in FM 3-24 places great emphasis on intelligence obtained from the indigenous population. While such intelligence can be quite valuable, it has to be viewed through a cultural lens and is vulnerable to a multitude of subjective machinations of those furnishing the information.

Visual observations have a grammar all their own. A May 2008 *U.S. News and World Report* article explained how sophisticated aerial surveillance had become by noting that Air Force ISR capabilities often can provide a superior perspective than even the "boots on the ground."[35] The article noted that at the forward deployed Air Operations Center UAVs are used to:

> [E]stablish a "pattern of life" around potential targets—recording such things as the comings and goings of friends, school hours, and market times. Despite the distance, the real-time video feeds often give them a better vantage point than an Army unit has just down the street from a group of insurgents.[36]

Similarly, journalist Mark Benjamin provides an exceptionally incisive illustration of how the persistence revolution complements the new precision capabilities by observing that ISR assets can now effectively track individual people for extended periods.[37] Benjamin reports:

> The Air Force recently watched one man in Iraq for more than five weeks, carefully recording his habits—where he lives, works, and worships, and whom he meets . . . The military may decide to have such a man arrested, or to do nothing at all. Or, at any moment they could decide to blow him to smithereens.[38]

The last statement may be more insightful than perhaps even Benjamin realized. The precision and persistence of today's airpower creates opportunities to dislocate the psychology of the insurgents. Insurgents' sheer inability to anticipate how high-technology airpower might put them at risk can inflict stress, thereby greatly diminishing their effectiveness. For example, *The Los Angeles Times* reported in April 2008 that in Afghanistan NATO "forces recently have had unusual success in tracking and targeting mid-level Taliban field commanders, killing scores of them in pinpoint air strikes." Because the Taliban believed that cell phone signals were being used to target them, they began blowing up telecommunications towers. The result, *The Times* reported, "could hardly have been a worse public-relations move for the insurgency" because ordinary Afghans were enraged; many had become dependent upon cell phones, and the system was a source of national pride.[39]

Another data point comes from the 2008 operations in Basra. When the Iraqi Army's effort ran into difficulties, U.S. airpower proved instrumental in stabilizing the situation.[40] Again, evidence is emerging to suggest airpower is having the proper psychological effects. Specifically, according to CNN, Shi'a cleric Muqtada al-Sadr ordered his militias to stand-down in a "nine-point statement [that] followed U.S. air strikes" in Baghdad areas considered strongholds of his Mehdi Army.[41]

Airpower can unnerve even the fiercest fighters. Though they may be willing to die heroically in battle against U.S. forces, that is not the death contemporary airpower permits. As one Afghan told the *New York Times*, "We pray to Allah that we have American soldiers to kill" but added pessimistically that "these bombs from the sky we cannot fight."[42]

The helplessness that airpower inflicts on insurgents' thinking can produce real effects. In Colombia, for example, the rebel group known as the Revolutionary Armed Force of Colombia (FARC in its Spanish acronym) is facing accelerating desertions, raising the possibility that the entire insurgency may unravel. Why? According to interviews with former rebels, "the sheer terror of being bombed by Colombian fighter planes" was a crucial factor in their decision to desert.[43] In short, the psychological effects of persistent ISR and precision airpower are revising the oft-misunderstood notion of airpower's strategic impact. Where historically there was much discussion about the effect, or lack thereof, of airpower on the civilian populations of hostile nations, now the issue is much different: It focuses on the psychological impact on the insurgents themselves, not the civilian population. As one report put it:

> Iraqi insurgents have learned to fear the drones. "They hear some sort of air noise and they don't know exactly what it is, but they know it's associated with 'my buddy getting killed,'" says [a U.S. soldier]. "Anything that makes them uneasy makes me happy."[44]

As that anecdote reveals, airpower can now inflict on insurgents the same kind of disconcerting sense of vulnerability that the enemy sought to impose upon U.S. troops via improvised explosive devices, the most deadly weapon COIN forces face.[45] Today, the situation is much-reversed as a result of American air assets: U.S. "soldiers do not have to feel like they are sitting ducks for every ambusher or bomb maker. As they peer up at that . . . bird . . . it's the insurgents who have to worry."[46]

As important as imposing this kind of "friction" on the minds of enemy combatants may be, it is also still possible in certain circumstances to use airpower kinetically to influence the civilian population, albeit not in the traditional way. Doing so can help win hearts and minds. For example, consider the effect when B-1 bombers destroyed an al-Qaeda torture compound in early March 2008. After the facility was flattened, a former Iraqi victim declared, "I'm a lot happier now. . . . It was like my mother gave birth to me again." Furthermore reports say that "[a]s Coalition forces left the area, villagers stood on the side of the road cheering and clapping to be rid of this remnant of al-Qaida."[47]

Air Force Doctrine; Needs a "Vector Check"?

Ironically, the Air Force's own recently published doctrine is not especially reflective of the precision and persistence revolution as implemented in the field beginning in 2007. The drafting of that doctrine began only when it became clear that FM 3-24, with its "airpower-lite" views, would function not just as service doctrine for the Army and Marine Corps, but also as the design for the entire operation in Iraq. By early spring 2007, the Air Force's historical complacence regarding COIN abruptly ended as it convened a COIN conference that "jump started" its own doctrine-development project.[48]

That effort produced Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 2-3, *Irregular Warfare*, which was fielded the following August.[49] AFDD 2-3, which aims to cover counterterrorism and other operations in addition to COIN, does represent a marked advance in Air Force thinking. It references Air Force key capabilities in the areas of ISR, mobility, agile combat support, precision engagement, and command and control. Importantly, it makes the vital point that the introduction of a large U.S. ground force on foreign soil "may exacerbate the local situation while providing adversaries a new target set for attacks and propaganda." Airpower, on the other hand, "can deliver a variety of effects from great distance without increasing force presence in a region or country."[50]

Still, there are issues. The Air Force doctrine mimics FM 3-24's tendency to overemphasize what "hearts and mind-winning" efforts by occupying troops can accomplish in situations where xenophobia imbues the populace, and the insurgency's core is comprised of ideologically immovable extremists. Thus, it undervalues the function of force in suppressing intractable insurgents. Perhaps most surprising is its seeming replication of FM 3-24's relegation of airpower to an "enabling" role as opposed to that of an independent maneuver force.[51]

Much like FM 3-24, AFDD 2-3 declares several times that irregular warfare (IW) "is not a lesser-included form of traditional warfare" as if it were relevant to an Air Force approach to COIN.[52] Actually, the record of 2007 forcefully demonstrates that airpower's instrumentalities of traditional war include—lesser or otherwise—tremendous capabilities across the full spectrum of conflict. This utility extends, for example, beyond the kinetic uses previously addressed. To illustrate: by taking 5,000 trucks off dangerous Iraqi roads in a single month, C-17 transports—the same aircraft that would be employed in high-end war—became, in effect, perfect counter-IED weaponry.[53] This concept is vitally important because airpower's inherent flexibility differentiates it from ground power's assertion (as reflected in FM 3-24) that its conventional capability cannot easily transition from the traditional fight to a COIN role.[54] The failure of AFDD 2-3 to emphasize this agility as a central and unique strength of airpower detracts from the overall doctrine. Additionally, the doctrine does not examine at all how airpower may be used (as it was in 2007) to inflict a psychological toll on insurgents.

Most troubling, a central pillar of the doctrine is "building partnership capacity," or BPC. While BPC may have strategic, "big picture" value apart from IW, it has little practical utility in most COIN environments. It is very often too expensive and too time consuming. Iraq is a perfect example: It will take nearly three years before the Iraqis are able to conduct their first airborne kinetic strike, and that will likely be a small-scale, relatively low-tech operation involving a few Russian helicopters[55]

While this minimal capability may have some morale value for the Iraqis, its true military value in COIN is marginal. It should not be overlooked that the emergence of U.S. airpower as a premier COIN weapon in 2007 depended greatly upon what has been described as a "battery of technology" involving "drone aircraft, three-dimensional satellite images, and increasingly small precision weapons guided by lasers or Global Positioning Systems."[56] For a host of reasons, few "partner" nations will have access to such high-tech capabilities, and it is simply too difficult to build these technologies on a timeline that will make a difference in most COIN scenarios.

Similarly, some advocates are urging the Air Force's acquisition of low-tech, fixed-wing aircraft, specifically for a COIN role. While there may be instances where such aircraft could prove effective, overall it is not a solution the U.S. military ought to embrace without having a rationale beyond COIN. Slow-moving, low-altitude, fixed-wing aircraft are simply too vulnerable, even to older antiaircraft systems. In a real way, implementing this suggestion would build an air force with significant manpower and infrastructure requirements yet with all the low-tech deficiencies that consigned airpower to a peripheral role in FM 3-24. It is simply not the kind of "airpower" that proved successful in 2007.

This is another example of how AFDD 2-3 embraces a concept appropriate for ground forces but not for air forces. While a few months of training can turn a poorly educated but culturally imbued host-nation soldier into an effective counterinsurgent, such is not the case with airpower. It takes years of education and training to produce an airman, time and resources many nations do not have. Finally, why should the Air Force acquire a capability useful in only one kind of conflict, especially when doing so will burden the service with yet another platform having unique operational and sustainment requirements?

If a modest, demonstrably cost-efficient aerial kinetic capability is desired for indigenous forces, the BPC ought to focus on acquiring rotary assets already part of the Army's aviation arm. Indeed, if all that is desired is a standoff, precision-strike system, the Army's satellite-guided Excalibur artillery round would seem to be a better, quicker fit for local forces.[57] These assets have utility across the full spectrum of conflict, not simply COIN, a tenet that should drive the bulk of the US military's future equipment purchases.

The Way Ahead

The experience of 2007 (and extending into 2008) indicates that neither FM 3-24 nor AFDD 2-3 have the doctrine quite right.[58] While each manual arguably advances a valued perspective, neither really captures the principles that should guide an American COIN doctrine designed to optimize a truly interdependent joint team. Several factors call for a reevaluation.

First, the efficacy of "killing and capturing" insurgents needs to be fully acknowledged. In fairness, the perceptions of FM 3-24 in this regard seem to frustrate its authors. Lieutenant Colonel John Nagl, one of the manual's primary drafters, insists the manual is more about ensuring the right people were killed and captured as opposed to suggesting that killing or capturing could be avoided altogether by some collection of nonviolent means. Likewise, General Petraeus bristles at the suggestion the manual "shy[s] away from the need to kill the enemy" arguing that "[t]he words 'kill' and 'capture' are on every page."[59]

We need to understand that the complex nature of today's insurgent threat differs from that of the 20th century. According to former Army officer John R. Sutherland, the 21st century has given rise to what he calls the "iGuerrilla" which he describes as "the New Model Techno-Insurgent" who exploits technology in a wide variety of ways.[60] What is key, Sutherland contends, is that the iGuerrilla "cannot be swayed by logic or argument" and is markedly different from those insurgents of the 20th century who, he contends, are relegated to the "dustbin of history."[61]

"Hearts and minds" campaigns, however successful they may be among the bulk of the population, cannot by themselves end the pattern of near-anarchic violence the hardcore iGuerrillas use to block COIN success. Counterinsurgents can, however, defeat the "New Model Techno-

Insurgent" at his own techno-game if they accept the fact that technology is a centerpiece of their culture; it is, in fact, our "asymmetric" advantage. Recently, strategic theorist Colin Gray noted:

> [H]igh technology is the American way in warfare. It has to be. A high-technology society cannot possibly prepare for, or attempt to fight, its wars in any other than a technology-led manner.[62]

The United States has to develop technology capable of substituting for "boots-on-the-ground" in order to provide future decision makers with broader options. Pragmatism drives this approach, not any deficiency in the valor or dedication of U.S. ground forces. Apart from the difficulty—and risks—of acquiring and maintaining a COIN-focused Army, there is the mind-numbing price of a manpower-intensive COIN strategy.[63] Currently, it costs more than $390,000 to deploy each U.S. soldier to Iraq,[64] an expense complicated by the political reality that COIN seldom engages, as Jeffrey Record observes, "core U.S. security interests,"[65] at least in the public's perceptions. This fact is likely one of the main reasons why, despite the real success of the past year, a poll found that 62 percent of Americans think the United States should have stayed out of Iraq,[66] and another survey shows that 56 percent want the troops brought home.[67]

Beyond the potential reluctance of the U.S. electorate, another difficulty in using significant numbers of U.S. ground forces as counterinsurgents is the fact that although America's image is improving around the globe, it is still extremely negative.[68] That no country on the entire continent of Africa would host the U.S. Africa Command headquarters is but one indicator that for the foreseeable future a large "footprint" of American ground combat forces in any overseas operation should expect to be unwelcome by the indigenous population.[69]

Thus, the notion that American COIN or nation-building efforts can best be executed by infusing the host state with large numbers of U.S. troops is fundamentally flawed. In fact, the deeply entrenched view of U.S. troops as an occupation force is now the main rallying point for anti-American feelings among many Iraqis.[70] More broadly, in a new book Middle Eastern expert William R. Polk argues that the "fundamental motivation" of insurgents during the past three centuries is traceable to an "aim primarily to protect the integrity of the native group from foreigners."[71]

Considering all the brutal realities of 21st century insurgencies it is imperative, as strategist Phillip Meilinger observes, to completely recast America's approach to COIN in an effort to achieve "politically desirable results with the least cost in blood and treasure."[72] Doing so, Meilinger contends, requires the adaptation of a new paradigm that leverages airpower's precision strike and persistent ISR capabilities with U.S. Special Forces and indigenous troops on the ground—much the formula employed with great success in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and northern Iraq in the early 1990s. Overarching this effort would be a re-conceptualization of the entire fight against extremism, one that makes psychological operations the main "weapon" and posits an intelligence entity as the supported command.[73]

To be sure, a COIN doctrine compatible with America's posture in the world, as well as its high-tech strengths, does not necessarily eliminate the need for "boots-on-the-ground." It does, however, emphasize that indigenous forces should comprise the bulk of the counterinsurgent force ratios outlined in FM 3-24. They can be supported by U.S. Special Forces, along with specially trained Army advisers, but the "face" of the COIN effort interfacing with the local population should be native, not American.[74] This blend of local ground forces reinforced with U.S. advisers and sophisticated American technology can work; recent reports, for example, "showed the Iraqi Army to be considerably resilient when backed by Coalition airpower."[75] Necessary for success, however, is not just any kind of airpower, but rather the high-tech precision and persistence enabled airpower that has proven so effective since 2007.

Of course, the solution to any COIN situation will never be exclusively military. Yet at the same

time it is a mistake to underestimate what military means can accomplish. In that respect, exploitation of the air weapon can contribute as never before. The experience of 2007 clearly demonstrates that its newfound precision and persistence have revolutionized COIN warfare. U.S. doctrine must evolve to fully capitalize airpower's newly enhanced prowess.

Notes

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Part III: U.S. Marines, Counterinsurgency, and Urban Warfare in Iraq

For the U.S. Marine Corps, the war in Iraq was primarily an urban conflict. The largest battles, such as First and Second Fallujah, an-Najaf, and Ramadi, were characterized by fierce street fighting between Marines and insurgent fighters. Insurgents fully exploited the urban environment to their advantage. In all of these battles, Marines implemented many important elements of counterinsurgency operations, drawing from its legacy fighting in small wars and from new ideas developed during the Iraq conflict. Both the summaries of action produced by the I Marine Expeditionary Force and II Marine Expeditionary Force attest to this fact and provide readers with a detailed overview of the major military and civil operations conducted by the Marines in Iraq from 2004 through 2006.

The other selections in this section provide readers with a more in-depth view of counterinsurgency operations in Iraq during this period. Several focus on the battles of Fallujah. The two battles for the city of Fallujah (fought in April and November 2004, respectively) constituted the fiercest fighting the Corps had faced since the Vietnam War. As Jonathan F. Keiler's article, "Who Won the Battle of Fallujah?" reminds readers, the battles also demonstrated the complex challenges of battling an insurgency. Militarily, the Marine Corps did not lose either battle. Yet the first battle of Fallujah, launched to clear the city of insurgents in April 2004, was a major setback for the Coalition's operations in Iraq. Major Alfred B. Connable's "The Massacre That Wasn't" examines the reasons the insurgents were able to retain the initiative during the battle. The second battle of Fallujah, in contrast, was a decisive victory that effectively cleared the city of insurgents. In their piece, "Operation Al Fajr: The Battle of Fallujah—Part II," Lieutenant General John F. Sattler and Lieutenant Colonel Daniel H. Wilson present a commander's perspective on the battle to retake the city in November 2004.

The final two selections present further perspective on the tactics and challenges of urban combat. Colonel Eric T. Litaker's "Efforts to Counter the IED Threat" examines efforts to defeat the insurgents' most ubiquitous weapon, the improvised explosive device. Finally, William Langewiesche's article "Rules of Engagement" examines the Haditha incident, considering how the stresses of battling an insurgency led to the deaths of 24 civilians under questionable circumstances in the Iraqi town in November 2005.

The Massacre That Wasn't

by Major Alfred B."Ben" Connable
Ideas as Weapons: Influence and Perception in Modern Warfare (2009)

During the fighting in Fallujah in April 2004, the Associated Press reported that the U.S. Marines had bombed a mosque in the city, killing 40 civilians gathered innocently for prayer. The story was picked up by the major international news networks and rebroadcast around the world. This report became the focal point for the intensive media backlash against the Fallujah assault that eventually forced a Marine withdrawal. Over the summer, Fallujah became a safe haven for the worst of the criminal gangs, insurgents, and terrorists, including Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. The problem was the Marines did not kill 40 innocent people at that mosque.

I was working with the 1st Marine Division staff in Ramadi on April 7, 2004, at the height of the first Fallujah campaign. As the fight for the streets of the city developed, we watched a company of Marines in a firefight via the transmitted picture from an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). We were seeing everything unfold on the streets of Fallujah in a surreal but very clear, live, televised shot. The Marines were in a tough spot, pinned by insurgents laying down accurate fire from the minaret of the large Abdul-Aziz al-Samarai mosque that dominated the surrounding terrain. Other insurgents moved in and out of the ground floor during the fight, but if the Marines were unable to eliminate the snipers the advance in that sector would be stalled.

For several hours, the two sides traded shots, during which five Marines were wounded.[1] Tightly restricted by rules of engagement from using anything heavier than a light machine gun against the mosque, the Marines struggled unsuccessfully to put a "golden round" into the narrow slit at the top of the tower. After careful consideration and a clear discussion with the staff lawyers, the Marine commander eventually approved the launch of a single Hellfire missile into the tower to kill the snipers while minimizing damage to the mosque.[2]

We watched as the helicopter-launched missile streaked an errant path along one side of the tower, harmlessly slamming into the ground below and leaving the snipers unscathed. The minaret was too small a target, and the Marines were loath to take a second shot for fear of another missile going astray.

Pressure to advance increased as units on their flanks became exposed by the lack of progress around the mosque. The Marines on the ground asked to drop two bombs along the retaining wall around the mosque so they could rush the insurgents without becoming easy targets as they tried to break through. There was another heated debate, a command decision, and a fixed-wing jet aircraft[3] dropped two 500-pound bombs along the wall at 3:53 p.m.[4]

The camera caught the explosion of the bombs on film.[5] A huge cloud of black smoke flew up, and then settled, as the Marines rushed forward and cleared the mosque. The bombs had smashed a gap in the wall but clearly left the building completely intact. We saw no bodies live or otherwise near the wall before or after the impact of the bombs. As the unmanned aircraft slowly circled the compound, it became clear that the insurgents had fled. Some young infantry Marines climbed those steps and made sure the snipers were gone. They radioed back their report: mosque secured. They found no other personnel, weapons, or equipment, just empty shell casings on the ground floor. There were no bodies inside or outside the building.

Acutely aware that our entry into the mosque might make for negative media headlines, I began to monitor the news websites. It didn't take long for an AP reporter, Abdul-Qader Saadi,

to relay "eyewitness accounts" of the incident to his bureau:

> *Associated Press* (3:01 p.m. UK Time)—A U.S. helicopter fired three missiles at a mosque compound in the city of Fallujah on Wednesday, killing about 40 people as American forces batted Sunni insurgents, witnesses said. Cars ferried bodies from the scene, though there was no immediate confirmation of casualties. The strike came as worshippers gathered for afternoon prayers, witnesses said. They said the dead were taken to private homes in the area where temporary hospitals had been set up.[6]

Alarmed by what appeared to be an impending and wholly unwarranted public relations disaster, we scrambled to gather the facts so we could work a release through our public affairs officer, then-Lieutenant Eric Knapp. Our first task was to confirm that we were all talking about the same mosque (we were). We then interviewed the Marines in charge of the video feed, and they confirmed that no unarmed people were seen anywhere near the fighting or the bomb impact site.

We ran the feed of the bomb drops again, taking video snapshots of the undamaged and completely intact mosque, the two craters, and the broken wall. We reviewed the facts as we knew them from our constant observation and the reporting from the Marines on the ground. There were no indications of any casualties, civilian or other. If anyone had been gathering in that mosque for prayers, they were long gone after the half-day intensive firefight in broad daylight.

In order to give the press an accurate and convincing rebuttal to the AP headline, we wanted to issue a copy of the video frames showing the intact mosque along with our version of events. Unfortunately, because the image was taken from a classified video system, the photo was considered classified and the word "Secret" was clearly visible inside the margins. It took us more than eight hours to get the image cropped and prepared for release; by that time the story had taken on a life of its own. The BBC picked up the lead from the AP:

> BBC (April 7, 2004)—A U.S. air strike has killed up to 40 people inside a mosque compound during heavy fighting in the Sunni Muslim Iraqi town of Fallujah, witnesses say. Forty Iraqis were reportedly killed when a U.S. helicopter struck a mosque with three missiles today in the central Iraqi city of Fallujah. Cars ferried bodies of the dead from the scene and part of the wall surrounding the Abdul-Aziz al-Samarrai mosque was demolished, said an AP reporter, Abdul-Qader Saadi, who added that the mosque building itself was not damaged. The strike came as worshippers gathered for afternoon prayers, witnesses said. An angry crowd gathered as the wounded were taken to makeshift hospitals.[7]

Our frustration grew as we watched what we knew to be fictions develop into reported fact—the Americans bombed a mosque and killed 40 innocent people in the midst of peaceful prayer. Things quickly got worse as the official AP report hit the Internet.[8] In a story entitled "U.S. Bombs Fallujah Mosque; More than 40 Worshippers Killed," by Bassem Mroue and Abdul-Qader Saadi, the AP reported the following:

> An Associated Press reporter in Fallujah saw cars ferrying the dead and wounded from the Abdul-Aziz al-Samarrai mosque. Witnesses said a helicopter fired three missiles into the compound, destroying part of a wall surrounding the mosque but not damaging the main building. The strike-came as worshippers had gathered for afternoon prayers, witnesses said. Temporary hospitals were set up in private homes to treat the wounded and prepare the dead for burial.

Most important, the inset picture AP story's by Agence France-Presse photographer Cris Bouroncle depicted three Marines on the streets

of Fallujah. It was accompanied by this caption:

> U.S. Marines from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force move into Fallujah. U.S. Marines pressing an offensive in this Iraqi town west of Baghdad bombed a central mosque filled with worshippers and killed up to 40, a Marine officer said.

Now the AP was attributing the story of the massacre to an official, although unnamed, Marine source. We ran a request for information down the chain of command and quickly ascertained that nobody had confirmed this version of events. Reporters and editors were passing along the original AP report as if they were playing a bad game of "telephone." Every report seemed to loop back on the original story by Saadi. Later that day, Gwen Ifill interviewed Tony Perry, a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* who spent a considerable amount of time in al-Anbar Province. He depicted a different version of events from the AP story:

> Ifill: . . . We did hear today about an attack on a mosque that killed anywhere from 40 to 60 people. Were you with that unit and can you describe what happened? (Note: Now Ifill has introduced the number "60" into the story.)
>
> Perry: Yeah, I'm with the unit right now. The first reports are a little misleading. What happened here . . . there are several mosques that have been used by the insurgents as places to either gather or strategize or even fire at Marines. One particular mosque had 30 to 40 insurgents in it. They had snipers. They wounded five Marines. There were ambulances that drove up and the Marines let them come in to take the insurgent wounded away. But instead, people with RPGs . . . jumped out of the ambulances and started fighting with the Marines. Ultimately, what the Marines did is call in airpower. A helicopter dropped a Hellfire missile and then an F-16 dropped a laser-guided bomb on the outside of the mosque, put a huge crater outside the mosque. There's sort of a plaza outside the mosque. And suddenly, the firing inside stopped. But when the Marines examined the mosque and went in and went door-to-door in the mosque and floor-to-floor, they found no bodies, nor did they find the kind of blood and guts one would presume if people had died. Now one of two things must have happened: either the people died inside and were carted off somehow—and there is a tradition of the insurgents carting off their dead very quickly; or two, frankly, they escaped before the bomb was dropped. We cannot confirm that anybody actually died in that mosque. The Marines were quite willing to kill everybody in the mosque because they were insurgents. They had been firing at people, at Marines. And as the lieutenant colonel who ordered the strikes said, this was no longer a house of worship; this was a military target.[9]

Tony Perry had developed a reputation with the Marines for both professionalism and objectivity. Admittedly fearful of combat and death, he gained tremendous respect with his willingness to travel into hot spots alongside the Marines. However, he was never afraid to point out our failures or shortcomings on the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*.

If Perry, who was right on the scene, couldn't find evidence of any massacre, how did Saadi get the chain of events so confused?[10] I hesitate to question the fact that he personally witnessed carloads of casualties. There does not seem to be any evidence, however, that he confirmed the wounded and dead were actually removed from the compound, had been innocently gathering for prayer, had been hit by an air strike, or were not just insurgent fighters being evacuated from the ongoing fight down the street.

Even assuming Saadi's first-person account of casualties coming from the area around the mosque is accurate, the rest of the story relies entirely on secondhand accounts from Fallujah residents or, possibly, savvy insurgent fighters who regularly dropped their weapons to blend

in with the civilian population. Reporting these secondhand stories as nearly unquestioned fact seems to be where truth separated from the fiction in the confusion of battle.

If "eyewitness" reports are to be taken at face value, the preponderance of Marine attacks on insurgent targets in Fallujah between April and November 2004 resulted in the deaths of women and children. Reporters regularly overlooked the fact that most of these accounts came from a spokesman in the insurgent-controlled hospital on the southwestern peninsula of the city or from other questionable sources.[11] Few media outlets seemed to take into account the power of Fallujan xenophobia or the active insurgent propaganda campaign aimed at the American and international media. The "truth" in Fallujah often wallowed helplessly somewhere between frantic street rumor and outright lie.

No matter whether the people reporting the story to Saadi were actual witnesses, insurgents, or simply Fallujans angered at the fighting around the mosque, some logical questions regarding the AP story remain:

- Why were Fallujah Muslims gathering for prayer at 3:53 p.m. when the closest prayer times for April 7, 2004, were 1:08 p.m. and 4:43 p.m.?[12]
- Why were 40 people gathering for prayer at the mosque on a Wednesday afternoon when this kind of communal prayer gathering is usually reserved for Friday mornings?
- Why were 40 people gathering peacefully for prayer at a mosque that had become the focal point for a broad daylight, raging firefight?
- If the Marine bombs killed up to 40 innocent people, why were there no signs of any blood or bodies in or around the mosque compound?

Despite the doubts raised by Tony Perry, a CNN online article that seemed to dismiss the casualties as rumor,[13] protestations of the Marine battalion commander on site, and lengthy denials by military spokesman Brigadier General [Mark T.] Kimmet, the story of the massacre at the Abdul-Aziz al-Samarrai mosque is now part of the official history of Iraq. The website for the group "Iraq Body Count" (IBC), lists the incident not once but twice, accounting for 40 deaths "confirmed" by the Associated Press and Middle East Online.[14] Antiwar bloggers made haste to turn the AP version of the incident into political fodder. An April 8 article by Anthony Gregory on antiwar.com entitled, "Fallujah Revenge and the War Disease" leads with the following paragraph:

> The recent bombing of a mosque in Fallujah meant fiery deaths for about 40 Iraqis, but if the hawks get their way, it will be only the beginning of the deadly reprisals waged by the U.S. against that town in retaliation for the massacre of Americans there last week.[15]

The New World Blogger adds:

> This isn't good—an understatement. If even during the Middle Ages someone could call for sanctuary within a church, shouldn't mosques, churches and synagogues be off limits for bombing as well? Not only do they represent relentless revenge, but they also plant further seeds for anti-U.S. hatred among those who feel their religion has been disrespected. I think we have seen enough of what blind retaliation has to offer us.[16]

The bloggers aren't the only ones to capitalize on the massacre-that-wasn't in Fallujah. Al Jazeera added a new twist to the story in its April 7 English-online Internet reporting:

> The bomb hit the minaret of the mosque and ploughed a hole through the building, shattering windows and leaving the mosque badly damaged.[17]

With the Associated Press and BBC stories to back up its claims, nobody bothered to question the Al Jazeera version of events. It should be noted that then-Prime Minister Ayad Allawi banned Al Jazeera from reporting in Iraq prior to the second Fallujah campaign because of ongoing collusion with the insurgents and blatant propagandizing.

There is no indication that the Associated Press or any other agency made any effort to confirm or deny the original story by Saadi. None of the post-incident interviews seems to indicate that the AP reporter actually entered the mosque compound to check his facts. Tony Perry's on-scene reporting was simply ignored.

What impact, if any, did this false report have on the conduct of the war? According to in-depth interviews and research done by Bing West, the author of *No True Glory*, stories like the one about the mosque "massacre" beamed across the BBC airwaves led in large part to a dramatic shift in British public opinion against the Fallujah assault.[18] The resulting pressure and public outcry over the reports of civilian deaths and images of dead babies repeatedly broadcast by Al Jazeera forced Prime Minister Tony Blair to pressure President Bush to cease offensive combat operations. Although not strictly causal by itself, the AP report was certainly a central factor in the media disaster that led to the withdrawal from Fallujah in the spring.

This withdrawal left the city in the hands of men like Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, Abdullah Janabi, and Omar Hadid. They turned it into a safe haven for criminals, terrorists, and murderers of every stripe. These men cut off Nick Berg's head and brutally slaughtered other Western hostages. They kidnapped, tortured, and murdered innocent Iraqi civilians who happened to get in their way. The Fallujah haven allowed them to conduct hundreds of operations that killed and maimed our Marines and soldiers across the al-Anbar and northern Babil provinces in mid-2004.

We were eventually able to respond with Operation al-Fajr, the intensive Marine and Army assault to retake the city in November.[19] The six-month interval between Operations Vigilant Resolve and al-Fajr allowed the insurgents to dig tunnels, prepare defenses, and stock weapons and ammunition. We suffered more than 500 U.S. and Iraqi military casualties in this battle. Learning their lesson from the propaganda victory in April, the insurgents turned almost every mosque in Fallujah into a fortress and weapons depot in the hope they would take return fire during the fighting. Unfortunately, the fighting did indeed cause some damage, and the AP was there to point out American culpability.[20]

The reported events at the Abdul-Aziz al-Samarrai mosque continue to provide ammunition to the antiwar crowd and contribute to the outrage in the greater Arab world. The story seems to be handcrafted for extremist religious leaders trying to coerce young Muslim men to travel to Iraq and kill Americans. The Iraq Body Count casualty list that includes the numbers of dead reported by the AP is regularly quoted as fact. The official BBC Iraq timeline figures the mosque incident prominently, reminding its readers of this supposed atrocity and continuing to erode support for the war.[21]

Many reporters working stories in Iraq are professional, relatively unbiased, and willing to risk their lives to get first-person accounts. However, military and diplomatic officers also regularly complain about shallow, inaccurate reporting that exaggerates violence, ignores incremental success, and undermines American popular support. Some of the most vociferous critics of military cultural training display a stunning ignorance of post-Saddam culture when quoting the Iraqi street. Spend enough time on the ground and one finds reporters content to rereport wire stories from the Green Zone (with a suitably dramatic backdrop) or rely wholly on Iraqi stringers who may or may not be working with insurgents, exaggerating events, or simply creating stories to turn a buck in the face of high unemployment. There are even a few mainstream reporters with dedicated antiwar agendas. One prominent wire service correspondent is well known for going on "hunting missions," looking for that one disgruntled Marine or soldier who will give him a gripe or a pithy, antiwar comment, while ignoring positive or upbeat interviews.

It is unlikely that Mr. Abdul-Qader Saadi was hunting for a negative story. He was obviously brave and willing to risk his life on the streets of Fallujah, and his report was very straightforward and seemingly professional. It was technically

accurate: some people told him that the Americans had bombed a mosque and killed 40 innocent people. He says he saw people carting away casualties. He never says that he followed through with an investigation and did not confirm the details of the incident in any meaningful way. This is typical of AP "up-to-the minute" coverage.

It took the assumptions and circular reporting of the BBC, Iraq Body Count, the Agence France-Presse photographer, Al Jazeera. and the bloggers to cement "the massacre that wasn't" into the history of the Iraq War. Some of them wanted the story to be true and will never question the facts. Those with a professional reputation for objectivity to uphold may want to take a second look. The Marines learned their lesson; it will never again take eight hours to release critical evidence to the media in the heat of battle. Perhaps if the truth had been told we could have avoided the murder and mayhem that emanated from the "city of mosques" throughout the long, hot summer of 2004. We may never know how many more reports like this one are woven into the narrative of the war in Iraq.

Notes

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1. All five were wounded in the initial contact when a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) fired from the mosque compound struck a Marine vehicle. According to press reports one later died, although this has not been confirmed by the Marine Corps.
2. The AGM-114 series Hellfire is a laser-guided anti-tank missile with a small, shaped charge warhead typically used to destroy armored vehicles.
3. "Eyewitness" accounts would later incorrectly identify a Marine helicopter as the source of all three strikes: the missile and the two bombs. Marine helicopters do not carry or employ 500-pound aerial bombs
4. This time is taken from the original time stamp on the uncleared, classified imagery.
5. Images sanitized and cleared for release by the appropriate Marine Corps units and public affairs officials.
6. "IBC Falluja April 2004 News Digest," *Iraq Body Count* (http://www.iraqbodycount.net/resources/falluja/ibc_fal!uja_apr_07.php#bna 1).
7. BBC News, "U.S. Bombards Iraq Mosque Complex," April 7, 2004 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/l/hi/middle_east/3609665.stm).
8. Bassem Mroue and Abdul-Qader Saadi, "U.S. Bombs Fallujah Mosque; More Than 40 Worshippers Killed," CommonDreams.org News Center, April 7, 2004 (http://www.commondreams.org/headlines04/0407-06.htm).
9. "IBC Falluja April 2004 News Digest."
10. Perry himself later filed a joint report with Edmund Sanders (Tony Perry and Edmund Sanders, "U.S. Bombs Mosque in Falluja: Military Says Site Was Used to Launch Strikes; Troops' Tours May Be Extended," *Los Angeles Times,* April 8, 2004) that repeated both the eyewitness claims and the Marine denials. This version did not point out that there had been no confirmation of deaths in or around the mosque and did not go into the level of detail presented in the Ifill interview.
11. See http://www.fair.org/activisim/nyt-fallujah.html

;http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/6890A8DA -AF79-45AD-BB4F-42C060978A07.htm; Brian Dominick, "Fallujah, U.S. Declares War on Hospitals, Ambulances," *The New Standard,* November 9, 2004 (http://newstandardnews.net/content/index.cfm /items/1208); Iraq Body Count website (http:// www.iraqbodycount.org). All websites accessed November 30, 2006.

12. Exact prayer times for April 7, 2004, in Fallujah can be found at http://www.islamicfinder. org.

13. CNN.com, "Marines: U.S. Bombed Iraqi Mosque Wall," April 7, 2004 (http://www.cnn.com/2004 /WORLD/meast/04/07/fallujah.strike/index.html).

14. Iraq Body Count typically (and commendably) lists only incidents confirmed by two sources. However, in this case they refer to the original AP story and a website that references the AP story in an obvious case of circular reporting.

15. Anthony Gregory, "Fallujah Revenge and the War Disease," Anti-War.com, April 8, 2004 (http://www .antiwar.com/orig/gregory.php?articleid=2274).

16. New World Blogger.com, "New Additions," April 10, 2004 (http://new-world-blogger.blogspot.com /2004_04_04_new-wor!d-blogger_archive.html).

17. Al Jazeera English website: http://english .aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/A73529Fl-1554-4C68-8774-BA478D565B02.htm (accessed November 30, 2006).

18. Bing West, *No True Glory: A Frontline Account of the Battle for Fallujah* (New York: Bantam, 2005). West refers to the incident at the mosque from two separate vantage points.

19. "Phantom Fury" is the other name for al-Fajr. "Vigilant Resolve" was the code name for the first Marine assault on Fallujah.

20. AP Photo/Bilal Hussein, "An Iraqi Man Inspects Damage," November 8, 2004 (http://www.commondreams.org/headlines04/1108-08.htm).

21. BBC News, "Timeline: Iraq," October 14, 2005 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4343078 .stm).

About the Author

Major Alfred B. "Ben" Connable served as the Middle East desk officer at Headquarters Marine Corps Intelligence Department before being assigned to 1st Marine Division as a foreign area officer. In 2003 and 2004, he was the division's foreign area officer and intelligence operations officer. Connable has retired from the Marine Corps and is working for the RAND Corporation as an intelligence policy analyst.

I Marine Expeditionary Force Summary of Action

by Commander, U.S. Marine Forces, Central Command

Adapted from Unit Award Recommendation

Unit: I Marine Expeditionary Force
Recommended Award: Presidential Unit Citation
Period of Award: 2 August 2004–1 February 2005
Status: Secretary of the Navy
Originator: Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command

Citation:

For extraordinary heroism and exceptional performance of duty in actions against enemy forces from 2 August 2004 to 1 February 2005, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II. I Marine Expeditionary Force (Reinforced) (I MEF) conducted a coordinated campaign across a 400 mile arc of the Euphrates River Valley to eliminate insurgent control over the key cities of an-Najaf and al-Fallujah and the remainder of the local population in the I Marine Expeditionary Force area of responsibility. The battles for an-Najaf and al-Fallujah were the largest U.S.-led urban operations since the Vietnam War. Both battles saw the introduction of new and innovative tactics, techniques, and procedures which became key to I Marine Expeditionary Force's success. Throughout 24 days of intense conflict in an-Najaf, the Marines conducted destruction raids on insurgent strongholds, captured weapons caches, and engaged in fierce close-quarters battle. During this operation, I Marine Expeditionary Force killed over 1,500 enemy insurgents while simultaneously preserving the sacred Imam Ali Shrine and Mosque Complex. In response to violent insurgent actions in al-Fallujah, a coalition force of 12,500, led by I MEF, boldly breached the city's fortifications and destroyed a heavily armed and well-entrenched fanatical enemy. Countless acts of individual bravery in al-Fallujah resulted in over 2,000 enemy killed or captured as the Marines, Soldiers, and Sailors fiercely fought and cleared the city house by house. By their outstanding courage, resourcefulness and aggressive fighting spirit in combat against the enemy, the officers and enlisted personnel of I Marine Expeditionary Force reflected great credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. . . .

The Battle to Liberate an-Najaf

In August 2004, I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) was called upon to conduct full spectrum offensive operations in order to defeat insurgent Mahdi militia forces in Najaf and Kufa and restore normal civil authorities to the cities of Najaf and Kufa. In sustained urban combat, I MEF destroyed and otherwise forcibly removed a well-entrenched enemy militia from Najaf, the holiest city in Iraq, without damaging the holy Imam Ali Shrine and Mosque Complex.

Combat operations were characterized by intense and close combat. Infantry fought at close range through a huge cemetery, honeycombed with tunnels, crypts, and other concealed positions. Close air support and main tank direct fire enabled ground units to dislodge Mahdi militias from improved fighting positions in the cemetery and buildings around the mosques. During the entire 24 days of combat in Najaf, I MEF forces suffered minimal casualties but inflicted an estimated 1,500 enemy killed in action.

The defeat of the enemy in Najaf also represented the beginning of the end for the organized Mahdi militia insurgency and the marginalization of a dangerous militant Shi'ite insurgent movement. The strategic outcome later helped shape future combat operations in Fallujah and encouraged Shi'ite support for a national election.

Summary of Ground Combat Operations

On 7 August 2004, Task Force 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment (TF 1-5 CAV) arrived to reinforce

the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (11th MEU) for further combat operations, while the Iraqi National Guard (ING) led an Iraqi operation to raid Sadr's house in Najaf. This engagement resulted in four enemy killed in action and the capture of two Mahdi militia. On 8 August 2004, TF 1-5 CAV cleared the remainder of the Najaf cemetery and encountered little to no resistance moving into the cemetery. On 9 August 2004, Multi National Force-West (MNF-W) assumed tactical control of 11th MEU with the arrival of the I MEF (Fwd) Command Element, commanded by the I MEF Deputy Commanding General, Brigadier General Dennis J. Hejlik, USMC. Upon his arrival, and during the duration of operations, I MEF (Fwd) Command Element conducted rounds of sustained peace negotiations with Iraqi interim government and Mahdi militia officials, while still planning, overseeing and supervising combat operations.

On 11 August 2004, 11th MEU forces engaged anti-Iraqi forces in the southwest, northwest, and northeast portions of the city. As of 11 August 2004, enemy killed in action was estimated at 460. On 12 August 2004, Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 1/4 (1st Battalion, 4th Marines) and members of 405th ING conducted a raid near Sadr's house to destroy anti-Iraqi forces and gather information of intelligence value. The raiders attacked and cleared four buildings against a platoon-sized enemy armed with small arms, sniper rifles, and mortars, resulting in three enemy killed in action and 18 enemy wounded in action. Exploitation of Sadr's house produced numerous documents, computer hard drives and other material of intelligence value. On 13 August 2004, the 11th MEU Maritime Special Purpose Force, in support of 36th Civil Defense Order and Iraqi Counter Terrorism Force, conducted a direct action mission on the Sahlah Mosque in Kufa. BLT 1/4 forces provided exterior cordon while 36th Civil Defense Order and Iraqi Counter Terrorism Force established the interior cordon and conducted the assault, resulting in three enemy killed in action and the capture of eight Mahdi militia.

On 15 August 2004, both TF 1-5 CAV and Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Cavalry (TF 2-7 CAV) were engaged numerous times by direct and indirect fire. Both units returned fire killing or wounding numerous enemies. Later that day, the Governor of an-Najaf announced that the provincial council voted to oust the Mahdi militia and demanded the Mahdi militia forces leave an-Najaf. Sporadic fighting continued with the Mahdi militia intentionally using the no-fire area as a safe haven from which to attack or retreat. On 17 August 2004, Alpha Company, BLT 1/4, attached to TF 2-7 CAV, conducted a destruction raid on a suspected enemy weapons cache in Najaf while Charlie Company TF 2-7 CAV conducted a destruction raid on a suspected enemy stronghold. These raids resulted in the capture of a Mahdi militia and a weapons cache. At the request of TF 2-7 CAV, aviation assets engaged an enemy mortar position near the hotel district within the old city.

18 August 2004 saw sustained engagements involving every battalion in the special Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF). TF 1-5 CAV was engaged with rocket-propelled grenades in the cemetery. Alpha Company, TF 2-7 CAV received heavy machine-gun, small arms, and RPG fire from a building just inside the ring road. After Bravo Company, BLT 1 /4 was engaged by mortar fire, aviation assets surgically destroyed the mortar system, located within the restricted fire area. Reinforced by the Iraqi National Guard, the Iraqi police established a traffic control point for all traffic approaching the ring road and succeeded in containing the Mahdi militia inside the Imam Ali Mosque Complex. On 20 August 2004, after TF 1-5 CAV received mortar fire in the cemetery, an AC-130 gunship destroyed the enemy position.

On 21 August 2004, Alpha Company, BLT 1/4 conducted a raid on Kufah to clear a former Iraqi police station. In support of this raid, Bravo Company attacked by fire onto a Mahdi militia checkpoint. 2d Platoon of Alpha Company and BLT 1/4 Reconnaissance established a screen line to prevent a southern egress from Kufah. An AC-130, in coordination with attack helicopters, brought effective fire on the target during the attack. The coordinated attack was a success. Both objectives were secured with an estimated 45 enemy killed in action and 29 Mahdi militia captured.

On 22 August 2004, TF 1-5 CAV, reinforced with elements of BLT 1/4, conducted a probing attack on the western portion of a parking garage. The probing element encountered heavy resistance, centered mainly on the buildings to the southwest of the parking garage. An AC-130, which had been prosecuting targets of opportunity on the western end of the

parking garage and surrounding buildings, engaged a mortar position. After TF 2-7 CAV received sniper fire from four buildings to the east of the restricted fire area, aviation assets destroyed the targets, resulting in an unknown number of enemy killed in action. Despite rumors of peace talks, the fighting continued on 23 August 2004. After TF 2-7 CAV received RPG and heavy machine-gun fire from the northern end of the old city, AC-130 fire destroyed the target. Following a rocket-propelled grenade and small arms fire attack on TF 1-5 CAV from west of the shrine, artillery fire destroyed the target.

Combat operations continued on 24 August 2004 when TF 2-7 CAV, TF 1-5 CAV and BLT 1/4 crossed the line of departure to conduct limited objective attacks in their respective zones. They were supported by 155mm artillery, AC-130, AV-8B Harriers, F-18 Hornets and AH-1W Cobras. TF 2-7 CAV came in contact immediately and executed numerous close air support missions. Hellfire missiles and several rockets helped TF 2-7 take several buildings in the eastern portion of the old city. TF 1-5 engaged the enemy with tank main gun, 25mm, and heavy machine gun fire. Following their attack, TF 1-5 moved south into the old city to conduct a reconnaissance by force. TF 1-5 encountered a deliberate obstacle with imbedded improvised explosive devices, sporadic rocket-propelled grenades, and small arms fire. An AC-130 engaged the obstacles, resulting in a large secondary explosion and the partial reduction of the obstacle. The AC-130 also engaged a bus near the garage complex. BLT 1/4 successfully cleared their zone with little contact. The battalion landing team's actions forced a Mahdi militia retreat south and east, where 36th Commando conducted a preplanned ambush, resulting in an unknown number of enemy killed in action.

On 24 August 2004, a UH-1N Huey employed a Bright Star laser designator for the first time in combat. The aircraft designated a building that housed five to 15 Mahdi militia and a possible antiaircraft artillery piece. The building and enemy were destroyed by Hellfire missiles from an AH-1W, which were employed in conjunction with the Bright Star laser. On 24 August, TF 2-7 CAV established attack by fire positions around the eastern side of the ring road in order to support the pending BLT 1/4 attack south through the cemetery and into the northwest corner of the old city. Two key buildings were seized, followed by systematic clearing of Mahdi militia forces throughout the night. In support of this attack and the final assault planned for 26 August 2004, several key targets were engaged by fixed-wing aviation assets. To help shape the conditions for the final assault on the shrine and mosque, GBU-12 bombs (500 pounds) and GBU-31 bombs (2,000 pounds) were delivered on key buildings, which housed Mahdi militia, with good effects. During this assault, an estimated 51 enemy killed in action were assessed, with Marine expeditionary unit forces sustaining 13 friendly wounded in action.

Sporadic fighting continued throughout the morning and into the early afternoon on 26 August 2004. BLT 1/4 attacked the Mahdi militia through the northwest corner of the old city. Alpha Company BLT 1/4 attacked east and tied in by fire with TF 1-5 near the intersection of the ring road and Route Nova. TF 2-7 pressed the attack from east to west. By 1500 on 26 August 2004, the Imam Ali Shrine and Mosque was surrounded and final planning continued on decisive actions to storm the site. However, Multi National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) released an order directing I MEF to cease offensive operations in Najaf in order to allow Iraqi political and religious officials the opportunity to peaceably resolve the removal of Mahdi militia from the Imam Ali Shrine and Mosque Complex. On 27 August 2004, the Grand Ayatollah Sistani received the keys to the Imam Ali Shrine and Mosque Complex, signaling the end of hostilities there.

Summary of Air Combat Operations

Support by I MEF's air combat element, the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW), was noteworthy and impressive. 3d MAW's CH-46E Sea Knights provided casualty evacuation and medical evacuation support, while H-1s and AV-8Bs were heavily engaged in close air support missions throughout the city. CH-53E Super Stallions flew nightly missions from Al Asad to Forward Operating Base Duke, bringing equipment and ammunition. On 5 August 2005, 3d MAW experienced a combat loss when a UH-1N was shot down by enemy fire. Although the two crew members sustained injuries, they were quickly recovered by a CH-46 and flown to Babylon for appropriate medical treatment.

Fixed-wing and rotary wing close air support proved to be extremely challenging due to clearance of fire issues, the importance of minimizing collateral damage, and the various restricted fire areas and no-fire areas placed around the Imam Ali Shrine and Mosque Complex. As the pressure from Coalition forces mounted, the Mahdi militia began to hide within these buffer zones. On 25 August 2004, precision air strikes were conducted on multiple buildings occupied by the Mahdi militia forces within the buffer zone around the Imam Ali Shrine.

During the battle of an-Najaf, the H-1s expended more than 90 Hellfire missiles, 600 2.75mm rockets, and 7,000 rounds of 20mm shells while the AV-8B Harriers delivered seven GBU-12 bombs, nine AGM-65E Maverick missiles, and 100 rounds of 25mm shells. During the battle of Najaf, CH-46 helicopters transported a total of 100 casualty evacuation support missions and routinely responded to calls for assistance in 30 minutes or less. 3d MAW aircraft flew over 1,800 hours, 1,100 sorties, and delivered 300,000 pounds of cargo in support of operations in the city of an-Najaf.

Summary of Combat Service Support Operations

1st Force Service Support Group (1st FSSG) provided superior assistance to 11th MEU in developing actionable intelligence in Kufa to defeat Mahdi militia. 1st FSSG's subordinate commands provided combat support to ensure the success of Operation Najaf, including providing a detachment of corpsman and AN/VRC-90 radios to 11th MEU in support of this operation; coordinating transportation for personnel and associated equipment to Forward Operating Base Duke; and ensuring that proper equipment custody procedures were followed to transfer the equipment from force service support group EKMS [Electronic Key Management System] account to 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit EKMS account.

Summary of Reconstruction Operations

In the aftermath of the August battle of Najaf, 11th MEU established an extremely aggressive and proactive program to repair battle damage by making reconstruction and condolence payments to the innocent victims of the battle. An aggressive patrolling package was utilized to identify potential civil affairs projects while maintaining a force protection posture commensurate with the cessation of hostilities. The Gulf Investment Company processed 45 cases, generating over $90,000 in payments. In the span of one month, 11th MEU spent $3.5 million on over 100 civil affairs projects in Najaf.

In the months that followed, the Marine expeditionary unit worked closely with Najaf government officials, Iraqi security forces and nongovernmental organizations to identify, screen and provide nearly 18,000 condolence payments of approximately $10 million dollars in aid and to facilitate repairs for these victims. Such a large and rapid undertaking in providing battle damage condolence payments was unprecedented in Iraqi history. The successful reconstruction operations in Najaf served as a template for future operations in Fallujah. . . .

The Battle to Liberate Fallujah, Operation al-Fajr

Operation al-Fajr (formerly known as Operation Phantom Fury) was the battle to liberate the city of al-Fallujah from the control of entrenched foreign fighters, terrorists, and insurgents in November 2004. The battle represented an unprecedented joint and combined operation, which broke the back of a strong insurgency in al-Anbar Province and effectively disrupted insurgent operations throughout the region. The success of Coalition forces in Fallujah, in one of the most fiercely difficult urban combat battles to be recorded, is credited with tremendously strengthening the Interim Iraqi Government and swaying moderate Iraqis to support the peaceful transition to local control.

Summary of Ground Combat Operations

Decisive ground combat operations in Fallujah were preceded by weeks of carefully planned and executed Phase I shaping and Phase II enhanced shaping operations. Phase I shaping operations included precision air strikes, a massive regiment-sized feint, as well as other smaller mounted and dismounted raids and snap vehicle checkpoints.

During Phase I shaping operations, I MEF executed an effective information operations campaign that drove wedges between the local population and the anti-Iraqi forces, created paranoia among the insur-

gents and caused the local population to slowly vacate the battlespace before the attack. This information campaign helped reduce the risk of collateral damage and avoided a humanitarian crisis had the civilian population suddenly fled the city.

Incessant I MEF Phase I shaping operations and troop movements disrupted anti-Iraqi forces command and control and forced the anti-Iraqi forces to commit their defenses to the south and west of the city. Other shaping operations consisted of precision air strikes, which destroyed key targets deep in the heart of the city with only minimal collateral damage. Precision air strikes targeted anti-Iraqi forces leadership; key command and control nodes; weapons systems and platforms; ammunition and weapons caches; and berms, bunkers and fortifications. A carefully thought out information operations and public affairs operation shaping campaign headed off adverse reaction to potential collateral damage by reminding the local and world audience that anti-Iraqi forces were illegally using protected places, like mosques, hospitals and schools, to carry out attacks.

Phase II enhanced shaping began on 7 November 2004. Enhanced shaping included a complex electronic attack, the isolation of Fallujah, movement into attack positions, the securing of two key bridges on the western peninsula, the continued integration of Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF) snipers and precision air strikes, which destroyed scores of improvised explosive devices and improved fighting positions and obstacles. These surgical air strikes created breaches and opened lanes for follow-on troop movement.

During Phase II enhanced shaping, the Iraqi 36th Civil Defense Order, supported by 3d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, seized a hospital on the peninsula west of the city, which had served as an insurgent command and control node. The 36th Civil Defense Order raised the Iraqi flag as a symbol of the great things to come. These units also secured the two bridges that connected the peninsula with the city and established blocking positions on each. The U.S. Army's "Black Jack" Brigade then encircled the city to prevent any insurgents from escaping and to prevent any insurgent reinforcements from entering. Regimental Combat Team 1 (RCT-1) and Regimental Combat Team 7 (RCT-7) moved into their attack positions just north of the city, with RCT-1 assigned to the western portion of the city and RCT-7 assigned to the east. On cue, power was cut to the city to disorient the insurgents and take greater advantage of the technological capabilities of the multinational forces.

Phase III decisive operations began at 1900 on 8 November 2004. Unfolding exactly as planned, decisive operations consisted of the rapid mechanized penetration by RCT-1 and RCT-7, a combined arms attack, "search and attack in zone" operations and the continued blocking of the city, along with rear area security. RCT-1 commenced the attack by seizing the apartment complex just north of the city. Snipers used the apartment complex to kill dozens of anti-Iraqi forces, forward observers, and defenders on the northern edge of the city. Breaching of the train tracks and a mechanized-supported infantry assault into the city quickly followed. RCT-7 conducted similar assaults from north to south.

The original plan anticipated RCT-1 to experience a great deal of resistance in the northwest portion of the city. Less resistance was expected for RCT-7 in the northeast quadrant. Therefore, RCT-7 was scheduled to turn and sweep through the southeast quadrant into the southwest and drive any resistance into the river to the city's west. However, as operations progressed, both regimental combat teams moved more quickly than expected. Utilizing the branches and sequels developed in advance, the division commander modified the plan and, on 11 November 2004, directed both regimental combat teams to continue their assault directly to the south.

By 13 November 2004, the initial attack through the city was complete and Phase III-B (Search and Attack) operations commenced as the units went back through the city and conducted detailed clearing of any remaining insurgents. During the Search and Attack phase, operations targeted anti-Iraqi forces that might have escaped operations. Simultaneously, I MEF conducted other brigade, regiment, and division-level operations throughout Area of Operations Atlanta to disrupt enemy forces, develop actionable intelligence, and set conditions for elections that soon followed. Those operations occurred in Amariyah, Saqlawiyah, Khalidiyah and Habbaniyah, Kharma, Nasser Wa Salam, and Khandaria.

During Phase III operations, I MEF troops seized over 520 weapons caches; secured 60 mosques,

which had been used as fighting positions; discovered 24 improvised explosive device factories and two vehicle–borne improvised explosive device factories; destroyed 13 command and control nodes; discovered 7 suspected anti-Iraqi forces chemical laboratories; and found eight hostage locations. The gritty success of I MEF during Operation al-Fajr has been likened to the Marine Corps' hard won victory in the historic urban battle for Hue City. However, while I MEF suffered modest casualties during the assault, enemy losses were estimated at over 1,000 killed in action and 1,000 captured.

Phase III operations were notable for the successful employment of joint fixed- and rotary-wing close air support in the urban environment, which minimized collateral damage. The bold decision to employ joint and combined armor/infantry units disrupted anti-Iraqi forces command and control and exploited I MEF's superior firepower, armor protection, and command-and-control advantages. The Iraqi security forces proved their value by aggressively attacking and seizing culturally sensitive sites such as mosques. They easily identified foreign fighters and gathered intelligence. Iraqi security forces also put an Iraqi face on Coalition efforts by providing humanitarian assistance. I MEF's decision to integrate Iraqi security forces into I MEF operations again reenforced that the ISF could fight as an effective force, if properly supported and led. As with Najaf, success of combat operations in Fallujah produced positive atmospherics and allowed reconstruction efforts to begin even before clearing operations were completed throughout the city.

Summary of Air Combat Operations

3d MAW played an historic role in providing close air support, casualty evacuation and air traffic management missions during Operation al-Fajr. Intricate coordination of third-generation sensors and precision guided weapons with the ground scheme of maneuver allowed an incredibly precise level of close air support in the urban environment.

As ground combat operations began, 3d MAW supported the initial phases of combat operations through enhanced shaping strikes in northern and southern Fallujah. A railroad berm which would have impeded RCT-1's progress was reduced by multiple joint direct attack munitions strikes. This action enabled RCT-1's subsequent main effort attack with mechanized fighting vehicles and tanks. As the ground units pressed south toward the government center and Jolan Park, 3d MAW provided continuous close air support of troops in contact while continuing to shape targets in the south.

By 10 November 2004, as ground forces enjoyed excellent success in seizing Jolan Park and the government center with relatively few casualties, 3d MAW continued providing fixed- and rotary-wing close air support. Close air support aided troops in contact and shaped the southern end of Fallujah by destroying fortified positions within the coordinated fire line box. The continuation of the attack south was commenced with a branch plan being executed on 11 November 2004. By 14 November 2004, the penetration was complete and the search and attacks commenced. 3d MAW supported throughout this phase with continued surge air operations providing precise and effective close air support to the ground combat element.

During Operation al-Fajr, 3d MAW continued to conduct convoy escort and route reconnaissance missions, in order to protect mission critical logistics trains. Additionally, over 25 direct action operations were planned and conducted with 1st Marine Division, 11th, 24th, and 31st MEU's ground elements. These actions proved vital in capturing and exploiting critical high value targets and uncovering large weapons caches throughout the I MEF area of operations.

The Marines of 3d MAW continued to distinguish themselves with the unprecedented ability to perform emergency casualty evacuation and medical evacuation operations within the I MEF area of operations. 3d MAW aircraft performed 196 casualty evacuation missions and 79 medical evacuation missions in support of combat operations. The actions of Marine Aircraft Group 16's (MAG-16) casualty evacuation and medical evacuation crews were directly responsible for saving numerous lives in support of combat operations throughout the al-Anbar Province, Iraq.

3d MAW's Marine Unmanned Squadron 1 (VMU-1) conducted unmanned reconnaissance, surveillance, target acquisition, indirect fire adjustment, battlefield damage assessment, and support for the rear area security plan during combat and surveillance operations. The Watchdogs of VMU-1 fulfilled their mission

and exceeded all expectations by surging for 12 days (7-18 November 2004) in support Of Operation al-Fajr. During this period, VMU-1 flew 57 unmanned sorties for a total 273.9 flight hours, averaging 22.8 flight hours per day. The quality of support to I MEF was nothing short of extraordinary.

Marine Aerial Refueler and Transport Squadron 452 (VMGR-452 [-] [Reinforced]) added an additional C-130 aircraft from VMGR-352 for surge operations in support of Operation al-Fajr. The KC-130 tankers of VMGR-452 (-)(Reinforced) provided 24-hour aerial refueling coverage in the Elena and Daytona tracks to the north and west of Fallujah, respectively. KC-130s transferred 4.3 million pounds of fuel to 502 receivers consisting of the AV-8B, FA-18, and EA-6B Prowlers throughout the operation.

Ordnance expenditures for Operation al-Fajr were robust, as was the precision targeting. The following ordnance was expended in support of the 1st Marine Division during Operation al-Fajr, from 7–18 November 2004: 183 GBU-12 bombs; 46 GBU-38 bombs; 12 GBU-31 bombs; 121 Hellfire missiles; 34 Laser Maverick; 32 tube launch, optical tracked, wire guided (TOW) missiles; 70,009 20mm high explosive incendiaries; 39,411 rounds of .50-caliber rounds; 30,582 rounds of 7.62 rounds; 8 five-inch rockets; 188 2.75-inch rockets; 1,473 25mm rounds; and 4,237 20mm rounds.

3d MAW provided full-scale flight operations in support of I MEF, flying 5,733 sorties, generating 9,730.8 flight hours, moving 10,182 passengers, and hauling 2.4 million pounds of cargo throughout the I MEF area of responsibility during the operation. . . .

Summary of Combat Service Support Operations

1st FSSG and I Marine Expeditionary Force Engineer Group (I MEG) personnel and equipment were provided to Camps Fallujah and Baharia in support of requirements for Operation Phantom Fury. A surge in camp population required the construction of several tent camps. This surge in population was the result of the anti-Iraqi forces intimidation campaign where local nationals and third-country nationals were hesitant to continue working for Coalition forces. The decrease in work force created an opportunity for 1st FSSG to fulfill construction and camp improvement efforts in support of the operations. Marines, sailors, operators, and equipment were provided to support camp infrastructure and improvements.

Responding to the Marine expeditionary force's decision to create a forward-based supply point, colloquially referred to as an "Iron Mountain" of supplies, 1st FSSG expertly and methodically developed a plan to meet the multitude of requirements of supported units and balance those requirements against the management capabilities inherent within the receiving combat service support element.

The 1st FSSG ensured that forward provisioning of support occurred without unnecessarily overburdening parallel support agencies. The results of this detailed coordination include the delivery of over 11 million rounds of ammunition, 424 secondary repairables worth in excess of four million dollars, 210 line items of Class IX repair parts worth close to one million dollars, over two million bottles of water in more than 175,000 cases, and over 750,000 ready-to-eat meals.

I MEG contributed 2,500 man-days of construction support to I MEF during Operation al-Fajr. Seabees and soldiers emplaced force protection habitability improvements for firm bases including boarding up and sandbagging windows, placing HESCO and Texas barriers, repaired battle damaged generators and made other electrical upgrades. Improvements to RCT 1's forward command post increased the quality of life of the Marines posted there and subsequently improved security in Fallujah.

Seabee Engineer Reconnaissance Teams (SERT) played a vital role in Phase III of Operation al-Fajr. They executed multiple engineering and construction assessment missions to determine the state of essential services and critical infrastructure. The hasty repairs and assessments for permanent repair of the Qanishyah Bridge for main supply route Mobile, a critical route running from Baghdad to the Jordanian border, were particularly notable. SERT teams also assessed the breach points cut across the railroad tracks north of Fallujah during the initial drive into the city and reviewed damage and repair requirements for main supply route Michigan's Euphrates River Bridge. Battle damage repairs were performed at various locations on main supply route "Mobile," including hasty repair of craters caused by improvised explosive device detonations. These repairs

were vital to the safety of all convoys traveling on this critical main supply route.

Summary of Reconstruction Operations

Fighting the "three-block war," I MEF executed Phase IV civil-military operations, including rubble removal, the dewatering of flooded streets, infrastructure repair, mortuary affairs operations, claims payments, food and water distribution and the re-population of Fallujah even as Phase III decisive actions continued in other parts of the city. The repopulation of the city commenced on 23 December 2004. During Phase IV operations, I MEF oversaw a huge and complex logistical, engineering, and security effort, while, at the same time, supporting historic elections, discussed below.

Civil affairs operations prepared the city for civilian return. During the months of insurgent control of the city, all maintenance of basic services had ceased. Already neglected for some time before the attack, the city sustained significant damage from combat operations. First, military debris had to be removed. Hundreds of dead bodies lined the streets, yards, and houses of the cities. Mortuary affairs personnel from 1st FSSG collected the remains and processed them for burial. More than 520 caches containing tons of weapons and unexploded ordnance had to be cleared.

Repairs to the city's services followed. Damage to the water pumping stations had caused a large portion of the city to flood. Each pumping station had to be repaired. Waste removal, pest control, repair of the city's electrical grid, restoration of phone services, rubble removal, and the opening of the main roads soon followed.

A civil-military operations center (CMOC) was established to coordinate civilian population return. Entry control points were created to limit and coordinate access. Once food distribution centers were emplaced to support the returning population, the city began repatriating its citizens. Spread over 18 days, the population smoothly began resettling into their liberated neighborhoods.

I MEG, supported by 1st FSSG, led the effort to provide reconstruction of physical infrastructure. I MEG organized engineer assessment teams to determine the state of essential city services in Fallujah and to inventory battle damage to critical infrastructures. The information was used to determine when the conditions would permit the return of the civilian population to Fallujah, and to determine how battle damage would affect security and force protection in the city after the defeat of the insurgents.

I MEG established a reconstruction cell within the civil-military operations center to execute repair and reconstruction activities that facilitated the return of displaced residents. I MEG, through the reconstruction cell, oversaw and efficiently coordinated reconstruction activities, with a priority of effort set by the Iraqi interim government and I MEF. The reconstruction cell assisted and advised the civil-military operations center, validated and prioritized reconstruction projects, facilitated execution of general engineering missions, and reported the status of reconstruction work and emerging requirements.

The I MEG Reconstruction Cell facilitated the restoration and reconstruction of 10 essential service and public infrastructure sectors including water and power distribution, and the citywide drainage system. This effort required cooperation and coordination with six national ministries, six city departments, various Coalition commands and numerous contractors. Reconstruction cell members worked closely with the Fallujah municipal managers and workers to identify repair and reconstruction requirements and to return maintenance and operation of the Fallujah public works to Iraqi control.

I MEG's determination to boldly establish a course of action for Fallujah reconstruction resulted in the identification of over 120 restoration and reconstruction projects valued at over $140 million. The Reconstruction Cell effectively addressed critical short-term infrastructure repairs while developing a viable long-term redevelopment plan for the city of Fallujah.

Through the reconstruction cell, I MEG improved security in Fallujah and provided force protection. I MEG rubble removal crews worked for 37 days, hauling 7,500 tons of rubble out of the city and clearing lines of communications. I MEG also supported rubble removal with a total of 11 rubble removal contracts valued at over $1.6 million. I MEG tactical construction teams constructed entry control points to the city and improved firm bases for Marines and Iraqi security forces throughout the city.

4th Civil Affairs Group (4th CAG) spearheaded the

efforts to transition Fallujah to local control. With the beginning of kinetics, the 4th Civil Affairs Group civil affairs teams began tactical engagement in support of Operation al-Fajr. Civil affairs teams in nearby Saklawiyah distributed food, water, and blankets to displaced citizens. As kinetics progressed, the civil affairs teams entered the city of Fallujah with their supported regimental combat teams. There, civil affairs teams began initial assessments for humanitarian assistance needs of the population and conducted assessments of key infrastructure/essential services.

Civil affairs teams began humanitarian assistance at local mosques where minor medical treatment was provided as well. Humanitarian assistance distribution sites also included the Fallujah Liaison Team (FLT) site and the cement factory north of the site.

Civil affairs medical officers established an ambulance exchange point in coordination with MNF-I whereby injured civilians would be transported to the Abu Ghraib General Hospital for treatment. Both the civil affairs group surgeon and Iraqi interim government Ministry of Health representatives conducted initial assessments of medical facilities in the city, and 4th CAG headquarters worked with the division staff to support the initial delivery of trucks of humanitarian assistance from the Iraqi Red Crescent Society.

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society delivered supplies to the citizens gathered at the Saklawiyah apartments and the Iraqi interim government provided supplies to those assembled near Habbaniyah.

4th CAG's Municipal Support Team held meetings with the military governor, General Abdul Qadr, to develop combined plans for reconstruction in Fallujah. The Municipal Support Team also engaged in key discussions with the Iraqi Ministerial Working Group concerning Fallujah reconstruction to include the establishment of a local 'Reconstruction Administration' to prioritize and coordinate reconstruction activities within the city. . . .

Elections in al-Anbar, an-Najaf, Babil, and Karbala Provinces

Just weeks after executing urban combat missions associated with Operation al-Fajr, I MEF was instrumental in securing legitimate elections throughout its vast area of operations, including al-Anbar, an-Najaf, Babil, and Karbala Provinces. These historic elections were accomplished despite a dogged, effective and brutal insurgency, which systematically targeted politicians, voters and elections officials.

I MEF planned for and oversaw a massive security and logistic support effort to the Independent Electoral Commission Iraq (IECI) and its contractors. This feat ensured that elections could be held as scheduled on 30 January 2005. Nearly one million people voted in Karbala and Najaf at more than 430 polling centers. Due to an impressive force protection posture and disruption operations, none of the polling centers secured by I MEF were subjected to an effective indirect force or direct attack.

Summary of Ground Combat Operations

Having identified the number and locations of centers, the I MEF staff began obtaining essential force protection and communication assets for the polling centers. Great resourcefulness and initiative was exercised to find products (walk-thru metal detectors, wands, barriers, commercial phones, etc.) that could be delivered on very short notice to al-Anbar sites to support election day activities.

The Independent Electoral Commission also stated in late January that it might not be able to hire sufficient polling center workers for al-Anbar by the election day. I MEF again offered support. Within days, I MEF's major subordinate commands, through coordination with community and government leaders, assembled hundreds of Iraqi citizens from al-Anbar to work for the IECI in polling centers. This local group included over 100 citizens from Fallujah who worked in polling centers across al-Anbar. In a logistical feat, 3d MAW and U.S. Air Force C-130s safely returned over 1,100 other IECI election volunteers to their home cities in south-central Iraq.

To support Iraqi polling center workers, the 1st Marine Division provided election support teams for each polling center. These support teams consisted of a senior noncommissioned officer or officer and a translator from the major subordinate element that was providing security for the polling center assigned. The election support teams had the responsibility to provide liaison with the Independent Electoral Commission Iraq workers at their respective polling centers and to help coordinate security, life support and training for the elections. The election support teams met their polling center workers at

Taqqadum and arranged for their air transport from Taqqadum to various forward operating bases throughout al-Anbar. Upon arrival at the forward operating bases, each election support team and the Independent Electoral Commission workers were transported to the designated polling centers and immediately began setting up the spaces to be ready by 0700 on 30 January 2005 for the voters. For many teams, this resulted in a 24-hour day and then another full day of working security issues for voters. On the morning of election day, these election support teams moved out of the polling center along with the Marines and soldiers who were providing outer cordon security.

As a collateral mission, I MEF sought to ensure that all polling center workers, both locally recruited and electoral commission provided, had a very positive experience. I MEF succeeded in sending all the workers home enthusiastic about their positive experiences with MNF and the democratic process. This extra effort was believed essential to support successful polling center recruiting for future elections in October and December of 2005.

Another challenge I MEF faced was the lack of effort and the lack of success the Independent Electoral Commission Iraq had experienced in providing voter education on the election and the election process. I MEF information operations worked closely with the electoral commission, producing and distributing hundreds of products released in concert with a deliberate education campaign. This campaign was designed to inform voters of the existence of the election, the date of the election, the importance of the election to Iraq's future, and then in the last few days the exact locations of polling centers. Polling center locations were not released until 28 January 2005 for force protection reasons.

In conjunction with the information operations campaign, I MEF leadership, supported by civil affairs Marines, engaged almost daily with local and provincial government leaders, sheiks, religious leaders, former military leaders, and business leaders to solicit their support for the elections. Battalion commanders, regimental/brigade/MEU commanders, as well as the assistant division commander and commanding general promoted the elections message. This multifaceted method of delivering the message proved highly successful, particularly in Fallujah.

On 30 January 2005, all division polling centers were set for success. All polling centers opened on time. Citizens voted at all centers. No injuries or fatalities were incurred at any center. Ballots were tallied, boxed, and returned to Taqqadum without incident. Locally hired workers were paid on site and released in good spirits. Within 48 hours and as planned, all polling centers had been cleared of personnel, equipment, and barriers and returned to their original state.

Summary of Air Combat Operations

3d MAW was tasked to support I MEF operations to ensure successful elections within the al-Anbar Province. In order to ensure success, 3d MAW conducted offensive air and assault support. Offensive air operations disrupted anti-Iraqi Forces and prevented interference with elections. Assault support ensured safe transport of Independent Electoral Commission Iraq polling workers and material throughout the area of responsibility.

3d MAW safely flew over 500 sorties in support of the actual election movement, flying over 4,080 passengers and 83,570 pounds of polling materials in a four-day period, spanning the I MEF area of operations from an-Najaf in southern Najaf Province to al-Qaim in northwestern al-Anbar Province.

During Operation Citadel II, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing transported over 4,002 passengers and 80,880 pounds of cargo. This effort was conducted by over 455 carefully planned sorties. Maintaining this level of vigilance and focus on mission over such a long period of time was truly noteworthy.

Summary of Combat Service Support Operations

To support Electoral Commission Elections, 1st FSSG's support was broken into 5 phases to mirror the phases of I MEF operations. Each phase utilized the current infrastructure to enable the Iraqi national elections to move forward in the al-Anbar Province. During Phase I, 1st FSSG built 'Iron Mountains' within all forward operating bases and set infrastructure in place to receive, billet and provide basic life support to over 1,000 electoral commission personnel. During Phase II, 1st FSSG received and secured the Independent Electoral Commission Iraq polling materials and personnel aboard Camp Taqaddum in support of elections within Anbar Province. The materi-

als were sorted, distributed and staged at the forward staging location. During Phase III, 1st FSSG prepared, and distributed the necessary materials and life support for three days of supply to the polling centers. During Phase IV, 1st FSSG broke down the electoral commission into flight groups for onward movement by 3d MAW to the polling centers IOT to begin election operations. During Phase V, 1st FSSG ensured the polling center materials and nonconsumable life support was retrograde from the polling centers and collated at Camp Taqaddum. . . .

End State

Unlike other areas of Iraq, I MEF was requested to provide unprecedented direct security and logistical support to the electoral commission. In addition to tight security around polling areas, I MEF single-handedly accounted for all voter education efforts in al-Anbar. Also, in a logistical feat, I MEF was solely responsible for the unprecedented recruitment, out-fitting, berthing and tactical movement of electoral commission workers throughout the al-Anbar Province.

Intelligence reports through election day indicated that I MEF disruption actions (i.e., snap vehicle checkpoints, cordon and search operations, high value targets, targeted raids, and presence operations) made it difficult for the insurgency to conduct deliberate operations or plan actions against voting centers. The absence of attacks against polling centers on election day is evidence of the success of this offensive strategy and the quality of its execution. I MEF sustained only one friendly killed in action on election day.

The success of the historic free and balanced elections in Iraq is attributable to I MEF's "behind the scenes" planning, logistical support, voter education, and Independent Electoral Commission employment efforts. These elections represented a significant boost to the interim Iraqi government and swayed many uncommitted Iraqis that the insurgency was impotent to halt the progress of democracy.

Notes

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Operation Al-Fajr: The Battle of Fallujah—Part II

by Lieutenant General John F. Sattler and Lieutenant Colonel Daniel H. Wilson
Marine Corps Gazette, July 2005

Operation al-Fajr represented a major success for the Iraqi government and Coalition forces. The November 2004 assault and subsequent reconstruction efforts have turned Fallujah from an insurgent base of operations into the cornerstone of progress in the al-Anbar Province. Success in Operation al-Fajr resulted from pre-battle shaping (information operations, feints, and precision air strikes), the contribution of Iraqi and joint forces, and the indomitable fighting spirit of the Coalition forces.

Background

The first battle of Fallujah (Operation Vigilant Resolve) was fought from 5 to 30 April 2004, and ended with an agreement to cede the security responsibilities within the city to the hastily formed Fallujah Brigade. The agreement included provisions for the surrender of heavy weapons by insurgents and stipulated that the Fallujah Brigade would initiate investigations to identify the murderers and mutilators of the four American citizens (Blackwater employees) killed on 31 March. There was a feeble attempt by the Fallujah Brigade to collect and turn over weapons and ammunition to our forces that netted a few small pickup trucks' worth of rusty, inoperable rifles, mortar tubes, and mortar rounds. The insurgent and terrorist factions in Fallujah used their sanctuary to turn the "City of Mosques" (officially 72) into a way station for exporting their acts of terror to all parts of Iraq. Foreign fighters, weapons, ammunition, equipment, and money were all brought into the insurgent safe haven and facilitated their activities against Coalition forces and the people of Iraq.

Our planners immediately resumed planning for combat operations in Fallujah. All felt it was not a matter of "if" but just a matter of "when" those operations would commence. The situation in Fallujah continued to deteriorate through the summer months (2004) and into the fall. A slow drain of the city's estimated 250,000 residents occurred as the insurgents and terrorists expanded their grip over the populace through intimidation, brutality, and murder. The effectiveness of the Fallujah Brigade quickly waned as various insurgent and terrorist groups vied for greater control in the city. While some viewed the Fallujah Brigade as a failed experiment, it actually provided an insight into the insurgency that was previously nonexistent. The Fallujah Brigade was an Iraqi solution to the Fallujah problem, and when it failed to maintain the peace, the blame could no longer be pinned on the Coalition forces. In fact, the failure of the Fallujah Brigade provided the Coalition forces with opportunities for the psychological operations (PsyOp) campaign that was effective in driving a wedge between competing factions and the residents of Fallujah. For example, it was pointed out in PsyOp products that the lack of stability in Fallujah, caused by factional infighting, denied the residents the benefit of $30 million waiting to be invested in community improvement projects. Equally significant, the Fallujah Brigade experiment demonstrated that the insurgency was factionalized, and therein was its real weakness. Without the presence of Coalition forces to galvanize cooperation, the factions would fight each other for dominance.

The Threat

The threat in Iraq comes from a variety of insurgent, terrorist, tribal, extremist, and criminal networks—each with its own agenda. Foreign fighters are mixed in with these networks, with the primary foreign threat represented by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and his al-Qaeda terrorist network. While there is no single unifying leader of the insurgency,

these various groups cooperate with each other in a loose alliance when it is convenient to do so.

The predominant insurgent and terrorist leaders in Fallujah were Sheik Abdullah Janabi, Omar Hadid and, of course, al-Zarqawi. These three thugs were the real power brokers in the city and collaborated when it suited their purposes. In early August, when Lieutenant Colonel Suleiman [Hamad al-Marawi], Commander, 506th Iraqi National Guard (ING) Battalion, confronted Hadid about the abduction of his intelligence officer, he himself was abducted and beaten to death. Residents understood that the real message behind this brutal murder was that Omar Hadid was a force to be reckoned with in Fallujah. Reporting suggested that he had as many as 1,500 fighters loyal to him. Inside sources also reported that Sheik Janabi was complicit in the murder of Lieutenant Colonel Suleiman and had even presided over a Sharia court that found the commander guilty of treason through his association with Coalition forces. This incident was a red flag to the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) and the Interim Iraqi Government (IIG). It signaled the complete loss of any legitimate provision of security to the residents of Fallujah. Coupled with the theft of weapons, vehicles, and equipment from the compounds of the 505th and 506th ING Battalions, it became clear that Fallujah needed to be liberated from the mugs, thugs, and intimidators. The IIG put out a decree disbanding the 505th and 506th ING Battalions. The ING battalions had become ineffective, and many of their members were themselves involved in insurgent activities. Fallujah had become the bright ember in the ash pit of the insurgency, and the IIG knew it must be eliminated.

The threat assessment of Fallujah in September and October 2004 revealed that the insurgents were fully expecting an attack by Coalition forces. Three hundred and six well-constructed defensive positions were identified, many of which were interlaced with improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The orientation of the bulk of their defenses indicated that they expected an attack into the southeast sector of the city, leading the planners to recommend an attack from north to south. Intelligence also identified 33 of 72 mosques in Fallujah being used by insurgents to conduct meetings, store weapons and ammunition, interrogate and torture kidnap victims, and conduct illegal Sharia court sessions. In our experience, the insurgents and terrorists justify their actions as jihad (holy war) when it is convenient, and in order to appeal to a broader Muslim audience, but their actual actions and motives are in stark contrast to the religious tenets of Islam.

Operations Planning

Planning for combat operations in Fallujah continued during September and October. Intelligence improved as captured insurgents turned on their "brothers." The results of precision targeting of insurgent safe houses began to have the desired effect. Insurgent factions were turning on one another, as each suspected the other of providing us with intelligence. It seemed to them that our intelligence was too good for it not to have come from inside sources, and in some instances it did. Through various means that idea was perpetuated and encouraged, which increased the internecine strife among insurgent groups. We estimated that there were approximately 5,600 insurgent fighters operating in the Fallujah-Ramadi corridor at that time, with 4,500 in the city of Fallujah, including foreign fighters and terrorists. It is more probable that there were actually closer to 3,000 in Fallujah at the time, and this proved to be quite close to the number actually captured or killed during the major kinetic phase of operations.

The MEF plan called for five phases. Initially, it was named Operation Phantom Fury, but then was appropriately renamed by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi as Operation al-Fajr (New Dawn). We knew it would be important to include the Iraqi security forces (ISF) in the battle and have the decision to conduct the operation made by none other than the Prime Minister himself. Previously, during the April battle of Fallujah, only the 36th Iraqi Commando Battalion had joined us for the fight, with the remainder of assigned Iraqi forces refusing to deploy. During August two Iraqi Intervention Force (IIF) battalions had fought side-by-side with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (11th MEU) in Najaf, reinforced by two U.S. Army battalions, to crush Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi militia

around the Imam Ali and Kufa Mosques. These same two IIF battalions, along with six other ISF battalions, joined the I MEF for Operation al-Fajr. The ISF had come a long way by November in their training and willingness to fight.

Phase I of Operation al-Fajr was preparation and shaping. The primary activities during this phase were moving the forces into position, building the iron mountain (prestaged supplies, ammunition, and fuel), collecting intelligence, planning, and shaping the battlefield by various means, both kinetic and nonkinetic. This shaping was steady and precise for two months prior to Operation al-Fajr. Special operations forces (SOF) provided specific intelligence-based targeting information. These targets were struck with a variety of Marine Corps, Coalition, and SOF assets. Marine battalions manning vehicle checkpoints (VCPs) or participating in feints were extremely successful in targeting fixed enemy defenses and degrading insurgent command and control (C^2) capabilities. A series of feints conducted by 1st Marine Division (1st MarDiv) deceived the insurgents as to the time and location of our main attack. They knew we were coming, but they didn't know when or from where. The feints also allowed us to develop actionable intelligence on their positions for targeting in Phase II. The Commanding Officer, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, whose Marines manned the southern VCPs around Fallujah, described this period as a real-world fire support coordination exercise that provided a valuable opportunity for his fire support coordinator and company fire support teams to work tactics, techniques, and procedures and to practice coordinating surface and air-delivered fires.

Building the iron mountain was a concept derived from a lesson learned during April 2004 in the first battle of Fallujah. Our supply lines were heavily targeted at that time by the insurgents. A disruption of the supply lines was one of our worst-case planning assumptions, and building the iron mountain mitigated this risk. The just-in-time logistics concept was not practical in this situation. Quantity has a quality of its own, and the iron mountain was a textbook example of that maxim. Guidance for Operation al-Fajr was to have a 15-day excess amount of supplies, foodstuffs, ammunition, and fuel aboard each forward operating base prior to commencement of combat operations. The iron mountain also minimized the need for any routine resupply convoys to travel the dangerous routes. 1st Force Service Support Group (1st FSSG) was the main effort during this phase, and they literally moved mountains of supplies, equipment, and ammunition to build the iron mountain. Their exceptional around-the-clock efforts set the conditions for success during subsequent phases of the operation.

A monumental task of Phase I was the buildup of Camp Fallujah by the Marines and sailors of the I MEF Headquarters Group (MHG) as the central hub for C^2, logistics, and medical services. Camp Fallujah experienced an overnight surge as units poured in for Operation al-Fajr. Camp facilities felt the strain as they fought to accommodate nearly 2½ times the camp's normal capacity. The Seabees of the MEF Engineering Group (MEG) rose above and beyond the call of duty to build the East Fallujah Iraqi Camp (EFIC) after the contractor failed to fulfill his contractual obligations. The MEG built the EFIC in mere days to accommodate the ISF battalions that were arriving. A temporary joint mortuary affairs (MA) facility at Camp Fallujah was opened to provide excess capacity for casualties. This detachment was later moved to the potato factory just outside Fallujah to provide MA support for the insurgent dead.

Information operations in close concert with combat operations during Phase I encouraged Fallujah's residents to leave the city. A "whisper campaign," PsyOp, and multiple feints convinced the overwhelming majority of the citizens to depart Fallujah, while disguising when and where the assault would occur. Estimates are that there were less than 500 civilians remaining in the city when Phase III combat operations commenced. These efforts were instrumental in ensuring that few civilians were injured in combat operations. The information campaign was very effective and as important to this operation as the actual combat offensive to liberate the city. We stole the strategic communications initiative from the enemy and never gave it back.

We were keenly aware of the strategic necessity to get ahead of the bow wave of publicity regular-

ly associated with these types of combat actions. The influx of embeds from a variety of media outlets was welcomed with open arms. We were confident they would get the truth out if they were embedded with our forces. There were 91 embeds, representing 60 media outlets, at the peak of Operation al-Fajr. Their only restriction was not releasing operational information that would jeopardize lives. Anytime a significant target was struck, the public affairs section was ready with a straightforward, accurate, and timely press release. This guiding principle prevented us from being in the reactive mode of countering insurgent propaganda.

Joint and Combined Operations

Operation al-Fajr was joint and Coalition warfare at its finest. The best capability set was quickly assembled from throughout Iraq and massed for the battle. The flexibility of this force was later demonstrated shortly after offensive operations were underway, when the Stryker battalion (equipped with light armored wheeled vehicles—similar to the Marine light armored vehicle) was pulled in the midst of battle to return to its home area of Mosul in order to quell the insurgency there. The Army's Black Jack Brigade (2d Brigade Combat Team (2d BCT), 1st Calvary Division) arrived from Baghdad just days before the fight. A look at the task organization of the Black Jack Brigade is a revelation of the joint integration that existed for this battle. An Army troop of tanks and Bradley's was under the tactical control (TaCon) of 2d Marine Reconnaissance Battalion, which in turn was TaCon to the Black Jack Brigade, which in turn was TaCon to 1st MarDiv. Other Army battalions arrived that had participated in combat operations in Najaf during August. The heavy armor shock and firepower they brought to the fight was invaluable, and two of these task forces became the main penetration elements for our regimental combat teams (RCTs) in the attack. Joint special operations sniper teams (three teams of six) were integrated with the assault regiments. They performed superbly in the battle as a combat multiplier and were credited with numerous confirmed kills. All in all, the attack force included nine U.S. Army and Marine battalions, six Iraqi battalions, and attack aviation from all of the Military Services, to include naval air flying off an aircraft carrier. The full assault force included some 12,000 Marines, soldiers, sailors, airmen, and ISF. The keys to successful integration of this joint and Coalition force were complementary war fighting capabilities, a single chain of command, advances in technology, and the unifying vision of liberating a city from the oppressive grip of the insurgents and terrorists. Rehearsals of the concept and confirmation briefs solidified the plan in the minds of the combatants. You could feel the energy among the Coalition forces—it was a contagious, confident enthusiasm.

Other MEF units provided forces and supporting missions critical to the success of Operation al-Fajr. 11th MEU in the Najaf Province contributed a rifle company, sniper teams, an engineer platoon, explosive ordnance disposal teams, tanks, assault amphibious vehicles, air/naval gunfire liaison company teams, and additional linguists in direct support of combat forces involved in the fight. They also ensured the peace and stability in the Najaf Province during Operation al-Fajr, allowing the MEF to concentrate additional combat power for the battle. 31st MEU, U.S. Central Command's strategic reserve, was deployed to the al-Anbar Province just prior to Operation al-Fajr. They took command of the western area of the province from RCT-7. 31st MEU's presence freed up RCT-7's command post to participate in combat operations. The 31st MEU chopped their battalion landing team (Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 3d Marines) TaCon to RCT-7 for the Fallujah fight. 31st MEU conducted supporting operations that prevented foreign fighters, weapons, and financing from crossing the borders and points of entry (POEs) into Iraq. They enforced the IIG's complete closure of the Syrian POEs to military-aged males, preventing the insurgency from receiving foreign recruits for their cause. 24th MEU, operating in the northern portion of the Babil Province, kept a lid on the insurgency in their area. The British Black Watch Battalion deployed from southeastern Iraq in support of 24th MEU, and their combined force sealed off the escape routes of insurgents down through the Euphrates River corridor into Babil. 2d BCT, 2d Infantry Division (from Korea) conducted dozens of supporting operations in the Fallujah-Ramadi corri-

dor throughout Operation al-Fajr that disrupted insurgent activity to the north and west of Fallujah proper. The addition of units to the regular I MEF structure expanded our numbers from a pre-al-Fajr 32,000 to 45,000 during the operation. The temporary augmentation was needed for full focus of combat power, without any loss of capability in the rest of the MEF's area of operations. Everyone arrived ready for action, and the noteworthy performance by all of the organic and joined units guaranteed the success of Operation al-Fajr.

The final act of Phase I was the isolation of Fallujah through blocking positions established by the Black Jack Brigade. They were also responsible for security of the routes leading to Fallujah, coinciding with an IIG ban on vehicular traffic in and around the city. The IIG closed the border POEs from Syria into Iraq, which cut back significantly on the smuggling of foreign fighters, weapons, and financial support to the insurgency. A portion of the insurgent and terrorist leadership, in spite of public proclamations to fight to the death, had cowardly slipped out of the city with the civilian exodus. The insurgents still in the city were isolated with few options remaining—escape, surrender, or die.

Phase II, enhanced shaping, began on 7 November at 1900 local time—D-day and H-hour respectively. This was an intense 12- to 24-hour period of electronic, aviation, and indirect fire attacks against the insurgents' C^2 nodes and defensive positions. All fires were delivered against precise targets. The fury of the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (3d MAW) and all of the joint aircraft in support was unleashed. Artillery and mortar rounds added to the fires descending on enemy targets. The synchronization of fires into this confined urban area (5 kilometers by 5 kilometers) was facilitated by the establishment of a high-density airspace control zone (HIDACZ). The HIDACZ and fire support coordination measures, such as the coordinated fire line, allowed for the simultaneous employment of fixed- and rotary-wing fires in concert with ground direct and indirect fires, unmanned aerial vehicles, and AC-130 gunships. AC-130 aircraft in support of Operation al-Fajr were devastatingly effective in destroying targets with their accurate weapons systems. The Coalition Force Air Component Commander's air support operations center and the MEF's direct air support center synchronized and deconflicted the intricate movements of aircraft and indirect fires in and around the HIDACZ.

A ground attack was conducted up the peninsula to the west of Fallujah during this phase by Task Force LAR (light armored reconnaissance battalion [TF LAR]) to set the final conditions for Phase III, which included Marines of 3d LAR; a company from 1st Battalion, 23d Marines; a company of Soldiers from the 1-503d Infantry Battalion, 2d BCT; and the soldiers of the 36th Iraqi Commando Battalion. This attack was conducted as the final operation of Phase II to complete the isolation of Fallujah proper from the west, while the Black Jack Brigade isolated the city from the east and south. The hospital at the northern tip of the peninsula was also to be seized, as it had been used by the insurgents as a C^2 center and weapons storage facility.

The attack up the peninsula proceeded according to plan and accomplished its intended purpose. The 36th Iraqi Commando Battalion quickly seized the hospital from a small group of insurgents that included some foreign fighters. The bridges allowing access to western Fallujah were secured by TF LAR that encountered sporadic small arms fire and suffered some wounded from IEDs that were placed on the roads leading to the bridges. The insurgents mistook D-day for the actual attack, and cell leaders were on the speaker systems in Fallujah's mosques calling their fighters to pick up weapons and report to designated locations. This tactical deception was a useful diversion for the real blow to come from the north 24 hours later. It also kept the insurgents in an alert status for a full day, sapping their physical and mental energies for the real fight to come. Phase II was a crucial part of properly setting the stage for the main attack. The precision attacks degraded the insurgents' ability to C^2 their fighters and destroyed many of the hazards that would have impeded our forces' attack into the city.

Hammer Blows

The twin hammers of Operation al-Fajr were RCT-1 and RCT-7. They rolled out of their various staging areas through the night of 7 November and during the day of 8 November (A-day for attack

day). This was a sequenced movement of forces that first staged RCT-7 in position by daylight in the event that an early supporting attack was required to keep the insurgents off balance, or in the event that indirect fires made their attack positions untenable. The main effort, RCT-1, moved into position near simultaneously, but slightly behind RCT-7. RCT-1 completed its movement into its final attack positions just prior to the hour of attack (A-hour, 1900 local time). They literally moved into their attack positions and rolled onward into the attack. Each RCT had a penetration force consisting of an armor-heavy battalion TF from the Army. TF 2-7 (2d Cavalry Squadron, 7th Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division) led the way for RCT-1, with TF 2-2 (2d Battalion, 2d Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division) advancing in zone for RCT-7. These penetrating forces were critical to quickly slicing through the insurgents' defenses and disrupting their ability to conduct coordinated counterattacks. The firepower and armor protection these battalions brought to the fight added significantly to the capability set of the assault force. Marine and ISF battalions conducted supporting attacks and moved closely behind the penetration forces to conduct follow-on search and attack missions. The fighting was intense, close, and personal, the likes of which has been experienced on just a few occasions since the battle of Hue City in the Vietnam War. We attacked at night to take advantage of our superior night-fighting capability.

The assault force dominated the urban battle from the start. The Army penetration did what it was designed to do and fractured the enemy's ability to execute a cohesive defense. The young Marines, soldiers, and Iraqi soldiers expanded and cleared the wedge of remaining insurgent groups. Wherever the insurgents stood to fight, they died. In spite of their pre-battle braggadocio, they were no match for our combined and joint force. Many fought fiercely but were never able to overcome our troops' advantage in leadership, training, and morale. The smart insurgents quickly went into survival mode. They scurried from building to building trying to avoid our forces until they had a window of opportunity to make a suicidal defense that would produce the greatest amount of casualties among our forces. In some cases they built spider holes in the floors of houses and buildings to use as ambush positions from which to attack our clearing forces as they entered the structures. In other instances, they built "panic rooms" in the interior of structures, complete with light discipline, where they waited for an opportune moment to attack. The insurgency rapidly dissolved into small groups that moved between houses using tunnels, ladders across rooftops, and holes that they had knocked out of exterior walls. Oftentimes they would double back into an area already "cleared" by our forces and wait for their chance to make a last-ditch suicidal stand.

In our pre-battle planning we had anticipated reaching the center of town within 72 to 96 hours. In reality the battle progressed at a faster tempo than our best planning assumptions, with elements of RCT-7 crossing the road (Main Supply Route [MSR] Michigan/Phase Line [PL] Fran) that runs from east to west through the center of Fallujah in just 14 hours. The main effort (RCT-1) encountered some of the insurgents' toughest defensive positions in the Jolan District but still managed to fight to PL Fran within 43 hours of the commencement of the attack. The end of 10 November 2004—the Marine Corps' 229th Birthday—saw both RCT-1 and RCT-7 in control of MSR Michigan, having secured all initial 1st MarDiv objectives. Controlling MSR Michigan was a key tactical victory because it opened up a shorter resupply route from Camp Fallujah, three miles to the southeast. The 1st MarDiv's original plan at this point of the battle was for RCT-7 to reorient, drive to the west, and become the main effort. However, RCT-1 was doing so well in driving from north to south, and resistance had been heavier in the northeastern quadrant of the city, that an audible was called to execute a branch plan instead. We deemed that the time delay to move and reorient the necessary forces to attack from east to west would give the enemy a chance to catch his breath when we had him back on his heels. The branch plan involved both RCTs continuing on their north-south attack in zone to the southern portion of the city. The division's execution of the branch plan maintained the momentum of the attack. The RCTs continued south on 11 November, and by the end of the day their forward units were at the southernmost edge

of Fallujah. Full combat operations continued side by side with search-and-attack operations through the remainder of Phase III.

Phase III-B was the search and attack period of operations. There was no defining date that neatly separates the two subphases. Phase III-B activities featured small unit combat actions that were as equally intense and lethal as the Phase III-A combat operations. The city was divided into six sectors with the mission to go through each area in detail to eliminate remaining pockets of insurgents and to identify weapons caches. With the departure of TF 2-2 and TF 2-7 at the end of November, the city was reapportioned into four sectors, maintaining the same mission. Enough cannot be said about these competent professional soldiers who brought a tremendous capability and warrior spirit to the fight. In turn, they will proudly wear the recently authorized Blue Diamond patch of the 1st MarDiv on their uniforms.

During Phase III we actually commenced Phase IV-type humanitarian and reconstruction activities simultaneously with the search-and-attack operations. We knew it was critical to get a head start in restoring the city for the inevitable return of its residents. This is where the "three block" war literally became the "three building" war. On the same block, within steps of each other, combat operations were taking place in one building, while a few buildings away humanitarian aid was being rendered, and rubble was being cleared from the streets just down the block.

The search and attack operations of Phase III-B progressed steadily through the rest of November and into December. The city was divided into 86 sectors, and the status of operations was tracked with a color-coded map. Green, for example, meant that the sector had been cleared in detail, with weapons caches and boobytraps removed. Slowly but surely our combined forces turned sector after sector into green. Prime Minister Allawi wanted the city reopened to its citizens as soon as possible, but we held firm that the city needed to be cleared of insurgents and weapons caches before opening the floodgates to the residents. Too much blood of courageous warriors was being spilled to not get the job done right. Furthermore, we wanted to make sure that Fallujah was safe and secure for returning residents. We established a civil-military operations center (CMOC) at the site of the former government center in the heart of the city. Our Seabees and civil affairs group (CAG) personnel worked around the clock to prepare the city for the return of residents. Many of the streets were filled with rubble and downed power lines that had to be cleared. Portions of Fallujah are below the water table, and the water pumps that kept river water out had ceased operating. Standing water was perhaps the biggest problem and was eventually solved by the Seabees of the MEG. Essential services across the board were nonexistent. The CAG established three humanitarian distribution sites at key junctures in the city to provide relief supplies to returning residents. These sites eventually supplied humanitarian relief to 87,620 residents. The removal of enemy dead bodies was another important job that was completed by our joint MA teams. These teams worked closely with the combat forces, often at great peril, to ensure that enemy bodies were handled morally and in accordance with Islamic customs. In several cases the insurgents had boobytrapped the bodies of their dead in a final attempt to inflict casualties among our forces. The MA teams carefully recovered all located bodies and transported them to the potato factory for processing. Each body was meticulously checked and documented while being prepared for burial. Sunni Imams were flown in from Baghdad to perform their religious rites and ensure that the bodies were buried in compliance with religious traditions.

Open the City

The Prime Minister made the decision to open the city for returning residents on 23 December, and thus began Phase IV of Operation al-Fajr—the civil affairs phase. Reopening the city was accomplished through a sequenced phasing plan that repopulated Fallujah by opening up one district at a time (total of 18 districts) to returning residents. This control was necessary as there were still sectors of the city being cleared. Five entry control points (ECPs) were established at key roads leading into the city. Vehicles were searched by Marines and ISF soldiers, and military-aged males

were registered with the biometric automated tool set (BATS). The BATS was linked to a database that would alert us if a military-aged male had a previously recorded history of insurgent or criminal acts. Female military personnel played a critical role in this process by searching the women and children. Unfortunately, women and children needed to be searched to prevent insurgents from using them as smugglers. IIG workers and civilian contractors flooded the city to begin the process of reconstruction. We insisted that contractors hire Fallujan residents in their reconstruction projects. It was important that the rebuilding of Fallujah be an inclusive process, so the people of Fallujah would vehemently reject any attempts by insurgents to regain control. Thousands of Fallujans have been hired in the cleanup and reconstruction of their city. With unemployment running 60 percent in the al-Anbar Province, this was a win-win situation for all involved in rebuilding Fallujah. The CAG held weekly town hall meetings at the CMOC that were attended by national ministerial representatives, provincial government representatives, and local sheikhs. A $200 humanitarian payment was made to heads of household to help them get reestablished. It secured a temporary reservoir of good will with the returning residents. A total of $6,509,200 was paid to 32,546 heads of household.

The Payoff

One of the most memorable and gratifying moments of Phase IV occurred on election day—30 January 2005. Free from intimidation, the Sunni residents turned out in droves—proof positive that in an environment free of intimidation, the average citizen wants to exercise his or her right to freely determine his/her government. The 7,679 male and female residents who voted in Fallujah accounted for 40 percent of the entire vote cast in the al-Anbar Province. The elections were another strategic victory emanating from the decisive tactical victory of Operation al-Fajr.

The residents of Fallujah are eager about the opportunities that lie ahead. They are friendly and cooperative in our combined efforts to restore the city. One can hardly get out of a vehicle without being swarmed by children and residents. Residents have even identified weapons caches to our Marines and their ISF partners. A newfound sense of freedom and confidence prevails in the city, and the atmosphere is positive and electric.

The immediate impact of the first four phases of Operation al-Fajr has produced a turning of the tide in the fight against the insurgency in the al-Anbar Province. By the end of March we had recovered 629 weapons caches, just from the city itself. The amount of weapons, equipment, and ordnance is mind-boggling—literally, enough to equip a good-sized army. The number of attacks throughout the MEF's area of operations dropped 40 percent between October and December. The insurgents are on the run, and those who escaped have fled out west along the Euphrates River. The 1st MarDiv's subsequent pursuits, Operations River Blitz and River Bridge, further disrupted the intimidators' ability to conduct organized attacks and uncovered even more weapons caches they will not be able to use. Raids conducted with actionable intelligence continue to roll up cell leaders. Calls to the tips line rose 630 percent between the beginning of January and the middle of March, as the citizens are becoming fed up with the insurgents, who are turning more and more to criminal activities to finance their operations. Another good measure of the effect of Operation al-Fajr has been the 90 percent, across the board, rise in the price of weapons and ammunition on the black market.

It was recognized by the planners that the compensation to homeowners and businessmen for damage to their homes and buildings would be key to sealing the strategic victory. Full compensation would demonstrate to the Sunni residents that the predominantly Shi'a-controlled government cared about their plight and wanted to include them in the new Iraq. It would open up multiple avenues for the inclusion of the Sunni population in the political process and turn Fallujah into a model for the entire Sunni heartland. The tactical military success of November 2004 was subsequently turned into a political strategic victory with the issuing of the first compensation checks at the CMOC to Iraqi homeowners on 14 March. The Iraqi government made good on its promises, and the good will it has engendered will spawn a new era of political engagement with the previously dis-

enfranchised Sunni population. This, in turn, will be the death knell of the insurgency. While the tactical military victory of Operation al-Fajr was a knockdown blow, the strategic consequences that will flow from political engagement with the Sunni's will be the knockout punch to the insurgency.

The Future

Operation al-Fajr continues on, as Phase V has yet to be implemented—transition to local control—at the time of this writing [2006]. However, great inroads have been made in the right direction. The bulk of the joint forces providing security for Fallujah have been phased out. In their place, the ISF have increasingly taken control of the day-to-day security for the city. The ISF are the right force for this role. They instinctively identify foreigners and undesirables and stop them at the ECPs. They interact well with the local population and, since they are from other provinces, can resist the normal family and tribal influences of "homegrown" forces. Traffic police have been on the streets of Fallujah since February directing the ever-increasing volume of traffic as the city springs back to life. A new Fallujah police force is being established, with tight screening of applicants to ensure there is no return of the corrupt old guard. The new police force will start to populate the city this summer. Specially designed and constructed police forts are being built to improve their force protection and to reduce their vulnerability to insurgent attacks. In fact, these structures will become a model for other troubled parts of Iraq.

Operation al-Fajr was a classic example of integrated staff planning, interaction, and collaboration between the MEF's major subordinate commands (1st MarDiv, 3d MAW, 1st FSSG, MHG, MEG, CAG, and 11th MEU), the MEF staff, and higher headquarters. Commanders at all levels were personally involved on a daily basis in both planning and execution. The commanding general, 1st MarDiv, and key staff were up front every day during the battle to maintain their situational awareness and rapidly adjust to changing circumstances. The commanders of Multi National Corps-Iraq and Multi National Force-Iraq provided the MEF with tremendous support—evident in the allocation of roughly six Iraqi battalions plus the Army's Blackjack Brigade to the operation. They went out of their way to fulfill every request for additional resources—such as the extension of the Black Jack Brigade—and provided the political top cover that allowed the MEF to focus on the mission at hand.

The heroics and tactical details of the battle of Fallujah will be the subject of many articles and books in the years to come. The real key to this tactical victory rested in the spirit of the warriors who courageously fought the battle. They deserve all of the credit for liberating Fallujah. Their spirit is epitomized by an encounter with a wounded Marine noncommissioned officer at our Bravo surgical treatment facility on Camp Fallujah. When asked what we could do for him, he held up his right hand and extended his index finger, then replied, "Sir, send me back to my team. My trigger-finger is still good!" This indomitable spirit was the consistent theme of all of the wounded fighters. They wanted to immediately return to the fight with their comrades. We were honored and privileged to have had the opportunity to serve with the soldiers, sailors, airmen, special forces, Marines, and Iraqi soldiers who selflessly gave their all to liberate Fallujah. "Remember Fallujah" is no longer the rallying cry of the insurgency. Our warriors took that from them and made it our rallying cry.

Notes

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Who Won the Battle of Fallujah?

by Jonathan F Keiler
U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, January 2005

Was Fallujah a battle we lost in April 2004, with ruinous results? Or was it a battle we won in November? The answer is yes. If that sounds awkward, it is because Fallujah was an awkward battle without an easy parallel in U.S. military history. It is hard to say whether the drawn-out process of securing that medium-sized Iraqi city was a one-time event or the beginning of a trend. I hope it is the former. And to make that outcome probable, I will objectively evaluate the battle here and offer comparisons of Marine Corps and Israel Defense Forces (IDF) doctrine and operations.

The United States is likely to face more Fallujahs in the near future. The Marine Corps' reputation as an elite and feared combat force will ride in part on how Fallujah and similar battles are perceived at home and abroad. In evaluating the battle, I considered the differing objectives of the two opposing forces and how close each came to achieving those objectives. One side's objectives were more limited than the other's. Third parties, such as Syria and Iran, may perceive the battle differently. Reaching honest answers to these questions requires looking beyond convenient bromides that recount U.S. heroics or anticipate favorable outcomes that remain largely unpredictable.

*Operation Valiant Resolve**

After its impressive initial victory in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) returned to Iraq in 2004 to replace Army forces in parts of central and western Iraq. The 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment (1/5), was sent to Fallujah to relieve troops of the 82d Airborne Division. On 31 March 2004, four U.S. contractors driving through that city were ambushed and killed by Iraqi insurgents; their bodies were mutilated and displayed publicly before frenzied crowds in a scene reminiscent of the battle of Mogadishu. A forceful response was vital and anticipated widely. Accordingly, 1/5, along with the 2d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment (2/1), and supporting Army and Air Force special operations units were ordered to enter Fallujah for an operation dubbed Valiant Resolve. Their mission was to find and eliminate—or apprehend—the mujahedeen and any accomplices who had perpetrated the ambush. Resistance was expected. Rather than a stability and security operation, Valiant Resolve was to consist of deliberate assaults on prepared defenses.[1]

When the attack commenced 5 April 2004, lead Marine elements were engaged quickly by well-armed and organized enemy units effectively using hit-and-run urban warfare. Despite heavy resistance, the Marines limited their firepower, relying mostly on rifles, machine guns, and snipers. They restricted air support to Cobra attack helicopters and AC-130 gunships.[2] On a few occasions—only after considerable deliberation—fixed-wing aircraft dropped guided bombs on insurgent targets, including a mosque used as a center of resistance.[3] In general, Marine units fought with impressive skill and with exceptional care for civilian lives and property. This solicitude, however, quickly limited the scope of the advance to outlying areas of the city. They did not attempt to penetrate the heart of the city, apparently because U.S. casualties would have been excessive, as would casualties among the inhabitants. The Marines did not want to "rubble the city."[4]

On 1 May 2004, Iraqi insurgents took to the streets of Fallujah to declare victory over the Marines. "We won," an Iraqi insurgent told a reporter, explaining they had succeeded by keeping U.S. forces from taking the city.[5] Newspaper and televised reports showed Muslim gunmen celebrating their "triumph" with weapons, flags, and victory signs. U.S. authorities explained that a new Iraqi Fallujah Brigade would assume security duties in the city and ultimately accomplish the mission.

*Editor's note: The operation identified as Valiant Resolve in this article is much more commonly known as Vigilant Resolve.

According to the 1st Marine Division, by 13 April 2004, 39 U.S. Marines and soldiers had died in the battle, along with approximately 600 enemy fighters.[6] In much of the Arab and Muslim world, the Marines' withdrawal was viewed as a U.S. defeat, an outlook encouraged by Al Jazerra television and other Islamic media.

In some important respects, the initial push into Fallujah violated guidelines in the Corps' urban warfare manual, MCWP 3-35.3. Often cautionary, the manual discusses 22 examples of modern urban warfare in detail and warns, "regardless of the size or quality of defensive forces, the defender usually extracts large costs from the attacker in time, resources, and casualties."[7] Located 40 miles west of Baghdad, Fallujah is a city of about 300,000 people and 30 square kilometers of area. Its western edge lies along the Euphrates River. The Marines faced a mixed bag of urban guerrillas with few heavy weapons, but nonetheless they were armed for close-quarter combat. Before the battle, the enemy force was estimated to be 2,000.

Marine Corps doctrine calls for isolating cities before the assault. "No single factor is more important to success than isolation of the urban area." In all the examples provided in MCWP 3-35.3, "the attacker won all battles where the defender was isolated."[8] The two battalions assigned the mission also were to cordon off the city: 2/1 from the north and 1/5 to the south and east. Although both cordoning and attacking a city of this size was a demanding task for two battalions, it appears the Marines effectively isolated the city early in the operation.[9]

In addition to isolation, "overwhelming superiority is needed if all costs are to be minimized." Here it may be that the objectives and means of Valiant Resolve became incompatible. Two reinforced battalions were tasked with isolating and attacking a medium-sized city. MCWP 3-35-3 notes, "in an attack on a built-up area (population of 100,000+), the GCE [ground combat element] of a MEF would be a Marine division."[10] Fallujah's population exceeds 100,000, but it is not Shanghai. Thus, while a division (normally composed of three infantry regiments and supporting units) was not needed to cope with the insurgent force in April, the Marines were at less than regimental strength.

During the battle of Jenin in 2002, two Israeli infantry battalions engaged several hundred Palestinian guerrillas. Jenin's population of about 26,000 was much smaller than Fallujah's.[11] According to Randy Gangle, director of the Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities (a private concern in partnership with the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory), the Marines would have operated in Jenin with a single battalion, given its one square mile area." The refugee camp where the main battle was waged is smaller still and densely populated. A Marine battalion probably would have done as well as the Israelis in Jenin. The tasks assigned to 1/5 and 2/1 in Fallujah, however, were of a different magnitude and beyond their capabilities—at least within what were deemed to be acceptable limits of friendly and civilian casualties and property destruction. Superiority does not necessarily entail a numerical advantage in men. At the same time, urban warfare marginalizes traditional Marine attributes, such as superior training and discipline.

Depending on the tactical situation, manpower shortages may be compensated for by increased firepower, which Marine commanders were unwilling—or unable—to apply in Valiant Resolve. Indeed, it appears that leaders at the scene quickly came to this conclusion. The operation never progressed beyond the foothold stage. Marines gained access to the urban area (in that case, outlying industrial neighborhoods), but did not penetrate to the heart of the city, much less take it. After a few days of active combat, Marines cordoned off the area and the matter was "resolved" politically by establishment of the Fallujah Brigade. The bulk of the enemy force remained at large in the city and was reinforced. Fallujah became an insurgent stronghold and base for kidnappings, murders, and attacks that would cost the coalition dearly in the following months.

Operation al-Fajr

Between April and November 2004, both sides busily prepared for a rematch. Iraqi insurgents and foreign mujahedeen dug tunnels, emplaced mines and booby traps, and improved their defenses. Meanwhile, most of Fallujah's civilian population fled the city, which greatly reduced the potential for noncombatant casualties. The emptying city invited greater applications of air power. U.S. warplanes and

artillery launched highly selective attacks, weakening insurgent defenses, hitting leadership targets, and laying the groundwork for a renewed assault. Although some estimates put insurgent strength before al-Fajr as high as 5,000, many of them—including most of their top leadership—fled before the battle. When U.S. troops crossed the line of departure, it is estimated that 2,000-3,000 insurgents remained in the city.

The combined Marine-Army-Iraqi force for Operation al-Fajr was many times larger than the force employed in April 2004. Numerous press reports placed the total size of Coalition forces at 10,000-15,000. The actual assault element comprised about 6,000 U.S. troops in four Marine battalions (3/1, 1/3, 3/5, 1/8) and Army Task Force 2-2 (two mechanized battalions).[12] About 2,000 Iraqi troops bolstered the assault force, which was supported by aircraft and several Marine and Army artillery battalions.

With Fallujah cordoned by the remaining troops, the assault force struck from the north on 8 November 2004, quickly breaching insurgent defenses and reaching the heart of the city. Although fighting was at times severe, by 12 November, U.S.-Iraqi forces controlled 80 percent of the city.[13] Combatants and observers recognized a heavier and broader application of firepower. By 10 November, U.S. artillery batteries had fired at least 800 rounds into the city; a frequently cited report claimed 24 sorties were flown over the city on the first day of combat and a total of four 500-pound bombs was dropped.[14]

Fallujah is sometimes called "the city of mosques"; and insurgents made heavy use of them as command posts, arms depots, and defensive positions. Inside the Saad Abi Bin Waqas Mosque in central Fallujah, Marines found small arms, artillery shells, and parts of missile systems. Marines and soldiers engaged insurgents emplaced in mosques, but always with great caution and often using Iraqi troops to finish off assaults. It took Company B, 1/8, fighting on foot, 16 hours of house-to-house combat to capture the Muhammadia Mosque, during which time they were attacked with everything from rocket-propelled grenades to suicide bombers.[15]

Resistance stiffened in southern Fallujah as the assault force faced sometimes uniformed opponents who fought with increased professionalism and discipline. "When we found those boys in that bunker with their equipment, it became a whole new ballgame" said one soldier. He continued, "The way these guys fight is different than the insurgents."[16] Nonetheless, by 20 November, the attackers had routed the remaining insurgents and taken the city.

U.S. casualties in Operation al-Fajr were 51 killed and 425 seriously wounded; Iraqi government troops suffered 8 dead and 43 wounded; and as many as 1,200 insurgents were reported killed. Some knowledgeable analysts described these losses as historically light for an urban battle of Fallujah's scale—and there is a sound basis for this claim. The U.S. forces avoided major disasters like the Soviets suffered in Grozny, and even more limited reversals, such as the IDF suffered in Jenin, when most of a platoon was destroyed in an ambush.[17]

Yet despite the superb performance of Marines and soldiers in Fallujah, there is reason for concern. The 476 U.S. casualties represent about 8 percent of the total assault force, a low but not insignificant loss for less than two weeks' combat.[18] Moreover, a surprising number of U.S. troops are wounded and returned to duty in Iraq—about 45 percent overall. For example, as of 12 November 2004, I MEF Commander Lieutenant General John Sattler reported that, while 170 troops had been wounded seriously, another 490 Marines and soldiers suffered wounds but were able to return to duty.[19] Extrapolating U.S. losses based on a 45 percent rate of wounded returning to duty, actual wounded in Fallujah might have been 616. Considering General Sattler's actual figures, total wounded might have been more than 1,200 men (about 20 percent of the assault forces), a casualty rate that is not significantly lower than historical precedents. It is gratifying that U.S. troops are willing and able to fight on despite their wounds, but it is cause for concern when they are expected to take considerable casualties to spare civilians and infrastructure and appease the U.S. and international media.

Analysis

In many respects, the U.S. approach in Fallujah resembled Israeli tactics in the West Bank and Gaza. This is not surprising because numerous sources indicate that Marine and Army officers studied Israeli tactics prior to OIF. Israeli urban warfare tactics are sophisticated, effective, and well practiced. In many respects, however, the IDF has different operational

and strategic objectives from U.S. forces. In addition, the IDF historically—for example, in Jerusalem in 1967, Beirut in 1982, and Jenin in 2002—has proved willing to take high casualties in urban warfare.

Dating from the siege of Beirut in 1982, Israel has practiced a complex and limited form of urban warfare. In Beirut, this involved a cordon around the city, accompanied by limited attacks with artillery, ground, and air forces to put pressure on the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Syrian forces inside. The IDF did not launch a general assault on the city; it awaited a political solution that resulted in evacuation of enemy forces under the auspices of outside powers. Despite the IDF's restraint, it was depicted as little short of barbaric by much of the international media. The PLO's evacuation was treated as a victory parade, rather than the retreat it was, and the PLO lived to fight another day. The battle was a tactical victory for Israel, but a strategic defeat.

The Beirut experience and ongoing domestic and international pressures color Israeli doctrine. Throughout the current struggle, the IDF generally has not occupied Palestinian cities, a notable exception being seizure of the Jenin refugee camp. (The Jenin operation is the exception that proves the rule: the IDF was castigated for its assault on Jenin and falsely accused of perpetrating a massacre.) IDF urban warfare doctrine effectively bans the use of fixed-wing aircraft and artillery in support of ground operations. Troops rely on attack helicopters and direct fire weapons—usually only small arms and machine guns. Israeli units cordon Palestinian cities and towns, seize a few key buildings or areas, and launch raids against suspected terrorists. Although these operations tend to be quite effective tactically, they result in strategic stalemate because Palestinian forces are left in place after the IDF withdraws.

Tactically and operationally, fighting Israeli style in an urban setting requires a heavy commitment of ground troops to make up for reduced fire support, and to intimidate rather than confront enemy forces. This allows Israeli units to achieve limited objectives. In June 2004, the IDF's tunnel raids in Rafah, a small city in Gaza, required deployment of almost a division of Israel troops. (Israeli divisions are somewhat smaller than their U.S. counterparts, and the force in Rafah would have operated without artillery and other supporting elements). Rafah has about half the population of Fallujah (167,000) and it is tiny in comparison: 5-6 square kilometers.

In Valiant Resolve, U.S. tactics and highly restrictive rules of engagement closely mirrored Israeli techniques. Owing to these restrictions and too small a force, the operation was aborted, with arguably disastrous results for U.S. policy in Iraq. Many mistakes were corrected during al-Fajr. Heavy armor was employed, and air and artillery strikes were more liberally authorized. Even so, dropping four 500-pound bombs on the first day of a major assault remains an extremely selective application of firepower. Despite predictable claims that Fallujah was devastated, photos reveal superficial damage to most buildings and an occasional structure demolished. Television coverage of Marines engaged in harrowing room-to-room combat belie hysterical stories that entire city blocks were leveled.

What would have happened had we met a tougher, more professional opponent in Fallujah? The insurgents were formidable because many were willing to fight to the death—but in the main, they were an indifferently armed rabble who could inflict casualties because of the nature of urban warfare and U.S. sensibilities. What if U.S. forces find themselves facing Syrian commandos or well-trained Hezbollah guerrillas?

Conclusions

Large ground forces are necessary when U.S. units adopt Israeli-style urban warfare tactics—which, to a large extent, the Marines appear to have done in Fallujah. To accomplish their mission in Valiant Resolve, they needed a considerably larger force to operate in the absence of heavy air and artillery support. Further, Israeli urban tactics are designed primarily for isolating selected areas, not seizing and holding terrain and buildings. If U.S. forces intend to take and clear an urban area block by block, as they did during al-Fajr, they are going to pay a heavier price. The result in Valiant Resolve was similar to what Israeli forces have achieved against the Palestinians: indecisive outcomes that keep the enemy in business. Operation al-Fajr weakened the Iraqi insurgency, but it came too late and too temperately to have broken the insurgency's back, despite the claims of some U.S. officers. The men who killed the U.S. contractors—

the act that precipitated the battle—have not been found, much less prosecuted. Many insurgents escaped Fallujah during the buildup after Valiant Resolve, and al-Qaeda leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi remains at large.

Was the battle of Fallujah a victory or a defeat? The Marine Corps' military operations in urban terrain doctrine recognizes that tactical success does not necessarily translate to strategic victory. It notes the Israeli's tactical victory in Beirut was a strategic defeat—and observes the same about the battle of Hue in the Vietnam War, when Marines defeated an enemy that sought to put up a good fight but never expected to win. Much the same can be said of Fallujah's defenders. In spite of the beating they took in November, they will continue to assert they repelled the initial attack and fought well thereafter.

The potential problem for the Marine Corps and U.S. deterrence in general is more than just local. During a visit to Israel in the early 1980s, an Israeli acquaintance described his military service to me as "an Israeli Marine." Israel does not have Marines; he meant he had been in the paratroops, which were the best and toughest soldiers in the IDF. He assumed that an American would understand a comparison with U.S. Marines—and I did.

At that time, the IDF could deploy paratroops to disturbances in the West Bank or Gaza who, by simply showing up in their red berets, could settle things down. Much has changed in 20 years. Today, no Israeli paratrooper would be so foolish as to wear his beret in Nablus or Ramallah. Israeli paratroopers continue to fight well. Nonetheless, a couple of decades of persistent and inconclusive combat in Lebanon and urban combat in the territories have done much to erode their regional, if not international, reputation.

The handwriting is on the wall. The battle of Fallujah was not a defeat—but we cannot afford many more victories like it.

Notes

U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, January 2005, 57-61. Reprinted by permission. Copyright © 2005 by U.S. Naval Institute (www.usni.org).

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18. It is also nearly 50 percent of total U.S. casualties suffered in the initial campaign (OIF) between 19 March and 30 April 2003: according to DoD, 109 killed and 426 wounded and not returned to duty.
19. About 45 percent of U.S. forces wounded in Iraq are returned to duty and not evacuated. Karl Vick, "August: 1,100 Troops Wounded," *Los Angeles Times*, 5 September 2004; Spinner and Vick, "U.S. Forces Meet Fierce Resistance in Fallujah."

About the Author

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II Marine Expeditionary Force Summary of Action

by Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command

Unit: II Marine Expeditionary Force
Recommended Award: Presidential Unit Citation
Period of Award: 1 March 2005 to 28 February 2006
Status: Secretary of the Navy
Originator: Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command

Citation:

For extraordinary heroism and outstanding performance of duty in action against enemy forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 04-06 from 27 March 2005 to 28 February 2006. II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) executed a campaign plan utilizing kinetic and non-kinetic methods to establish a secure environment enabling Iraqi self-governance and self-reliance. Under the constructs of Operations Patriot Shield, Liberty Express, and Sayaid II, hundreds of aggressive counterinsurgency operations, ranging from information operations and reconstruction programs to high intensity offensive combat, were carried out. These operations, conducted in every major population center in the area of operations, resulted in over 1,700 enemy killed in action, over 10,500 detentions, and over 210 tons of explosives captured and destroyed. Anti-Iraq Forces in al-Anbar Province were effectively neutralized, setting the conditions for a 2,700 percent increase in voter participation in the constitutional referendum and the parliamentary election. Iraqi security forces were transformed from an unorganized body numbering less than 1,600 into a structured force with over 21,000 volunteers serving in army, police, and border

enforcement units. By their outstanding courage, resourcefulness, and aggressive fighting spirit in combat against the enemy, the officers and enlisted personnel of II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) reflected great credit upon themselves and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service. . . .

Operation Patriot Shield

This operation was designed to maintain Coalition force momentum and to disrupt anti-Iraqi force elements throughout al-Anbar Province and to train and integrate Iraqi security force units for combined counterinsurgency operations.

Ground Combat Element

During April and May, 2d Marine Division units simultaneously conducted over 30 major counterinsurgency operations and trained, integrated, and operated with newly formed and arriving Iraqi security force units in order to maintain tempo and disrupt Anti-Iraqi Forces (AIF). During Operation Patriot Shield, the focus of effort was neutralization of insurgent forces in the city of Ramadi, the provincial capital. Regimental Combat Team 2 (RCT-2) continued interdiction operations along the Hit and Haditha corridor, while Regimental Combat Team 8 (RCT-8) conducted operations to establish control of Fallujah, Zaydon, and Amiriyah. The subordinate operations Matador and New Market were especially noteworthy during this period, as they were conducted in the insurgent hotspots of al-Qaim and the Hadithah triad. This region was used as a staging area for foreign fighters who crossed the Syrian border illegally along traditional smuggling routes. In these areas, foreign fighters received weapons and equipment in order to conduct attacks in the more populated key cities, i.e. Baghdad, Ramadi, Fallujah, and Mosul. These operations resulted in a significant disruption of al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) operations along the western Euphrates River valley and served as the starting point for what would become a series of operations designed to maintain Coalition forces' momentum and neutralization of AQI as a threat by denying them sanctuary and restricting their movement and ability to plan large-scale operations.

The combined success of those operations resulted in almost 350 enemy killed in action and the detainment of over 2,000 insurgents. A number of high value individuals were among the captured or killed, dealing a blow to the leadership of AQI. The 2d Marine Division units also discovered almost 200 weapons caches which included approximately 8,000 mortar and rocket rounds, almost 20 SA-7s, and SA-13 surface-to-air-missiles, two complete mortar systems and eight 500-pound bombs.

Air Combat Element

During Operation Patriot Shield, the air combat element flew approximately 4,723 sorties and 7,609 flight hours. The missions flown by 2d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) (2d MAW [Fwd]) in support of Patriot Shield included assault support, close air support, aerial reconnaissance, offensive air support, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. Marine Wing Support Group 27 (MWSG-27) during this and other operations provided forward arming and refueling point support and other aviation ground support functions, and one tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel mission. 2d MAW (Fwd) executed 90 casualty evacuation missions, transporting 254 wounded Marines to higher level medical care facilities.

Combat Service Support Element

2d Marine Logistics Group (Forward) (2d MLG [Fwd]) mounted a complex logistic support plan through the distribution of Classes I, III, IV and IX supplies. A coordinated air and ground movement plan expedited the delivery of these supplies and made efficient use of all available transportation assets. Challenging the flexibility and capabilities of all involved, it demonstrated 2d MLG (Fwd)'s ability to provide a quick response and consistent logistical support.

During Operation Matador, Combat Logistics Battalion 2 (CLB-2), with support from 2d MLG (Fwd), provided critical combat logistical support contributing to another successful phase in com-

bat operations. Logistical support included: Explosive Ordnance Demolition teams, female search teams, fiscal support, mortuary affairs, medical aid as well as a consistent stream of supplies (classes I, II, III, V, VIII, and IX). This consistent and ready effort ensured a healthy and superior combat force.

Operation Guardian Sword

This operation commenced on 6 June and lasted through the month of July, focusing on neutralizing insurgents and strengthening the Iraqi security forces.

Ground Combat Element

On 6 June, 2d Marine Division began a series of counterinsurgency operations in support of Operation Guardian Sword. This division operation focused on shaping conditions to support the upcoming Iraqi constitutional referendum and national elections by preventing anti-Iraqi forces from intimidating the Iraqi populace. Most importantly this Operation effectively prevented AQI disruption of the relief in place of OIF 04-06-1 and 04-06-2 forces. Throughout Operations Khanjar and Scimitar (RCT-8) and Spear, Scimitar, and Saber (RCT-2); and 2d Brigade Combat Team's (2 BCT) small unit counterinsurgency operations in Ramadi, the division killed over 250 insurgents while detaining over 2,000. In addition, units discovered over 150 weapons caches containing 2,500 mortar and rocket rounds and 23,500 pounds of bombs. One of the most significant caches was discovered during an RCT-8 operation in Karmah. Coalition forces discovered a subterranean insurgent complex, consisting of a series of underground bunkers in an old rock quarry approximately 170 meters wide by 275 meters long. Within various rooms, Coalition forces discovered four fully furnished living spaces, a kitchen with fresh food, two shower facilities and a working air conditioner. Other rooms were filled with numerous weapons and ammunition to include various types of machine guns, ordnance, to include mortars, rockets and artillery rounds, black uniforms, ski masks, night vision goggles, and communications equipment. The net effect of these operations were a series of efficient transfers of authority between 35 maneuver units. Incoming units assumed their responsibilities and battlespace with no loss in continuity of operations.

Air Combat Element

During this operation, 2d MAW (Fwd) flew approximately 8,134 sorties and 13,974 flight hours. 2d MAW (Fwd)'s direct support of combat sustainment included strip alert assets constantly maintained at the ready to provide casualty evacuation / medical evacuation, of which there were 49 casualty evacuation missions for 598 casualties, tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel/quick reaction force (QRF), and both rotary-wing and fixed-wing close air support in response to troops in contact and the needs of II MEF (Fwd).

Combat Service Support Element

2d MLG (Fwd), Combat Logistics Battalion 2 (CLB-2), and Combat Logistics Battalion 8 (CLB-8) provided a variety of combat support to include the recovery of vehicles with their maintenance detachments, repair of vital alternate supply routes and main supply routes to deny the insurgents improvised explosive device emplacement opportunities. Alternate supply routes and main supply route maintenance was critical in keeping Multi National Force-West (MNF-W) stocked with combat supplies (classes I, II, III, V, VIII, and IX).

During Operation Spear, from 15-19 June 2005 in the al-Qaim region, CLB-2 provided a variety of combat support to include the recovery of vehicles with their maintenance detachment and a personnel recovery mission by Mortuary Affairs Marines. This service was critical in keeping 2d Marine Division mobile and strong.

During Operation Dagger, CLB-8 assisted greatly with combat logistic resupply of Classes I, II, III, V, VIII and IX. Due to the unique weather patterns of the Shamal, or sandstorm, season which occurred during the timeframe of this operation, exceptional logistic support measures had to be taken. Because of the potential that airfield operations would be shut down and aircraft

grounded, CLB-8 forward deployed a forward resuscitative surgical section, in order to provide a level II surgical capability for the units participating in Operation Dagger. CLB-8 also assisted RCT-8 in securing the main supply routes in the area of operations during this timeframe by creating Team Truck, a task organized force of both motor transport and military police vehicles and personnel that assisted in patrolling the main supply routes and alternate supply routes.

During Operation Sword, conducted in the Hit and Haditha region, CLB-2 provided combat resupply and maintenance support. The 2d MLG (Fwd) developed and enacted a survivability plan that supplied protective barriers to reinforce the camps from indirect fire, as well as vehicular threats, along with multiple resupply missions to maintain a superior force. This effort continued throughout the month of June.

Triad Region

Ground Combat Element

Operation River Gate was conducted from 3-19 October in the cities of Hadithah, Haqlaniyah and Barwanah. Iraqi security forces; 3d Battalion, 1st Marines; 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion; and the 3d Battalion, 504th Infantry Regiment (U.S. Army), conducted counterinsurgency operations to continue the disruption of insurgents and secure the triad region. Coalition forces encountered numerous small arms fire attacks and 13 improvised explosive device attacks during the operation. Over 172 insurgents were detained, 12 enemy killed in action, 32 caches were discovered along with 95 improvised explosive devices and mines. At the completion of the operation a permanent firm base was establish to provide continued security.

Air Combat Element

The air combat element once again found themselves participating in several combat operations. The major operation throughout the month was Operation River Gate. The operation was the first thrust of a planned string of operations to clear the Euphrates corridor of insurgent activity. The operation lasted over three weeks, with MAG-26 assets successfully launching heliborne assaults with ground elements of the 82d Airborne, 1st Recon, 2d Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Division of the Iraqi Army and 2d Marine Division with the units surrounding the town of Haditha.

Combat Service Support Element

During Operation River Gate, CLB-2 provided combat logistics support to RCT-2 throughout the operation. From the onset of the operation, CLB-2 pushed forces from al-Asad and established a repair and replenishment point, as well as a refueling point south of the Euphrates River between Hadithah and Haqlaniyah. CLB-2 put a provisional rifle platoon, a transportation and material handling detachment, recovery vehicles, engineers, heavy equipment, maintenance detachments and classes I, III (bulk fuel), IV, and V supplies at the repair and replenishment point. CLB-2 would eventually place over 300 Marines and sailors at this location while offensive counterinsurgency operations were conducted less than 1.5 miles away in Hadithah and Haqlaniyah. To free up combat power, CLB-2 assisted the regimental combat team in manning the defensive positions at the repair and replenishment point allowing the ground combat element forces to focus more combat power on the operation. . . .

Western Border Control

Securing Iraq's border with Syria became a critical necessity to achieving Coalition force strategic objectives. Anti-Iraqi forces using historical smuggling routes through the porous border, were fueling the insurgency by introducing a steady flow of arms, foreign fighters, and cash into the province. Under the construct of Operation Sayaid, a series of subordinate operations were planned and executed. These high-intensity, kinetic efforts: Iron Fist, River Gate, Steel Curtain, and Iron Hammer effectively disrupted and neutralized insurgent activities throughout the western Euphrates River valley, and more importantly set the conditions for the introduction of Iraqi security forces in the region. This permanent presence of Iraqi security forces has been a critical factor in preventing

insurgent groups from reestablishing themselves following Coalition force kinetic operations. The aforementioned operations culminated in a 30 November Iraqi border control ceremony held in Husaybah to symbolize the securing of the borders through cooperation of the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of the Interior, and Multi National Corps-Iraq.

Ground Combat Element

While Operation Liberty Express was still in progress, the division adjusted its main effort from the 2d Brigade Combat Team (2 BCT) to RCT-2 for Operation Sayaid. RCT-2 was assigned operational and tactical control of three additional Army maneuver battalions to provide additional maneuver capability for Operations Iron Fist, River Gate, and Steel Curtain. Operation Steel Curtain, the largest of the three, was a major counterinsurgency operation in the cities of Husaybah, Karabilah, Ubaydi, and Ramana in support of the Multi National Corps-Iraq Operation Sayaid. Operation Steel Curtain focused on disrupting and denying AQI safe havens and freedom of movement in western al-Anbar Province, establishing a persistent presence in this region, restoring Iraqi control of the border with Syria, and setting the conditions for the constitutional referendum and national election.

In order to effectively restrict and channel insurgents, RCT-2's area of operations was expanded north of the Euphrates River. Tasked to establish Iraqi control of the Iraq-Syrian border, RCT-2 began attacks from the Syrian border west into Husaybah with three reinforced battalions preceded by a mechanized feint into the Ubaydi peninsula. The 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, along with the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines and supporting Iraqi Army units, successfully attacked and cleared Husaybah, Karabilah, and New Ubaydi. Operation Steel Curtain was instrumental in causing a significant disruption to the AQI organization that has had lasting effects across al-Anbar Province. In addition to destroying much of the AQI leadership and command-and-control functions, this operation significantly improved atmospherics among the local population of western al-Anbar. Insurgent organizations in western al-Anbar had subjected the local populace to an intense murder and intimidation campaign that was successful in preventing locals from assisting Coalition forces. Al-Qaeda freedom of movement and sanctuary were denied. The AQI infrastructure and terror campaign was neutralized. A permanent Iraqi security force presence is now established across much of the western Euphrates River valley, consequently eliminating AQI influence and restoring a sense of security among the local populace, who are now more willing to cooperate and assist Coalition and Iraqi Army forces.

Essential to the effort of securing the border has been the integration of the Iraqi border police into Coalition force activities. The 2d Marine Division in concert with Iraqi Defense Border Enforcement has helped to stem the flow of terrorists, weapons and money from Syria by continuing with the construction of a series of border forts along the entire length of the Iraqi-Syrian border. A brigade of Iraqi Border Defense Police has also been trained and equipped with assistance from the division. These border guards are now conducting patrols, detaining smugglers and infiltrators, and maintaining an active presence on this critical border.

Air Combat Element

2d MAW (Fwd) executed special planning and coordination for Operation Sayaid Phase II Bravo and Steel Curtain. At the completion of Steel Curtain fixed-wing and rotary-wing reconnaissance and on-call missions in the Husaybah area enhanced the security and logistical support for the 30 November Multi National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) Boarder Control Ceremony by facilitating the coordination and scheduling of assault support and F/W aircraft for combat air patrol. Extensive coordination between MNF-W, MNC-I, Marine Aircraft Group 26 (MAG-26) and various squadrons was also conducted to facilitate the successful movement of Iraqi Ministry of Defense personnel and their freshly recruited and or trained Iraq personnel in support of the Desert Protector program variant 2 and 3.

Combat Service Support Element

Cumulatively, support for these Operations

was provided by the 2d MLG (Fwd)'s CLB-2, with augmentation by Combat Logistics Regiment (CLR-25) and 8th Engineer Support Battalion (ESB). Logistical support included: explosive ordnance demolition teams, construction of 13 firm bases or battle positions and a steady stream of supplies (classes I, II, III, V, VIII, and IX) as well as medical aid from forward located repair and replenishment points established by CLB-2. The logistics forces established repair and replenishment points within contested areas of the operation in order to provide expeditious support to the ground combat element. This consistent and ready effort ensured the success of this series of intense, dynamic and wide ranging operations across the entire western al-Anbar Province.

During Operation Steel Curtain, CLB-2 established a forward command cell in foreign operating base al-Qaim. This command cell was originally intended to support Contingency Operating Location South construction. Knowing that they would have to surge forces to the al-Qaim region, CLB-2 planned accordingly by building an infrastructure to support up to 400 of its Marines and sailors in forward operating base al-Qaim. From this operating base the Marines pushed supplies and equipment in support of Operation Steel Curtain. Once again, materials, equipment, Marines and sailors could not be staged early in order to ensure Coalition forces kept the element of surprise. CLB-2 forces, supplies and equipment were surged to forward operating base al-Qaim just before the operation commenced and continued to push supplies forward from al-Asad throughout it. As the assault moved from west to east, CLB-2 established a repair and replenishment point at Camp Gannon and provided a provisional rifle platoon for security, vehicle recovery support, maintenance support, and Classes I, III, IV, and V supplies for the assault on Husaybah and Karbala. As these towns were secured, engineers moved in from forward operating base al-Qaim to build firm bases. The firm base fortifications provided force protection for units occupying these firm bases and provided a large physical presence in the towns. Speed was essential to provide force protection when the Coalition forces were most vulnerable (immediately after taking objectives) and to show townspeople that Coalition forces were there to stay. After securing towns, Iraqis woke up to heavy vehicles delivering hundreds of Texas (10,000 pounds each) and Jersey barriers as well as heavy equipment to fortify firm bases with HESCO barriers, guard towers, and bunkers. They built two firm bases in the town of Husaybah and a third firm base in Karabilah. CLB-2 also built a detainee holding facility and assisted in constructing and supply of a humanitarian camp for Iraqis fleeing the fighting during this phase of the operation.

To take advantage of the forces available and to exploit its momentum, RCT-2 extended Operation Steel Curtain into the towns of New Ubaydi and Old Ubaydi and the Ramana area, north of the Euphrates River across from Ubaydi. CLB-2 continued to provide logistics similar to what was provided for the assault on Husaybah and Karabilah but from forward operating base al-Qaim. This involved building several more firm bases and moving forces across the river. Also, CLB-2 supported another humanitarian camp near New and Old Ubaydi.

Iraq Security Forces

In order to help Iraq secure its sovereign borders, II MEF (Fwd) successfully engaged the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior and the Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq organization to obtain the support and resources to produce more border police and to build the necessary border fort infrastructure to defend over 1,000 kilometers of border area with Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. Additionally, II MEF (Fwd) and its seven border transition teams played a vital role in the organization, training, and equipping of a virtually ineffective border force. The Iraqi border forces grew from approximately 2,300 personnel spread over three brigades to 3,600. II MEF (Fwd) coordinated the construction of 30 permanent and expeditionary border forts. These border defense forces employed at the forts continue to grow in operational capabilities due to the employment of Border Transition Teams that are focused on deterring AIF activities along the Syrian border.

The G-5/civil-military operations cell purchased critically needed humanitarian assistance

supplies that were delivered and stored at Camp Fallujah. They were then shipped from Camp Fallujah to support Operation Sayaid II in the western Euphrates River valley. The humanitarian assistance supplies were used to support Internally Displaced Persons camps and other humanitarian requirements. In addition, supplies were used to support the humanitarian mission throughout the MNF-W area of operations including initiatives in area of operations Biloxi helping the Army civil affairs companies successfully complete their missions.

Referendum/Elections (Operation Liberty Express)

Operation Liberty Express, conducted September through December, focused on expanding Coalition forces and the Ministry of Defense/Ministry of Interior control throughout al-Anbar Province, while providing support to the Independent Electoral Commission in Iraq for the constitutional referendum and national elections. These two historic events were benchmark achievements in the story of II MEF (Fwd)'s involvement in Operation Iraqi Freedom 04-06.

Ground Combat Element

2d Marine Division units conducted over 30 major battalion/regimental operations designed to improve the security situation across the area of operations and create an environment conducive to safe and secure elections. Counterinsurgency operations were conducted in nearly every city across al-Anbar, including Fallujah, Amiriyah, Zaydon, Karmah, Saqliwiyah, Ramadi, Khalidiyah, Hit, the Haditha triad, Ubaydi, Karabilah, and Husaybah to capitalize on the progress made thus far in disrupting and defeating the insurgency while preparing the province for the upcoming elections. In addition to killing almost 1,000 insurgents and detaining almost 4,000 others, over 500 weapons caches were discovered. Some of the more significant weapons cache contents included well over 10,000 mortar, artillery, and rocket rounds, 5 surface-to-air missile systems, and 70 250-pound bombs.

The numerous operations conducted by 2d Marine Division in al-Anbar Province helped disrupt and limit the ability of al-Qaeda in Iraq to murder and intimidate the local populace, thereby ensuring the safety and maximum participation of Iraqi citizens in the constitutional referendum and national elections. The Iraqi security force (ISF), demonstrating significant progress, was responsible for providing security inside polling sites and the area immediately around the outside of polling locations. The presence of the Iraqi security force proved significant as it provided the voting populace with a sense of security and greatly enhanced voter turnout. The 2d Marine Division provided a wide range of support to bolster the efforts of the Independent Electoral Commission's Election Support Teams.

During the October constitutional referendum, 2d Marine Division provided security and logistics support for over 140 polling centers throughout the province. While tons of materials were moved to support the force protection requirements around many of the centers, another key activity was the movement of Iraqi poll workers from Baghdad International Airport to the two special poll worker camps in al-Anbar, and from there to the forward operating bases where they would stage prior to final movement to their actual polling centers. Over 1,300 Iraqi poll workers were safely transported and provided meals and quarters at the forward operating bases before and after Election Day. Additionally, 2d Marine Division personnel moved all ballots cast to the appropriate recovery locations. Overall, approximately 260,000 Iraqis voted in al-Anbar Province without incident. This total represented a 1,775 percent increase in voter turnout compared to the January 2005 election, and was a significant milestone on Iraq's road to democracy.

Two months later, 2d Marine Division replicated the security and logistics support for the national elections. With robust planning and smooth execution, the division provided extensive "long-haul" logistics support to 30 polling centers across the western al-Anbar Province and coordinated the movement and care of over 800 poll workers flown in from Baghdad. In the Ramadi and Fallujah areas, an additional 135 Independent Electoral Commission operated

polling centers were established to support the election in east al-Anbar. The expansion of this security model, limited to Fallujah during the constitutional referendum, was a testament to the rapidly improving capabilities of the Iraqi Security forces, as they again provided internal and point security at polling sites in a larger geographic area of responsibility.

The coordination of the support for the Independent Electoral Commission polling centers in Ramadi and Fallujah was especially complex since it involved synchronization with various commission officials, Iraqi police, and Iraqi poll workers. However, the movement of hundreds of thousands of ballots and related materials to three distribution points for Iraqi acceptance was executed with minimal difficulty. Furthermore, all ballots and poll workers in the western al-Anbar Province were retrograded as planned.

There were no significant insurgent attacks during the election period which recorded unprecedented Sunni voter turnout. Over 1,617,000 voters participated in the national elections in the MNF-W area of operations. According to official results from the Independent Electoral Commission, al-Anbar Province voter participation continued to increase, with nearly 374,000 voters casting ballots, accounting for a 2,690 percent increase in voter participation from the January to the December elections. Improved security conditions brought about by members of the 2d Marine Division provided hundreds of thousands of citizens in al-Anbar Province the opportunity to vote.

The national election was the first time Iraqi security force had an opportunity to vote in a national election. With extensive division support in opening 15 polling centers manned by Independent Electoral Commission poll workers around the province, about 12,000 Iraqi soldiers were able to safely vote on the 12th of December for the political party of their choice. The security operations and logistic support provided during the elections assured the smooth execution of both electoral events. Operation Liberty Express culminated in the successful 15 December 2005 election of a representative government for the country of Iraq.

Air Combat Element

MAG-26 helicopter assets provided aerial lift for over 1,000 Iraqi voting committee members to various polling stations throughout the al-Anbar Province for the October Referendum. Additionally, Marines and sailors from units of the air combat element provided security and search procedures at the polling stations. The success of the referendum was a direct result of Operation River Bridge and the aerial assets, which supported both events.

2d MAW (Fwd) also provided the flights required for Operation Liberty Express in support of the 15 December Iraq national elections. This included the coordination and scheduling of assault support and MNF-W and Combined Forces Air Component Commander/F/W aircraft for combat air patrol and aerial refueling. Extensive coordination between MNF-W, MNC-I, MAG-26, and various squadrons was also conducted to facilitate the successful movement of Iraqi Ministry of Defense personnel and their freshly recruited and or trained Iraq personnel in support of the Desert Protector program variant 4 and 5.

Throughout the months of September through December, the air combat element flew approximately 11,172 sorties and 22,012 flight hours in support of Sayaid, Liberty Express, and River Gate. Again, they flew over 1,000 Iraqi voting committee members to various polling stations throughout the al-Anbar Province.

Combat Service Support Element

Operation Liberty Express was a resounding success as the 2d Marine Logistics Group (Fwd) assisted the Independent Electoral Commission in al-Anbar Province in the planning and execution of the delivery and recovery of balloting materials and polling center equipment at more than 140 polling sites during the 15 October referendum, the 12 December election voting by the Iraqi security force and the 15 December general parliamentary election. CLR-25 was instrumental in the sorting, packaging, and delivering of all balloting materials throughout the al-Anbar Province as well as the eventual recovery and storage of reusable items following the elections.

Additionally, 2d MLG (Fwd) provided life support to and throughput of over 700 Independent Electoral Commission poll workers. To support the poll workers at Camp Taqaddum, a fully functioning temporary workers' camp was constructed, capable of housing up to 1,600 workers. The camp included biometric automated tracking and scanning of personnel upon arrival. The camp was constructed with numerous force protection barriers, and had security, command and billeting tents with environmental control units, sanitation facilities and a kitchen tent. In addition to general support for the entire area of operations, 2d MLG (Fwd) was directly involved in the detailed planning for the security for two polling sites within 2d MLG (Fwd)'s battlespace in towns near Camp Taqaddum.

During both the October referendum and the December national elections in the western part of the area of operations, CLB-2 assisted RCT-2 and the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) with the delivery of balloting materials and polling station kits in cities throughout the entire western portion of al-Anbar Province. CLB-2 also delivered and emplaced force protection barriers surrounding voting locations in Hit, Haditha, al-Qaim, and the Korean Village area, providing the ability to have polling stations protected from the threat of vehicle borne improvised explosive devices and indirect fire. In addition to delivering force protection materials, CLB-2 Marines assisted in the set up of polling centers across their area of operations. Once voting had been completed during the October referendum and December Iraqi security force/national elections, CLB-2 Marines were instrumental in securing and transferring ballots and ballot materials back to MNF-W forward operating bases for initial tallying and onward movement back to Baghdad for Independent Electoral Commission election validation.

In the eastern part of the area of operations during the October referendum, CLB-8 continued to provide direct support to RCT-8 in order to enhance the security throughout the area of operations, as well as ensure that the Independent Electoral Commission was prepared to conduct the election with all materials necessary. This included three barrier-emplacements, task organized around motor transport and engineer platoons, placing over 80 barriers that blocked off streets, allowing traffic to be more easily controlled in the city of Fallujah. For the Iraqi national election in December, CLB-8 was again emplacing barriers to support the RCT-8 security plan. This involved four task-organized barrier emplacement teams moving over 120 barriers. Two teams operated in the city of Fallujah, one in the city of Kharmah, and one operated in both Amiriyah and Ferris in the southern portion of the area of operations. As in the October referendum, CLB-8 ensured that the Independent Electoral Commission received all materials necessary for the election, and retrieved all material after the election. In both the October referendum and the December national election, CLB-8 established a Bravo command group at the Fallujah civil-military operations center, as well as establishing two maintenance/recovery quick reaction forces, and one clean-up/consequence management quick reaction force to rapidly respond to any developing situation.

II MEF Headquarters Group

In October of 2005 and again in December of 2005, the Marines and sailors of II MEF Headquarters Group established a camp at the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP). This camp was established to process Iraqi civilians who would then board aircraft for movement forward to Polling Centers throughout the western half of Iraq. Working closely with USAF flight crews, the Independent Electoral Commission, the U.S. Army's 3d Infantry Division and many others, II MHG moved 1,300 personnel to western Iraq in October, and nearly 400 personnel in December. Demonstrating exceptional diplomacy, skill and energy, these Marines worked through logistical, political, and security-related challenges to ensure that poll workers were present to support both events. . . .

Iraq Security Forces

At the time II MEF (Fwd) assumed responsibility for the MNF-W area of operations there were

two under strength brigades and no police in the al-Anbar region. As of 28 February 2006, there are over 21,000 Iraqi security force operating and functioning in the area. The growth and development of the Iraqi Army in al-Anbar has been particularly significant, growing from a force of about 1,600 to over 16,000 soldiers. These forces now consist of two full divisions, seven brigades, and 21 battalions.

Recognizing the need to establish conditions to enable the rule of law and an effective operating government, II MEF (Fwd) developed a comprehensive and integrated strategy to build and employ the requisite number of Iraqi army, police and special border police forces in the MNF-W area of operations. This strategy was wholly consistent with the theater commander's priorities and the U.S. national strategy to achieve victory in Iraq.

Iraqi Army Development

As II MEF (Fwd) set out to execute this integrated strategy, one of first priorities to build a capable Iraqi security force was focused on the disestablishment of the ineffective 60th Iraqi National Guard (eight battalions) stationed in the al-Anbar Province. These sectarian forces proved to be unreliable and susceptible to local insurgent threats and intimidation. Therefore, in March 2005, II MEF (Fwd) began to methodically and carefully disband the force by recovering all weapons and equipment and then offering the opportunity to integrate those that were interested into the regular army. By June 2005, six battalions were stood down and nearly 2,000 former Iraqi National Guard soldiers were assimilated into the regular Iraqi Army.

Once this effort was complete, II MEF (Fwd) realized that another Iraqi Army division was needed in the al-Anbar Province to neutralize the insurgency and create the conditions to develop local control and domestic security. To that end, II MEF (Fwd) immediately began the difficult task of standing up the 7th Iraqi Army Division headquarters and three brigades. This was a huge undertaking, but II MEF (Fwd) successfully stood up all headquarters; planned and coordinated all equipping and training; and deployed these forces to intermediate and final locations. This was a superb achievement that greatly improved the security situation in al-Anbar. Additionally, II MEF (Fwd) built and managed a temporary camp for 7th Iraqi Army division headquarters within the confines of Camp Fallujah; provided a military transition team out-of-hide for that headquarters; supported training of headquarters personnel; and successfully executed a move of the division headquarters to its permanent location in Ramadi (Camp Blue Diamond).

Another significant accomplishment was the employment and integration of the 1st Division Iraqi Army Headquarters and its subordinate forces. II MEF (Fwd) partnered and worked diligently to prepare and deploy the 1st Iraqi Army division headquarters into al-Anbar Province from its initial location in Tadji. In addition to preparing the facilities and infrastructure at Habbaniyah, II MEF (Fwd) coordinated and managed the successful and incident-free movement of 1,700 division headquarters personnel from Tadji to their new location in Habbaniyah during November and December 2005.

As II MEF (Fwd) continued to operationalize the Iraqi Army, one problem encountered was maintaining sufficient unit manning levels. Due to the harsh operating environment and violence associated with the insurgency, the 1st and 7th Divisions forces experienced high attrition. Since the national force regeneration system was not able to provide sufficient replacements, II MEF (Fwd) responded by utilizing the East Fallujah Iraqi Camp to conduct local boot camp training in order to produce trained combat replacements. As a secure training environment the East Fallujah Camp proved to be quite useful and helped train and produce more than 1,100 soldiers during OIF 04-06. II MEF (Fwd) continued to maximize the utility of the East Fallujah Camp and expanded its use for other Iraqi security force purposes, such as Iraqi police screening, and training Iraqi traffic police and public order forces. In this capacity II MEF (Fwd) used the East Fallujah Iraqi Camp to screen over 1,700 police candidates which contributed directly to building the Fallujah police force.

One of the key components of II MEF (Fwd)'s

strategy to develop the Iraqi Army were the embedded transition teams. These teams were critical to the Iraqi security force's continued improvement, assessment, and tactical employment. These 45, 10-man teams, a third of them formed internally from II MEF (Fwd) structure, lived with their Iraqi security force unit to facilitate their partnership and mentorship. The contributions of these teams were diverse and far-reaching. They provided critical links to training opportunities, access to Coalition effects, administrative tasks, a host of logistical support, and essential feedback on the current state of Iraq security force readiness. Coupled with effective partnering from MNF-W Coalition force units, the transition teams mentored and trained battalion and above headquarters and were instrumental in assisting their respective Iraqi Army units improve their capabilities to the point where most units can perform platoon, company and some battalion level operations. By January 2006, four of the Iraqi Army brigades and 10 battalions were either controlling their own battlespace or preparing to assume it. The Iraqi Army demonstrated their resolve and increasing capabilities during Operation Sayaid in the western Euphrates River valley and in other subordinate named operations. Additionally, these forces performed extremely well during security operations in support of the constitutional referendum and national election.

Iraqi Border Police and Iraqi Police Service Development

Concurrent with integrating soldiers into Coalition forces-led counterinsurgency operations, II MEF (Fwd) expanded and improved a regional department of border enforcement and police academy in order to meet MNF-W training needs. This academy was one of the first in the country to provide advanced, follow-on group tactical skills training for policemen who had recently completed their entry-level national training. It also provided basic training to Department of Border Enforcement forces. In just a six-month period, 24 II MEF (Fwd) Marines trained a combined total of 1,000 Iraqi police service and Iraqi border police personnel.

With Iraqi security forces established at cities along the Euphrates River valley, and along the border, the conditions existed to introduce Iraqi police. To date, II MEF (Fwd) has enabled the training of 3,100 new Iraqi policemen for service in the al-Anbar Province. These efforts were spearheaded by out-of-hide police partnership program teams operating at the provincial and police district level. These teams conducted screening, training, advising, and follow-on assessment. MNF-W equipped over 10,000 policemen in four provinces with weapons, individual equipment, communications equipment, and vehicles. Starting in March 2005, II MEF (Fwd) built a 1,700-man police department in the city of Fallujah from the ground up, restoring law enforcement services to an area of 240,000 people that had been without since prior to the Battle for Fallujah in November 2004. MNF-W also began the first meaningful police force reconstruction in other areas of the al-Anbar Province in over a year. These actions are set to be repeated in the districts along the Euphrates River valley. In December, II MEF (Fwd) initiated an aggressive police assessment plan in the cities of al-Qaim. By mid-February, II MEF (Fwd) assisted the Provincial Governor in shipping 1,400 candidates to the Baghdad police academy. Through this aggressive plan II MEF (Fwd) has set the conditions for the rapid growth of police and improved security throughout the western Euphrates River valley, as well as being able to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the theater commander's "2006 year of the police" campaign plan.

Iraqi Security Force Logistical Support

In order to successfully equip, sustain and support the Iraqi security force during OIF 04-06, II MEF (Fwd) developed and executed a comprehensive logistical support and infrastructure development strategy. II MEF (Fwd) worked tactical and strategic logistical issues through Multi National Corps-Iraq, Multi National Forces-Iraq (MNF-I) and Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq; which included procurement, military construction, developing Iraqi security force logistic policy, sustainment, life support, health services, maintenance, Iraqi camp management and distribution in direct support of training and

equipping an effective Iraqi security force. The magnitude of these efforts cannot be understated. To field, train and equip the Iraqi security force, 325 contracting actions valued at 27 million dollars were executed for life support, equipment, maintenance, services, sanitation and sustainment to the Iraqi security force operating in the MNF-W area of operations. Additionally, to support the material needs of the Iraqi Army, police and border forces, II MEF (Fwd) coordinated the transportation, security and delivery of 1,250 vehicles, 10,000 small arms weapons, 11 million rounds of ammunition, 1,400 pieces of communications equipment, 2,500 sets of individual police equipment, 8,400 sets of initial issue for Iraqi Army soldiers, 10,000 sets of cold weather gear, and 100 short tons of sustainment cargo. These monumental efforts ensured that the ever increasing numbers of Iraqi security force in the area of operations were adequately provisioned to focus on the maturation of their basic skills.

Many of the initial Iraqi security force needs related to facilities and life support. The Iraqi security force had few organic capabilities to support them, so close coordination was vital to ensuring Iraqi security force forces could sustain operations. One element of life support was a wide-ranging array of camps and bases in the area of operations to support Iraqi security force employment. II MEF (Fwd) coordinated construction of 17 Iraqi Army bases totaling $183 million, nine Iraqi police stations costing $10.9 million, and six border forts valued at $1.9 million. These bases and camps enabled an additional Iraqi Army division to be located in western al-Anbar Province. Beyond these fixed facilities, II MEF (Fwd) developed and executed an up-armor program for Iraqi security force vehicles valued at $760,900, providing better protection for 383 vehicles of the Iraqi Army and police from small arms and improvised explosive devices. To sustain the operational readiness of these vehicles and other equipment, II MEF (Fwd) coordinated and established over $300,000 in maintenance contracts.

Ground Combat Element

During the past year the Iraqi police forces have gone from being nonexistent to contributing to the security of Fallujah and other surrounding areas. The Iraqi highway patrol is patrolling the roads around Fallujah and Ramadi. The traffic police are directing traffic and performing other functions. The Iraqi police in Fallujah are patrolling the streets and arresting insurgents. In Fallujah, over 90 percent of the police force have attended formal training and are fully equipped to perform law enforcement duties. During the national elections in December, the Iraqi police provided security for the polling sites and poll workers. Their efforts combined with the Iraqi Army and 2d Marine Division resulted in the largest voter turnout to date in the province.

The division partnered Iraqi Army units with the division's RCTs and BCTs. Despite considerable logistical and life support challenges, the division was able to put in place all necessary resources in addition to force protection measures in time to receive Iraqi security forces. Within a short period of time the division established and equipped 16 Iraqi security force camps throughout the area of operations, in addition to more than a dozen firm bases. Division units demonstrated versatility and resourcefulness in their implementation of creative training programs for partnered Iraqi security force units. Their efforts considerably enhanced each unit's training and combat effectiveness in an accelerated time frame. The division's efforts, in concert with improved provincial relations resulted in a continually increasing Iraqi Army that grew from a platoon of 34 reconnaissance soldiers to two full divisions of 18,000 plus soldiers, a Border Defense Force of over 2,000 that patrols the Syrian and Jordanian borders and an Iraqi police force of over 11,000. During this period, the Marines, sailors, and commanders of 2d Marine Division worked tirelessly to train and fully integrate Iraqi security forces into unit operations, while overcoming the challenges of language and cultural barriers. After only six months, the Iraqi security forces are now involved in 100 percent of the division's unit operations. The success of their training and their unilateral involvement has been essential to the division's success during the electoral process and the growing progress toward positive opinions of the Multi National Forces by the Iraqi people. To

date, three Iraqi Army brigades and eight Iraqi battalions conduct independent operations and control their own battlespace.

Iraqi Security Force and Coalition Force Basing

30th Naval Construction Regiment: The 30th Naval Construction Regiment (30th NCR) planned and executed over 173 projects totaling over 240,000 man-days of engineering support while placing $49 million worth of materials and conducting over 1,100 convoy security missions (56,000 miles) in support of the continued development of the Iraqi security force and enabling Iraqi self reliance and self governance.

The 30th NCR provided engineering designs, bills of materials, CL IV material acquisition and delivery, construction of three combat outposts and seven Iraqi security force battalion base camps throughout the area of operations. This effort was timed to provide direct support to Operation Sayaid in the western Euphrates River valley and completing camps in time to field Iraqi security force forces prior to the December national election.

Critical supporting projects constructed and/or designed by 30th NCR include the following:

- Command Outpost South was designed and constructed to house and sustain 750 troops near the Syrian border south of al-Qaim. This project needed 8,000 man-days at a cost of $2.4 million in construction materials.
- Command Outpost North was designed to house and sustain 1,950 troops near the Syrian border just north of al-Qaim. The 30th NCR provided the designs and bill of materials for the construction of this $34 million contractor-constructed project and responded with an emergency camp maintenance detachment when a contractor solution proved unsuccessful.
- The Iraqi security force Battalion and Brigade Headquarters in al-Qaim was designed to house and sustain 1,100 troops and senior leadership of the Iraqi security force which provides the command and control of Syrian border operations. The project required 9,200 man-days to construct at a cost of $3.5 million.
- Command Outpost Rawah was designed to house and sustain 1,500 troops at a cost of $4.3 million and 14,000 man-days. This project was completed in similar fashion as the other command outposts.

The 30th NCR extended this capability to house and sustain over 5,000 thousand Iraqi security force and associated Coalition force battalion and unit personnel throughout the area of operations by designing, and constructing nine forward operating bases (FOBs). Each FOB provided berthing, dining and cooking facilities, force protection, maintenance yards, administrative facilities, armory, ammunition storage, fuel farms, and hygiene facilities for the troops.

Projects by location and cost of construction performed by 30th NCR include:

- Iraqi security force Base Camp Hadithah $596K
- Iraqi security force Hadithah Battalion $1.8M
- Iraqi security force al-Qaim Battalion and Brigade $2.1M
- Iraqi security force Hit Battalion $2.3M
- Iraqi security force Tiger Battalion and Brigade $1.2M
- Iraqi security force Ranger/Law College Battalions $309K
- Iraqi security force Commando Battalion $317K

Health Service Support: A key supporter to the II MEF (Fwd) Iraqi security force directorate, health service support facilitated both Coalition forces and Iraqi Ministry of Health medical support to Iraqi Army training and combat operations. The application of timely and persuasive influence on Multi National Security Training Command-Iraq assisted in formation of a medic training school and Iraqi Army Medical clinic at Habbaniyah Base. This action also resulted in establishment of the first Iraqi base support unit in al-Anbar Province. Additionally, a battlefield

distribution system using MNF-W medical logistics assets to deliver start up equipment sets and resupply items for all Iraqi Battalions with medical personnel was set up to assist Iraqi logistics development.

Health service support coordinated medical support plans with the Iraqi security force directorate to provide medical support to 20,000 Iraqi Army soldiers and 30 U.S. transition teams. The establishment of level one and level two medical care for the Iraqi Army was critical to the survival of innumerable wounded Iraqi soldiers. Health service support communicated with multiple organizations to facilitate the movement of medical supplies to Iraqi Ministry of Health facilities in al-Anbar Province in support of civil affairs actions.

Reconstruction

The security and support of the provincial and local governments were critical to the success of Coalition forces throughout al-Anbar Province. Prior to February 2005, the provincial government of al-Anbar and the city councils of most major cities in the province were completely ineffective. Those governing bodies that did exist were intimated and infiltrated by insurgents. Fallujah was the only major city in which the insurgents had been driven out and the citizens were attempting to begin self-governance. During the past year the 2d Marine Division has driven the insurgents out of all the major cities; Ramadi, Habbaniyah, al-Qaim, and Rutbah. In the process several smaller towns have also been made safe for the citizens of Iraq. Immediately after each city or town was cleared of insurgents the 2d Marine Division began to work with the leadership of the city. The 2d Marine Division commanders maintained a continuous dialogue with local officials in order to address their needs and determine priorities for projects to improve the quality of life for Iraqi citizens. The division has also greatly assisted the provincial government. When the newly elected governor was kidnapped and later killed during a gun battle with insurgents, the division helped the provincial government work through the transition of authority in accordance with the established Iraqi rules applicable to the situation.

Headquarters Battalion, 2d Marine Division installed a communications network at the provincial civil-military operations center to support Coalition efforts to bolster capabilities of the Iraqi transitional government. This service helped facilitate a more expeditious flow of information to research and staff reconstruction projects on behalf of the Iraqi people. RCT-8's civil affairs detachment rehabilitated the Fallujah mayor's building. The facility was later used to relocate Fallujah governance and create a backdrop of governmental autonomy and self-sufficiency.

2d Marine Division integrated several civil-military operations center staffed with civil affairs personnel and translators located within close proximity of the provincial government facilities in order to provide around-the-clock support and immediate access to key personnel. These efforts resulted in progressive movement within the Iraqi political process, a favorable shift in the overall opinion of Coalition forces and coordinated planning efforts for projects that met the cultural and civic needs of the Iraqi people.

Division units, Iraqi forces, and civil affairs group (CAG) personnel worked diligently throughout every operation to build positive relationships and secure the trust of Iraqi citizens and influential local officials. This process began with moving and distributing over 150 billion Iraqi dinars as financial compensation for damages and loss caused as a result of anti-Iraqi forces insurgent activities. The Iraqi provincial reconstruction development committee was established to build provincial government capacity and legitimacy to help identify how chief of mission Coalition projects are planned and executed. Two water treatment facilities were restored in addition to the construction of five water treatment facilities for villages in al-Anbar Province that will provide fresh water for over 100,000 people. The division's relationship with electrical representatives resulted in improvements to three substations and the installation of additional electrical transformers increasing electrical output to over 500,000 residents of al-Anbar Province. The division assisted in refurbishing over 25 schools for use by more than 10,000 students. Several areas received

much needed medical supplies, incubators and funding for new medical clinics. The CAG provided food, water, shelter, clothing, blankets, and medical assistance to 4,000 displaced persons in Ubaydi. In the Hit area 1,200 hygiene kits, 2,000 water buckets, 1,600 kerosene heaters, 1,700 sweaters and 10,000 blankets and several thousand pounds of food items were provided. Additionally, CAG personnel delivered 39 primary care health care kits enabling the Iraqi Ministry of Health to provide service to 1.5 million citizens of al-Anbar Province. The division's reconstructive efforts have resulted in the completion of 483 projects worth $18.3 million and 183 projects valued at $13.3 million still in progress. The division's reconstructive efforts have done a great deal to influence the support of the local government and Iraqi people.

155th Brigade Combat Team (Army National Guard) (155 BCT): The 155th BCT was an energetic force and a catalyst in transitioning local and provincial responsibilities to the Iraqi people. The 155 BCT built Police Partnership Programs in three provinces. Two of these provinces converted to provincial security control, the first provinces in MNF-W to attain such status. Through their diligent efforts, they have been instrumental in converting the remaining province to local control.

The 155th BCT was also responsible for the non-kinetic efforts which included over 100 million dollars in projects that secured and improved critical infrastructure through establishing local confidence in Coalition forces and strengthening local and provincial Iraqi governments. The 155th BCT, working with local Iraqi contractors, built schools, improved roads, and provided water irrigation. They were instrumental in helping the Iraqi police build police stations to provide centralization of local city police and a visible sign of a force dedicated to service and peace.

MNF-W had almost $15 million in Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds to spend before the end of the fiscal year. Projects organized by 5th/6th CAG had to be quickly identified, quotes and legal requirements completed. The G-5/civil-military operations cell of II MEF (Fwd) was able to spend more than $15 million in CERP purchasing HA items, generators, pumps, farm equipment and a telecommunication project for Fallujah along with coordinating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to pay for five water treatment plants in Ramadi.

The G-5/Civil Military Operations Cell (CMOC) found there was no function plan for economic development. Utilizing key individuals, a plan was developed to engage MNC-I, MNF-I along with the U.S. embassy to determine programs for economic development and what funding was available to move an economic plan forward. From this, an engagement plan was developed to begin pursing an economic development plan in Fallujah. Fallujah was chosen based on the security situation. Execution began with a simple meeting with Iraqi businessmen, and quickly grew in size to include more businessmen, key leaders, representatives from United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Members of the CMO cell were able to develop relationships to fund a micro financing program, development of a business center to promote economic growth, training and better business practices. The plan will inject more than $5 million in the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office funds for micro-financing into al-Anbar. USAID will complete training for the Iraqis who will manage the loans. The overarching part of the plan was to establish a mechanism to initiate large-scale reconstruction projects anywhere in the province. From its beginning in Fallujah, the same plan was moved to Ramadi where 6th CAG began developing a business center and microfinancing.

The planning process continued with the attempt to develop an overall economic plan for al-Anbar attempting to tie together the MNC-I plan, the division Strategic Reconstruction plan along with the Fallujah based economic plan.

The G-5/civil-military operations cell also established an agriculture development plan addressing irrigation as the primary means to

improve crop production. Utilizing primarily USAID Office of Transitional Initiative Funds, canals were cleared of debris.

The G-5/civil military operations cell supported the provincial reconstruction team (PRT) concept development and fielding in Babil Province. The G-5/civil-military operations cell supported the provincial reconstruction team (PRT) program helping shape its development through interactions with the MNC-I and MNF-I Staffs. The civil military operations cell coordinated with the regional embassy in Hillah to ensure the initial move of soldiers there would be expected and supported. This was followed up by a site visit to ensure the soldiers were being taken care of and completing an assessment of the current situation. This assessment along with assessments of the Najaf and Karbala government support teams allowed MNF-W to develop a position and direction for the PRT engagement for Ramadi.

Equally significant, MNF-W's engineers provided detailed planning input and subject matter expertise to develop a vulnerability assessment of critical infrastructure throughout the battlespace. The most significant efforts in this critical activity were centered on the Hadithah hydroelectric dam. This critical infrastructure provides electrical services to over 500,000 citizens in eastern al-Anbar Province. With a strong Marine presence to provide security, MNF-W engineers keenly identified the requirement to safeguard the facility from the effects maintenance neglect. The Marine air-ground task force tenaciously communicated this critical vulnerability to the operational commander and affected the deployment and employment of personnel with the highly specialized and technical subject matter expertise required preserve this strategic infrastructure and ensure the continued efficient operation of the dam in support of Iraqi citizens.

MNF-W's explosive ordnance demolition technicians also led and mentored the Iraqi National Mine action authority representatives in their effort to work with civil military affairs in MNF-W. The extensive coordination required to accept an action authority de-mining contractor, synchronize the efforts with the U.S. State Department representatives, 5th CAG, public affairs staff, information operations staff, and the 2d Marine Division Operations Section enabled the clearing of minefields and unexploded ordnance that set the conditions for significant reconstruction operations to commence within the city of Fallujah.

The conditions of the main supply routes and alternate supply routes are critical to the execution of ground operations and the safety of the troops conducting the missions. It is imperative that these routes remain operative and in good condition. The 30th NCR has maintained these routes in the best possible condition supporting thousands of missions each month. Delivering $960,000 in repair materials to complete projects consisting of crater repairs, new route construction and repairing existing roads, bridges and highways, 30th NCR ensured these critical lines of communications remained open and serviceable.

The 30th NCR also provided the subject matter experts who conducted route reconnaissance and provided the designs of a new supply route which will serve as the primary sustainment route for command outpost North and other facilities north of the Euphrates River. The command provided the logistical and construction support of this project through the procurement of 50,000 cubic meters of gravel required for this project. The 30th NCR executed this project with a company augment from the 947th Combat Support Equipment Battalion, and was further directed to extend the scope of work to include repairing an 18-kilometer road to augment sustainment options north of the Euphrates River.

Regional Reconstruction Operation Center (RROC)

The RROC provided support to MNF-W, the Iraqi government, chief of mission, and all organizations involved in the reconstruction of Iraq in the area of operations by coordinating reconstruction efforts, information, logistics, and security between the contracting community, military, and Iraqi government in order to better enable all responsible for the reconstruction effort.

Acting as the central point of contact for

reconstruction projects in MNF-W, the RROC accomplished three mission areas: reconstruction program management oversight, support to the PRDC, and facilitating contractor convoy movements.

Reconstruction Program Management Oversight. Advocated, monitored, and reported on the MNF-W reconstruction program driven by a team of agencies under the chief of mission and executed by the Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division. The reconstruction program included 531 projects for MNF-W, valued at $440 million with 92 percent contracted and 45 percent work-in-place. The reconstruction projects provided restoration of essential services in several infrastructure sectors including: electrical, water, wastewater, health, education, security, justice, transportation, and communication.

Iraqi Government Provincial Reconstruction Development Council Support (PRDC). Engineering support to the PRDC; advising and assisting in planning, prioritizing, contracting, and implementing the commander's emergency response program (CERP) funded projects. PRDC/CERP projects within the four MNF-W provinces (al-Anbar, an-Najaf, Karbala, and North Babil) have totaled 79 successfully completed projects totaling almost $6.5 million. In addition, the RROC is working with the PRDC on an additional 182 projects with an estimated value of $51.5 million. These efforts increase the governance capacity of the provincial governments and legitimize the governments by helping them provide essential services.

Contractor Support and Movement Coordination. Facilitated civilian contractor support and movement within the MNF-W area of operation through Aegis Defense Services. Disseminated threat warnings and unclassified intelligence to relevant reconstruction agencies, contractors, and vendors; providing over-watch for civilian personnel and equipment movements; and, by providing security escort teams (SETs) and reconstruction liaison teams (RLTs). Provided over 390 intelligence reports, and the RROC provided over-watch for over 1,700 civilian convoy movements. Over-watch includes calling in military quick reaction forces or casualty evacuation when needed.

Notes

Reprinted from the II Marine Expeditionary Force Unit Award Recommendation (2006).

GARRETT

Efforts to Counter the IED Threat

by Colonel Eric T. Litaker
Marine Corps Gazette, January 2005

As Coalition forces involved in both Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) continue to come under attack from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the Marine Corps and the Department of Defense (DoD) have taken decisive action to counter this threat.

Working Group

In late 2003, Lieutenant General Edward Hanlon Jr., then-Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and the Commanding General (CG), Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC), directed the formation of an IED countermeasures working group (IED WG) to:

> . . . raise IED situational awareness, reduce redundant efforts, capitalize on Joint/other Service initiatives, leverage science and technology, and evaluate initiatives across the DOTMLPF [doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, and facilities] spectrum.[1]

Initially the IED WG consisted of a single engineer officer from the Expeditionary Force Development Center (EFDC) and several part-time members. As the WG expanded, organizational control transitioned to the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory (MCWL). Today, MCWL has the lead in a robust organization consisting of eight full-time and more than 20 part-time members from the spectrum of Marine Corps, DoD, and other federal organizations. The group meets weekly to review threat trends and to develop opportunities to counter the threat, either through the use of technology or through the use of modifications to tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP).

The mission of the IED WG is to identify, evaluate, and facilitate the delivery of materiel and nonmateriel counter-IED solutions to ensure that operating forces have unencumbered freedom of maneuver. Its functions include evaluating and prioritizing Marine Corps counter-IED requirements and solutions and providing a focal point for Marine IED/counter-IED situational awareness through the use of intelligence information, technology, TTP, and training. The IED WG's approach is to reduce redundancy, capitalize on joint/other Service initiatives, and leverage the science and technology community.

The group is divided into teams focusing on intelligence, technology evaluation and integration, communications, training and TTP, technical support, and programmatic support. This provides a central focus to Marine Corps efforts to defeat the IED threat and to facilitate the development and implementation of joint and Marine Corps-specific solutions.

Although not organizationally a part of the EFDC, the MCWL-led effort requires a close working relationship with EFDC, Marine Corps Systems Command (MarCorSysCom), and Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC). Together, the IED WG team works with deployed operating forces to determine in-theater requirements and how best to provide these capabilities to the operating forces.

In addition to working closely with continental United States-based organizations, the IED WG also maintains close contact with I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) forces in theater and at Camp Pendleton through the I MEF G-9 and the MCWL liaison officers (LNOs). The free flow of communications between these organizations has been the key to their ability to maintain close contact and coordination on a wide variety of IED-related issues.

Contributions

The IED WG has been able to contribute to counter-IED efforts by combining information from I MEF sources on the specific nature of the threat,

and their thoughts on how to counter it, with information on technologies either already available or currently in development. Some of these efforts have been made directly by using MCWL or Marine Corps resources, while others have been made indirectly by facilitating access to external resources.

Given the emerging nature of the IED threat, there are limitations on what existing programs of record can accomplish to counter the threat. As a result, a portion of the work done by the IED WG is to coordinate the resources available through associated Marine Corps programs of record with those available through other channels. Additionally, the expeditionary force development process, including the use of urgent universal needs statements, has been used with great success to support deployed operating forces.

Nevertheless, there are also limitations on the extent to which existing funds can be reprogrammed for an effort that, because of its emerging nature, has not yet been incorporated into the normal budget process. One of the challenges facing the IED WG is to find and leverage resources that can be used for these purposes. The formation of the Joint IED Defeat Integrated Process Team (IPT) within DoD has given the IED WG a forum in which to pursue resources to support Marine forces.

In early June 2004, General John Abizaid, Commander, U.S. Central Command (CentCom), sent a memo to the Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) stating, "IEDs are my number one threat in Iraq. I want a full court press on IEDs."[2] In particular, General Abizaid noted that IEDs continued to be the primary cause of casualties in Iraq, and questioned whether there was the equivalent of a Manhattan Project working to counter the IED threat. He further indicated that the enemy quickly adjusts to new methods and that the conflict in Iraq provides the opportunity to experiment with efforts to defeat IEDs. One of the conclusions to be drawn from the memo is that there is no need to wait for a perfect solution; providing partial solutions on an experimental basis will save lives in the near term and will doubtless lead to increasingly better solutions in the longer term.

In part because of General Abizaid's memo, in July 2004 Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz approved the establishment of a Joint IED Defeat IPT (JIDI). The purpose of this IPT is to "focus all counter IED efforts within the Department of Defense" and to identify, prioritize, and resource materiel and non-materiel solutions.[3] The CG MCWL is the Marine Corps participant in the JIDI. The JIDI has become one of the principal external organizations with which the IED WG coordinates in order to support deployed Marine forces.

The JIDI's approach to countering the IED threat is to consider an IED defeat continuum, consisting of what must be done to predict where IEDs might be used, detect their emplacement, prevent their detonation, neutralize them before they can be used in attacks, or to mitigate the effects of these attacks. In recent months the IED WG has been successful in leveraging resources, either through the JIDI or through other channels, to contribute to the process of helping to meet the needs of I MEF in countering the IED threat.

These efforts include arranging funding for the purchase of existing technologies, working toward the development and testing of new technologies, coordinating the delivery of training, and participating in the development of new TTP. The goal continues to be to facilitate the rapid deployment of suitably mature technologies or the development of nonmateriel solutions.

Adaptation and improvement of current capabilities to counter the IED threat is a continuous process. As the only Marine Corps organization that looks specifically at defeating the IED threat, the IED WG understands the stakes involved and is dedicated to doing whatever is necessary to help deployed Marines. To date, the IED WG, in partnership with the organizations represented by its part-time members, such as MarCorSysCom; MCCDC; HQMC Plans, Policies, and Operations; and Programs and Resources, has been involved in the delivery of a number of types of technologies and equipment involved in OEF and OIF. These include detection technology, robots, electronic countermeasures equipment, and protective devices, such as ballistic shields and body armor.

Work Continues

For as long as this threat exists, there will be concerted efforts to seek out the people who make the

IEDs, to detect when and where they are emplaced, to find ways to neutralize their components, and to protect our Marines from the effects of IEDs.

The IED WG seeks to facilitate an ability to anticipate, as well as to learn from past experiences, as part of its effort to find solutions to the IED threat. Lessons learned include:

- While technology is both useful and important, the most effective counter-IED weapon is a well-trained, vigilant, and offensive-minded Marine.
- The IED fight is now largely an intelligence battle. Units at all levels must be able to process information quickly so that it becomes actionable. Our Marines have an outstanding ability to kill the enemy; we need to be efficient, adaptive, and effective in intelligence gathering and staff planning in order to ensure that they have the opportunity to do so.
- IEDs are not a new threat, but they are an evolving one. We need to provide our Marines with the ability to seize the initiative in the effort to defeat IEDs. Whoever moves faster wins.
- There is no "silver bullet" in sight. For the foreseeable future, the key to defeating the IED threat will almost certainly be a combination of technology, TTP, and an offensive mindset.

For as long as Marines are deployed in support of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, countering the IED threat will continue to be a priority, and the IED WG will continue its efforts to focus and coordinate the activities of all relevant organizations to defeat the threat.

Notes

Marine Corps Gazette, January 2005, 29-31. Reprinted by permission. Copyright *Marine Corps Gazette*.

1. LtGen Edward Hanlon Jr., CG, MCCDC, e-mail to fellow general officers, 22 December 2003.
2. CentCom memorandum to CJCS, dated 4 June 2004.
3. JIDI information paper of 10 September 2004.

About the Author

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Rules of Engagement

by William Langewiesche
Vanity Fair, November 2006

I: One Morning in November

The Euphrates is a peaceful river. It meanders silently through the desert province of Anbar like a ribbon of life, flanked by the greenery that grows along its banks, sustaining palm groves and farms, and a string of well-watered cities and towns. Fallujah, Ramadi, Hit, and Haditha. These are among the places made famous by battle—conservative, once quiet communities where American power has been checked, and where despite all the narrow measures of military success the Sunni insurgency continues to grow. On that short list, Haditha is the smallest and farthest upstream. It extends along the Euphrates' western bank with a population of about 50,000, in a disarray of dusty streets and individual houses, many with walled gardens in which private jungles grow. It has a market, mosques, schools, and a hospital with a morgue. Snipers permitting, you can walk it top to bottom in less than an hour, allowing time enough to stone the dogs. Before the American invasion, it was known as an idyllic spot, where families came from as far away as Baghdad to while away their summers splashing in the river and sipping tea in the shade of trees. No longer, of course. Now, all through Anbar, and indeed the Middle East, Haditha is known as a city of death, or more simply as a name, a war cry against the United States.

November 19, 2005, is the date people remember. Near the center of Haditha the U.S. Marines had established a forward operating

Editor's Note

At the time of the republication of this article, the events that began in Haditha on 19 November 2005 are still awaiting resolution. In December 2006, eight Marines were charged for crimes committed during that incident. Four were charged with multiple counts of premeditated murder: Staff Sergeant Frank D. Wuterich, Lance Corporal Justin L. Sharratt, Sergeant Sanick P. Dela Cruz, and Lance Corporal Stephen B. Tatum. Another four were charged with dereliction of duty: 3d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, commanding officer Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey R. Chessani, the battalion's staff judge advocate Captain Randy W. Stone, Company K commander Captain Lucas M. McConnell, and intelligence officer Lieutenant Andrew A. Grayson.[1]

As of this writing, only one of those charged remains to be tried. The charges against six of the eight indicted (Lance Corporals Sharrett and Tatum, Sergeant Dela Cruz, Captains Stone and McConnell, and Lieutenant Colonel Chessani) were dropped between 2007 and 2008. Lieutenant Grayson was acquitted of all charges in June 2008. The trial date for Staff Sergeant Wuterich is pending.[2]

Since legal proceedings involving Haditha are still in progress, there is very little official, published documentary material about the event. The following article is included to encourage discussion about the significance of this incident and present analysis of how journalists write about events of this nature. It is not the definitive interpretation or conclusion about these events. A letter written in response to this article by then-Brigadier General Robert E. Milstead Jr. is also reprinted.

base they called Sparta. It was manned by the roughly 200 Marines of Kilo Company of the 3d Battalion, 1st Marine Division, out of Camp Pendleton, California. This was Kilo Company's third tour in Iraq. It had participated in the invasion, in the spring of 2003, and again in the hard-fought battle for Fallujah in the fall of 2004. Because of normal rotations, however, only about two-thirds of its current members had been to Iraq before. The average age was 21. The company commander was a captain, an Annapolis graduate named Lucas McConnell, who was 32 and, like all but one of his lieutenants, was on his first tour at war. McConnell was a can-do guy, more of a believer than a thinker, disciplined, moderately religious, somewhat moralistic, and deeply invested in his beloved Marine Corps.

Winter was coming. At dawn Haditha was cool and clear. McConnell dispatched a convoy of four armored Humvees on a routine mission to deliver hot breakfasts and a radio-coding card to an observation post, a fortified checkpoint about three miles away, on River Road south of town. Some of the Humvees were equipped with top-mounted machine guns; two were "high-back" vehicles with open rear beds like those of pickup trucks, designed to carry troops and supplies, and wrapped in high protective siding. Between them the four Humvees held a squad of 12 heavily armed Marines, which was considered to be the minimum desirable force even for such a milk run as this. The men carried grenades, 9mm pistols, and variations of the basic assault rifle, the M16. They were led by a sergeant named Frank Wuterich, aged 25, who of all the sergeants of Kilo Company was known to be the most unassuming and considerate, the slowest to anger. He was another first-timer at war.

They rolled south toward the outpost, rattling through sleeping neighborhoods in single file, spaced well apart. Any insurgents watching them from the houses—and there likely were some—would have perceived the men behind the top-mounted guns as robotic figures swaddled in protective armor and cloth, and would barely have glimpsed the others through the small panes of thick, dusty, bulletproof glass, or above the armored high-back sides. Over the years on the streets of Iraq, living outside the American protective bubbles, I have often imagined that killing Americans is easier for their anonymity, because it allows insurgents to take on the machines or the uniforms without dwelling on the individuals inside. This was the experience of resistance fighters when slaughtering hapless German conscripts during World War II in France, and presumably also of the mujahedeen when killing Russians in Afghanistan. But the men on the receiving end of an attack have a different view of the effects. They know one another as individuals and friends. Even the newcomers to Kilo Company, for instance, had spent at least six months together already, and had grown so close that they could identify one another on sight, from behind, when all geared up and walking on patrols at night.

It was a 15-minute drive from Sparta Base to the outpost south of town. Sergeant Wuterich's squad unloaded the hot breakfasts and other supplies, and picked up several Iraqi soldiers from the apprentice Iraqi Army—trainees attached to the company, who lived in their own compound adjoining that of the Marines. The Iraqis were armed with the ubiquitous Iraqi weapon, the banana-clip, Russian-designed AK-47. After a brief delay the squad headed up River Road for Sparta Base. It is possible to judge the mood. Because the conflict in Iraq is a guerrilla war without progressive front lines, and American combat troops operate from immobile forts with fixed zones of responsibility, most patrols consist of predictable out-and-returns. The pattern is well known to the insurgents. Routes can be varied, but the choices typically are limited, especially if the patrols must stick to the roads and the distances are short. As a result, one of the basic facts of life for those troops who are actually in the fight is that the return to base is the most dangerous trip in Iraq: if the mujahedeen are going to hit you at all, the chances are they'll hit you then. Nonetheless, for individual soldiers even in places as threatening as Haditha, most days are quiet, and weeks can go by with little sign of the enemy. There is no reason to believe that Wuterich's men were pumped

up for the drive home. Were they alert? Sure, why not, but another fact of life is that you cannot see much out of an armored Humvee, and even if you could, you have no chance of identifying the enemy until first you come under attack. You've got all these weapons, and you've been told that you're a mighty warrior, a Spartan, but what are you going to shoot—the dogs? You're a Marine without a beach. So you sit zipped into a filthy Humvee, trusting the guys up on the guns to watch the rooftops and the traffic on the road, trusting your driver to keep his eyes on the ground ahead, holding your M16 muzzle-up between your knees, calmly enduring the ride. The radio crackles. Your head bobs with the bumps. You don't talk much. There's not much to say. If you're dumb you trust your luck. If you're smart you're fatalistic. Either way it usually works out fine.

They turned west off River Road, onto a street known to them as Route Chestnut—a wide thoroughfare running through a district of clustered houses. It was 7:15 in the morning. Up ahead and unbeknownst to them, insurgents had planted a land mine, probably weeks before. In the bureaucratized language of this war, such mines are known as improvised explosive devices, or IED's. The ordinary ones are made from small artillery rounds, and rigged to detonate upon reception of an electronic signal from a short-range line-of-sight transmitter—a cordless telephone, a garage-door opener, a toy-car remote control. The insurgents of Haditha produced plenty of them; Kilo Company had discovered dozens in the previous weeks, and in the following weeks would discover many more. Most had been laid hastily and were poorly tucked into soft dirt or trash beside the roads, sometimes with wires showing. But the land mine this morning was different. It was a sizable propane tank stuffed with high explosives. More important, it had been buried directly in the road, and so lovingly paved over that apparently no surface disturbance was visible. The first Humvee rolled across it without incident. On board were three Marines, named Salinas, Rodriguez, and Sharratt. The second Humvee crossed, carrying Mendoza, De La Cruz, and Tatum. The third Humvee was the command vehicle. It crossed, with Wuterich, Graviss, and a medic named Whitt. Somewhere in these vehicles sat the Iraqi soldiers as well.

The fourth Humvee carried the final three Marines. It was a high-back model. At the steering wheel was a veteran of the Fallujah fight, a plump 20-year-old named Miguel Terrazas, from El Paso, Texas, who was one of the most popular soldiers in Kilo Company, known for certain kills he had made, and yet also for his irrepressible good humor. Sitting to his right was another Fallujah veteran, James Crossan, aged 20, from North Bend, Washington. Crossan was frustrated with the mission in Haditha, which he saw as an attempt to play policeman in the midst of an active war. In the open back was Salvador Guzman, aged 19, a first-timer to Iraq, who was known as a typically easygoing Marine. Guzman was from Crystal Lake, Illinois. He faced rearward in the Humvee pointing his weapon over the protective siding, watching the street behind.

As this trio passed unsuspectingly over the buried land mine, a spotter watching from nearby, probably in one of the houses, pushed a button. With a boom that shook the surrounding neighborhood, the device detonated directly under Terrazas in a fireball of violently expanding gases. The blast simultaneously lifted the Humvee and split it in two, separating the top half from the bottom. Guzman was blown clear and landed in the dirt behind the wreckage. He lay there bruised and stunned, with a broken foot but no serious injury. Crossan, in the right front seat, was not so fortunate. He was blown through the right door and then had part of the Humvee fall on him. He lay pinned under the heavy steel, suffering from multiple bone fractures and internal injuries. Others from the squad came running up. He heard someone shouting, "Get some morphine!" and he passed out.

The morphine can only have been meant for Crossan, because Guzman was not so badly hurt, and Terrazas was already beyond such needs. It is a requirement of understanding the events in Haditha—and the circumstances of this war—not to shy away from the physical realities here, or to soften the scene in the interest of politics or

taste. Terrazas was torn in half. His bottom half remained under the steering wheel. His top half was blown into the road, where he landed spilling his entrails and organs. He probably did not suffer, at least. He must have lost consciousness instantly and have died soon after hitting the ground. He had a hole in his chin. His eyes were rolled back. He did not look peaceful at all. He looked bloody and grotesque.

Get morphine? No, not for Terrazas. For Wuterich and the nine intact members of the squad, Terrazas's fate was extremely disturbing. They were all of them professional soldiers who had willingly assumed the risk. But just a minute ago Terrazas had been driving home, relaxed and good-humored as usual, and now in a flash he was irretrievably gone. Such is the nature of death in Iraq: you are alive, and the streets seem calm and normal, until suddenly, inevitably, with no warning, you are dead or maimed for the rest of time. With no distant thunder to approach, the loss seems worse for the lack of any ability to prepare.

The wreckage smoked black. The air smelled of cordite, dust, and burned rubber. Wuterich called for backup, and for medical helicopters to evacuate the casualties. He did what a squad leader is supposed to do. A few Marines struggled to free Crossan. After a period of confusion the others crouched with weapons to their shoulders, scanning the nearby rooftops, walls, and windows in the hope of spotting the spotter, and alert to the possibility of further attack. They ordered the Iraqi soldiers to do the same. The Iraqis complied, but somewhat reluctantly, as if perhaps they thought this was not really their fight. In any case, though much remains confused about the immediate aftermath of the attack, and indeed about the hours that followed, what is nearly certain is that at first the squad took no fire. When reinforcements arrived from Sparta Base, after about 10 minutes, one of them was able to kneel gently over Terrazas's remains. He said, "You are my brother by another mother. I love you, man." He covered Terrazas with a poncho, closing him off from sight.

By that time the killing of Iraqis had already begun, though here again uncertainty reigns. From transcripts, conversations, documents, press reports, and above all a sense for the plausible in Iraq, it is possible to reconstruct a lot. Nonetheless, given the complexities of guerrilla war, and the confusion that exists in the minds of those closest to battle, only the barest facts are indisputable. After the land-mine explosion, Wuterich's Marines remained in the immediate vicinity throughout the morning and beyond. Over the next few hours, until maybe around lunchtime, they killed 24 Iraqis. To accomplish the job, they used a few grenades, and maybe a pistol, but primarily their assault rifles. They suffered not a single casualty during this time. Five of the dead were young men who had approached in a car. The remaining 19 were people from the neighborhood, found and killed in the rooms or yards of four family houses, two on the south side of the road, and two on the north. They included nine men, four women, and six children. Many had been sleeping, and were woken by the land-mine blast. Some were shot down in their pajamas. The oldest man was 76. He was blind and decrepit, and sat in a wheelchair. His elderly wife was killed, too. The dead children ranged in age from 15 to 3. They included boys and girls. The Marines later delivered the corpses to the morgue, where they were catalogued by the local coroner. Photographs and videos were taken independently by Americans and Iraqis in the neighborhood and at the morgue. The images showed blood-splattered rooms, as well as victims. The dead did not look peaceful. They looked bloody and grotesque. You are my brother by another mother, you are my daughter by my wife. The dead were buried by angry, grieving crowds.

On the second day, a Marine Corps press officer at the big base downriver in Ramadi issued a wildly misleading statement attributing the civilian deaths to the enemy's IED, as if the families had crowded around the device before it exploded. That statement was later held out to be a deliberate lie, a cover-up, but in fairness it resulted from the isolation of the base, and was more self-delusional than underhanded. The press statement was not seen by Captain McConnell or his men, who had no chance therefore to correct

it. Once it was issued, it became an official truth that the Marine Corps, even today, has rigidly refused to retract, despite the fact that within the Corps a more plausible official truth existed almost from the start: the day after the press statement was issued, McConnell visited the battalion headquarters at a dam five miles north of Haditha, where he gave his commander, Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Chessani, a PowerPoint briefing on the action, explaining that some number of civilians had been killed by Wuterich's squad while they suppressed a "complex ambush" that had started with the explosion of the land mine and had continued with an attack by hidden gunmen. Most of the briefing concerned other small firefights that had erupted in Haditha the same day. Chessani authorized the maximum compensation payments of $2,500 to the families for each of the dead who could be certified not to have been insurgents. A Marine major was assigned to do at least that much of an investigation. McConnell's version was passed up the chain of command. McConnell returned to his fight for Haditha.

But one month later a reporter at *Time* magazine's Baghdad bureau, Tim McGirk, viewed a gruesome video of the aftermath, which suggested that people had been shot and killed inside the houses. Such is the nature of this war, with its routine collateral horrors, that had McGirk been privy to McConnell's report the video might not have surprised him. But with only the press statement about a land mine to go by, it was obvious that something about the official description was very wrong. McGirk's initial queries to the Marine Corps were rebuffed with an e-mail accusing him of buying into insurgent propaganda, and, implicitly, of aiding and abetting the enemy in a time of war. Whoever wrote the e-mail was out of his league. Negative publicity does indeed help the insurgency, but it's the killing of bystanders that really does the trick. Iraq is a small country with large family ties. After three years of war, the locals hardly needed *Time* to tell them the score. Rather, it was the Americans back home who needed help—any little insight into why the war kept getting worse. McGirk and others in the Baghdad bureau continued with their inquiry, focusing increasingly on the possibility that a massacre and cover-up had occurred. They did not draw conclusions, but laid out what was known and, in mid-March 2006, published the first of several carefully considered accounts.

Knowing that the articles were coming, the Marine Corps had been forced to accept two independent military investigations, one led by an Army general, concentrating on the responsibilities of command, and the other by the criminal investigative branch of the Navy, which focused on reconstructing events on the ground. News from the investigations occasionally emerged, and did not look good for the Marines.

Pennsylvania congressman John Murtha, a former Marine and a powerful friend of the Pentagon, stated bluntly that his sources were telling him that a massacre had indeed occurred; he said that there had been no firefight, and that Wuterich's squad had simply gone berserk. Murtha's larger point was that impossible pressure was being placed on U.S. troops, and that they should be withdrawn from a self-destructive war. Following his statements, Haditha became yet another test in a polarized nation, and never mind the details: if you liked President George W. Bush, you believed that no massacre had taken place; if you disliked him, you believed the opposite. As part of the package, *Time* came in for Internet attacks, hate-filled attempts to find any small discrepancies in its reporting, and, again, never mind the underlying truth.

Amid the vitriol came allegations of other U.S. atrocities in Iraq, some of which turned out to be real. The Iraqi prime minister, Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, who had enjoyed the strong support of the U.S. government, stated publicly what has long been obvious on the streets—that the abuse of Iraqi civilians by American soldiers is routine. He did not say what is equally obvious—that abuse of Iraqis by Iraqis is even more routine, and that, along with horrors inflicted by Sunni groups, much of the worst is done by Shiite militias, who constitute a significant portion of the government's own forces as Iraq slips into civil war. Al-Maliki vowed to launch his own independent investigation of the Haditha killings—

wishful thinking for a government leader forced to hunker down in Baghdad's fortified Green Zone. But tempers were fraying in both Iraq and the United States.

Meanwhile, Kilo Company and the rest of the 3d Battalion had returned to California on schedule in the early spring of 2006, and had been greeted with the usual fanfare. But one week later the division's top general relieved Captain McConnell and Lieutenant Colonel Chessani of their commands, stating that he had lost confidence in their abilities to lead. The two officers remained on duty in other roles, though straining against bitterness, and anxious about the future. McConnell hoped that by remaining silent he might prevail, standing against the assault as a Spartan would. Semper fi. Nonetheless, it seems eventually to have dawned on him that his own beloved Corps might not be at his side. Reluctantly, McConnell hired a private defense lawyer, as did Wuterich and others. The naval investigation dragged on, and in midsummer produced a 3,500-page report. The report has not been made public, but apparently suggests that some members of the squad had engaged in murder, and that afterward they and perhaps others had agreed on a narrative to hide the crime. The Marine Corps began to ready charges, and to prepare for military trials and lesser career-ending disciplinary actions. The trials will take place at Pendleton, probably sometime before spring. The penalties may include capital punishment and prison for life. In the most general terms the outcome is already known. A former officer close to McConnell said to me, "The Corps has this reflex when it feels threatened at home. It has a history of eating its young."

II: The Fallujah Legacy

Who among these young should be eaten, and how, are questions that Marine Corps justice will decide. But the story of Haditha is about more than the fate of just a few men, the loss of their friend, or the casualties they inflicted along the Euphrates River one cool November morning. More fully explored, it is about the observable realities of an expanding guerrilla war—about mistakes that have been made and, regrettably, about the inability to fix what is wrong. Those limitations appear to be inherent in the military, and though they certainly have much to do with the reactions and resentments of the least competent soldiers, they also, in a different way, apply to the very best. No matter how sophisticated or subtle our military thinkers may be, ultimately they have use of only this very blunt device—a heavy American force that is simply not up to suppressing a popular rebellion in a foreign land. Despite all the fine words and intentions, the U.S. military turns out to be a tool that is too large and too powerful to be sharpened. Our soldiers collectively did not want this war, and many have come to believe that it cannot be won, but they are not in positions to act on those thoughts, and have no choice but to perform their assignments as their capacities allow.

The starting point of the Haditha killings is early 2004, when the occupation was nearly a year old, and the Marines were brought back to Iraq to take over from the U.S. Army west of Baghdad, in the Sunni strongholds of Anbar Province. Anbar was said to be restive, but it was already dangerous as hell. The Army had blundered there. Soon after the invasion, in April 2003, soldiers from the 82d Airborne Division had gone into the center of Fallujah, where they set up an observation post in a schoolhouse. The best account yet of the consequences, and indeed of the entire war, is contained in the recent book *Fiasco,* written by Thomas E. Ricks of the *Washington Post.* Ricks quotes the Army colonel in command, who said, "We came in to show presence just so the average citizen would feel safe." But it didn't work out that way, as it has not worked out for all the iterations of "presence" ever since.

This is an aspect of the war still poorly accepted by the military, and by critics who believe that by sending more troops the U.S. might have done a better job, or could do so today. The view from the street has always been different. Iraq steps aside to let soldiers pass by, and then immediately fills in the void behind them. The soldiers are targets as hapless as any German

conscript ever was. Reduced to giving candy to children, and cut off by language and ignorance from the culture around them, they work in such isolation that the potentially positive effects of their presence usually amount to nil. The potentially negative effects, however, are significant. Back in April 2003, the U.S. colonel's average Iraqi citizen might have told him, "You don't know what you don't know, and, sir, you don't know a lot."

The colonel's soldiers had set up the observation post high in the schoolhouse, from which they could see over the tops of garden walls and into family compounds where unveiled women did housework and hung laundry to dry. The soldiers did not understand that this amounted to a violation of the local women, and a serious insult to their men. An angry crowd gathered in front of the school to demand the soldiers' withdrawal. From their positions in the building, the soldiers eyed the demonstrators warily for a while, but then rifle rounds began to hit the walls, fired perhaps from both a rooftop and the street, and the soldiers responded by firing directly into the crowd. Massive response had been the norm during the recent invasion, when the opponents were enemy troops, but times had changed and these were mostly noncombatants on the street. As many as 71 people were wounded, and between 5 and 17 died, depending on the truth of the American or Iraqi versions. The commander of the 82d Airborne, General Charles Swannack Jr., later claimed that his men's marksmanship had been precise—and indeed so accurate that every one of the casualties (he counted five or six) was an identifiable instigator who deserved what he got. In other words, within the Army there was no question of disciplinary action. But the schoolhouse shootings had given the insurgency a cause, and the guerrilla war had begun.

By the time the Marines arrived in early 2004, nearly two years before the killings in Haditha, the war was out of hand. This was true not just in Anbar but all through central Iraq, where it was obvious that the crude tactics of the Army were failing, and playing into the insurgents' plans. Individual soldiers were brave, but the Army as an institution was averse to risk, and it was making a show of its fear by living on overprotected bases, running patrols only in armored vehicles, and overdoing its responses to the pinprick attacks by the insurgents—arresting far too many men, and answering rifle fire with tanks, rockets, artillery, and air strikes. It became so common to call down precision bombs against even individual suspected insurgents (for instance, someone spotted by drone, walking with a shovel along a road at night) that a new term was coined, based on the physical effects that could sometimes be observed on video. "Pink misting," some soldiers called it, and in their growing frustration they said it with glee.

Excessive force was employed not merely because the weapons were available but also because high technology had led Americans to expect low-casualty wars. Especially in the context of a conflict that had never been adequately explained, the U.S. military for political reasons could not afford any implication that it was squandering its soldiers' lives in Iraq. It is difficult to argue publicly that the military's caution was not a good thing. Strictly in gaming terms, however, there was a problem: by squandering innocent Iraqi lives instead, in order to save American soldiers, the Army in particular was spawning untold numbers of new enemies who would mount more frequent attacks against those same soldiers in the future. This was happening, and fast. The Army was locked into a self-defeating cycle by the very need to keep its casualties down. Meanwhile, the insurgent campaign was expanding in proportion to the number of noncombatants dishonored, brutalized, or killed. It was expanding in proportion to outrage.

Perhaps because of their history in irregular wars, the Marines seem to have a special sense for such cycles of violence. Despite their public image as leathernecks and fighters, they possess a contemplative strain, and their organization, because it is relatively small, is also relatively amenable to change. When they returned to Iraq in 2004, they knew that the fight had grown much trickier than before, and they announced that in Anbar they would demonstrate a new

approach to winning the war. They would shed the excess of armor, use military precision rather than power, get out of their vehicles and walk through the towns, knock on doors rather than break them down, and go out of their way to accommodate the Iraqi culture. They would base their tactics on good intelligence. They would not overreact when provoked. They would shoot insurgents, and even enjoy the kills, but they would be careful not to hurt innocent bystanders. They would provide the necessary stability to allow a civil Iraqi society to grow. They would be understood, and they would make friends.

It was to be a textbook counterinsurgency campaign. In abstraction the strategy made sense, and it was the obvious choice—indeed, the only potentially productive one remaining. In practice, however, it quickly encountered an uncooperative Iraq. With its population of 250,000, Fallujah was particularly tough. In addition to all the native insurgents there, it contained foreign fighters from elsewhere in the Middle East, who had arrived to do battle under the banners of God. Within a couple of weeks the Marines were being forced by hostile fire back into their armored vehicles, and were encountering the same frustrations that the Army had, of not speaking Arabic, not having reliable translators, not knowing whose advice to trust, and not being able to distinguish between the enemy and ordinary people on the streets. As for the Iraqis in Anbar, the distinction so dear to the American forces, between the Army and the Marines, meant little to them. The view from the rooftops was that all these guys wore the same stars and stripes, and were crusaders for Zionists and oilmen, if not necessarily for Christ. Recently on Capitol Hill, John Murtha, the congressman and former Marine who has been so vocal about the killings in Haditha, mentioned those early encounters with reality to me. He said, "The Marines came over here to my office and said, 'Jesus, they're shooting at us!' And I said, 'Well, where did you *think* you were going?'"

The Marines did not formally abandon their strategy, but they saw it torn from their grasp. On March 31, 2004, precisely two years before Captain McConnell and his Kilo Company came home from their momentous tour in Haditha, four American employees of a security firm called Blackwater were ambushed and killed in Fallujah. Their corpses were hacked apart and burned, and two of them were hung from a bridge amid celebrations on the street. Images were beamed around the world. Judging correctly that it could not leave the insult unanswered, the Bush administration, after brief consideration of the options, decided on an all-out assault against the city. That decision continues to stand as one of the worst of the war, ranking only below the decision to disband the Iraqi Army and the initial decision to invade. At the time, for those of us living independently in Iraq outside of the American security zones, and with some sense therefore of the mood on the streets, it demonstrated once again the inability of officials to imagine the trouble that the United States was in, and the astonishing insularity of Washington, D.C.

The Marines knew better. They wanted to respond to the Blackwater ambush by going after the individual killers, and then following through with a well-crafted counterinsurgency campaign to stabilize and mollify the city. But when they were overruled and ordered to do the opposite—to mount an immediate full-frontal offensive—they set aside their theories, and as professional soldiers they dutifully complied. It was a disaster. Backed up by tanks and combat aircraft, the Marines went into Fallujah dealing destruction, and quickly bogged down in house-to-house fighting against a competent and determined foe. To make matters worse, the showcase battalion of the new Iraqi Army mutinied and refused to join the fight. The battle cost several dozen American dead and many more wounded, and did immeasurable damage to the prospects for American success. It turned into a humiliation for the United States when, after four days of struggle, the Marines were ordered by a nervous Washington to withdraw. Again they dutifully complied. Afterward, the jubilant insurgents took full public control of the city, and with the help of the foreign fighters turned it into a fortified haven which U.S. forces did not dare to enter.

To get a feeling for Kilo Company and the killings in Haditha, it is necessary to remember this. After the spring battle was lost, Fallujah became an open challenge to the American presence in Iraq. There were plenty of other challenges, and to speak only of Fallujah is grossly to simplify the war. Still, Fallujah was the most obvious one, and the United States, unless it was to quit and go home, had no choice but to take the city back. Everyone knew it, on all sides, and for months the antagonists prepared. Because of the fortifications and the expectation of active resistance, there was no question this time of a patient counterinsurgency campaign: the Marines were going to have to go in and simply smash the city down. In November of 2004, they did just that, with a force about 10,000 strong. Before attacking they gave the city warning, and allowed an exodus to occur. Nearly the entire population fled, including most of the insurgents, who spread into Baghdad or up the Euphrates to carry on the rebellion, leaving behind, however, a rear guard of perhaps 1,000 gunmen who, exceptionally, wanted to make a stand. This was their mistake. The Marines attacked with high explosives and heavy weapons. Over the 10 days it took to move through Fallujah, and the following weeks of methodical house-to-house clearing, they wrecked the city's infrastructure, damaged or destroyed 20,000 houses or more, and did the same to dozens of schools and mosques. They were not crusaders. They did not Christianize the place. They turned Fallujah into Stalingrad.

Many insurgents survived the initial assaults and emerged to contest the Marines at close quarters, room to room and in the rubble. It is said to have been the most intense battle by American forces since Vietnam. The insurgents were trapped inside cordon upon cordon of American troops, and they fought until death. For the Marines the rules of engagement were necessarily loose. Rules of engagement are standing orders that limit the targets of soldiers, defining the difference between appropriate and inappropriate killing according to strategic and tactical goals, and between legal and illegal killing according to interpretations of international law. In Fallujah the rules allowed Marines to kill anyone they believed to be dangerous, and others who got in the way. In addition to those seen carrying weapons, in practice this meant everyone in every structure from which hostile fire came, and any military-age male seen moving toward the Marines or running away. Obviously, the Marines were not allowed to kill wounded prisoners, but in a televised case one of them did, and Marine Corps justice averted its gaze.

The men of Kilo Company fought through the thick of Fallujah. Lance Corporals Terrazas and Crossan, and most of the other men of future Haditha note, ran the course from start to finish. Kilo Company lost four Marines killed and at least 20 seriously wounded, and was involved in the best-known close-quarters combat of the battle—a desperate attempt to clear insurgents from the rooms of a house, which came to be known as the Hell House fight. Toward the end of it, a New York–based photographer named Lucian Read snapped an iconic picture of a blood-drenched sergeant who had been shot seven times and blasted with an enemy grenade, but who nonetheless was emerging on foot from the house, holding a pistol in one hand, supported by a Marine on each side. The photograph showed the Marines as they like to be seen, and as some like to see themselves. There's a lot to be said for going to war with a photographer in tow, until something happens that you would rather forget.

Fallujah was a victory for the Marine Corps, but a victory narrowly defined. The reality is that a quarter-million people were forced from their homes and, when they returned, were faced with a city in ruins, surrounded by concertina wire and watched over by armed men in towers. Marine General John Sattler, who had led the assault, claimed that the insurgency had been broken. But as the seasons slid by in 2005, guerrillas slipped back into Fallujah, or sprang up from its ruins, and they surged forward through all the other towns of Anbar, including Haditha. Sattler was wrong, and embarrassingly so. Within more contemplative circles of Marines, the battle of Fallujah became less of a triumph than a warning. The consequences were not difficult to

discern. A hard-pressed combat officer once put it this way to me: "Yeah, we won Fallujah. But before that we *made* Fallujah. And we definitely can't afford to make another."

The hell of it was that the reasonable alternative—a nuanced counterinsurgency campaign—was not showing much promise either. At its core, the counterinsurgency campaign asked a lot. On the Iraqi side, it required the people of Anbar to place their faith in a United States government that had repeatedly blundered over the previous few years, and that was unable to protect collaborators from the insurgents' knives. On the American side, it required young Marines with little worldly experience to show trust in a foreign population on alien streets where they were being shot at and blown up. Indeed, the formula asked so much from everyone involved that it was becoming difficult to know when it was realistic anymore. Specialists in Washington advocated patience and wisdom, and said the standard thing about our instant-gratification society. Officials in the Green Zone highlighted the slightest positive signs. But on the ground in Anbar the trends were all wrong.

III: First, Do No Harm

After Fallujah and the Hell House fight, Kilo Company flew home to California, spent a half-year retraining under its new captain, Lucas McConnell, and then returned to Iraq in September 2005, with Haditha in its sights. Haditha at that point had been largely ignored by the Marines for nearly a year. It was being ruled by an uncompromising group of insurgents who had instituted Islamic law and done some good deeds, but had also carried out public floggings and beheadings, and were using Haditha as a base from which to launch attacks in the region. In April of 2005 they had taken 19 Shia fishermen to a soccer field and slaughtered them all. The few policemen in town had resigned or fled to avoid similar fates. Then, on August 1, roughly two months before Kilo Company returned to Iraq, six Marine snipers from an Ohio-based company of reservists had been ambushed and killed on the outskirts of the city, in a scene that was videotaped by the insurgents and made available on DVDs in the market. Two days later another 14 Marines from the same reserve company were killed when their armored personnel carrier was destroyed by an improvised mine. By the end of its tour, primarily around Haditha, that company had suffered 23 dead and 36 wounded, earning it the unfortunate distinction of having been the most badly mauled of any company in the war thus far. Upon returning to Ohio, one of the sergeants described his rage after the destruction of the personnel carrier. He had busted into a nearby house and had barely restrained himself from shooting two women and a teenage boy whom he found inside. He said he realized then that he had been too long in Iraq. He had been there seven months. He left in September 2005, when Kilo Company arrived.

The Marines decided to clean out Haditha once and for all. At the start of October they positioned about 3,000 troops in an arc to the south, west, and north, around the town. Roughly 700 of the troops were from Pendleton's 3d Battalion under its new commander, Lieutenant Colonel Chessani. The men of Kilo Company were assigned the lead. They waited in the desert west of the city center. Before the offensive began, they knelt with their helmets off and prayed. They expected intense resistance in the form of rifle fire and rocket-propelled grenades. The plan called for them to advance on foot on a broad front, and to push the insurgents through the city until they were backed against the Euphrates, where they would surrender or die. The strategy was odd—as if the Marines had forgotten exactly which war they were in. Before dawn three bridges that crossed the river were bombed to cut off the enemy's escape. Later, at a Baghdad press briefing, Major General Rick Lynch said, "We took out a portion of each of those bridges to deny the terrorists and foreign fighters—the insurgency—the ability to come from north to south, or south to north, across the Euphrates River. It was a precision strike so that when we indeed defeat the insurgency in these areas—and we're on a glide path to do that—we can go back and replace those segments of the bridges so that the people in that

area can regain their own freedom of movement." It was a tidy plan for an orderly war, everything in its place. Lynch continued, "Put that original chart up, please, the one that I just took down."

When the Marines advanced into Haditha, on the first day of Ramadan, October 4, 2005, they encountered a town so peaceful that at first it seemed deserted. They knew that it was not—that they were being watched from behind the compound walls, and that the residents were playing it safe by staying off the streets. The frustration was that the insurgents were lying equally low, and not standing to fight or run away, as conventional combatants would. They could do this because of a reality soon evident to ordinary grunts but stubbornly denied by the U.S. command, which was that in Haditha the insurgency enjoyed widespread public support, and all the more so now with American soldiers suddenly walking around. The insurgents did not need to consult with experts to understand guerrilla war. Why bother to confront these Americans immediately, when you could let them pass by and later hunt them down? Why bother to go north to south or south to north when you could simply stay at home?

Within hours the Marines had walked all the way through Haditha and had reached the Euphrates with little to show. Over the next two weeks Chessani's battalion remained in town, searching house to house and encountering hardly any opposition. Evidence of the insurgency was all around. By the time the offensive was formally called off, the Marines had netted 119 improvised mines, several facilities for making them, two car bombs, 14 weapons caches, and a propaganda shop equipped with computers, copiers, and several thousand blank CDs and audiotapes. They had found a note pinned to the door of a mosque, on which a former policeman renounced his collaboration with the invaders and begged the insurgents for their forgiveness. Finally, they had detained about 130 suspects, of whom they released about half and shipped off the others for interrogation. Against the scale of the rebellion, these were illusory accomplishments.

When Chessani's battalion withdrew in mid-October, it shifted a few miles to the north and settled into its comfortable quarters at the dam above Haditha. McConnell and his Kilo Company were left behind to maintain a full-time presence in the center of town. They set up Sparta Base in a former school administration building, in a walled compound that could accommodate their generators and Humvees. The perimeter was reinforced with coils of concertina wire, sandbagged machine-gun emplacements, and blast walls made of HESCO barriers—large dirt-filled cubes heavy enough to limit the effects of mortars and rockets. The administration building was H-shaped and low-slung. It contained about 15 rooms of various sizes, all with linoleum floors and painted concrete walls. One of the rooms was made into the company's office and called the Combat Operations Center. Two others were made into a chow hall and a kitchen. The kitchen once burned because the cooks were not paying attention, but the food that was served was surprisingly good, and later sometimes included crab. Most of the building was made into general living quarters, where the men slept on cots and kept their personal gear, including an abundance of iPods, video games, and DVD players. As a final special touch there was even a makeshift photography studio where Lucian Read, who had rejoined the company, shot individual portraits of the men. Despite all that is said about difficulties endured by American forces in Iraq, as time passed the Marines at Sparta Base tended to feel that, if anything, they were not roughing it enough.

A sign on the wall read:

Habits of Thought

1. Sturdy Professionalism
2. Make yourself hard to kill.
3. No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy
4. First, Do No Harm
5. The Iraqi People are not our enemy, but our enemy hides amongst them.

Corollary 1: You have to look at these people as if they are trying to kill you, but you can't treat them that way.

Corollary 2: Be polite, be professional, have a plan to kill everyone you meet.

This was standard Marine Corps stuff, passed down from above. It was meant as a guide to the war in Iraq, but it was unclear and overwrought. The men of Kilo Company had a culture of being assertive and tough, partly because of the Hell House fight and the publicity that had followed. But now that this latest offensive had fizzled, they were being asked to do exactly what? They were wandering around Haditha just waiting to get hit. Lieutenant Colonel Chessani, up at the dam, was a strange guy to them. He had a reputation of being standoffish, intensely religious, and uncommunicative; he seemed to know the enlisted men only by the nametags on their chests, and they felt he offered them little guidance at best. Captain McConnell was a different story. He was seen as an accessible and straightforward guy, but also as a military lifer, whose talks to his men, though intended to be inspirational, were dulled by Marine Corps clichés and pre-fabricated thoughts. He was always talking about responsibility and honor. He seemed sincerely to believe that in Haditha they were fighting the global war on terror—oh yes, and winning it, too. He insisted that the insurgents were cowards who lacked values, when the opposite was evidently true. He made Wagnerian vows like "We will not falter in the clashing of spears." At Sparta Base sometimes it got a little thick, especially for a place with no enemy in sight. In fairness, however, officers who can inspire enlisted Marines are rare, and McConnell, because he was new, was perhaps just trying too hard.

Meanwhile, the Marines mounted patrols every day, often for no better reason than to spot something unusual on streets that to them remained strange. This was said to be an intelligence-based war, but the intelligence was poor. Sometimes the Marines detained men whose names appeared on their lists; more often they went into houses, asked a few questions, and walked away empty-handed. Officially their rules of engagement were only slightly more restrictive than those that had applied to the free hunting in Fallujah, with their tolerance for the killing of people who got in the way. In Haditha, however, there were civilians all around. Reflexively the city was known as a battlespace, and perhaps it was one, but if so it was barely recognizable. Simply put, though Haditha was still largely controlled by the insurgents, during all the weeks prior to the killings of November 19, the Marines of Kilo Company saw very little action there. Battlespace? They killed one man—a town idiot who insisted on crossing their perimeter wire. They found some munitions caches in sandy soil along the riverbanks. They talked to some tribal leaders. But the largest measure of their success was a circular one—the continuing discovery of improvised land mines, which were laid each night, but which would not have been planted in the first place were it not for the presence of American troops in town. Indeed, the whole war had become a chicken-or-egg question, around and around with no answer possible.

The enlisted men of Kilo Company rarely philosophized. Many had joined the Corps in response to the September 11 attacks, now four years past, but the emotions that once had motivated them had been reduced by their participation in an enormously bureaucratic enterprise, and by the tedium of war. Fine—they were probably better soldiers for it. These were not the taut warriors portrayed in action movies. As they shed their helmets and body armor, they emerged as ordinary five-foot-nine-inch, 150-pound middle-class Americans, sometimes pimple-faced, and often sort of scrawny. Some of them were mentally agile, and some quite obviously were not. By the stringent standards of the U.S. military, they were not always well behaved. At Sparta Base there was a bit of illicit drinking, a touch of pornography. There are rumors about the use of narcotics as well. But the unit's morale was good enough, largely because the men had become close friends. They liked motorcycles, they liked cars, they liked guns. They especially liked girls a lot. Some could not speak without f**k. For instance, they f**king did not want to be in Iraq. Not anymore, if they ever did. Those who were returning felt they had come back way too f**king soon. And no, they did not respect the Iraqi culture—who the f**k would? Iraqi men

wear man-dresses. Iraqi men think everyone wants to eye-f**k their precious wives. Iraqi men kill their own people, then turn around and kill Marines. It's f**king bulls**t. God should paintball the genuine bastards so the Marines could then blow them away. Sometimes on the streets of Haditha it seemed like every man would get splattered.

But the Marines did not sit around Sparta Base and worry this to death. They talked about other things, their exploits, their party binges, the really dumb moves of their friends. They laughed and gave each other hard times. They gave each other names. When they mounted their patrols, they went up and down the designated streets and did their jobs as they were told. Be polite and have a plan to kill everyone you meet? Yes, sir, roger that, and on streets like these that would mean shooting the guy from up close, sir, at any false move on his part—is that what you mean by a plan? If the counterinsurgency mission in Haditha seemed half-cocked, so did any real chance for success in Iraq, but that was for others to decide—not for the soldiers who had to carry out the fights. The Marines of Kilo Company were well-intentioned guys who took pride in their conventional battlefield skills and, partly as a result, now just wanted to go home. As a group they were not like people who join the police for the satisfaction of hurting others. They were more like people who join Outward Bound. Until the killings of November 19, there is no evidence that in Haditha they abused the f**king Iraqis even once.

Then suddenly on Route Chestnut, Guzman and Crossan were wounded, Terrazas was torn in two, and Sergeant Wuterich was calling for backup. The events that followed will never be reconstructed completely, no matter what the courts may find. Through the dust and noise on that Haditha street, they played out in a jumble of semi-autonomous actions, complicated by perceptions that had been narrowed by the attack and further confused by the ambiguities associated with fighting a guerrilla war on foreign ground. Some of the Marines may have suspected that a line had been crossed, and that crimes might have been committed, but in the urgency of the moment it would have seemed less likely then than it seems now, and even today the principal view of those involved is anger that the accusations are cheap, and that Kilo Company has been unfairly singled out. There is probably a feeling of remorse as well, but, to generalize, it is regret that the killing of noncombatants had so little to do with the intentions of the men, and that the story cannot somehow be taken back and run all over again.

IV: From House to House

The boom of the land mine exploding was heard throughout Haditha. Immediately afterward the city went quiet, except near the convoy, from which the Marines piled out shouting. Some ran back to the shattered Humvee to render aid as they could; the others quickly settled down, and indeed milled around uncertainly until Wuterich ordered them to spread out into defensive positions. It was still barely 7:15 in the morning, the Humvee boiled with black smoke, and the possibility existed that its destruction marked the start of an ambush that would now expand into overlapping attacks with automatic fire and rocket-propelled grenades. All through Iraq the insurgents were laying such lethal traps. For the moment, the houses on both sides of the street showed no sign of activity, though certainly they contained people lying low, if only out of fear.

Again it is important to face the realities here. According to counterinsurgency doctrine, these people were not necessarily the enemy, but Terrazas was nonetheless spilling his guts into their street. Among these very houses was one where the Marines had discovered a bomb factory just a few days before. Moreover, even if the neighbors were not directly involved, they must have known the location of this land mine, which could not have been planted without the locals taking notice. Surely some residents could have found a way to warn the patrol; if they were not the enemy, surely some could have acknowledged that Kilo Company during its stay in Haditha had been showing goodwill and restraint. But no, it was apparent that to these

people Terrazas was just another dead American, like roadkill, and good riddance to him. For Wuterich's squad the silence of the neighborhood was therefore less reassuring than ominous. It was the quiet before the storm, the prelude to an attack. The Marines were angry and tense. They sighted their rifles at the walls and rooftops, thinking every variation of f**k and waiting for the incoming rounds.

Instead, a white Opel sedan came driving up the street. It was an unmarked taxi carrying five young men, four of them college students bound for school in Baghdad, the fifth their driver. They were only about a hundred yards away from the blast site when they happened upon the scene. Through their windshield—dirty, bug-splattered, against the sun—they would have seen one of the most dangerous sights in Iraq: smoke rising from a shattered Humvee, a stopped convoy, and American soldiers in full fighting mettle coming at them down the street. The Marines halted the car from a distance. When soldiers do this in Iraq, they are supposed to follow a progressive escalation of force, with hand signals first, followed by raised weapons, then warning shots with tracers visible, then shots to the engine block, and finally, if the car keeps coming, shots directly into the driver. Because of the risk of car bombs, however, the procedure is typically shortened: weapons go up, and if the car doesn't stop, the driver and other occupants are liberally sprayed with fire. Those are the rules of the road, and so be it; given the circumstances, they are well enough understood to seem fair.

This time the driver stopped, as most drivers do. Some witnesses in the nearby houses later said that he tried to back away but then desisted. The Marines came running up, shouting and cursing. Presumably they told the occupants to get out of the car and to kneel on the street with their hands on their heads. What the Marines thought of them is not clear. Later they said they believed the men were associated with the landmine explosion, and were perhaps the spotters who had pushed the button, or were following up now with a car-bomb attack. This strains credulity for several reasons, not the least of which is that five people in a car are about four too many for either purpose. Equally unlikely was another explanation sometimes mentioned, that these were insurgents driving up to do battle. But the truth is that the Marines neither knew nor needed to know why they stopped the car. The stop was legitimate. It was a necessary act to limit the risks to the squad, and to keep the confusion from growing.

The problem is what happened next, after a quick search revealed that the car contained no weapons or explosives, or any other evidence that linked the men to the insurgency. The Iraqis perhaps should have been held for a while or, better yet, allowed to take their car and leave. Instead, all five of them were shot dead by the Marines. Later, the Marines reported that they killed them because they had started to run away. Even if true, by normal standards this raises the question of what threat these men could have posed when they were fleeing unarmed—or at least what threat could have justified shooting them down. But in Iraq the question was moot, and for reasons that give significance to the Haditha story beyond mere crime and punishment. The first and simplest reason is that, because of reluctance to second-guess soldiers in a fight, the rules of engagement allow for such liberal interpretations of threat that in practice they authorize the killing of even unarmed military-age males who are running away. The second reason derives from the first. It is that the killing of civilians has become so commonplace that the report of these particular ones barely aroused notice as it moved up the chain of command in Iraq. War is fog, civilians die, and these fools should not have tried to escape.

The incident reemerged only because of the insistent inquiries of *Time* magazine. During the subsequent military investigations that were forced onto the Marine Corps in the spring and summer of 2006, grainy images from an aerial drone were found that appeared to show the five bodies lying clustered together beside the sedan, with one sprawled partly atop another. Perhaps they had been dragged back and placed there, but this was not part of the original story. Certainly the pattern as seen from overhead was not one of men killed while trying to scatter.

Equally troubling were the statements of one of the Iraqi soldiers who was with the convoy, and who four months later was questioned by a naval investigator. The questioning was incomplete, full of opportunities never pursued, and further weakened by an incompetent interpreter. A lawyer in court could tear such testimony apart. Nonetheless, what emerged was a picture of murder. The Iraqi soldier said he had been only about 25 yards away from the Opel sedan, and had watched the entire scene. It was obvious to him that the Iraqis were noncombatants—otherwise, why would they have driven up like this? He said the Marines had yanked open the Opel's doors, taken the men out, forced them to kneel with their hands on their heads, and, without bothering to search them, had quickly gunned them down. The investigator said, "Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang." Well yeah, well no, well actually the Iraqis were sprayed with rifle rounds. The M16 is a light, clip-fed weapon with a plastic stock and a metal barrel. It fires a three-round burst when it is switched to automatic. It does not bang then, but ripples sharply. The Iraqi soldier said he saw a head come apart and a face split in two. He also said that one of the Marines used a pistol, and he called that man a captain, but he did not appear to know any of the squad members' names, and this element he seems to have gotten wrong. By my calculation, there were no officers yet on the scene.

Errors are too easy to make when assigning individual blame. Sergeant Wuterich, for instance, has been repeatedly singled out. If the five Iraqi civilians from the car were summarily slain, Wuterich was probably elsewhere, closer to the center of concern, placing his men into defensive positions and watching the houses for hostile fire. Indeed, it is wrong to brand any of the Marines of his squad without knowing what each was doing, and where each one was. I do not know those details, though by now the military prosecutors must. It appears that only a few of the Marines handled the people from the car, and that, while all of them were angry, only two let loose with their guns. The killing was not agreed upon or planned. It started without warning and finished too fast to stop. Claims have been made of an extensive conspiracy to cover up murders and protect the Marine Corps from embarrassment—but no such conspiracy was necessary, and it is unlikely that any occurred. As for the killings of the car's occupants, all that would have been required was a shift at the outset contained in two simple words. They ran. It would not matter who first uttered the words, or if these were the ones actually spoken. Among the men of Wuterich's squad the elegance would immediately have been understood. We are brothers by other mothers. The dead do not return to life, but some mistakes can be undone. Killing is not wrong in Iraq, if you can say the rules allowed it.

Within minutes the force from Sparta Base arrived. It was a squad of about the same size as Wuterich's, led by the only officer present on Route Chestnut the entire morning, a young lieutenant named William Kallop. Like other lieutenants in Kilo Company, Kallop was junior in all but rank to the senior enlisted men, to whom he naturally deferred. He had a reputation of being a little soft, a little lost. He was the pleasant son of a wealthy New York family, who had joined the Marine Corps, it was believed in Kilo Company, to prove something to himself before returning to a life of comfort. As a soldier he was said to be average. When the allegations against Kilo Company surfaced in the spring of 2006, his parents vigorously reacted. They hired a New York public-relations firm that specializes in legal cases, and then engaged a defense attorney who is a former Marine general and was once one of the top lawyers in the Corps. The implicit warning may have had some effect. While McConnell and Chessani were humiliated and relieved of their commands, and Wuterich was fingered in public, Kallop was left untouched, though technically upon his arrival at Route Chestnut on November 19 he had become the commander on the scene.

Apparently his command didn't amount to much. For the most part he remained on the street by the Humvees with the rest of his squad and allowed Wuterich and his men to work their way through the four houses where, to repeat the number, they killed the additional 19 Iraqis—

children, women, and men. It is virtually certain that none of the dead were combatants, but little else about the case is so straightforward. Strange though it seems at first glance, the military courts will probably have a very difficult time deciding if war crimes were committed inside the houses. The difficulty will not be due to a Marine Corps agenda. Indeed, the expedient solution for the entire U.S. military would be to treat Wuterich and his men as criminals, and to destroy McConnell and Chessani as well, thereby avoiding the alternative conclusion, that the debacle in Haditha is related to normal operations in the war. But it just does not seem plausible, as John Murtha and others have claimed, that these particular Marines, who had enjoyed a relatively low-key tour, went so berserk after Terrazas's death that, having already slaughtered the five Iraqis by the car, they proceeded without specific reason or provocation to enter people's houses and execute even the children at point-blank range in a feverish rampage sustained for several hours, even while Lieutenant Kallop and the other recent arrivals listened to the rippling of gunfire and the screams of the soon dead. The killings in the houses on November 19 were probably nothing so simple as that.

Wuterich may have explained it best, because he has insisted that his Marines came under AK-47 attack, and defended themselves as they had been trained to do, by returning fire and surging forward to suppress the aggressors. Critics have expressed skepticism, pointing out that there was little evidence of exterior damage to the houses, and that certain neighborhood witnesses heard no firefight before the first house was stormed. Other witnesses, however, did hear firing, and the same Iraqi soldier who gave the damning description of executions by the car, and who was certainly no friend of the Marines, repeatedly described coming under attack from the south side of the street.

When the naval investigator asked for details, the interpreter summarized the soldier's answers. He said, "Fire open at them. Shots were shooting at them. Fighting between them and forces are fighting at us, shooting at us. The Americans spread through the houses, and they stayed. They were going to take care of this. So they went where the fire was coming, receiving fire, in that direction.… Somebody's shooting at us, we're shooting at them, but they are just shooting at us and we're shooting back."

The investigator said, "Okay. And how many Marines did that?"

Translating directly now, the interpreter said, "It was all mixed up. Even I was a little shaken. . . . I didn't see who's shooting at us."

"Did you shoot your weapon at all?"

"I shot in the air. Yeah, we shot, but we shot in the air."

"Why did you shoot in the air?"

"He says, Who am I going to shoot? I got to see somebody I'm shooting."

"Okay. So why shoot at all?"

"When they start firing, the Marines were like, 'Oh come on, you shoot too.' Everybody shot five, six rounds."

Maybe this investigator had not been around the Iraqi Army before. He said, "In the air?"

"In the air, yes, sir. . . . I mean, we have no effect when we go out there. We have no effect on anything because they take orders from whatever they tell us." The Iraqi soldier obviously wanted to make it clear that he had not killed any of the dead.

"So you shot in the air?"

"Yes, I did."

"Who told you to shoot in the air?"

"They told."

"But who told you?"

"Not all, not everybody, sir."

Evidently, the investigator tried to recover his balance. He said, "Did you ever see anybody—you said that you were taking shots from the neighborhood. Did you ever see anybody shooting at you or the Marines?"

"No, I haven't seen. I know the fires were coming at us, but from where, I don't know."

"But you're sure that you were being shot at?"

"Yes, yes. They want to kill us."

"Was it a lot of shots or just here and there?"

"Spray. It was spray continuous."

"Spray continuous. For about how long?"

"When we first received spray, and then after that, hell break loose. All Americans were firing

and everything. I couldn't tell which one's which."

"Okay. And you shot in the air?"

"Yes sir."

The testimony rings all too true, with compensation for some light twisting of facts. It is very likely that the Marines did indeed begin taking fire on Route Chestnut, a short while after the occupants of the car were killed, and possibly in angry response. Someone is bomb me, I am shoot him, but he is just shoot at me, and I am just shoot him back. This is the kind of fight that Donald Rumsfeld could not imagine.

It was now perhaps 7:30 in the morning. Kallop had arrived with his reinforcements. The fire seemed to come from a house on the south side of the street. In hindsight we know that no insurgents were discovered there, but chances are they were present nonetheless, if not in that house, then in others nearby. The evidence remains uncertain, but Wuterich, for one, insists that his men believed the house contained aggressors, and that they proceeded with a by-the-book operation to clear them out, exactly as the rules of engagement allowed. This may very well be. If you assume it is true, you can watch Haditha play out from there, largely within the legal definition of justified killing—a baseline narrative that becomes the happiest possible version of the morning's events.

With Kallop in place among the Humvees, Wuterich led his men from the front. They got to the house, kicked through the door, and in the entranceway came upon the owner, a middle-aged man, whom one of them shot at close range, probably with a three-round burst to the chest. The Marine's M16 would barely have kicked in his hands. Beyond the sound of the shots, he might have heard the double pops of the rounds entering and exiting the man, the heavier snap of bullets against bone, perhaps the metallic clatter of spent cartridges hitting the ground. The Iraqi was not thrown by the rounds as people are thrown in the movies. If no bones were broken, he may not have felt much pain, except for some stinging where his skin was torn. Unless he was struck in the heart, he did not die immediately, but soon succumbed to massive hemorrhaging. Chances are his blood first splattered against the wall, then flowed into a dark-scarlet puddle beneath him until his heart stopped pumping.

The power was out in the house, and the light inside was dim, all the more so for the Marines, who were piling in from the sunshine of the street. Inside a hostile house, survival requires fast reactions. The Marines fired on a figure down the hall, who turned out too late to be an old woman. There could have been a message there, but guerrilla wars are tricky, and the Marines were not about to slow down. She screamed when she was hit, apparently in the back, and then she died. The Marines were shouting excitedly to one another. They worked down the hallway until, busting open a door, they came upon a room full of people. Later some of the squad said they had heard AK-47s being racked, though whatever they heard turned out not to be that. The room was dim, and the people were glimpsed rather than clearly seen. The Marines rolled in a grenade, hugged the hallway for the blast, and then charged into the dust and smoke to mop up with their rifles as they had been trained to do. This is my weapon, this is my gun. It was the Hell House fight all over again, though, as it happened, without the opposition. Nine people had sheltered in that room, three generations of the same family, from an ancient man paralyzed by a stroke to an infant girl just three months old. When the grenade exploded, it blew some of them apart, wounded others with penetrating shrapnel, and littered the room with evil-smelling body parts. In the urgency of the moment the old man forgot that he was paralyzed and tried to stand up. He took rounds to the chest, vomited blood as he fell, and then lay on the floor twitching as he died. In that room four residents survived. A young woman left her husband behind, grabbed the infant girl, and managed to run away; a 10-year-old girl and her younger brother lay wounded beside their dead mother and remained conscious enough to be terrified.

The Marines went on to the neighboring house, still seeking insurgents, as they believed. What happened there was a repeat of what had

just happened next door, only this time the Americans knocked before they shot the man at the gate, and a grenade tossed into an empty bathroom ignited a washing machine, and a grenade tossed into the room where the family was sheltering failed to go off, and perhaps only one American came in and sprayed the room with automatic fire. This time there was just a single survivor, a girl of about 13, who later was able to provide some details of her family's death. There was a lot of smoke, but:

Daddy was shot through the heart. He was 43.

Mommy was shot in the head and chest. She was 41.

Aunt Huda was shot in the chest. She was 27.

My sister Nour was shot in the right side of her head. She was 15.

My sister Saba was shot through the ear. She was 11.

My brother Muhammad was shot in the hand and I don't know where else. He was 10.

My sister Zainab was shot in the hand and the head. She was five.

My sister Aysha was shot in the leg and I don't know where else. She was three.

The brains of at least one of the little girls were shoved through fractures in her skull by the impact of a bullet. This is a standard effect of high-velocity rounds fired into the closed cavity of a head. Later that day, when a replacement Marine came in to carry out the bodies, the girl's brains would fall onto his boot.

Wuterich's men pursued the search to the north side of Route Chestnut, where they put the women and children under guard and killed four men of another family. There on the north side they found the only AK-47 that was discovered that day—apparently a household defensive weapon, of the type that is legal and common in Iraq. No one has claimed that the rifle had been fired.

On Route Chestnut the killing was over, and the cleanup began. Nearly a year later, the Marines who were involved unanimously insist that it was just another s**ty Anbar morning. By narrow application of military law, the upcoming trials may indeed leave it as such. If so, however, those trials will have to justify the shootings around the car and, furthermore, will have to account for certain statements by witnesses that call into question the scenes inside houses as I have described them in the happiest possible version of the events. Those statements, which again are full of contradictions and uncertainties, raise the possibility that, behind the privacy of the walls, Wuterich's men were carrying out deliberate executions and laughing about it, that one aimed and said "You! You!" before he shot the old man down, that they made return trips to the killing rooms to finish people off, and that on the north side of the road they herded their victims into a wardrobe before shooting them through the door. Unless the Marines of Wuterich's squad suddenly start confessing to war crimes, these are questions only the courts will be able to decide.

V: A Thanksgiving Prayer

On the afternoon of November 19, when the reports of civilian casualties reached Captain Lucas McConnell, it did not cross his mind that anything unusual had occurred: the killing by American forces of noncombatants in Iraq is simply so commonplace. Sergeant Wuterich reported on the fight as he defined it. Lieutenant Kallop acquiesced. An intelligence sergeant who surveyed the carnage said much the same thing. Captain McConnell scarcely reacted, because this slaughter seemed to lie within the rules of engagement, and in that sense was little different from any other. McConnell inhabited a military world, full of acronyms and equipment, and peopled by identifiable combatants—a place where spears clashed and civilians unfortunately sometimes came to harm. For him it had been a very active day. Soon after the land-mine explosion that had killed Terrazas, ambushes and firefights erupted elsewhere in Haditha, and all four of his platoons were engaged.

The main thread started at 8:35 in the morning, when an explosives-and-ordnance squad heading to Route Chestnut for a post-blast analysis came under fire from a palm grove. The squad returned fire and drove on. Twenty-five minutes later, and slightly to the south, an aerial drone observed 10

men meeting on a palm-grove trail between River Road and the Euphrates. The men appeared to be MAMs, or military-age males, and clearly were not just farmers. Two came on foot, one by motorcycle, and seven by car. They loaded gear into the car and, leaving three men behind, drove slowly south along the trail. McConnell called this "egressing." The drone circled lazily overhead, performing well in the global war on terror. The time was approximately 9:12. At 9:48, about a kilometer away, a Kilo Company patrol was attacked by small-arms fire, and the Marines shot back, resulting, they believed, in three enemy wounded in action, or EWIA, though all of them got away.

The men in the car on the palm-grove trail were in no particular hurry. They stopped beside other cars on the trail, presumably to coordinate future attacks. Eventually they came to River Road, not far south of Route Chestnut, where they parked the car and entered two houses. McConnell called the houses "safe houses," perhaps because the men calmly entered them. There was little doubt that all seven men were insurgents, but it was impossible to tell who else was in the houses, and specifically whether families were sheltering inside. Force-protection standards precluded the possibility of checking, and since the rules of engagement sanctioned collateral casualties with the enemy so near, a flight of Cobra helicopters arrived and fired two AGM-114 Hellfire missiles, one into each house, to soften things up. Kilo Company Marines then rushed forward to clear the rooms as required. The first house was empty, but as they approached the second one they were greeted by small-arms fire and grenades. The Marines pulled back—way back—and called in an AV-8B Harrier jet to drop a guided 500-pound GBU-12 Paveway bomb. The bomb crashed into the house with impressive precision, but did not explode.

At this point the drone saw two MAMs leave through the back door and run into a little palm-grove patch to hide. The Marines brought the Harrier around to pink-mist these guys with a second 500-pound bomb—this one guided into the patch—but it, too, turned out to be a dud. Undaunted, the troops switched weapons and hit the patch with a $180,000 air-launched AGM-65 Maverick missile. The strike resulted in one EKIA. The surviving MAM egressed the patch and ingressed the house again. It was ridiculous. The Harrier came back around and dropped a third 500-pound bomb directly through the roof, blowing the whole house and everyone in it to bloody shreds.

This was McConnell's reality as Haditha settled down for the night. He gave a talk at Sparta Base, in which for once he did not overstretch. He said: Men, we've had a tough day, it's sad about Terrazas, but everyone functioned pretty well, so good job and keep at it. He did not mention—and apparently did not much think about—all the noncombatants who had died. Look, this was Iraq. The clearing operations on Route Chestnut did not stand out as being significantly different from the other main act of the day, the use of missiles and bombs against a house that may well have contained a family. God knows there were enough body parts now scattered through the ruins. Killing face-to-face with an M16 allows you at least some chance to desist from slaughtering women and children, which is not true once a bomb is called down on a house. But there is no evidence that McConnell was even thinking about these matters. The photographer Lucian Read, who had been traveling elsewhere in Anbar, returned the day after the killings and later snapped digital pictures of shrouded corpses in the houses by Route Chestnut. Read believes McConnell was aware of the pictures; if so, he did not try to suppress them or to limit their distribution. McConnell was such a company man, such a by-the-book Marine, that, like the entire chain of command above him, he was numb to the killings of noncombatants so long as the rules of engagement made the killings legal. If there was a failure here, it was not that of McConnell but of the most basic conduct of this war.

Five days after the killings, Kilo Company celebrated Thanksgiving with a turkey dinner, including stuffing and potatoes. The occasion was recorded on video. Before the meal McConnell led the men in prayer. He said,

> Father, we thank you for this food which you have prepared for us. Please bless this

food with your great grace, and please let us take the sustenance that you provide for us, and go forth and do great things in your name. We are very grateful here in Kilo Company for many things. We thank you for the mission that you have provided for us, to leave America and go into foreign lands and try to do good things for the world and for our country. It's our greatest honor, and we thank you for that. We thank you for our families, who support us back in the States, and the brotherhood that we have here. It is our greatest strength, and we thank you for that as well. We also want to thank you for the veterans and those who have gone before us, because without them there would be no Marine Corps legacy, and there wouldn't be that great standard to uphold. So we thank you for that because it guides us, it keeps us on the right track, and it's that steering factor that helps us go forth and do great things. We thank you for the memory and the life of Lance Corporal Miguel Terrazas, who did great things in his life, did great things for all of us, was a great friend and a great Marine. We just ask that you help us take this food that you've provided us here today, help it maintain, sustain our bodies so we can uphold that legacy that our fallen comrades have provided for us. We say all these things in your great name. Amen.

The men answered with Marine Corps *Hoo*-rahs and Amens.

McConnell said, "Hey, please enjoy the meal. Make sure you pat the cooks on the back. They work hard. And if you see someone from the Four shop here in the near future that you know, pat them on the back, because they get all that stuff out here, and it's not the most safest place to be pushing food around But I appreciate you all being here, and first and foremost Happy Thanksgiving. Go forth and do great things. *Hoo*-rah!"

Hoo-rah. Iraqis live in an honor-bound society, built of tight family ties. When noncombatants are killed, it matters little to the survivors whether the American rules allowed it, or what the U.S. military courts decide. The survivors go to war in return, which provokes more of the same in a circular dive that spirals beyond recovery. Haditha is just a small example. By now, nearly one year later, hatred of the American forces in the city has turned so fierce that military investigators for the trials at Pendleton have given up on going there. That hatred is blood hatred. It is the kind of hatred people are willing to die for, with no expectation but revenge. This was immediately apparent on a video that was taken the day after the killings by an Iraqi from the neighborhood—the same video that was later passed along to *Time.* The Marine Corps was wrong to dismiss the video as propaganda and fiction. It is an authentic Iraqi artifact. It should be shown to the grunts in training. It should be shown to the generals in command. The scenes it depicts are raw. People move among the hideous corpses, wailing their grief and vowing vengeance before God. "This is my brother! My brother! My brother!" In one of the killing rooms, a hard-looking boy insists that the camera show the body of his father. Sobbing angrily, he shouts, "I want to say this is my father! God will punish you Americans! Show me on the camera! This is my father! He just bought a car showroom! He did not pay all the money to the owner yet, and he got killed!"

A man cries, "This is an act denied by God. What did he do? To be executed in the closet? Those bastards! Even the Jews would not do such an act! Why? Why did they kill him this way? Look, this is his brain on the ground!"

The boy continues to sob over the corpse on the floor. He shouts, "Father! I want my father!"

Another man cries, "This is democracy?"

Well yeah, well no, well actually this is Haditha. For the United States, it is what defeat looks like in this war.

Notes

Vanity Fair, November 2006, 312-28, 350-55. Reprinted by permission from *Vanity Fair* and Darhansoff, Verrill, Feldman Literary Agents on behalf of the author.

1. Josh White and Sonya Geis, "4 Marines Charged in Haditha Killings: Deaths of Iraqi Civilians Also Lead to

Letter to the Editor, *Vanity Fair*

William Langewiesche's "Rules of Engagement" concerning allegations that Marines killed unarmed Iraqis in Haditha, Iraq, on 19 November 2005 is replete with inaccuracies and errors. The fact that the article effortlessly flows from facts to opinion to pure conjecture without any distinctions is equally disturbing. I'd like to address two of Langewiesche's most fundamental errors.

First, his declaration that the Marine Corps was forced to accept the findings of two independent investigations is simply false. There were actually four investigations initiated after the allegations were brought forward. Rather than being forced into action, as suggested in the article, the Marine commander acted quickly to initiate both a criminal and an administrative investigation once the matter was brought to his attention. Marine Corps leadership was immediately informed of his decision.

Secondly, Langewiesche tries and convicts the Marines of Kilo Company without access to facts and evidence that are still being developed in the ongoing criminal investigation. His article does a great disservice not only to the military men and women serving with honor and courage throughout the world but also to the constitutional principles of due process and the presumption of innocence, which are guaranteed in the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Robert E. Milstead Jr.
Brigadier General, United States Marine Corps
Washington, D.C.

[This is a copy of the letter as it was submitted by General Milstead. *Vanity Fair* edited it for publication in the January 2007 issue.]

Dereliction Counts Against 4 Officers," *Washington Post*, 22 December 2006 (http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/21/AR2006122100124.html).

2. Mark Walker, "Haditha Case Continues to Unravel," *North County Times*, 28 June 2008 (http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2008/06/28/military/zcaed43dd200c477388257472005a24b4.txt).

About the Author

William Langewiesche is an international correspondent for *Vanity Fair*. He previously worked for *Atlantic Monthly*. He is the author of several books, including *Fly by Wire* (2009), *The Atomic Bazaar* (2007), *The Outlaw Sea* (2004), and *American Ground* (2002).

Part IV: Building Iraqi Forces, the al-Anbar Awakening, and the Quest to Restore Stability to Iraq

While counterinsurgency doctrine stresses the need to launch surgical operations aimed at pacifying territory and cutting off the supply lines of insurgent fighters, the need to win the support of the population remains critical. From the day they began their second deployment, U.S. Marines made dedicated efforts to build relationships with local leaders and the Iraqi population as a whole. Of particular importance was the need to build stability by using locally raised security forces.

The question facing Marines and Coalition forces in general, however, was what kind of security forces should be raised? Until 2006, most of the Coalition's focus was on building an Iraqi National Army. One method for constructing such a force was to deploy Combined Action Program (CAP) platoons. An innovation of the Vietnam War, CAPs combined U.S. Marines with Iraqis as a means of building a professional, Iraqi military.

However, many Sunnis in al-Anbar Province saw the Shi'a-dominated Iraqi National Army as a force for occupation and oppression. As a consequence, many Marines and other Coalition leaders found that building local police forces was a more effective means for combating the insurgency in western Iraq. Fearing the imminent withdrawal of U.S. troops and subsequent domination of the region by al-Qaeda in Iraq, tribal sheiks like Abdul Sattar Abu Risha approached U.S. forces, offering to enroll the male members of their tribes into the Iraqi police forces. This change, known as the Anbar Awakening, thus led to the development of a professional and efficient police force capable of confronting al-Qaeda in Iraq. The Awakening represents a high point in Marine and Army efforts to engage the Iraqi population and build an effective security apparatus.

The following selections provide readers with a summary of the efforts undertaken by Marines to build local security forces. "The Combined Action Platoon in Iraq" examines how this legacy of the Vietnam War was adapted for the situation in Iraq. Carter Malkasian's essay "Will Iraqization Work?" explores the challenges of building security forces that the Sunnis of the Anbar province could trust in the Shi'a-dominated state. Andrew Lubin and Austen Long's essays provide further analysis and detail about what remains an ongoing effort to forge stability and security in Iraq. Then-Colonel Sean B. MacFarland and Major Niel Smith's essay focuses on the efforts undertaken by the U.S. Army's First Brigade Heavy Combat Team (commanded by Colonel MacFarland) to build alliances with the local Sunni tribes of the Anbar Province. Finally, the diary of al-Qaeda in Iraq fighter Abu-Tariq details the impact of the Awakening on his force's resources and morale, as the diarist relates the imminent collapse of al-Qaeda in Iraq in Anbar Province.

The Combined Action Platoon in Iraq

by First Lieutenant Jason R. Goodale and First Lieutenant Jonathan F. Webre
Marine Corps Gazette, April 2005

On 30 May 2004, the Marines of 3d Platoon, Company G, Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marines (TF 2/7), Regimental Combat Team 7, were activated as one of the first combined action program (CAP) platoons since the end of the program in 1971 during Vietnam. Upon entering into this mission, which was new to everyone involved, the TF 2/7 CAP platoon had to "reinvent the wheel" and use an almost forgotten model in order to wage modern counterinsurgency warfare in the west-central al-Anbar Province, Iraq. The scope of the TF 2/7 CAP mission can be broken into three phases: initiating and founding the CAP mission, coordinating and operating in a CAP environment, and establishing a training base to ensure the continuation of the mission.

Phase I: Initiating the CAP Mission

Because TF 2/7 operations continued up to the day of the CAP platoon activation, including TF 2/7 displacement east in support of Fallujah offensive operations in April 2004, the CAP platoon was not able to start working with the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) until late May 2004. The utilization of the CAP platoon as a semi-independent unit within TF 2/7's area of operations (AO) had been planned for a period of weeks, since the battalion's arrival in February 2004, and finally the opportunity to utilize it presented itself. When the order arrived, the TF 2/7 CAP platoon, call sign "Golf 3," displaced from the battalion main forward operating base and moved 25 kilometers away into the platoon's new home near the city of Hit, Iraq. The CAP platoon arrived at the headquarters of the nascent Iraqi National Guard (ING) 503d Battalion on 30 May 2004.

Upon arriving at the 503d headquarters, the platoon had three goals: establish initial security, familiarize itself with new responsibilities, and sustainment. After a brief introduction to the platoon's new host, Colonel Fahad Ab'dal Aziz, commander of the 503d, the platoon established local security and began settling into billeting areas.

The CAP platoon quickly set in motion the necessary functions to train the 503d in anticipation of the national transfer of sovereignty in little over a month. The CAP platoon commander introduced the unit to the staff and officers of the 503d and established short-, mid-, and long-term training and operations goals. The CAP platoon sergeant ensured that all logistical and security concerns were immediately addressed and that future requirements were anticipated. The platoon guide assumed the role of chief trainer and began establishing the process of turning the 503d into a capable Iraqi fighting force.

The noncommissioned officers (NCOs) of the platoon made sure tasks were assigned, watches and rotations established, and everything was proceeding according to the platoon plan. The junior Marines had perhaps the hardest role of adapting to a foreign culture by learning the language and working daily with hundreds of non-English speaking, ill-trained soldiers. Needless to say, this was all ad hoc considering that the CAP platoon's predeployment training consisted of two days of orientation that already proved far short of the expectations necessary to live, eat, sleep, and fight with the 503d. Despite these shortcomings, the TF 2/7 CAP platoon was cognizant that they were going to carry out this mission for the last three months of the battalion's deployment. The platoon wanted nothing short of success. The future local security in this AO needed to be transferred to the Iraqis as soon as they were ready.

Phase II: Coordination and Operations in a CAP Environment

Perhaps the biggest challenge that the TF 2/7

CAP faced in its mission was the establishment of procedures when it came to combined operations with Marines and the 503d soldiers. Golf 3's role in coordinating all U.S. and ISF training and operations from the 503d headquarters decreased throughout the platoon's stay in Iraq. This would never have been possible without the addition, in early June, of a battalion detachment led by the TF 2/7 S-3L (operations liaison officer). Along with subject matter experts from each battalion staff section, the essential task of establishing an operational capability at the 503d battalion level was removed from the CAP platoon.

The CAP platoon and battalion staff solidified, as the weeks passed, into a solid band of Marines and sailors that became known as "Team JCC" (joint coordination center). The JCC was the operations center at the heart of the mission. From the JCC, the CAP platoon and TF 2/7 tracked the majority of activity concerning the Marines, the ING, and the Iraqi police in TF 2/7's AO. Despite some early difficulties with command and control, understandable for a mission of this type, Team JCC began to establish useful techniques and procedures. Such procedures consisted of receiving direction from TF 2/7 headquarters; establishing whether an Iraqi-only, U.S.-only, or a combined effort would act on it; and supervising the execution of any action. As a team, the officers from the respective agencies would assess the situation and assign reaction teams from the ISF to respond. These teams were often supported by the Marines of Company E, located at the adjacent battalion forward operating base, or other units of the battalion as required.

Difficulties would often arise due to lack of communications equipment and logistics assets, such as fuel, unreliability (or lack of training) of the local forces, or language barriers. Each one of these problems was dealt with as it occurred, and over the course of months the CAP managed to find creative solutions to solve each challenge.

A simple example is that of the language barriers. Many of the battalion's interpreters were either not Iraqi or were from a different part of Iraq, making it difficult for Iraqi soldiers to understand them. By learning enough tactical terms in the local dialect to issue a simple order, such as checkpoint, patrol, enemy, and weapons, while making up the difference with diagrams and hand gestures, the problem was solved. As in Vietnam, the CAP platoon's language ability was essential to mission success.

Combined operations with the ISF are rarely smooth, but as the mission matured and evolved, Team JCC developed a system that resulted in several successful operations against the enemy. The CAP platoon jointly confiscated hundreds of illegal weapons and explosive material, captured several insurgents, and successfully engaged the enemy on numerous occasions with no casualties to ISF or TF 2/7 Marines.

Phase III: Establish a Training Base

Perhaps the most visible success of CAP platoon's training mission was the establishment of an instruction foundation that would ensure the continuation of sustainment training throughout the 503d. The CAP platoon initial training package trained 700 soldiers of the 503d in basic weapons handling and marksmanship with the AK-47 and RPK (Soviet) light machinegun. The 503d fired more than 13,000 rounds in the span of four days and set a standard for ISF training.

As a result of some collective thought between the 503d trainers and Marines, a plan developed to bring one platoon a week from one of the four companies in the 503d (from the cities of Hit, Baghdad, Haditha, and Anah/Rawah) and train them in basic combat skills. The training package, which became known as "basic skills training," lasted from Monday to Thursday of each week (accounting for the Iraqi religious day on Friday) with Sunday as a receiving day. The package included physical training and martial arts every morning and covered the gamut of basic mission essential tasks and combat skills to include procedures at checkpoints; search actions for both vehicles and personnel; basic dismounted patrolling skills, such as hand/arm signals, mounted/dismounted techniques; and medical training. Also included were urban skills, such as room clearing, patrolling, building entry techniques, and a full day of live fire and movement training on the

503d's 300-meter rifle range that was recently renovated by TF 2/7 civil affairs. The 503d soldiers learned to rely on a basic formation that they called the "zigzag," or tactical column, for most combat operations.

The training week culminated in a series of graduation battle drills in which the three squads of the 503d platoons would demonstrate—in a series of events—all of the skills learned in the week's training. During the CAP platoon's time with the 503d, the 503d passed 10 platoons (approximately 400 soldiers) through the training package. Each week the plan fluctuated and evolved but ultimately became smoother.

The CAP platoon's most significant training accomplishment was the establishment of a core group of approximately 10 Iraqi trainers led by Major Ab'del Qader Jubair, Training Officer, 503d, and the senior enlisted trainer, Sergeant First Class Jafa Sadeq Hatani. With the personnel additions of other trainers, the group developed into a highly skilled and well-versed training cadre.

Building on TF 2/7's military police platoon "train the trainer" package for 503d NCOs, the CAP platoon's initial training of the 503d was conducted entirely by Marines. After an additional train the trainer piece, the 503d trainers, affectionately referred to as the "Red Sleeves" for the armbands they wore, assumed responsibility.

By the beginning of August 2004, the Red Sleeves assumed full control of the basic skills training package and shaped it as their own. The Marines gladly and proudly allowed them to take the reins and stood back. The CAP platoon realized that if it was theirs (the Iraqis') it was better.

Looking Back

On 9 September 2004, the last Marines of Team JCC were extracted by helicopter, and Golf 3's CAP mission was complete. As the helicopter circled overhead the 503d headquarters, the Marines reflected that in three short months a small group of Marines had stood up an ING battalion, conducted combined operations against the enemy, and created a training program that had been adapted by the Iraqis as their own. As of this writing, the training program continues beyond TF 2/7's stay. A new CAP platoon from TF 1/23 carried on the mission.

TF 2/7 CAP platoon results were often roughly bordered, and many times the unit had to adjust expectations. Nevertheless, the overall goal was defined. The Team JCC leadership was completely confident that the mission was worthwhile. The reactivated CAP has been a relative success in this modern war on terror and should be closely examined as an option for future conflicts.

Notes

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Will Iraqization Work?

by Carter A. Malkasian
Center for Stability and Development, Center for Naval Analyses, February 2007

Introduction

"Iraqization" is a critical element in the Iraq debate. It is central to the U.S. military strategy and a key component of the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. The basic concept is that a properly trained and equipped Iraqi Army will be able to keep insurgent violence at a low level, thereby allowing the Coalition to withdraw forces. Conventional wisdom is that the Iraqi Army is the sole institution capable of stabilizing Iraq. Shortcomings in Iraqization are usually attributed to an insufficient focus on training, equipping, advising, and manning on the part of the Coalition.

Two years of evidence on the actual performance of the Iraqi Army in al-Anbar Province suggests that the current strategy of Iraqization is not likely to enable U.S. forces to withdraw. In spite of its dramatic growth, there are few signs that the Iraqi Army can suppress insurgent activity to a level that would permit the United States to withdraw substantial forces without leaving behind a terrorist safe haven. Improvements in training, equipping, and advising will not make a difference. Even the best-trained and equipped Iraqi Army units face continual attacks. The problem is the ethnic makeup of the Iraqi Army. Attacks cannot be suppressed because the Sunni population views the Shi'a-dominated army as an unjust occupation force, bent on oppressing them or at least unable to protect them from hard-core insurgents. The population generally refuses to provide actionable intelligence on insurgents, allows insurgents to mass freely, hides insurgents, and joins insurgents as fighters. As long as this sectarian

dynamic exists the Iraqi Army will do no better at defusing the insurgency than Coalition forces. The Iraqi Army, no matter how well trained, advised, equipped, or manned, cannot mend the sectarian rift within Iraq and create understanding between the Sunni and Shi'a.

This paper is based on empirical evidence collected on Iraqization while I served as an advisor to the I Marine Expeditionary Force in al-Anbar Province from February 2004 to February 2005 and February to August 2006. The evidence includes interviews with the Iraqi Army and police, discussions with U.S. advisors, and direct observation of Iraqi Army and police operations. Al-Anbar is overwhelmingly Sunni and infamous as a center of insurgent activity. Skeptics might ask whether the harsh environment of al-Anbar is a good case for testing the potential of Iraqization in general. The answer is that the failure of Iraqization in al-Anbar matters. It means a U.S. withdrawal would leave the Iraqi government unable to control the Sunni heartland. Even if the Iraqi Army resorted to extreme brutality, its initial lack of artillery, air power, and an overwhelming numerical advantage would preclude a rapid victory. The Iraqi government could only accede to the division of the country or engage in a long and bloody civil war to reclaim the province. Neither would appear to be in the interest of the United States. In both cases, hard-core insurgents (who are predominantly Sunni), such as al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), would be free to operate in al-Anbar for a prolonged period and organize terrorist operations outside al-Anbar. Even if successful everywhere else in Iraq, Iraqization will have failed as a strategy if it cannot address al-Anbar.

Iraqization may enjoy better prospects if its focus is altered in al-Anbar. In contrast to the Iraqi Army, local Sunni police forces have been able both to collect intelligence and injure the insurgency, especially hardcore groups of greatest concern to the United States, like AQI. Sunni police forces can do this because they enjoy a far stronger relationship with the population than the Iraqi Army. Thus, the emphasis of Iraqization in al-Anbar needs to be upon building local Sunni police forces as much as building an integrated national army. Even then, Iraqization may founder. Widespread Sunni disaffection from the Iraqi government deters Sunnis from joining the police, leaving the police embattled and outnumbered against the insurgents. This leads to an equally important point. Iraqization is no substitute for efforts by the Iraqi government to reward cooperative Sunni leaders. For Iraqization to prosper, the Iraqi government must enact reforms sufficient to garner the support of a critical mass of Sunnis for the police. The success of Iraqization can never be guaranteed but, with firm support from the Iraqi government, local police forces can marginalize AQI and secure the populated areas, which could serve as a basis for withdrawing U.S. forces.

The model of local Sunni police forces has relevance beyond al-Anbar. The Iraqi Army faces similar limitations in other Sunni areas, which locally recruited police could overcome. Indeed, a few local Sunni units have been formed in northern Iraq, which seem to perform well near their home base. The model would be less applicable in Baghdad where local police could be drawn into sectarian violence. Furthermore, the model has strong historical precedence. Locally recruited forces have been an effective means of counterinsurgency in earlier campaigns, such as the firqats in Oman and regional and popular forces in Vietnam. Even in Afghanistan today, locally recruited "auxiliary police" are being advocated as a means of countering the Taliban.

The Origins and Early Development of Iraqization

General George Casey, commander of Multi National Forces-Iraq (MNF-I), implemented Iraqization in the beginning of 2005. In December 2004, a review of the MNF-I campaign plan concluded that the formation of the Iraqi Army was lagging and needed to be accelerated. Multi National Support and Training Command Iraq (MNSTC-I) had planned to create 10 Iraqi divisions but by the end of 2004 only two brigades had seen significant combat. The planners expected that the Iraqi Army could provide

Name	Abbreviated Name	Initial Location	Arrival
2d Brigade, 1st Division	2-1 Iraqi Brigade	Fallujah	Spring 2005
3d Brigade, 1st Division	3-1 Iraqi Brigade	Fallujah	Spring 2005
4th Brigade, 1st Division	4-1 Iraqi Brigade	Vicinity of Fallujah	Spring 2005
1st Brigade, 7th Division	1-7 Iraqi Brigade	Ramadi	Autumn 2005
2d Brigade, 7th Division	2-7 Iraqi Brigade	Hit, Haditha, Rawah	Winter 2006
3d Brigade, 7th Division	3-7 Iraqi Brigade	Al-Qa'im	Winter 2006
1st Brigade, 1st Division	1-1 Iraqi Brigade	Ramadi	Spring 2006

(Table 1) *Iraqi Army Brigades in al-Anbar*

vital manpower and better gather intelligence than Coalition forces. Additionally, they believed that, unlike Coalition forces, the Iraqi Army would not be perceived as occupiers, undercutting a major motivation behind the insurgency. Most importantly, there was an explicit assumption that the Iraqi Army could eventually shoulder counterinsurgency operations, allowing U.S. forces to withdraw. The Iraqi Army would be able to prevent AQI from forming safe havens in Iraq and preserve the integrity of the Iraqi state. As a result of this review, Casey directed that all Coalition forces shift their focus from fighting insurgents to training Iraqis. In order to accelerate Iraqi Army development, MNF-I created the transition team concept—12 advisors embedded into every Iraqi Army battalion, brigade, and division.

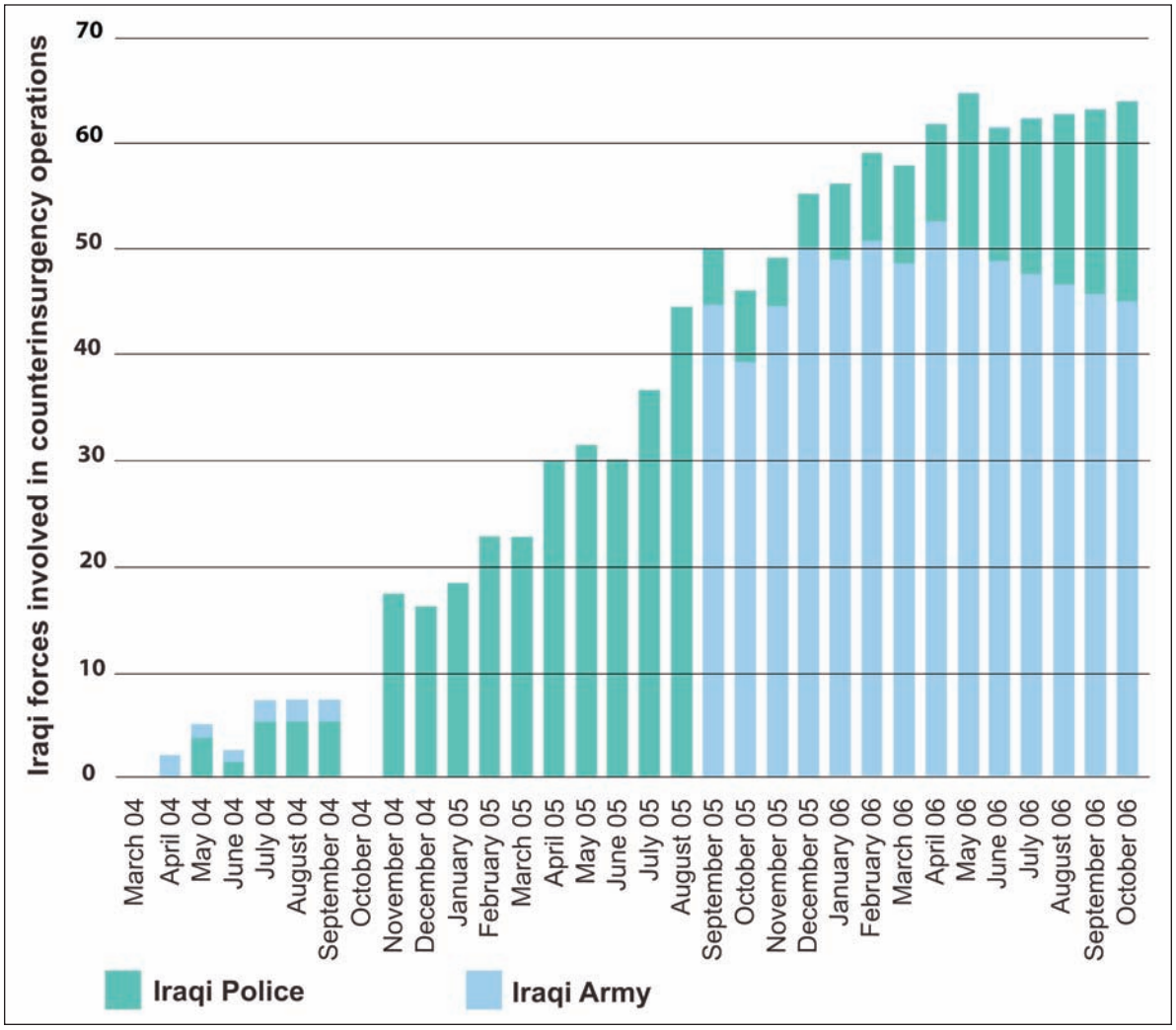
The army was meant to be a national force that integrated Kurds, Shi'a, and Sunni. After the difficulties experienced with the Sunni Iraqi National Guard and Fallujah Brigade in 2004, MNF-I did not want all-Sunni units.[1] It was thought that such units would undermine the development of a new Iraqi nation and cooperate with insurgents. True integration never occurred within the army. Few Sunnis joined in 2004 and 2005. A number of battalions, brigades, and divisions had Sunni commanders but the vast majority of the officers and soldiers were Shi'a.

By the end of 2006, an Iraqi Army had been built but it appeared unable to survive on its own. Prominent scholars cited flaws in the execution of Iraqization and generally claimed that the United States needed to invest greater resources into the effort. Ten divisions were considered too few to handle the insurgency.[2] They also argued that the Coalition had failed to provide sufficient training, equipment, or advisors to the Iraqis. Iraqi Army battalions had only been given a few weeks of formal training. In terms of equipment, the Coalition had left the Iraqi Army more lightly armed than the insurgents, trans-

ported in unarmored pick-up trucks, and often bereft of essential personal items, like boots and cold-weather jackets. Twelve advisors, often reservists or national guardsmen rather than the most capable active-duty personnel, were shown to be inadequate to train, administer, and operate alongside a battalion.[3]

In spite of these problems, today, the consensus remains that a national, ethnically integrated, and well-trained army is the best means of suppressing the insurgency. Ostensibly, the key to U.S. withdrawal from Iraq is simply to invest greater resources into the effort. General John Abizaid, commander of Central Command, told the U.S. Senate in November: "In discussions with our commanders and Iraqi leaders it is clear that they believe Iraqi forces can take more control fast, provided we invest more manpower and resources into the Coalition military transition teams, speed the delivery of logistics and mobility enablers, and embrace an aggressive Iraqi-led effort to disarm illegal militias."[4] Abizaid believed that U.S. forces might thereby be able to hand over security to Iraqi forces within one year.[5] Similarly, the Iraq Study Group's highly anticipated December 2006 report emphasized: "the urgent near-term need for significant additional trained Army brigades, since this is the

(Figure 1) *Iraqi forces as a percentage of total forces conducting counterinsurgency*



key to Iraqis taking over full responsibility for their own security."[6] The report implied that a shortcoming in "real combat capability" caused the Iraqi Army to be unable to handle the insurgency. It recommended increasing the number of U.S. advisors and personnel supporting Iraqi Army units and providing improved equipment.[7]

The Iraqi Army in al-Anbar

Marine commands—the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) and II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF)—have held responsibility for al-Anbar Province since March 2004. I MEF's first experience with the Iraqi Army brigades in al-Anbar was in the second battle of Fallujah, in November 2004. To the relief of many U.S. officers, the predominantly Shi'a Iraqi Army brigades stood and fought. After the battle, new Iraqi Army brigades flowed into al-Anbar as MNSTC-I trained more and more forces. In 2005, the Ministry of Defense decided that both the 1st and 7th Iraqi Divisions would be located in al-Anbar. By April 2006, all seven brigades had been deployed. Table 1 gives the name, location, and time of arrival of every brigade.

Every Iraqi battalion, brigade, and division in al-Anbar had its 12-man advisory team. National guardsmen and U.S. Army reservists composed the first advisory teams. By the end of 2005 the Marine Corps devoted its own active-duty personnel to the mission. Officers slated for command and key personnel within Marine infantry battalions became advisors. Additionally, Marine and Army battalions partnered with Iraqi battalions, in order to assist in their operations and training. Usually, the partnership process began with an Iraqi company working with a U.S. company. Eventually, the company would operate independently, followed by the battalion, and ultimately the entire brigade.

The Capabilities of the Iraqi Army in al-Anbar

Throughout 2005, the Iraqi Army brigades in al-Anbar developed. Figure 1 shows the percentage of Iraqis conducting counterinsurgency operations out of the total number of Coalition and Iraq forces conducting counterinsurgency operations in al-Anbar (the figure excludes headquarters, logistics, and aviation units). By December 2005, the Iraqi Army was providing 40 to 50 percent of the manpower for counterinsurgency operations. By March 2006, three brigades operated independently.

The Iraqi Army demonstrated strong combat performance. Nearly every Iraqi Army battalion stood its ground in major firefights. Most could perform advanced tasks such as calling in close air support, combining movement with suppressive fire, maneuvering, and assaulting insurgent positions. On no occasion did insurgents rout or overwhelm an Iraqi Army unit. The experiences of two Iraqi brigades provide detailed proof of the army's combat performance.

The 3d Brigade, 1st Iraqi Division (3-1 Iraqi Brigade) operated in the rural area west of Fallujah, along the Euphrates River. Other than 60 or so advisors, no Coalition ground forces supported it. Some Marine officers likened the area to Vietnam, with as many as 50 insurgents launching coordinated attacks against Iraqi Army outposts and patrols.[8] The Iraqi soldiers generally stood and fought. Under the leadership of their advisors, the Iraqis often employed close air support or artillery to break attacks and maneuvered aggressively against their opponents. For example, on 11 May 2006, insurgents coordinated two attacks against the brigade's first battalion. First, they hit a dismounted patrol with small arms fire and RPGs. The Iraqis called for close air support. The air support saw insurgents setting up an ambush position. Using this surveillance, the Iraqis counterattacked and drove off the insurgents. Then, insurgents engaged a nearby outpost with small arms, RPGs, and an antiaircraft gun. The Iraqis sent out their quick reaction force, which outflanked the insurgent position. They killed one insurgent, captured six more, and seized the antiaircraft gun. According to its advisors, the brigade won battles like this at least once per month.

The 1st Brigade, 1st Iraqi Division (1-1 Iraqi Brigade) fought in eastern Ramadi, the scene of the worst violence in al-Anbar. Insurgents

massed and assaulted brigade positions, sniped at patrols, struck convoys with IEDs, and rammed suicide car bombs into observation posts and entry control points. As many as 100 insurgents participated in some attacks. Firefights could last an hour. The brigade performed well. Advisors rated the brigade, a veteran of battles in Najaf, Fallujah, Baghdad, and al-Qa'im, as highly competent in urban fighting. Other Coalition officers considered Brigadier General Razzaq, the brigade commander, the equivalent of the average U.S. brigade commander. Razzaq's men clearly held a tactical edge over the insurgents. *Jundi* (Arabic term for an enlisted soldier) advanced under fire and officers aggressively took the initiative. On one occasion, 40-50 insurgents tried to pin, surround, and destroy a patrol from the brigade's first battalion in the volatile Milaab district of southeast Ramadi. The patrol stole the initiative and pre-empted the attack by assaulting the insurgent positions in surrounding buildings.[9] The brigade suffered casualties and desertions from the heavy fighting but never lost a firefight.

The other brigades succeeded in major engagements as well. Even inexperienced and poorly trained brigades stood and fought. For example, Coalition officers considered 1st Brigade, 7th Iraqi Division (1-7 Iraqi Brigade) to be one of the two weakest brigades.

Nevertheless, its battalions endured heavy fighting in western Ramadi. They consistently defeated attacks involving 20 or more insurgents.[10] The soldiers of the brigade's third battalion would advance under fire, assault insurgent positions, and generally attempt to encircle and outflank opponents. When an IED exploded they would immediately go after the triggerman. Iraqi officers, not just the U.S. advisors, provided the leadership for such tactics. The *jundi* hunkered down less than American troops and could be recklessly brave in combat. Some U.S. officers said that insurgents ran from the *jundi* of third battalion.[11]

Besides succeeding in major firefights, the Iraqi Army in al-Anbar showed a basic proficiency in counterinsurgency techniques. Every battalion conducted patrols, raids, and clearing operations, sometimes as much as Coalition units. For example, 3-1 Iraqi Brigade aggressively patrolled their area of operations and pressed outposts into insurgent safe areas.[12] Because of their aggressiveness, many Coalition officers candidly rated the brigade as better than certain U.S. units. Good Iraqi battalions sent out snipers, set ambushes, and operated at night. U.S. officers considered 1-1 Iraqi Brigade particularly good at squad- and company-level tactics. The brigade's ambushes regularly interdicted insurgents trying to enter Ramadi.[13] Iraqi units understood how to collect intelligence and target insurgents. As will be described later, the problem with intelligence was not the Iraqi Army's understanding of how to collect it but the willingness of the population to provide it in the first place. When intelligence was available, Iraqi units could identify insurgents, locate them, and then capture them in a raid.[14]

Overall, the Iraqi Army showed it could both fight and execute counterinsurgency techniques. It did not operate as well as the Coalition forces but could perform the same basic tasks. Major Lloyd Freeman, the operations officer with the 1st Iraqi Division military transition team, summed up the Iraqi Army's combat performance well:

> Some advisors claim the insurgents are better than the Iraqi soldiers. However, I have not seen an instance where an Iraqi unit has been overrun or even required a Coalition QRF to come to their rescue. I myself have seen enough patrols to be appalled at some of the simple things they are unable to do but in no case have I seen a situation where I felt I was surrounded by complete incompetence. I always felt they could get the job done. It might be ugly but the job would get done.[15]

Quite clearly, problems in advisors, equipment, and training were not preventing the Iraqi Army from fighting the insurgents and displaying a "real combat capability."

Sustained Insurgent Activity

The problem was that combat capability had little to do with the level of insurgent activity. In

spite of its dramatic growth and strong combat performance, the Iraqi Army faced incessant attacks, enduring a steady stream of attacks by small arms fire, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), indirect fire, and suicide car bombs. This experience was shared by nearly all Iraqi units, regardless of their skill level. Just like the Coalition, the Iraqi Army could fight well and understand counterinsurgency tactics yet still face a vibrant insurgency. Notably, proficiency in counterinsurgency techniques and combat performance did not save 1-1 and 3-1 Iraqi Brigades from major attacks involving scores of insurgents. Incident levels remained high in nearly every brigade area of operations, regardless of the resident brigade's capabilities. Most disturbing for U.S. interests, AQI maintained a presence throughout the province. Overall, insurgent attacks made it clear that the Iraqi Army could not manage the insurgency with U.S. forces present, which makes it highly unlikely they will be able to do so absent U.S. forces—the primary goal of Iraqization.

There is little reason to believe the answer to this problem is more advising, training, or equipping. Above, I judged the Iraqi Army's combat capability partly on the performance of two of its best brigades, which may seem unfair. However, 1-1 and 3-1 Iraqi brigades represent critical cases for Iraqization. One would expect them to face fewer attacks. The fact that they did not casts doubt on any argument that better advising, training, and equipping can enable Iraqization to succeed. If the best of the Iraqi Army brigades faced heavy attacks, then more advising, training, and equipping to bring the other brigades up to speed is not likely to solve the problem.

The answer was also not that the Coalition and Iraqi Army lacked sufficient forces to quell insurgent activity. Admittedly, Iraqi and Coalition forces could not be everywhere, meaning the insurgents had freedom to mass and gather for attacks. Iraqi Army officers frequently noted that al-Anbar was too big to be controlled by only 7 brigades. Furthermore, Iraqi battalions were under-strength. Most operated at 30 to 80 percent strength (150-400 men), excluding men on leave. One-third of the 750 men in a battalion were on leave at any time. Desertions and combat losses further drained the strength of Iraqi battalions. Desertions occurred because of poor living conditions, irregular pay, distance from home, and constant exposure to combat. Blame falls largely on the Ministry of Defense, which failed to pay soldiers on time or provide combat replacements for most of 2006. There is evidence that reinforcing or building new Iraqi Army units would have helped. In 2004 and 2005, saturating cities with forces, as in the second battle of Fallujah or the battle of al-Qa'im, tended to reduce large-scale attacks.

However, there is good reason to doubt whether greater numbers would have made a decisive difference. Reinforcement of counterinsurgency operations in 2006 had disappointing results. The number of Iraqi Army units in Ramadi, Hit, and Haditha increased substantially in 2006 *without any sustained drop in large-scale attacks.*

Indeed, attacks increased in Ramadi and Haditha even though the number of forces met the 20 security personnel per 1,000 civilians ratio often touted as needed for effective counterinsurgency.[16] In Ramadi, areas supposedly "locked down" by thorough Iraqi patrolling witnessed attacks. In other words, even where the Iraqi Army operated with sufficient numbers, major insurgent activity did not always subside. Thus, inadequate numbers alone do not seem to explain why the Iraqi Army faced attacks. Perhaps if the Ministry of Defense had flooded al-Anbar with two or three additional divisions, violence could have been subdued by sheer weight of numbers. Even so, that would hardly have been the most efficient solution and probably would not have removed the fundamental roots of the violence.

Popular Opposition to the Iraqi Army

The main reason that the Iraqi Army suffered from incessant attacks is that the population sympathized with the insurgency. They generally would not provide intelligence on the location and identity of insurgents. Bottom-up intelligence

collection is essential to successful counterinsurgency. Without it, insurgents cannot be identified from among the population and removed. As Frank Kitson stated in his classic counterinsurgency text, *Low Intensity Operations,* "if it is accepted that the problem of defeating the enemy consists very largely of finding him, it is easy to recognise the paramount importance of good information."[17] More recently, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps new counterinsurgency manual cited intelligence as one of the key principles of counterinsurgency:

Without good intelligence, counterinsurgents are like blind boxers wasting energy flailing at unseen opponents and perhaps causing unintended harm. With good intelligence, counterinsurgents are like surgeons cutting out cancerous tissue while keeping other vital organs intact. Effective operations are shaped by timely, specific, and reliable intelligence, gathered and analyzed at the lowest possible level and disseminated throughout the force.[18]

In al-Anbar, insurgents could mass freely because local residents would not inform the Iraqi Army. Worse, some hid insurgents from Iraqi Army patrols and sweeps or even joined the insurgency as fighters. Consequently, the Iraqi Army could win every firefight and patrol diligently without ever rooting out the insurgents.

The population opposed the Iraqi Army primarily because of its Shi'a identity. Sunnis disliked the Shi'a-dominated Iraqi government. The government's insistence on denying Sunnis political power and economic wealth convinced them of its oppressive intentions. Sectarian violence in Baghdad following the February 2006 Golden Mosque bombing magnified the Sunni perception that the Shi'a intended on oppressing them. Polling in 2006 found that 77 to 90 percent of the people viewed the government as illegitimate. Eighty percent considered civil war likely.[19] As far as Sunnis were concerned, Persians probably controlled the entire government. The Iraqi Army was nothing more than a Shi'a militia bent on oppressing them. Polls confirmed that the majority of Sunnis in al-Anbar viewed the Iraqi Army as a threat.[20]

Virtually no Iraqi Army formation could gain the support of a critical mass of the local population. Even the best brigades, like 3-1 Iraqi Brigade, could not collect sufficient intelligence to reduce insurgent activity. One battalion in that brigade received only one actionable tip in eight months, in spite of an active civil affairs effort. The people in the area preferred to assist the insurgents. They kept 3-1 Iraqi Brigade under observation and reported its movements to insurgents. The 1st Brigade, 1st Iraqi Division probably held the best record in collecting intelligence but this never sufficed to decapitate insurgent command and control or regularly warn of insurgent attacks.[21] Few people wanted to interact with the Iraqi Army. They refused to take free water offered by the brigade (some angrily poured it onto the ground) and did not stop insurgents from bombing mobile clinics devised to render medical care to the people. One battalion commander said he felt little sympathy from locals. Locals did not come forward to provide information of value. From his perspective, popular opposition to the Iraqi Army was deeply ingrained. His officers agreed that shaykhs and imams supported the insurgents. The shaykhs and especially the imams had the ear of the people and influenced them to hide information from the Iraqi Army. In the battalion's experience, no other area of al-Anbar had been so opposed to the army. One officer estimated that 25 to 30 percent of locals were insurgents.[22]

On the other side of Ramadi, the battalions of 1-7 Iraqi Brigade also could never get enough intelligence to take out significant numbers of insurgent leaders. One battalion commander, a Sunni, complained that the people, mukhtars, and city leaders were not cooperating with him. They would not provide worthwhile information.[23] He believed locals were uncooperative because they found government policies anti-Sunni and undemocratic.[24] Another battalion commander stated that his men got little of value from the locals.[25] Some locals were openly hostile. They refused to talk and would not provide information.[26] A Marine civil affairs team that interacted with the population on a daily basis in Ramadi suspected that most people hoped that Saddam would return and the new government would leave.[27]

In Fallujah, locals gave the Iraqi Army minimal information on the location of insurgents and hid insurgents who attacked the army.[28] Imams told locals to fight the Iraqi Army.[29] Iraqi Army officers believed the people perceived them as occupiers and supported the insurgents.[30] They never heard an imam denounce an attack on the army. Indeed, at one city council meeting, city officials laughed derisively at an Iraqi officer when he noted his men received no cooperation from locals; as if to ask why he would expect any different. City leaders regularly accused the Iraqi Army of being Jaysh al Mahdi, Badr Corps, or an Iranian occupation force. At meeting after meeting, they claimed the Iranians had taken charge of the government.[31] A prominent imam said that the people of Fallujah were fighting a Persian occupation.[32] Similarly, a respected teacher accused Iraqi soldiers of following their sectarian desires and being an instrument of Iran.[33] Unfounded tales of horrible Iraqi atrocities often accompanied accusations of sectarianism. One local at a city council meeting said: "When your [Coalition] forces question us, we at least feel mostly safe. When the Iraqi Army and police take us, our people are killed and their bodies thrown into the streets."[34] Some locals called for revenge for the heavy-handedness of the Iraqi Army.

The Iraqi Army fed Sunni sectarian fears by occasionally treating the population poorly. At times, Iraqi soldiers cursed at Sunnis, stole items from homes, and occupied Sunni residences as observation posts.[35] If under stress, Iraqi soldiers could be physically brutal. In particular, the death of a comrade could motivate jundi to randomly detain or even beat locals. Usually, though, Iraqi officers intervened and reinforced discipline.

For example, Razzaq tried to counteract any abusive or sectarian tendencies in his brigade.[36] And Brigadier General Abdullah, the Sunni commander of 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Division (4-1 Iraqi Brigade), made a concerted effort to work with local leaders and have an amicable relationship with the population. City leaders in Fallujah upheld his brigade as a model of good behavior. Overall, brutality was an exception rather than the rule for the Iraqi Army. In spite of some Sunni propaganda, no Iraqi Army battalion ever acted as a Shi'a death squad or persecuted the Sunni population. Some jundi and officers had connections to a militia and many admired Moqtada Sadr. But no entire unit pursued a sectarian agenda against the Sunnis.

3d Brigade, 7th Iraqi Division (3-7 Iraqi Brigade)

If Sunnis fought the Iraqi Army because of its Shi'a identity, one might expect that a Sunni brigade would have a better ability to keep violence at a low level. Indeed, the one Iraqi brigade with a large Sunni composition experienced minimal attacks and easily enforced security in its area. The 3d Brigade, 7th Iraqi Division arrived in al-Qa'im in February 2006, following a major Coalition clearing operation (Operation Steel Curtain). The brigade obviously benefited from Operation Steel Curtain and could not have cleared the city on its own. What the brigade did was prevent insurgents from infiltrating back into the city. In other cities, such as Haditha and to some extent Fallujah, insurgents reinfiltrated following clearing operations and resumed attacks. Uniquely, a large number of Sunnis filled 3-7 Iraqi Brigade's rolls. Over the next 10 months, the brigade faced few attacks in spite of being severely undermanned, often operating at less than 50 percent strength (excluding leave rotations). It suffered roughly a quarter of the casualties the Iraqi Army suffered in Fallujah, the next most benign operating environment of comparable size (200,000 people). The fact the brigade was relatively untrained and undermanned yet subject to few attacks reinforces the argument that training and numbers were not critical to the ability of the Iraqi Army to manage the insurgency.

The success of the brigade depended on the Albu Mahal tribe, the most powerful tribe in the al-Qa'im area. Roughly 20 to 40 percent of the brigade came from that tribe.[37] The Albu Mahal had been insurgents in 2004. In 2005, AQI came to al-Qa'im. The tribe disliked AQI's indiscriminate use of force, importation of foreign fighters, and encroachment upon their control of the black-market. Unfortunately, AQI defeated the

Albu Mahal in a battle for control of the city in 2005.[38] Thereafter, the Albu Mahal helped the Coalition reassert control over al-Qa'im. In particular, the Coalition formed a set of "Desert Protector" platoons, composed of Albu Mahal and advised by U.S. Special Forces. The Ministry of Defense made special allowance for the formation of these militia-like units. The Desert Protector platoons proved especially useful during Operation Steel Curtain, when they collected large amounts of intelligence. Fellow tribesmen readily provided information on AQI sleeper agents, safe houses, ammunition caches, and bomb-making workshops.[39]

The Iraqi government rewarded the Albu Mahal for their support of Operation Steel Curtain. The Ministry of Defense allowed tribesmen to serve in 3-7 Iraqi Brigade, breaking the standard rule that brigades in al-Anbar could not be composed of local Sunnis. An Albu Mahal tribal leader, Colonel Ishmael, became the brigade's commander. Two battalion commanders and several staff officers were also Albu Mahal. The Coalition formed a police force, commanded by Colonel Ishmael's brother. By the end of the year, the police force numbered over 1,000, largely from the Albu Mahal.

The Albu Mahal received other forms of rewards besides control over an Iraqi Army brigade. The Ministry of Defense appointed Major General Murthi, from the tribe, as commander of the entire 7th Iraqi Division. Another tribal leader became mayor of al-Qa'im. In terms of money, the tribe now had freedom to retake control of the black market and run smuggling operations into Syria. Control over phosphate mines in Akashat gave the tribe a lucrative commodity to trade through al-Qa'im.[40] These rewards meant the Albu Mahal had deep interests in ensuring insurgents, particularly AQI, never returned to al-Qa'im.

The brigade, together with the police, proved highly effective in suppressing insurgent activity. Insurgent infiltration back into the city was rapidly cut off. In contrast to other Iraqi Army formations, 3-7 Iraqi Brigade demonstrated a robust capability for human intelligence collection. Battalions collected intelligence prodigiously, in spite of the fact they had been given little training. Soldiers and officers aggressively pursued leads and regularly captured insurgents. Information could be gathered easily from other Albu Mahal.

The Habbaniyah Mutiny

If Shi'a identity inhibited the effectiveness of the Iraqi Army, then the obvious answer would seem to be to recruit more Sunnis. I MEF and II MEF recognized that the Shi'a identity of the Iraqi Army inflamed tensions with the local Sunni population of al-Anbar. Accordingly, recruiting Sunnis into the army, particularly during early 2006, became a priority. Unfortunately, outside al-Qa'im, recruiting Sunnis proved quite difficult.

In late 2005, the Ministry of Defense granted that 5,000 Sunnis from al-Anbar could be recruited into the army. In early 2006, the figure was raised to 6,500. However, the ministry did not want all of the Sunnis serving in the 1st or 7th Divisions. Rather, the Sunni recruits would be deployed throughout the armed forces. The thought was that if allowed to remain in al-Anbar large numbers of Sunni soldiers, who would have ties to local insurgents, might undermine the 1st and 7th Iraqi Divisions. In the view of Ministry of Defense as well as much of the Iraqi government, Sunni elements of the two divisions, might become de facto Sunni militias resistant to the Iraqi government, like the old Fallujah Brigade (3-7 Iraqi Brigade evidently was exempt from this concern because of the Albu Mahal rivalry with AQI). Consequently, only a minority of the recruits was permitted to serve in al-Anbar.

The first recruiting effort occurred at the end of March. It aimed for 1,000 recruits. Ultimately, I MEF sent 1,017 recruits to training, largely from Fallujah. Unfortunately, success had been built on false pretenses. The Sunni recruits believed they would be serving near their homes. They did not know they could be deployed anywhere in Iraq or even anywhere in al-Anbar. In fact, the mayor of Fallujah had reassured the Fallujah recruits that they would serve in Fallujah. By all accounts, his assurances had induced many of them to volunteer.

On 30 April, the new soldiers graduated from training. During the ceremony, replete with Coalition and Iraqi generals, it was announced that many would be deployed outside al-Anbar. Yelling and throwing their uniforms to the ground, 600 of the newly trained soldiers refused to deploy. The main reason was a desire to stay close to home but this was connected to a fear of Shi'a militias and sectarian retribution if they joined predominantly Shi'a units and deployed outside the Sunni triangle. Many told U.S. officers that they would be attacked if they left al-Anbar. The mayor of Fallujah supported the recruits, telling Coalition officers: "As long as I am receiving corpses from Baghdad, I will not send soldiers there"[41] In the end, more than 600 of the 1,000 recruits deserted.[42]

The mutiny deterred Sunnis from subsequent recruiting efforts. Local imams and shaykhs evidently spoke out against joining the army.[43] I MEF never found 6,500 Sunnis for the army.

The Habbaniyah Mutiny showed that Sunnis would not serve in the Shi'a dominated army or deploy outside al-Anbar. It is the final piece of evidence that makes the Iraqi Army appear distinctly unable to handle the Sunni insurgency. The Iraqi Army cannot gather the intelligence necessary for effective counterinsurgency because of its Shi'a identity; while its structure as an integrated and national force deters Sunnis, who alone can collect vital intelligence, from joining.

The Year of the Police

After the Habbaniyah Mutiny, I MEF came to the conclusion that the best way to recruit Sunnis into the Iraqi security forces would be through forming local police forces. Unlike the army, the Iraqi government permitted police forces to be locally recruited. Casey had already dubbed 2006 the "year of the police." He wanted I MEF to recruit 11,330 police in Anbar by the end of the year. In the view of MNF-I, the establishment of law or order by police after the Iraqi Army had suppressed large-scale insurgent activity represented a natural progression toward stability. The commanders of I MEF tried to build police less for this reason than because they needed Sunnis to fight the insurgency.[44]

To the surprise of many U.S. officers, reliable local police actually formed in Al Anbar. By the end of 2006, roughly 20 percent of the forces conducting counterinsurgency operations in al-Anbar were police (see Figure 1). Although they had no love for the Iraqi government, a number of Sunnis wanted the violence and instability in al-Anbar to end. While in 2004 Sunnis had stood fairly united in support of the insurgency, by 2006 divisions had emerged between local Sunni leaders and hard-core insurgent groups.[45] Hard-core insurgent groups like AQI upset local Sunni leaders with their heavy-handed tactics and domination of the black market.[46] Polls found that the majority of Sunnis opposed the foreign fighters affiliated with AQI and viewed them as a significant threat. In fact, 47 to 65 percent favored killing them.[47] Accordingly, certain Sunni leaders cooperated with the Coalition to form police forces, most notably in Ramadi and Fallujah. In Fallujah, a set of local tribes, civic leaders, and imams supported the creation of a police force of 1,200.[48] None of these groups wanted hardcore insurgents in Fallujah. In Ramadi, a group of tribes centered on the Albu Thiyab, Albu Ali Jassim, and Albu Risha formed a police force of 1,000, under the leadership of Shaykh Sittar, a leader of the Albu Risha. In September, Sittar openly announced the opposition of those tribes to AQI and foreign-backed terrorists.[49] Other police forces equally committed to fighting AQI formed in Bagdadi, Hit, and Haditha.

Police forces proved far more dangerous to insurgents than the Iraqi Army. One policeman told a Marine advisor: "What makes an insurgent's heart turn cold is to see an Iraqi policeman in uniform. It is as if he has been stabbed in the chest with a cold knife."[50] The effectiveness of the police derived from their ability as Sunnis and members of the community to collect actionable intelligence. In Fallujah, most tips on insurgent activity came from the police.[51] Marines patrolling or standing post with the police were impressed with their knowledge of insurgent activity, insurgent tactics, and the allegiances of the population in the surrounding

area. The police regularly detained insurgents, especially in retaliation for attacks on policemen. At least five insurgent cells were taken out in July and August alone. In Ramadi, the police aggressively targeted insurgents from information gathered during patrols or from their tribal connections.[52]

Locals praised them.[53] On one patrol into a neighborhood controlled by AQI, locals were in tears at the sight of police. When asked in a poll if tribes were a good source of security, 69 percent of respondents strongly agreed (when asked the same question about the Iraqi Army, 81 percent strongly disagreed).[54] Through their access to intelligence, the Ramadi police and their tribes gave AQI a bloody nose during the last months of 2006. Not just thugs and fighters were captured or killed but leaders off Coalition high value targeting lists, including at least two al-Qaeda in Iraq "emirs" (senior leaders within Ramadi). The total number of publicized killings numbered over 20 by the end of October.[55]

Coalition officers were particularly impressed with the willingness of the Ramadi police to stand and fight. In one notable engagement, roughly 25 insurgents positioned in an apartment complex ambushed a police raiding force. The police held their ground despite casualties and then assaulted the apartment complex. A Coalition quick reaction force provided some fire support but the police cleared the insurgents out of the apartments entirely on their own over an hour of fighting, capturing many of the insurgents in the process. Insufficient numbers prevented the police from suppressing insurgent activity throughout Ramadi but their willingness to stand and fight plus access to intelligence allowed them to at least keep their own tribal areas relatively free of violence.

Unlike the Albu Mahal in al-Qa'im, police forces in Fallujah and Ramadi were too small (for reasons described below) to completely suppress insurgent activity. However, their ability to reduce insurgent activity still surpassed that of the Iraqi Army. In Fallujah, the support of imams, shaykhs, and former military officers enabled the police to lock down the city for the October 2005 referendum, December 2005 election, and March 2006 Iraqi Army recruiting drive.[56] During the referendum and election, both the Coalition and Iraqi Army stayed within their bases and outposts, meaning the police handled the bulk of the security duties. In Ramadi, the police controlled incidents within their tribal areas and neighborhoods, even if they could not secure the city as a whole.

Police forces only succeeded because of the support of local leaders, such as shaykhs and imams, who encouraged young men to volunteer and locals to provide information. The Iraqi government motivated local leaders to build police forces and stand against AQI through payoffs, political positions, and allowing them to control their own security forces. These rewards did not mean that local leaders trusted the Iraqi government. Rather, they made it worthwhile for local leaders to risk their lives opposing AQI in order to secure their own communities.

In Fallujah, economic assistance did not restore prosperity but gave the city leaders, who supported the police, the ability to keep portions of the population complacent. The Iraqi government provided $180 million for housing compensation and the Coalition conducted major projects to improve power, water, sewage, and medical care.[57] Politically, the Coalition arranged for Fallujah city leadership to have direct access to the Iraqi government by bringing major national political leaders to Fallujah for talks. Militarily, the Fallujah police became the protectors of the city. People approved of the police not only because they opposed AQI but also because they kept out Shi'a militias from Baghdad.

In Ramadi, Maliki purportedly awarded Sittar and his subordinates cash gifts and salaries.[58] The government turned a blind eye when Sittar regained control of criminal activity along the highways near Ramadi, which AQI had disturbed.[59] The government also provided prestigious political positions. At the end of October, the Ministry of the Interior granted Sittar authority over security in al-Anbar. Another leader in his movement became the provincial police chief. The ministry permitted the movement to create three "emergency" battalions, totaling

2,250 men. This was a huge concession. For all intents and purposes, the government was permitting Sittar and his movement to have their own militia. Sittar probably received vehicles and weapons from the Iraqi government as well. Maliki's aides have stated that the prime minister supports Sittar's movement and has met with its leaders.[60]

Unfortunately, the government only bought off a minority of the population. This is the reason the police could not completely suppress insurgent activity. Given high levels of attacks, insurgents probably outnumbered the police everywhere except al-Qa'im. One imam said that 5 percent of the people in Fallujah were hardcore insurgents. This was undoubtedly an exaggeration but even if the figure was 2 percent, the police would still be outnumbered. Four thousand insurgents (if Fallujah contained 200,000 people) would exceed the combined strength of the Coalition, Iraqi Army, and police. In Ramadi, Sittar slowly built support among other tribes but key tribes and most of the insurgent fighters would not oppose AQI. Sectarian violence and disaffection with the government remained a major concern for the bulk of the population in both Fallujah and Ramadi that deterred wider action against AQI. Rising sectarian violence motivated men in Fallujah to join the insurgency, particularly refugees from Baghdad. According to comments from some Sunnis, these men viewed AQI as the only means of defense against the Shi'a militias. By mid-2006, continuing violence in Baghdad made many imams resistant to moderation. Without their support, the police lost their best means of securing popular sympathy and discouraging insurgents from attacking them.[61] People had similar opinions in Ramadi. Lieutenant Colonel Adnan, chief of a police station in Ramadi, said:

> The people believe that the main reason for problems in Iraq is the government. Hakim and Sadr dominate the government. They work against Iraq. The situation had instilled hopelessness in the population. They do not believe stability will return. Good government in Baghdad would make everything successful. It would end sectarian violence. The government provides no help to Ramadi and hence the situation is not good.[62]

In many respects, the Iraqi government had only done enough to reconcile with select groups that had their own reasons to oppose insurgent activity. Efforts had been insufficient to overcome the deep grievances held by most of the population.

At the end of 2006, the police in Fallujah and Ramadi remained resilient but the situation could hardly be called stable. In Fallujah, insurgents constantly targeted the police and their supporters with sniper attacks, suicide car bombs, and assassinations. Casualties included the deputy police chief, the traffic police chief, two capable senior officers, a senior imam, and two chairmen of the Fallujah city council. The Coalition counted over 30 assassinations in July and August 2006 alone. Locals were not willing to risk their lives to protect the police, even if they appreciated their overall efforts. In Ramadi, AQI slew off-duty police and members of their tribes almost daily, including the shaykh of the Albu Ali Jassim tribe.[63] Still, as of January 2007, the will of the police in al-Anbar never broke; they continued to fight and contribute more toward stability than either the Coalition or the Iraqi Army.

Conclusion

This paper has asked whether Iraqization can produce security forces able to suppress the insurgency in al-Anbar. The answer is not with an integrated and predominantly Shi'a army. If the United States withdrew today, the war would continue unabated. The Iraqi Army would be surrounded by a population unwilling to help them. At best, the army would operate as they do now, unable to control much of al-Anbar. At worst, the army would be isolated around their posts and slowly whittled away by insurgent attacks.

Eventually, the insurgents, including AQI, would drive the army from al-Anbar and consol-

idate control over the province. The Shi'a government might eventually win through sheer numbers or ruthless brutality but the stage would be set for a long and bloody civil war. Insurgent and AQI control over al-Anbar and a civil war would hardly be positive outcomes for U.S. interests in the Middle East.

This grim forecast is not likely to change, no matter the hours of training, amount of equipment, or number of advisors invested into the Iraqi Army. Sunnis view the Iraqi Army as an occupation force and consequently refuse to provide the intelligence vital to successful counterinsurgency. The recommendations of the Iraq Study Group and other notable scholars to add advisors, improve equipment, lengthen training, or increase the number of brigades will improve the efficiency of the Iraqi Army but not enable it to reduce insurgent activity. More advisors, training, or equipment will not change the identity of the Iraqi Army or motivate Sunnis to join it; nor will increasing the size of the Iraqi Army.

Iraqization might still work in al-Anbar but the Iraqi Army cannot be the lone vehicle. Any capable security force must include Sunnis in order to gather intelligence from the population. Yet Sunnis will not join an army dominated by Shi'a.

Unfortunately, the majority Shi'a share of the population of Iraq argues that any integrated army will inherently have a Shi'a "face." Consequently, the Coalition should focus on building local police forces. Under the right conditions, Sunnis have shown themselves willing to join local police forces, which have been able to combat AQI, America's number one enemy in Iraq. Select areas have been formed that enjoy restricted insurgent activity. The growth of the police could expand these areas an enable a reduced U.S. presence.

Furthermore, this model might be implemented outside al-Anbar. Local police forces should be no less effective in other Sunni provinces, where the same division between AQI and Sunni leaders exists. To give three examples, 3d Brigade, 2d Iraqi Division, in Ninewa Province has a battalion of locally recruited Sunnis. According to U.S. officers, this battalion performs well against AQI as long as it operates in its local area. Similarly, in Mosul, the Iraqi government granted the Jabburi tribe control over the police forces in order to counter AQI. Finally, Prime Minister Maliki has reportedly considered implementing the model in Diyala province, where there is a large Sunni population and AQI is present.[64]

The success of police in the Sunni provinces turns on the ability of the Iraqi government to reach out to local Sunni communities and groups, particularly tribes, as they did with the Fallujah city leadership, the Albu Mahal tribe, and Shaykh Sittar's movement. So far, the Iraqi government has not done enough to win over more than a minority of the population. Imams, shaykhs, and other local leaders would need to be lavished with political and economic rewards for supporting the police. Such rewards could include: political positions, command of military formations, civil affairs projects, economic compensation packages, salaries, and permission to run black market activities. Otherwise, local leaders will not risk their lives against the insurgents. This form of Iraqization cannot succeed without the support of the Iraqi government. If the government cannot deliver rewards to the Sunnis, then Sunnis will not form security forces and the insurgency will not be suppressed.

To be clear, the evidence suggests that the model, and Iraqization as a whole, can only lessen, not eliminate, insurgent activity in Sunni areas. Sectarian violence and some degree of insurgent activity will continue as long as no political solution is found to the differences between the Sunni and the Shi'a within Iraq. Iraqization cannot bring peace to Iraq even if it might reduce the requirement for U.S. forces throughout the country.

Building local police forces would be a fundamental shift from the current structure of Iraqization, which holds an integrated national army as the key to victory. The army should not be abandoned; it has a proven ability to conduct combat operations and can provide backbone to police operations. Nevertheless, greater effort would need to be placed behind local police forces of a single identity. Although police in

name, the Coalition would essentially be allowing local Sunni militias. The formation of a national democracy would be undermined. The United States would be tacitly permitting the Sunnis, like the Shi'a with Jaysh al Mahdi and the Badr Corps, to defend themselves. With each community's military forces balancing against one another, this would be one more step toward the fragmentation of Iraq into Sunni, Shi'a, and Kurdish areas. A real possibility exists that Sunni police in Baghdad and other mixed areas would clash with Shi'a militias in defense of their neighborhoods. Under the worst case, Sunni police might attack Shi'a areas. Additionally, the government would be devolving power from democratically elected officials to traditional non-elected authority figures, such as imams and shaykhs, which could further undermine the democratization effort. Indeed, the move would drive Iraqi political development backwards toward the way that Iraq was ruled by the British, who gave the tribes considerable power in order to balance the authority of the government. That policy eventually left the Iraqi government dependent on certain tribes for authority (ironically, many of the very ones now forming local police) and may have contributed to its ultimate downfall.

These possibilities reduce but do not eliminate the value of building local Sunni police. To a certain extent, the costs can be exaggerated. National unity may be weakened but it is unlikely that local police would actually fragment the state. Outside Baghdad, Sunni police forces probably have a better relationship with the Iraqi government than any other element of Sunni society and there are no cases of Sunni police from al-Anbar attacking Shi'a areas. Sunnis may not help the Iraqi Army detain fellow Sunnis but all are not at open war with the Iraqi government either. The risk of clashes with Shi'a militia could be mitigated by not forming Sunni police within Baghdad. Furthermore, the Iraqi government has already been willing to countenance the formation of Sunni police. This suggests that the government does not view Sunni police as a threat. Indeed, an official from the Maliki government told the *Washington Post:* "Obviously some people see this as a threat, but when compared to other threats, this is a rather benign one."[65] As long as the Iraqi government is providing the economic and political rewards to supportive Sunni groups, the likelihood of the British experience being repeated will be limited. These Sunni groups will inherently depend on the government for patronage and power. They will be hard-pressed to challenge its authority without undermining their own position.

Ultimately, the United States faces a choice. A national and integrated state can continue to be pushed, at the cost of the presence of hard-core Sunni insurgents, such as AQI. Or the ties that bind the state can be loosened in order to remove hard-core insurgents, at the cost of formalizing sectarian divisions and weakening democratization. The latter is hardly optimal but still preferable to allowing America's number one enemy—AQI—to thrive in Iraq. By reducing the insurgency, the Iraqi government may actually gain better control over Iraq than it enjoys now, or ever will if a national and integrated army remains the sole focus of Iraqization.

Notes

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1. In 2004, the Iraqi National Guard in al-Anbar plus the ill-fated Fallujah Brigade performed poorly, either because of insurgent intimidation or outright sympathy for the insurgency. Only one of the seven Iraqi National Guard battalions demonstrated minimal levels of effectiveness. The Fallujah Brigade was basically controlled by the insurgents and would not cooperate with the Iraqi government.
2. Of the 10 divisions, those in Shi'a and Kurdish areas were locally based and could not be deployed to fight the insurgency in Sunni areas.
3. Michael Vickers, "Military Strategies for Unconventional Warfare," Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 27 October 2006; Thomas X. Hammes, An Oversight Hearing on the Planning and Conduct of the War in Iraq," Senate Democratic Policy Hearing, 25 September 2006; Thomas Ricks, "U.S. Military is Still Waiting for Iraqi Forces to 'Stand Up'," *Washington Post*, 1 October 2006; Thomas Ricks, "Flaws Cited in

Effort to Train Iraqi Forces," *Washington Post*, 21 November 2006; Hans Binnendijk and Bing West, "Force Multiplier," *Wall Street Journal*, 21 November 2006.
4. General John Abizaid, Testimony to Senate Armed Services Committee, 15 November 2006.
5. Ibid.
6. *The Iraq Study Group Report* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006), 70.
7. Ibid., xvi, 70-75, 77-83.
8. Discussion following I MEF Staff Visit to 3-1 Iraqi Brigade, Camp Fallujah, 20 April 2006.
9. Discussion with 1st Battalion, 506th U.S. Infantry Regiment (1-506 IN), Camp Corregidor, 12.
10. Discussion with 1st Battalion, 172d Infantry Regiment (1-172 IN), Camp Ramadi, 14 March 2006. Discussions with 3d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment (3/7), Hurricane Point, Ramadi, 11 March 2006.
11. Discussion with 1-172 IN, Camp Ramadi, 14 March 2006.
12. Discussion following I MEF Staff Visit to 3-1 Iraqi Brigade, Camp Fallujah, 20 April 2006.
13. Discussion with 1-506 IN, Camp Corregidor, 12 July 2006.
14. Discussion with 1-1 Iraqi Brigade military transition team, Combat Outpost, 10 July 2006.
15. Correspondence with 1st Iraqi Division military transition team, 27 May 2006.
16. James Quinlivan, "Force Requirements in Stability Operations," *Parameters* 25 (Winter 1995).
17. Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency & Peacekeeping* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), 95.
18. *Counterinsurgency*, FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, December 2006), 1-23.
19. Al-Anbar Survey 11: September/October 2006, October 2006, 24; Al-Anbar Survey 7: May 2006, 10 June 2006, 43.
20. Al-Anbar Survey 7: May 2006, 10 June 2006, 43.
21. Discussions with 1-1 Iraqi Brigade military transition team, Combat Outpost, 10 July 2006; Discussions with 1-1 Iraqi Brigade, Combat Outpost, 10 July 2006; Discussions with 1-506 IN, Camp Corregidor, 10-12 July 2006.
22. Discussion with 1-1 Iraqi Brigade, Ramadi, 11 July 2006.
23. Provincial Reconstruction Meeting, Government Center, Ramadi, 13 March 2006.
24. Discussion with 1-172 IN, Camp Ramadi, 14 March 2006.
25. Brief with 1-7 Iraqi Brigade, Camp Ramadi, 15 March 2006.
26. Discussion with military transition team for a battalion in 1-7 Iraqi Brigade, Ramadi, 6 July 2006.
27. Discussion with Government Support Team, Government Center, Ramadi, 12 March 2006.
28. Fallujah City Council Meeting, Fallujah Mayor's Compound, 31 July 2006.
29. Discussions with 2-1 Iraqi Brigade, CMOC, Fallujah, 20 March 2006.
30. Discussion with 2d Battalion, 2d Brigade, 1st Iraqi Division military transition team, Fallujah, 31 July 2006.
31. Security Council Meeting, CMOC, Fallujah, 20 March 2006.
32. Fallujah City Council Meeting, Fallujah Mayor's Compound, 31 July 2006.
33. Fallujah City Council Meeting, Fallujah Mayor's Compound, 16 May 2006.
34. Correspondence with al-Anbar State Department Representative, 13 March 2006.
35. Coalition units also occupied Sunni residences as observation posts.
36. Discussion with Brigadier General Razzaq, Combat Outpost, 11 April 2006. Discussion with 1-1 Iraqi Brigade, Combat Outpost, 10 July 2006.
37. Discussions with Regimental Combat Team 7 (RCT-7), Camp Al Asad, 23 February 2006.
38. Hannah Allam and Mohammed al Dulaimy, "Iraqis Lament Call for Help," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 17 May 2005.
39. "Iraq's Desert Protection Force at War," *Front Page*, 1 January 2006.
40. Discussions with RCT-7, Camp Al Asad, 15 July 2007.
41. Fallujah City Council Meeting, Mayor's Complex, 2 May 2006.
42. 1 MEF Staff Meeting, Camp Fallujah, 2 May 2006.
43. Regimental Combat Team 5 (RCT-5) Combined Commanders' Meeting, Camp Fallujah, 10 May 2006.
44. I MEF Commanders' Conference, Camp Fallujah, 8 August 2006.
45. Hence, in 2004, the Iraqi National Guard and Fallujah Brigade were ineffective because the Sunni population fully supported violent resistance. By 2006, that dynamic had changed and local Sunni forces could be formed.
46. Michael Gordon, "Wary Iraqis are Recruited as Policemen," *New York Times*, 24 July 2006.
47. Al-Anbar Survey 11: September/October 2006, October 2006, 29,41.
48. Discussion with Fallujah Police Transition Team, Camp Fallujah, 25 March 2006.
49. Khalid al-Ansary and Ali Adeeb, "Most Tribes in Anbar Agree to United Against Insurgents,"*New York Times*, 18 September 2006.
50. Discussions with RCT-7, Camp Al Asad, 15 July 2006.
51. Discussion with Fallujah Police Transition Team, Camp Fallujah, 25 March 2006; Anna Mulrine, "Getting it Right with the Law," *U.S. News & World Report*, 24 July 2006.
52. Thiebauld Malterre, "Ramadi: Defended by Insurgents Turned Police," *AFP,* 2 December 2006.
53. Discussion with 1-506 IN, ECP-8, Ramadi, 11 August 2006.

54. Poll of Ramadi, April 2006.
55. Mussab al Khairalli, "Sunni Chiefs Offer al-Maliki Help in War on Militants," *Washington Times*, 28 September 2006; Ellen Knickmeyer and Muhammed Saif Adin, "Families Flee Iraqi River Towns on 4th Day of Sectarian Warfare," *Washington Post*, 17 October 2006.
56. Discussion with Fallujah Police Transition Team, Fallujah Police Station, 26 April 2006; Meeting with former Iraqi Army generals, Fallujah Police Station, 6 April 2006.
57. Discussion with 3d Civil Affairs Group, Fallujah CMOC, 26 April 2006.
58. Peter Beaumont, *The Guardian*, 3 October 2006.
59. Mark Kukis, "Turning Iraq's Tribes Against al-Qaeda," *Time*, 26 December 2006.
60. Joshua Partlow, "Sheiks Help Curb Violence in Iraq's West, U.S. Says," *Washington Post,* 27 January 2007.
61. Discussion with al-Anbar imam, 30 June 2006.
62. Discussions with Ramadi Police, Jazirah Police Station, 28 July 2006.
63. Ibid.
64. Joshua Partlow, "Sheiks Help Curb Violence in Iraq's West, U.S. Says," *Washington Post,* 27 January 2007.
65. Ibid.

About the Author

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U.S. MARINES

The Anbar Awakening

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In late 2006, after several failed attempts and false starts, a tribal grouping in Iraq's restive province of Anbar allied with the United States and the central government of Iraq to fight "al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia." The U.S. alliance with this group, known as the Anbar Salvation Council (ASC), was widely hailed as a breakthrough both by members of the press and some officials in the U.S. and Iraqi governments.[1] Certainly the ASC's cooperation made Anbar's capital Ramadi, previously one of the most violent cities in Iraq, much safer. Cooperation with the tribes of Anbar was not unprecedented for Washington and Baghdad, but the alliance with the ASC was both more public and more dramatic than previous cooperation and saw significant linking of certain tribes and tribal leaders with the formal government structure of the province. In 2007, the U.S. military began seeking to forge similar alliances across Iraq, making Anbar the model for the provision of internal security.

Relying on tribes to provide security is not a new phenomenon for Iraq. The British did so in the 1920s; later Saddam Hussein became a master of using them to ensure the continuity of his rule, particularly once the formal Iraqi state and the Ba'ath Party withered in the 1980s and 1990s. While the current attempt in Anbar is analogous, it is not identical, and the differences suggest that it is likely to be less successful in the long run than Saddam's effort. Moreover, the current attempt highlights tension between the means and ends of Iraq strategy. The tribal strategy is a means to achieve one strategic end, fighting al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, but is antithetical to another, the creation of a stable, unified and democratic Iraq.

The Tribe and the State

The nature of tribes can be quite confusing to those unfamiliar with them. In general, a tribe consists of various smaller clans, in turn composed of extended families. Members of a tribe claim kinship, which is often based on association and assertion of a 'myth of common ancestry' rather than actual consanguinity.[2] This asserted relationship is sometimes called "fictive kinship." Fictive or not, this kinship helps regulate conflict and provides benefits such as jobs and social welfare in environments where the modern state does not exist or is too weak to function.[3] In Iraq, both the basic structure of tribes and the terms used to refer to them have changed over time. In present-day Anbar, the basic unit is the tribe (*'ashira*), which is composed of clans (*afkhad*). These clans are made up of lineages or households (*hamoulas*), which are in turn made up of houses (*bayts*) that contain individual families (*'alias*). In some cases, the term *qablla* is used to refer to a large tribe or confederation of tribes.[4] Saddam Hussein's tribal position at the time of the second Ba'ath coup of 1968 provides a good example of this system. His tribe was the Albu Nasir, one of three main groupings in the town of Tikrit. The Albu Nasir had six clans; Saddam was from the Beijat, the dominant clan. Within the Beijat clan were 10 lineages; Saddam was from the Albu Ghafur lineage. Within the Albu Ghafur were two main houses; Saddam's was the Albu Majid. His family was that of Hussein, though Hussein himself—Saddam's father—died before Saddam was born.[5]

It is important to note that kinship ties, while important, are not sacrosanct, particularly at the more abstract level of tribe and clan. Once again, Saddam Hussein's life provides an example. Saddam at the time of the 1968 coup was deputy to his kinsman Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr. Al-Bakr was also from the Beijat clan. However, as his name indicates, al-Bakr was from a different lineage, the Albu Bakr. Despite these affiliations, Saddam eventually maneuvered al-Bakr out of power and made his own lineage, Albu Ghafur, supreme.[6] Al-Bakr's subsequent death under mysterious circumstances is often attributed to those loyal to Saddam.

Saddam's closer kinsmen provided a more loyal power base. After the death of Saddam's father, his mother's remarriage to a member of the Albu Khattab lineage of the Beijat clan gave him three half-brothers from another lineage. He also drew upon his close cousins from the Albu Majid house of the Albu Ghafur lineage to fill his top security ranks. In general, close kinships like this have far greater strength than the more abstract links of tribe and clan.[7]

The impact of tribes on state formation in the Middle East has varied from state to state.[8] In Iraq in the 1920s, the tribe was a rural organization that stood in opposition to all things urban and modern. Following a revolt against the new Hashemite monarchy, the British and their allies in the royal family sought to appease and manipulate the tribes. In exchange for their support, areas outside cities were in many ways made a law unto themselves.[9]

The overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy in 1958 initiated a decline in tribal power, as the new military regime eliminated laws that gave sheikhs legal authority and control of agricultural land. This led to an exodus from rural areas to the cities and the first encounters of peasant tribesman with an alien urban environment. Many used affiliation to anchor themselves in this often hostile setting and tribalism came to coexist with urban modernity as ever more Iraqis migrated to towns and cities.

However, though some Iraqis clung to traditional names and affiliations, tribalism's power waned through the 1960s. Iraq was slowly but surely becoming a modern nation-state with a functioning security apparatus, judiciary and bureaucracy. By the late 1960s, tribalism was at its nadir, with many Iraqis ceasing to define themselves in the traditional way (though more than a few existed in a sort of dual state, with membership in both a tribe and a modern organization such as a trade union).[10]

In theory, the return of the Ba'ath Party to power in 1968 (it had briefly held power in 1963 but was ousted by the military) should have heralded the death knell of the tribe. Ba'ath ideology is relentlessly secular and modernist. As Amatzia Baram notes, the first Ba'ath communique in July 1968 declared: 'We are against religious sectarianism, racism, and tribalism', the latter being one of 'the remnants of colonialism'.[11]

However, the Ba'ath Party was highly insecure in its control of Iraq. In order to prevent another coup, the party both massively expanded membership and sought to place loyal elements in the military and security services. Many of these loyalists were members of the same tribe as the senior leaders of the party.[12] Thus, from its inception, the Ba'ath regime had an inconsistent policy and attitude which ensured that tribal power, though temporarily diminished, would endure.

Tribal-State Security Relations

The Ba'ath government's use of tribes to control Iraq's state-security apparatus is far from unique. Modern nation-states have in many instances turned to tribes to help provide internal security, generally because the state is either too weak to provide security itself or because it is too expensive to do so. In general, the weaker the state, the more autonomy is given to tribes to provide what the state cannot.

There are three basic patterns the relationship can take. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive, so that different patterns can be seen in the same state. The first is most likely in relatively stronger states and occurs when one group seeks to dominate the state's security apparatus by commingling tribal networks with the formal state structure. This 'state tribalism' is common in states that have not fully institutionalized the mechanism for providing internal security.[13] In the Middle East, Iraq, Syria, and many of the Gulf States have practiced various forms of state tribalism.[14] Other countries, such as Jordan, use electoral arrangements favoring tribes to ensure control of ostensibly democratic legislatures, partly to ensure internal security.[15]

Outside the Middle East, this pattern is commonly seen in postcolonial Africa. Kenya, for example, was dominated in the early postcolonial period by the Kikuyu tribe. The government of Jomo Kenyatta intentionally filled the army with Kikuyu tribesmen in the late 1960s to neutralise the Kamba and Kalenjin tribes that had dominated the country under the British. The government also used a paramilitary organization called the General Service Unit as a Kikuyu

Praetorian guard and 'Kikuyuised' the police and other intelligence services.[16] Following the death of Kenyatta in 1978, Vice President Daniel arap Moi, a member of the Kalenjin tribe, assumed the presidency and began to seed the security services with his own kinsmen, allowing him to thwart an attempted coup in 1982.[17] This pattern of state tribalism in the security services has continued and affiliation remains important to Kenyan politics and the preservation of internal security.[18]

The second pattern is common in weaker states and involves quasi-autonomous militias based on tribe (or more broadly on ethnicity). These militias are effectively "deputized" to provide internal security in certain regions in exchange for some form of payment from the central state. This pattern can be termed "auxiliary tribalism." Afghanistan in the late 1980s and early 1990s provides one of the best examples of the successful application of this pattern as well as a caution about its possible consequences. The communist government of Afghanistan faced a tenacious multiparty insurgency beginning in the late 1970s that even major Soviet intervention was unable to quell. The Afghan government began to arm and pay various tribal and ethnic militias to fight the insurgency, or to at least remain neutral. This process accelerated after Mohammed Najibullah replaced Babrak Karmal as president in 1986, and enabled Najibullah's regime to survive the Soviet withdrawal in 1989.[19] Perhaps the most famous of these militias was that of General Abdul Rashid Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek from northwestern Afghanistan. Dostum's militia grew from a small force intended to protect gas fields to over 20,000 men armed with heavy equipment and artillery by the late 1980s. Dostum was so effective he became a de facto mobile reserve for the Afghan government. However, when the collapsing Soviet Union cut funding to Afghanistan and the ability of the Afghan government to pay declined, Dostum quickly switched sides to the insurgents. This defection precipitated the rapid collapse of the Afghan government in early 1992.[20]

The final pattern of relations is the cession of all but the most desultory control over a territory to a tribe. Only the weakest or poorest of states would normally accept this type of relationship. Tribal leaders become, in effect, palatine vassals of the central state, and are often as restive as their medieval counterparts. This pattern can be termed "baronial tribalism." It is fairly rare, as such feudal relations are anathema to modern nation-states, but can be seen in Pakistan in the region along the border with Afghanistan. Either *dejure* or de facto tribal autonomy characterizes much of Baluchistan, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (which includes North and South Waziristan) and the North-West Frontier Province. The federal government's presence is felt lightly, if at all (apart from the occasional punitive expedition), a situation echoing the British imperial experience in these rugged border regions.[21] Yemen offers another example: clashes between a very weak central state and well-armed tribes are frequent and violent.[22] However, in most rural regions tribal law is far more powerful than the laws of the government, so despite these clashes the government also uses tribes to provide a degree of internal security.[23]

A final variation on these three patterns occurs when an external power becomes involved in the provision of internal security to a state. This presents the possibility of a three-way relationship among tribe, state and external power that can produce many complications. The external power might choose to ally itself with groups that are hostile to the state or vice versa, potentially creating serious problems. Further, the existence of multiple tribes can mean that the external power must also balance relations with groups that compete among themselves.

The United States' involvement in Vietnam is a good example. In the early 1960s, the CIA and U.S. Army Special Forces began arming and training Montagnard tribesmen in the mountainous west of South Vietnam to fight Communist insurgents supported by North Vietnam (a form of auxiliary tribalism). The Montagnard recruits were enthusiastic in fighting the insurgents, yet were only slightly less hostile to the government of South Vietnam, which had never treated the Montagnard minority particularly well. The gov-

ernment of South Vietnam was understandably nervous about this programme, known as the Civilian Irregular Defense Group programme. Tension came to a boil in late 1964, when several groups of tribesmen rose in open revolt. The situation was ultimately defused by the CIA and special forces advisers but could potentially have been much worse.[24]

Saddam's Tribal Strategy

In Iraq, the Ba'ath Party's relationship to the Iraqi tribes was equivocal from the beginning. Ideologically and rhetorically opposed to tribalism, the regime nevertheless practiced a form of state tribalism to remain in power. Members of Hassan al-Bakr and Saddam Hussein's Albu Nasir tribe began to fill the security services in the 1970s, as did members of other favored groups like the al-Jubburi.[25]

The Ba'ath Party in the 1970s had three main mechanisms to conduct this strategy. The first was the Ba'ath military bureau, which selected and organized party members for military service under the direction of the Beijat clan. The second was the security-service bureau, which was controlled by Saddam. The final and most obviously tribal instrument was the Committee of Tribes (Lajnat al-'Asha'ir), which was established to work with the tribes of the Sunni Triangle northwest of Baghdad, including Anbar, to secure the porous Syrian border.[26] These three organizations, combined with booming oil revenue after the oil shock of 1973, enabled the Ba'ath Party (and particularly the canny Saddam) to place kinsmen in power (state tribalism) and buy the loyalty of other clans (auxiliary tribalism).

The overall impact of tribalism on broader Iraqi society, however, remained muted in the 1970s. This was due to party efforts to weaken tribal power even as it sought to manipulate it, as well as the continuing modernization and urbanization of Iraq. Land reform was a major part of this, as the Ba'ath regime redistributed land or gave it to new peasant collectives. Tribesmen, including future sheikhs, often joined the Ba'ath Party and took up modern professions such as engineering.[27] The rural tribes as the British knew them in the 1920s and 1930s had effectively ceased to exist, mostly becoming rural-urban hybrids.

Events of the late 1970s and early 1980s would force the Ba'ath Party to increase its reliance on the tribes of Anbar for internal security. The Iranian revolution of 1979 seemed to provide Saddam with a golden opportunity to get even with an Iran that under the Shah had exploited Iraqi weakness. Now in sole command of Iraq following his ouster of Hassan al-Bakr, Saddam launched what was intended to be a limited incursion into Iran.

However, Iran's revolutionary fervor made it an implacable foe, and soon Saddam was fighting for his survival. In this period, he increasingly turned to the tribes to provide internal security. This process gathered momentum after the Iraqi retreat from Khorramshahr in 1982.[28] As the Iran-Iraq War continued, more and more party members (especially members of the Ba'ath militia known as the Popular Army) were sent to the front, thinning out the presence of loyal Ba'athists in tribal areas. This forced increasing reliance on tribal loyalty and Saddam widened the circle of tribes he relied on, drawing heavily on the large Dulaimi confederation of Anbar.[29]

In addition to this conscious policy, Saddam and the Ba'ath Party also increased the importance of Iraqi tribes unintentionally by eliminating alternative elements of civil society. The Ba'athist totalitarian impulse crushed and absorbed all other forms of ideological organization such as trade unions. Even as these alternative institutions contracted, the war consumed an ever greater portion of Iraq's wealth and managerial talent. This led to an accelerating decline of government social-welfare provision. Thus, by the mid 1980s, many Iraqis found themselves relying more and more on the social-safety net or personal network provided by the tribe, which therefore assumed ever greater importance.[30]

Following the end of the Iran-Iraq War, Saddam's invasion of Kuwait led to further devastation of the Iraqi state and further increases in tribal power. The decimation of the Iraqi military and particularly the regime's elite Republican Guard paved the way for widespread revolt in southern Iraq in 1991. The Ba'ath Party apparatus, drained by two wars, proved incapable of sup-

pressing the revolt and Saddam was forced to turn to the tribes, including many Shi'a tribes around Baghdad, to put it down. The tribes of Anbar, particularly the Dulaimi, were critical to this effort and became increasingly integral to regime survival. Some dubbed Anbar the "White Governate" to indicate its importance to the regime.[31]

After 1991 the state's reliance on tribes became truly explicit for the first time in Ba'athist Iraq, with sheikhs publicly visiting Saddam and being praised in the state media. Saddam increasingly went beyond state tribalism and embraced auxiliary tribalism by allowing sheikhs to create their own private armies equipped with small arms, rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and allegedly even howitzers. These armies were intended to allow a sheikh to police his area, and this period also saw increasing legal deference to tribal customs.[32]

By 1996, tribal formations had become so integral to the state that the creation of a formal High Council of Tribal Chiefs was proposed. Sheikhs were not only to have judicial and internal security powers but even the ability to tax on behalf of the central government. In exchange, they would receive not only money, weapons and equipment, but also land, government rations, diplomatic passports and exemption from compulsory military duty. Such was their importance for internal security that in the 1998 confrontation with the U.S. tribal units were deployed in large cities to support the security services. Previously this would have been the duty of the Ba'ath Party's Popular Army.[33] That the government even considered ceding this level of authority to the sheikhs shows that the Iraqi state, weakened by war and sanctions, was drifting beyond state and auxiliary tribalism and dangerously close to baronial tribalism.

This delegation of power to tribal authorities not only granted them formal authority but also enhanced their ability to seek extra-legal sources of additional revenue from smuggling (particularly lucrative as Iraq was under United Nations sanctions), government corruption and kickbacks, and even outright extortion and hijacking. Tribal gangs became increasingly common in this period.[34] Members of the Dulaimi, for example, are alleged to have raided cars and trucks using the Baghdad-Amman highway through their territory in the late 1990s. Tribal forces also intimidated or even assassinated state law-enforcement or security personnel; in other instances they demanded blood money or other compensation from the state for its actions. This latter practice became so widespread that the Ba'ath regime issued an edict making it illegal in 1997.[35]

The 1990s also saw several serious challenges to Saddam's power by elements of various tribes, particularly those he had so actively integrated with the regime. In 1990, members of the Jubburi plotted a coup against Saddam. The Iraqi leader successfully quashed this attempt (though in retaliation Jubburi pilots are alleged to have attacked the presidential palace) but it indicated that even his vigorous attempts to buy the loyalty of the tribes had not produced their unequivocal adherence.[36]

The most serious challenge began in May 1995, when Saddam returned the body of executed Brigadier-General Muhammad Mazlum al-Dulaimi to his family. Mazlum al-Dulaimi, a prominent member of the Dulaimi confederation's Albu Nimr tribe, had been held along with some of his kinsmen after an alleged coup attempt in 1994. His body and those of his kinsmen bore marks of horrible torture when finally returned and sections of the Albu Nimr in the Ramadi area rose in open revolt in response to this provocation. Other Dulaimi staged an insurrection at the Abu Ghraib military base in June; some tribesmen who fled to Damascus are alleged to have proclaimed an "Armed al-Dulaim Tribes Sons Movement."[37]

This movement eventually lost momentum and was finally put down by those loyal to Saddam. This was in large part because not even the majority of the Albu Nimr, much less the majority of the Dulaimi, participated. Despite this clear and widely reported rebellion, which led to the firing of Defense Minister Ali Hasan al-Majid, such was the reliance of Saddam on the tribes that he was unable to simply revoke the privileges of the Dulaimi or purge them from the security services.[38]

Saddam continued to employ a strategy of state and auxiliary tribalism on the eve of Operation

Iraqi Freedom. Tribal forces were to be integrated with other military and paramilitary formations to prevent an uprising like that of 1991 and, if needed, to fight invading Coalition forces. To ensure that he could continue to buy tribal loyalty, Saddam removed over a billion dollars from the Iraqi Central Bank right before the war.[39] Unfortunately for him, once the attack began the loyalty of the tribes proved ephemeral and many chose not to fight. A senior military adviser to the Ba'ath Party near the city of Samawa recalled after the war: "They called the tribal chiefs in As-Samawa to try and get more men, but the tribes said, 'We have no weapons, so how can we fight?' I sensed we were losing control of the situation—and the American forces had not yet arrived, there were only air attacks."[40]

The U.S.-Iraqi Tribal Strategy

Following the rapid success of U.S. conventional forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom, there was a need to provide internal security across the heterogeneous Iraqi nation, including in Anbar, the former bastion of the Ba'athist tribal strategy. Even in concert with Iraq's interim government, this proved challenging and 2003-04 saw the birth of an insurgency in Anbar and major anti-Coalition violence. Participants in the insurgency came from a mixture of groups and included former senior Ba'athists, tribesmen and foreign fighters. Though their motives differed, these groups made common cause against the Coalition.[41]

In this period, the U.S.-Iraqi tribal strategy was rudimentary in Anbar. However, by early 2004, U.S. and Iraqi officials began engaging in dialogue with tribes, and in limited cases cooperated with them. Still, the tribes overall saw little reason to support the new order and often sided with the newly declared al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia or other insurgent groups.

Attitudes began to shift in early 2005, following the massive Coalition assault on Fallujah in November 2004 and the Iraqi national elections in January 2005. Many tribal leaders began to conclude that the political process might hold more benefit than continued fighting. Further, al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia's transnational and fundamentalist goals were at odds with the local or national goals of the tribes. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia was competing for control of revenue sources—such as banditry and smuggling—that had long been the province of the tribes.[42]

Under this interpretation, the tribes did not change sides in response to violence towards civilians or their Anbar kinsmen, as press accounts have suggested. While this violence was not irrelevant, it does not appear to have been the central motive for the shift. For example, some began fighting al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia at least as early as the beginning of 2005, well before most of the violence towards civilians and tribesmen in Anbar occurred. The primary motive was not moral; it was self-interested.

In fact, it can be argued that much (though far from all) of al-Qaeda's violence against Sunnis in Anbar was intended to coerce the tribes back into alignment with the insurgents. Certainly this was the intent of attacks on selected tribal leaders. In other words, al-Qaeda's violence was principally an *effect* of shifts in allegiance rather than a *cause*. Though it often appears senseless and brutal to outsiders, the coercive use of extreme violence in insurgency and civil war is both fairly common and sometimes quite effective.[43]

This shift in the strategic calculus of the tribes made a successful U.S. Iraqi tribal strategy possible, but the opportunity was not fully exploited. For example, the United States did not take full advantage of a shift among members of the powerful Dulaimi confederation in western Anbar. The Albu Mahal tribe around the city of Qaim resented the influx of al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia to their border town and the group's competition with Albu Mahal's lucrative smuggling operations. With the support of members of the Albu Nimr, the Albu Mahal formed the Hamza Forces (also called the Hamza Battalion) to fight the newcomers. Al-Qaeda proved to be a tough opponent and in May of 2005 the tribes decided to turn to Coalition forces for help in battling them. Fasal al-Gaoud,

a former governor of Anbar and sheikh of the Albu Nimr, contacted U.S. Marines for support.[44]

The Marines had already been planning an offensive around Qaim, so this could have been an ideal moment to cement an alliance. Instead, the Marine offensive, known as Operation Matador, was uncoordinated with the tribes (some Marines appear to have not been informed about the requested alliance) and made use of intensive firepower, which alienated many tribesmen by destroying portions of Qaim. Furthermore, the Iraqi government was hostile to the Hamza Forces, declaring that such vigilantes had no place in Iraq.[45]

After Operation Matador, there were no further attempts by the Hamza Forces to coordinate with the Coalition for several months. Without Coalition support, the Hamza Forces were overwhelmed by al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia by September of 2005.[46] Fortunately, Coalition forces in Anbar learned from their earlier mistake and may have begun supporting the Albu Mahal with air strikes in late August 2005.[47] This was insufficient, however, to defeat the powerful al-Qaeda forces around Qaim and in November 2005 Coalition forces launched Operation Steel Curtain. This operation was marked by far better coordination with the Albu Mahal, and cooperation improved still further after the operation, when Marines and Iraqi Army personnel stayed behind to support the Albu Mahal in providing security.[48]

The eventual success of U.S.-Iraqi coordination with the Albu Mahal in 2005 was not widely emulated, though some tribes did continue to fight al-Qaeda. For example, members of the Dulaimi confederation fought the group around Ramadi in August 2005.[49] However, many in the Coalition remained reluctant to fully embrace a tribal strategy. More importantly, tribal leaders were targeted by al-Qaeda in a coercive campaign of murder and intimidation which sapped many tribes of the will to fight.[50] The success of the terrorists in this campaign was due in part to the nature of tribal loyalty. Al-Qaeda was able to turn clans and families from the same tribe against one another with a combination of carrots (money and other patronage) and sticks (threats of assassination).

This pattern of failed efforts to oppose al-Qaeda in Anbar continued into 2006. Elements of the Albu Fahd tribe, for example, began distancing themselves from al-Qaeda in Ramadi in late 2005 and early 2006. Al-Qaeda quickly targeted Sheikh Nasr al-Fahdawi and other prominent tribesmen for assassination, which was carried out in early 2006 (with the support of some of al-Fahdawi's pro-al-Qaeda fellow tribesmen).[51] A captured al-Qaeda document from this period reveals this strategy. Noting that tribal leaders had begun to cooperate with Americans, the authors write: "we found that the best solutions [sic] to stop thousands of people from renouncing their religion, is to cut the heads of the Sheiks of infidelity."[52] They accuse Sheikh Nasr al-Fahdawi of using his money, power, and reputation in Ramadi to "violate" the authors' "brothers," continuing: "so the brothers raided his house in the middle of the night wearing the national guards uniform and driving similar cars, they took him and killed him, thank God."[53]

Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia's campaign of murder and intimidation had the desired effect, as the document notes:

> Then there was a complete change of events than is was [sic] before thank god, cousins of Sheik Nasr came to the Mujahidin begging, announcing their repentance and innocence, saying we're with you, we'll do whatever you want. The turmoil is over, our brothers now are roaming the streets of AlbuFahd without any checkpoints.[54]

The document goes on to list others who were killed or intimidated, indicating that the terrorists' coercive violence was successful.[55]

Coalition cooperation with the tribes remained limited through early 2006.[56] There were some exceptional success stories, as with the Albu Mahal and U.S. Army Special Forces relationship with the Albu Nimr around the city of Hit. Even in these limited cases, al-Qaeda recognised the threat and sought to target these tribes. In captured documents, the group noted

the need to attack the Albu Nimr and regretted not crushing the Albu Mahal when it had the chance.[57]

Starting in mid-to-late 2006, however, the cooperation started to become more serious. In Ramadi, Sheikh Sattar al-Rishawi of the Dulaimi confederation's Albu Risha tribe formally launched a concerted campaign against al-Qaeda in September 2006. Along with other leaders such as the Albu Nimr's Fasal al-Gaoud, Sattar founded a tribal alliance known as the Anbar Salvation Council (ASC).

Sattar himself was a smuggler and highway robber, and a fairly minor sheikh. However, he was bold and charismatic and had shrewd advisers such as his brother Ahmed; when opportunities presented themselves he was well positioned to take advantage. Sattar had previously been willing to work with al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, but began to clash with the group as it muscled in on his illegal revenue. In 2005, Sattar turned to other Iraqis to help him battle his unwelcome competitors, but this alliance was ineffective and short lived. He subsequently seems to have realised that the best way to defeat al-Qaeda and gain power was to side with the United States.[58]

Sattar and his new alliance were soon supported by the Coalition. The U.S. military helped to protect Sattar, and the government of Iraq embraced him, albeit reluctantly, as well. Sattar was eventually made the counterinsurgency coordinator for the province, his tribesmen joined the Iraqi police around Ramadi in droves, and his militias were formally deputized as "Emergency Response Units." A blind eye was turned to Sattar's extralegal revenue generation.[59]

With the Albu Mahal and the Albu Risha, the Coalition was clearly employing both state-tribalism and auxiliary-tribalism strategies to provide internal security. The Albu Mahal were allowed to effectively take over the Iraqi Army brigade in their region, while the Albu Risha came to dominate the Ramadi police.[60] The Iraqi government delegated significant authority to both tribes, along with the Albu Nimr around Hit.

The effect of this strategy in 2007 was dramatic. By the late spring and early summer, parts of Anbar (such as Ramadi) that had previously been horrifically violent were relatively peaceful. Sattar was hailed as a hero by many Iraqis and Americans.

The success was striking enough that the Coalition attempted to duplicate the model across Iraq, giving rise to the euphemism 'concerned local citizens' or 'CLCs' (presumably to make the use of tribesmen and other former insurgents sound more palatable). These fighters have been recruited to help the Coalition in Baghdad and in parts of Salah ad Din and Diyala provinces.[61] There are also efforts to expand the strategy to the Shi'a south of Iraq.[62] By mid 2007, Saddam's tribal strategy had in effect become the Coalition's.

Comparing Strategies

Despite the similarities between Saddam's relatively successful strategy and the Coalition's present-day efforts, there is no guarantee that the Coalition will prevail. The two have very different contexts.

The first and most obvious difference is the role of the United States as a third party. This creates the possibility for tension between Baghdad and Washington regarding the means and ends of any tribal strategy. Presently, the government of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki is supporting the strategy, albeit with reservations. His government has been unable to establish security and has little authority in Anbar, so some formal deputization of tribes there does not represent a tangible loss of government power. However, some Shi'ites may cease to support what they regard as a generous approach to the Sunni; the political Coalition that supports al-Maliki is already fraying and might not survive.

This would confront the United States with a dilemma similar to that it faced in Vietnam's highlands in the 1960s. Supporting the tribes would increase the likelihood of success against the insurgents, but would alienate the government and possibly precipitate government-tribe conflict or even the collapse of the frail Iraqi state. Supporting the government would make the survival of a unified Iraq more likely, but could drive

the tribes back to the insurgency. This situation would actually be worse than Vietnam; the Sunni tribes of Anbar are not a small rural minority like the Montagnard, which makes it harder for the Coalition to exert leverage over them.

These tensions highlight a second and related difference between Saddam's and the Coalition's tribal strategies. Saddam's strategy was relatively simple in that it had only one goal: keeping Saddam in power. The United States has at least two goals: achieving a stable, democratic Iraq and defeating al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia. If the Iraqi government ceases to support the tribal strategy, these two goals would become mutually exclusive, at least in the short run. Already, the strengthening of unelected sheikhs in Anbar means an end to democracy in that province, at least for the present.

Further, the tribes themselves are no more unified now than they were under Saddam. The potential for both inter- and intra-tribal conflict remains. Some reports suggest that friction within the ASC is already high. Even if this is overstated it illustrates the potential for conflict in the future. Other tribes are reported to feel neglected or excluded from government and security-force positions.[63]

Intra-tribal relations can be equally challenging. As an example, in the powerful Albu Nimr, Sheikh Fasal al-Gaoud was relatively weak despite (or perhaps because of) being the former governor of Anbar. The real power in the Albu Nimr belongs to other members of his lineage, such as Sheikhs Jubair and Hatem al-Gaoud. Hatem and Jubair in turn have some rivalry despite being not only from the same lineage but the same house (Hatem is Jubair's nephew).[64]

While Hatem and Jubair have a good relationship with U.S. special operations forces, other members of the al-Gaoud family had close links to Saddam Hussein. Sattam al-Gaoud was the director of the largest network: of Iraqi front companies involved in smuggling for the regime. The network, Al-Eman, had numerous al-Gaoud family members in key positions. Sattam and many of his relatives were also associated with the Iraqi Intelligence Service.[65] While they have taken to spending much of their time in Jordan since the fall of Saddam, these al-Gaouds retain both wealth and connections inside Iraq, including to insurgent groups.[66]

This tangled family situation represents the intricacies of just one prominent family in one prominent tribe. As it expands its tribal strategy in Iraq, the United States will have to manage dozens or even hundreds of these relationships, leading one intelligence officer in Anbar to compare Iraqi tribal relations to Latin American *telenovelas* in drama and complexity.[67] Because Washington lacks the detailed knowledge of Iraqi clans possessed by Saddam, its approach is more like the British approach of the 1920s. Rather than managing the tribes, it is simply ceding Anbar to them, and potentially other territories as well. This cession undermines the past five decades of attempts to build a modern state in Iraq.

The third difference between the two strategies is the relative strength of the Iraqi state. Under Saddam, the state was battered by two decades of war and sanctions, yet it nonetheless retained significant coercive capability. This was due in no small part to Saddam's ruthless willingness to cause civilian casualties and suffering, and the state's large numbers of military and security-service personnel backed by totalitarian intelligence services. On the eve of Operation Iraqi Freedom, for example, Saddam is estimated to have had about 400,000 military personnel supplemented by perhaps as many police and security-service members. In contrast, the current Iraqi government has an authorized military end strength of 175,000, supplemented by a Ministry of Interior which has over 320,000 personnel on its payroll. Taking these numbers at face value, Saddam had a 50 percent advantage in total personnel, and more than double the number of military personnel. Yet the modern Iraqi military and security services are in reality nowhere near their authorized strength; indeed the Ministry of Interior is unable to determine which if any of its 320,000 employees is actually working. Further, the Iraqi military lacks much of the heavy equipment that enabled Saddam to punish tribal uprisings such as the Albu Nimr's 1995 revolt.[68]

Admittedly, the government of Iraq does possess one significant tool of coercion: the U.S. mil-

itary. Yet the United States lacks the ruthlessness of Saddam, and its forces are better suited to conventional battle than internal security. Also, the United States will clearly not maintain major force levels in Iraq indefinitely, so this coercive tool is a temporary asset for the government of Iraq. Whereas Saddam was able to restrict the power of the tribes to some degree, the present government of Iraq could soon face a situation in which baronial tribalism reigns throughout Anbar.

The fourth difference is the nature of the enemy that the respective tribal strategies are intended to defeat. Saddam's strategy was primarily aimed at other Sunni tribes and the restive Shi'a. Neither of these enemies had either motive or opportunity to outbid Saddam for the loyalty of tribes; the combination of carrots and sticks he could wield was too compelling.

Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, on the other hand, possesses a real capacity to outbid the Coalition as it attempts to build alliances. Moreover, it is still capable of murder and intimidation against tribal leaders. For example, al-Qaeda is believed to be behind the bombing of the Mansour Hotel in June 2007 that killed Fasal al-Gaoud, the Albu Nimr sheikh who had long sought to arrange Coalition cooperation with the tribes. The bombing also killed two other leaders of the Albu Nimr and a sheikh of the Albu Fahd, who had once again switched sides to join the ASC.[69] Other killings of ASC members take place frequently despite U.S. support and protection.[70] Sunnis who have joined with the Coalition in Baghdad and elsewhere also face fierce reprisals.[71]

Most notably, Sheikh Sattar was killed on 13 September 2007 by an improvised explosive device emplaced near his farm outside Ramadi. Unlike many previous assassinations of tribal leaders, this attack did not demolish the will to fight of the Albu Risha or the ASC.[72] Sattar's brother Ahmed quickly stepped into his place, and while lacking some of Sattar's charisma, he is a capable leader. He has begun negotiations with Shi'a leaders and, realizing that his tribal power base is limited, has attempted to build a political base beyond his tribe.[73] However, the fact that Sattar was killed in essentially his own backyard despite significant ASC and Coalition protection suggests that al-Qaeda (who may have bribed one or more of Sattar's guards) retains the ability to use coercive violence against even well-guarded senior figures, let alone rank-and-file tribesmen.[74]

Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia still has substantial revenue from activities in Iraq as well as donations from abroad (according to some reports it has sufficient excess revenue to fund al-Qaeda in Pakistan in addition to its own efforts).[75] Al-Qaeda thus has significant carrots and sticks with which to motivate the tribes, or portions thereof, to switch sides.

Moreover, whereas Saddam, like the members of al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, was a Sunni, the current government of Iraq is principally Shi'a. Many Sunni believe it is little more than a tool of Iran. Shi'a death squads have carried out ethnic cleansing in Baghdad and have infiltrated parts of the Iraqi government. In November 2007 senior leaders in Anbar complained that the government was not providing them sufficient resources, which they attributed to the government's sectarian bias. Leaders south of Baghdad have made similar complaints.[76] This perception of bias could make the tribes more inclined to listen to al-Qaeda, which can portray itself as seeking to protect the Sunni and limit the influence of Iran. This will be particularly true if sectarian violence rises again.

Looking to the Future

With these key differences in mind, two scenarios can be envisioned for the next two to three years. In the first, current trends continue unchanged. The government of Iraq continues to embrace the current tribal strategy, and there remains sufficient U.S. combat power to support and protect the tribes in Anbar and elsewhere. Patronage from both the government of Iraq and the United States continues to flow and the tribes' extra-legal income remains lucrative, while sectarian violence does not worsen.

This scenario looks favorable for the United States, as it would mean that al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia would be substantially weakened (though probably not eliminated). The trade-off for allowing continued state and auxiliary tribalism would be the possibility of putting democra-

tization on hold: elections in Anbar would likely be postponed or the formal structure of governance marginalized. Though unfortunate, this would not necessarily be permanent and would probably be accepted in the short term by many residents of Anbar as the price of security. It is possible that the ASC could jointly assume governing authority with provincial officials as part of a state-of-emergency government. And if Sheikh Ahmed succeeds in creating a non-tribal party, local democracy might even be preserved.

For the government of Iraq, this scenario means accepting a short- to medium-term continuation of Saddam's tribal strategy with all the hazards that entails. The loyalty of the tribes would have to be continually paid for and relationships both with and among the tribes would have to be managed. Anbar would enjoy at least as much autonomy as it enjoyed under Saddam, when it was governed by a system approaching baronial tribalism. Indeed, the government of Iraq would have little more control over Anbar than the government of Pakistan does over its western provinces. Further, by allowing the tribes a virtual monopoly on military and security forces in Anbar, the strategy would make future coups or civil war possible. The power of tribes in other regions would be expanded as well. For the Shi'a majority of Iraq, this might be acceptable but would remain worrisome.

As problematic as the above outcome would be, a much worse outcome is easily imagined simply by factoring in likely medium-term events, among them a withdrawal of U.S. forces that is not precipitous but nonetheless substantially reduces combat power in Anbar and other provinces. This would mean less ability to protect and support the ASC and other tribes. It would also make the supply of material support and patronage by the United States more difficult (though not impossible).

At the same time, the al-Maliki government as currently constituted is likely to change. It could shift towards a more hard-line Shi'a position or be supplanted entirely. Regardless, its support for the tribes will probably decrease if not end altogether. The combination of a U.S. drawdown and a shift in the position of the Iraqi government could exacerbate sectarian violence.

Even as Coalition support to the tribes wanes, al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia is likely to retain much of its ability to employ both carrots and sticks. The tribes may therefore be made "an offer they can't refuse." Like Rashid Dostum in Afghanistan, they could readily conclude that switching sides was in their best interest. This would be a particularly bad outcome for the Coalition as it would have helped train, equip and sustain forces that would then begin to work against it. For the United States, this would mean Anbar and other regions would become havens for al-Qaeda as it worked to destabilize the region and possibly support attacks further afield. For the government of Iraq, it would mean de facto partition, civil war, or both.

Finally, it is not clear that the present internal-security model can be expanded to the Shi'a south. The power of the tribes dwindled more in the face of modernization among the Shi'a than it did among the Sunni. The tribe was replaced or at least modified by the power of political Islam, so that in Shi'a areas political-religious parties or groups tend to dominate.[77] The largest at present are Muqtada al-Sadr's Office of the Martyr Sadr and affiliated militia Jaiysh al-Mahdi; and Abdul Aziz al-Hakim's Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council and affiliated militia, the Badr organization. However, there are numerous other groups with affiliated militias including the Fadhila Party and several smaller organizations. While tribal groups are not wholly absent, they lack the power and organization of these religious-political groups. In Basra, for example, armed tribesmen play a role in the fighting but the major factions are party militias.[78] So even if the United States' tribal strategy succeeds in the Sunni center and west of Iraq, the Shi'a south would likely remain problematic.

Fully embracing a tribal strategy for internal security in Anbar has been successful to date and expansion of this strategy over the rest of Iraq could provide real short-term security gains in at least some areas. There is little guarantee that these gains will persist, however, and there is some chance that the strategy will backfire in the medium term. Even Saddam Hussein had diffi-

culty managing Iraq's tribes despite his totalitarian state and lavish patronage. As the United States prepares to reduce its commitment to Iraq, it should be clear on both the tension in its strategic goals and the potential for the tribes to once again switch sides.

Beyond Iraq, there has been discussion of a U.S. alliance with tribes in Pakistan to fight al-Qaeda and the Taliban in the border region with Afghanistan. This alliance would face a welter of problems, including the lack of U.S. combat forces in Pakistan and the fact that the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Pakistan have had years to integrate with and even dominate the area's tribes.[79] Beyond these daunting issues, the central challenge would remain the same as in Iraq: managing a three-cornered relationship between the tribes, the state, and an external power as well as inter- and intra-tribal relations.

The tribe and the modern bureaucratic state are inherently in tension. Max Weber identified this difficulty nearly a century ago: tribes derive legitimacy from what he termed "the authority of the eternal yesterday" while the modern state derives legitimacy from the rational application of the rule of law.[80] Attempting to use the former to secure the latter is at best a stop-gap measure. At worst, it sows the seeds of future state failure.

Notes

Survival, April-May 2008, 67-93. Reprinted by permission of the Taylor and Francis Group.

1. "Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia" and "Anbar Salvation Council" (ASC) are the terms used throughout this paper, though both groups are known by other names. Al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia is more officially "The Organization of al-Qaeda (the Base) in the Land of Two Rivers" and has overlapping and often interchangeable membership with the Mujahedin Shura Council, the Islamic State of Iraq, and Jamaat al-Tahwid Wa al-Jihad (Group for Monotheism and Holy War). The Anbar Salvation Council is also referred to as the 'Sahawa al-Anbar' (Anbar Awakening) or more recently "Sahawa al-Iraq" (Iraq Awakening), often abbreviated SAA and SAL.
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6. See Ibid., pp. 85-8.
7. Ibid., p. 87.
8. See Khoury and Kostiner, *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*.
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12. Jabar, "Sheikhs and Ideologues," pp.80-3.
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15. See "Islamists' Electoral Disaster," *Economist Intelligence Unit,* 22 November 2007, http://www.economist.com /daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story_id=10178007.
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18. See "Going Up or Down?" *The Economist*, 7 June 2007, http://www.economist.com/world/africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9304146, for comments on the continued importance of tribe in Kenyan politics.
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33. Jabar, "Sheikhs and Ideologues," pp. 95-6.
34. Woods et al., p. 52.
35. Jabar, "Sheikhs and Ideologues," pp.97-9.
36. Baram, "Neo-tribalism," pp. 5-6.
37. Jabar, "Sheikhs and Ideologues," pp. 99-100; Baram, "Neo-tribalism," p. 6; and Wurmser, pp. 10-11.
38. Baram, "Neo-tribalism," p. 6; and Jabar, "Sheikhs and Ideologues," p. 100.
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41. Much of the following discussion is informed by the author's observations in Iraq from August to December 2007; conversations with U.S. military and intelligence-community personnel who have served in Anbar; and discussions with Carter Malkasian of the Center for Naval Analyses, who was an adviser to the Marine Expeditionary Force in Anbar.
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53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid. For example, the document mentions Mazhar al-'Alawani, "a candidate for the elections": "His pictures were all over Ramadi, where the entire Albu'Alwan tribe was supporting him, proud of him, one day before the elections, the brothers killed him while he was visiting Ramadi, no one from his tribe opened his mouth, instead they got more scared and weaker."

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65. See *Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DC1 on Iraq's* WMD (The Duelfer Report), vol. 1, "Front Company Conglomerates: Al-Eman and Al-Handal,"

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About the Author

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Anbar Awakens: The Tipping Point

by Major Niel Smith, USA, and Colonel Sean B. MacFarland, USA
Military Review, March-April 2008

The stunning security improvements in al-Anbar Province during 2007 fundamentally changed the military and political landscape of Iraq. Many, both in and outside the military (and as late as November 2006), had assessed the situation in Anbar as a lost cause. The "Anbar Awakening" of Sunni tribal leaders and their supporters that began in September 2006 near Ramadi seemed to come out of nowhere. But the change that led to the defeat of al-Qaeda in Ramadi—what some have called the "Gettysburg of Iraq"—was not a random event.[1] It was the result of a concerted plan executed by U.S. forces in Ramadi. Tactical victory became a strategic turning point when farsighted senior leaders, both Iraqi and American, replicated the Ramadi model throughout Anbar Province, in Baghdad, and other parts of the country, dramatically changing the Iraq security situation in the process.

The "Ready First Combat Team"

The 1st Brigade of the 1st Armored Division, the "Ready First Combat Team," was at the center of the Anbar Awakening. When we arrived in Ramadi in June 2006, few of us thought our campaign would change the entire complexion of the war and push al-Qaeda to the brink of defeat in Iraq. The soldiers, Marines, sailors, and airmen who served in or with our brigade combat team (BCT) enabled the Anbar Awakening through a deliberate, often difficult campaign that combined traditional counterinsurgency (COIN) principles with precise, lethal operations. The skilled application of the same principles and exploitation of success by other great units in Anbar and other parts of Iraq spread the success in Ramadi far beyond our area of operations (AO) at a pace no one could have predicted.

The Ready First enabled the Anbar Awakening by:

- Employing carefully focused lethal operations.
- Securing the populace through forward presence.
- Co-opting local leaders.
- Developing competent host-nation security forces.
- Creating a public belief in rising success.
- Developing human and physical infrastructure.

The execution of this approach enabled the brigade to set conditions, recognize opportunity, and exploit success when it came, to create a remarkable turnaround.

Ramadi on the Brink

In the summer of 2006, Ramadi by any measure was among the most dangerous cities in Iraq.[2] The area of operations averaged over three times more attacks per capita than any other area in the country. With the exception of the embattled government center and nearby buildings held by a company of Marines, al-Qaeda-related insurgents had almost complete freedom of movement throughout the city. They dominated nearly all of the city's key structures, including the city hospital, the largest in Anbar Province. Their freedom of movement allowed them to emplace complex subsurface IED belts, which rendered much of the city no-go terrain for U.S. and Iraqi Army (IA) forces.

The situation in Ramadi at this point was markedly different from that in Tal Afar, where the Ready First began its tour of duty. Although Ramadi was free of the sectarian divisions that bedeviled Tal Afar, it was the provincial capital, it was at least four times more populous, and it occupied a choke point along the key transit routes west of Baghdad. Perhaps recognizing these same factors, al-Qaeda

had declared Ramadi the future capital of its "caliphate" in Iraq. Local Iraqi security was essentially nonexistent. Less than a hundred Iraqi police reported for duty in June, and they remained in their stations, too intimidated to patrol. Additionally, the fledgling IA brigade nearest Ramadi had little operational experience.

In late 2005, the Sunni tribes around Ramadi attempted to expel al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQIZ) after growing weary of the terrorist group's heavy-handed, indiscriminate murder and intimidation campaign.[3] A group calling itself the al-Anbar People's Council formed from a Coalition of local Sunni sheiks and Sunni nationalist groups. The council intended to conduct an organized resistance against both Coalition forces and al-Qaeda elements, but, undermanned and hamstrung by tribal vendettas, it lacked strength and cohesion. A series of tribal leader assassinations ultimately brought down the group, which ceased to exist by February 2006. This collapse set the conditions that the brigade found when it arrived in late May. The assassinations had created a leadership vacuum in Ramadi and, by cutting tribal ties to outside tribal centers, had isolated the city. For their part, the tribes had adopted a passive posture, not wishing to antagonize a powerful al-Qaeda presence in and around Ramadi. In short, as the Ready First prepared to move from Tal Afar, their new AO was essentially in enemy hands.

Actions in Summer and Autumn, 2006

The situation in Ramadi clearly required a change in Coalition tactics. We had to introduce Iraqi security forces (ISF) into the city and the rural areas controlled by the enemy. But, even with a total of five Marine and Army maneuver battalion task forces, the Ready First did not have enough combat power to secure such a large city by itself. The Iraqi Army and at some point, the Iraqi police (IP), had to be brought into play. They would help, but we understood that without the support of the local leaders and populace, any security gains achieved solely through lethal operations would be temporary at best. In particular, we had to overcome the fallout from the unsuccessful tribal uprising of 2005. We had to convince tribal leaders to rejoin the fight against al-Qaeda.

Developing the plan. We reckoned the brigade had to isolate the insurgents, deny them sanctuary, and build Iraqi security forces, especially police forces, to succeed. The staff developed a plan that centered on attacking al-Qaeda's safe havens and establishing a lasting presence there to directly challenge the insurgents' dominance of the city, disrupting their operations, attriting their numbers, and gaining the confidence of the people. We intended to take the city and its environs back one neighborhood at a time by establishing combat outposts and developing a police force in the secured neighborhoods. The plan called for simultaneously engaging local leaders in an attempt to find those who had influence, or *wasta*, and to get their support. We recognized this as a critical part of the plan, because without their help, we would not be able to recruit enough police to take back the entire city.

We also realized that in the plan's initial stages, our efforts at fostering local cooperation were highly vulnerable. A concerted AQIZ attack on the supportive sheiks could quickly derail the process, as it had in 2005-2006. We therefore took some extraordinary measures to ensure the survival of tribal leaders who "flipped" to our side. We established neighborhood watches that involved deputizing screened members of internal tribal militias as "Provincial Auxiliary Iraqi Police," authorizing them to wear uniforms, carry weapons, and provide security within the defined tribal area. In the more important tribal areas, combat outposts manned by U.S. or IA forces would protect major routes and markets. In a few cases, we also planned to provide direct security to key leaders' residences, to include placing armored vehicles at checkpoints along the major access roads to their neighborhoods.

We designed our information operations (IO) efforts to alienate the people from the insurgents while increasing the prestige of supportive tribal leaders. We also made friendly sheiks the conduits for humanitarian aid efforts, such as free fuel disbursements. Wherever we established improved security, we established civil-military operations centers (CMOCs) and began the process of restor-

ing services to the area. After securing Ramadi General Hospital, we began an extensive effort to improve its services and to advertise it throughout the city. Prior to our operation there in early July 2006, the hospital's primary function had been treating wounded insurgents, with most citizens afraid to enter the facility. We also took a different IO tack with the sheiks. Instead of telling them that we would leave soon and they must assume responsibility for their own security, we told them that we would stay as long as necessary to defeat the terrorists. That was the message they had been waiting to hear. As long as they perceived us as mere interlopers, they dared not throw in their lot with ours. When they began to think of us as reliable partners, their attitudes began to change. Still, we had to prove that we meant what we were saying.

Experience in Tal Afar taught us that competent local police forces were vital for long-term success. An AQIZ intimidation campaign had all but eliminated the previous police force, and a suicide bomber killed dozens of potential recruits during a recruiting drive in January 2006, an event that caused recruitment to shut down for six months. In June 2006, the Ramadi IP force claimed approximately 420 police officers out of 3,386 authorized, and only about 140 of these officers ever showed up to work, with less than 100 present for duty on any given day. We realized that new recruiting was the key to building an effective police force.

Recruiting local security forces. Our desire to recruit local Iraqis into the IP was the catalyst for the Awakening movement's birth in September 2006. The way we went about it helped to prove that we were reliable partners, that we could deliver security to the sheiks in a way that broke the cycle of al-Qaeda murder and intimidation. In the bargain, the government of Iraq would assume the burden of paying their tribesmen to provide their security. The situation was a winner any way you looked at it. The tribes soon saw that instead of being the hunted, they could become the hunters, with well trained, paid, and equipped security forces backed up by locally positioned Coalition forces.

We began the process by shifting our recruiting center to a more secure location, at one of our forward operating bases (FOBs) located closer to the tribes that had indicated a willingness to join the ISF. This shift helped to deter attacks and other forms of intimidation that had undermined previous recruiting drives. We maintained secrecy by communicating information about the recruiting drive only to sympathetic sheiks who wanted to protect tribesmen sent to join the IP. This technique resulted in a steadily growing influx of new recruits. Over the six-month period from June to December 2006, nearly 4,000 police joined without incident.

This influx taxed the brigade security forces cell, composed of the deputy commander and a small staff of highly capable officers and NCOs. The majority of the population in al-Anbar had either forged ID papers or none at all, so the recruiters had to determine the true identify and reliability of the potential recruits. Insurgent infiltration of the police force was (and still is) a problem in Iraq, and is inevitable; however, the Ready First made use of several methods and technologies to mitigate this risk.

Biometric automated tool sets (BATS) proved extremely useful in screening recruits and preventing previously caught insurgents from joining. Convincing supportive sheiks to vouch for their tribal members was a second filter in the screening process. From June to December, more than 90 percent of police recruits came from tribes supporting the Awakening, and the sheiks knew whom to trust.

Our ISF cell understood the importance of paying the new police to prove that they were respected and their service was valued. As a collateral benefit, the growing IP force also created a small engine for economic development by providing jobs in addition to security for the local community. Each recruit received a bonus if accepted for training. Officers also received a bonus if they served as active police members for 90 days. These boosts injected more vitality into the economy.

New Iraqi Army recruits also received incentives to join. One obstacle to recruitment was that locals were hesitant to join the IA because of the possibility of receiving an assignment far from home. To mitigate this, IA Division G-1s assigned the *jundi* (junior soldiers) to an Iraqi battalion close to their

homes. This "station of choice" option helped eliminate a major constraint of recruitment possibilities for the IA.

Both Iraqi police and IA *jundi* assigned to Ramadi were required to attend a one-week urban combat training course run by the Ready First's field artillery unit to ensure that they could fight and survive once they joined their units. This focused training improved their confidence and discipline in urban combat, and significantly enhanced ISF effectiveness in small-unit actions. In time, the local IA brigade took responsibility for conducting the IA and IP courses with a cadre of drill sergeants, which helped forge closer bonds between the two services and instilled an increased sense of confidence in the Iraqi security forces.

The Ready First made every effort to help unqualified Iraqi recruits become police officers or soldiers. The most frequent disqualifier of recruits was the literacy requirement. The brigade commenced adult literacy classes, on a trial basis, for the illiterate recruits. These classes also had a positive, albeit unintended, collateral benefit. As security improved, hundreds of women enrolled in the classes—about five times more than we expected. The fact that women eventually felt safe enough to seek education reinforced the impression of improved security while directly attacking al-Qaeda's ability to influence the population.

As the benefits of cooperation with our recruiting efforts became obvious to the various local sheiks, more and more of them expressed an interest in cooperating with us. This interest eventually resulted in an al-Qaeda reprisal that, although tragic, was instrumental in bringing the sheiks together in the Awakening movement.

Securing the populace. Past Coalition operations in Ramadi had originated from large FOBs on the outskirts of town, with most forces conducting "drive-by COIN" (or combat)—they exited the FOB, drove to an objective or patrolled, were attacked, exchanged fire, and returned to base. Because the physical geography and road network in Ramadi enabled the enemy to observe and predict Coalition movements, nearly every movement into the center of the city was attacked multiple times by improvised explosive devices, RPGs, or small arms, often with deadly results. Moreover, the patrols played into the insurgents' information operations campaign: al-Qaeda exploited any collateral damage by depicting Coalition soldiers as aloof occupiers and random dispensers of violence against the populace.

It was clear that to win over the sheiks and their people, our BCT would have to move into the city and its contested areas. Thus, we decided to employ a tactic we had borrowed from the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment and used successfully in Tal Afar: the combat outpost, or COP. Our COPs normally consisted of a tank or infantry company team based in a defensible local structure in a disputed area. Eventually, the COPs included an Iraqi Army company wherever possible as they became emboldened by our presence. Later, we began to establish Iraqi police substations at or near the COPs as well. At this early stage, the outposts provided "lily pads" for mechanized quick-reaction forces, safe houses for special operations units, and security for civil-military operations centers. In rural areas, the COPs sometimes doubled as firebases with mortars and counterfire radars.

Because we now maintained a constant presence in disputed neighborhoods, the insurgents could no longer accurately trace and predict our actions. Frequent and random patrols out of the COPs prevented AQIZ from effectively moving and operating within the local populace. At the same time, the COPs enhanced our ability to conduct civil-military operations; intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance (ISR); and IO.

These outposts also acted as "fly bait," especially in the period immediately after a new COP was established. Experience in Tal Afar taught us that insurgents would attack a newly established outpost using all systems at their disposal, including suicide car bombs. These attacks usually did not end well for the insurgents, who often suffered heavy casualties. During the establishment of the first outpost, in July 2006, the enemy mounted multiple-platoon assaults. The frenzy of attacks on the new outposts culminated in a citywide battle on 24 July 2006 in which AQIZ forces were severely beaten and sustained heavy casualties. By October, attacks were far less fierce, with elements consisting of a handful of men conducting hit-and-run type operations. These noticeable decreases in

enemy strength indicated our plan to decimate their ranks was clearly working. Constant Coalition presence, insurgent attrition, and loss of insurgent mobility freed the people from intimidation and sapped any support for AQIZ.

The COPs also allowed us to control the infrastructure in Ramadi and use it to once again support the populace. This was the case with the Ramadi General Hospital. We established a COP just outside the hospital's walls while an IA unit secured the premises. Within days, the hospital was providing quality medical attention for the first time in a year, and the IA was detaining wounded insurgents who had come seeking treatment.

We continued to build new outposts in the city and surrounding areas until our redeployment transition began in February 2007. The strategy was not unlike the island-hopping campaign in the Pacific during World War II. With new outposts established in an ever-tightening circle around the inner city, we wrested control of areas away from the insurgents. As areas became manageable, we handed them over to newly trained Iraqi police forces (whom we kept a watchful eye on), and used the relieved forces elsewhere to continue tightening the noose. All these developments in securing the populace required an accompanying development of key alliances with tribal leaders, the history of which is inseparable from the operational story of the Anbar Awakening.

Courting local leaders. Convincing the local sheiks to join us and undertake another uprising was an immense challenge, but obtaining their support was the lynchpin of the second part of our strategy. We knew it would be pivotal when we arrived in Ramadi in June. The sheiks' memory of their first, failed attempt at establishing the al-Anbar People's Council (late 2005-early 2006) was the main obstacle to our plan in this regard. The Sunni tribal alliance was fragmented and weak compared to the growing al-Qaeda forces that controlled Ramadi in those days.

At the same time, area tribal sheiks had no great love for U.S. forces or the Iraqi Army. Early in the insurgency, they had directly and indirectly supported former-regime nationalist insurgents against U.S. forces, and as a result they had temporarily established an alliance of convenience with AQIZ. Many tribal members were killed or captured combating Coalition forces, which diminished the sheiks' ability to provide income for their tribes. These conditions in turn enabled AQIZ to recruit from those families in need of money. Another aggravating factor was that IA forces initially stationed in Anbar consisted largely of southern Iraqi Shi'ites. Ramadi area inhabitants regarded them as agents of the Sadr militia or Badr Corps, with a covert agenda to kill off Sunni tribes and enable a Shi'ite takeover of Anbar.

Nevertheless, the tribal leaders were still fed up with Al Qaeda's violence and frustrated by their own loss of prestige and influence in their traditional heartlands. The brigade staff believed that by offering convincing incentives, we could create a tribal alliance that could produce lasting security in Ramadi. To persuade the tribes to cooperate, we first needed to understand the human terrain in our AO, and that task fell to an outstanding and talented junior officer, Captain Travis Patriquin.

An Arabic-speaking former special forces soldier and an infantry officer assigned as the Ready First's S-9/engagements officer, Patriquin coordinated brigade-level local meetings and discussions. He quickly gained the sheiks' confidence through his language and interpersonal skills and developed strong personal bonds with their families. He strengthened these bonds during meetings between the brigade commander or deputy commanding officer and the sheiks. Battalion and company commanders also worked on improving relations with the townspeople on a daily basis. Thus, the sheiks' growing trust of the brigade's officers led them to support our efforts to reinvigorate police recruiting.

The combined effects of the engagement efforts were eventually hugely successful. However, some staff officers outside the brigade became concerned that we were arming a tribal militia that would fight against Iraqi security forces in the future. To allay those concerns and to pass on the "best practices" we had developed in Ramadi, Captain Patriquin created his now-famous PowerPoint stick-figure presentation "How to Win in al-Anbar."[4] This slideshow perfectly captured the Ready First's concept for winning the tribes over to our side.

We deliberately placed our first IP stations manned with newly recruited Sunni tribesmen

where they could protect the tribes that were supplying us with additional recruits. This tactic gave the IPs added incentive to stand and fight and effectively ended al-Qaeda's murder and intimidation campaign against the men serving in the ISF. In a significant change of circumstance, the newly minted IPs quickly became the hunters, arresting a number of insurgents and uncovering tremendous weapons caches. By the end of July 2006, AQIZ was definitely feeling the pinch.

In reacting to the pressure, al-Qaeda inadvertently aided our efforts by overplaying its hand. The group launched a series of attacks against the new IP stations. On 21 August, the insurgents attacked a newly established IP station in a tribal stronghold with an immense suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (SVBIED). The IPs, however, refused to be scared away. Despite offers of safe haven at a nearby Coalition base, the survivors remained at their posts, ran their tattered flag back up the flagpole, and even began to conduct patrols again that same day.

Hours later, al-Qaeda attempted to intimidate future recruits by murdering and desecrating the body of a leading local sheik who had been instrumental in our early push at recruiting tribe members into the ISF. The attack inflamed tribal sentiment against AQIZ and drove several fence-sitting tribes to support our police recruitment.

A significant leader for the burgeoning movement emerged in Sittar albu-Risha, a younger sheik who resided on the west side of town and who was reputed to have smuggling and business connections throughout Anbar. In addition to having questions about Sittar's true motives, some were concerned that we would be placing too much stock in a relatively junior sheik and undercutting ongoing negotiations with Anbar tribal leaders who had fled to Jordan. However, with each successful negotiation and demonstration of trustworthiness by Sittar, we were able to whittle away at these reservations.

The Tipping Point

Sheik Sittar was a dynamic figure willing to stand up to al-Qaeda. Other, more cautious, sheiks were happy to let him walk point for the anti-AQIZ tribes in the early days, when victory was far from certain and memories of earlier failed attempts were still fresh. In *The Tipping Point,* Malcolm Gladwell writes that three types of individuals are necessary for a radical change, or a "tipping point," to occur: mavens, salespersons, and connectors. In brief, mavens have the goods, salespersons spread the word, and connectors distribute the goods far and wide.[5] In Ramadi, the soldiers of the Ready First were the mavens who had the goods—in this case, the ability to form, train, and equip ISF and new leaders. The brigade and battalion commanders acted as salesmen. We identified Sittar as a connector who could get the people to buy into the Awakening. All the elements were in place for transformation; we only had to decide if we trusted Sittar. When our salesmen decided to take a risk with this connector, the effect was amazing in its speed and reach.

On 9 September 2006 Sittar organized a tribal council, attended by over 50 sheiks and the brigade commander, at which he declared the "Anbar Awakening" officially underway. The Awakening Council that emerged from the meeting agreed to first drive AQIZ from Ramadi, and then reestablish rule of law and a local government to support the people. The creation of the Awakening Council, combined with the ongoing recruitment of local security forces, began a snowball effect that resulted in a growing number of tribes either openly supporting the Awakening or withdrawing their support from AQIZ.

Although recruiting and establishing the neighborhood watch units was an important and necessary step to securing Ramadi, it was not sufficient to remove AQIZ influence in the city completely. We needed more police officers who would join us inside the city, which our soldiers called "the heart of darkness." A critical agreement emerging from the council resulted in commitments to provide more recruits from local tribes to fill out requirements for police forces.

Soon after the council ended, tribes began an independent campaign of eradication and retaliation against AQIZ members living among them. Al-Qaeda's influence in the city began to wane quickly. U.S. and Iraqi units operating from COPs killed or captured AQIZ's most effective elements while resurgent IP and tribal forces raided their caches

and safe houses. By late October, nearly every tribe in the northern and western outskirts of Ramadi had publically declared support for the Awakening, and tribes in the dangerous eastern outskirts of the city were sending out feelers about doing the same. The stage was set for a major change in Ramadi.

The Battle of Sufia

AQIZ did not sit idly as it slowly lost its dominance of both the terrain and the populace. Attacks remained high through October 2006 (Ramadan) inside the city limits while SVBIED attacks against and harassment of new COPs and IP stations located outside the city occurred regularly. These attacks often inflicted casualties on the nascent security forces. Casualties were not enough to slow the Awakening, however, and support continued to expand for the movement.

AQIZ long counted on a secure support base on the east outskirts of town in the Sufia and Julaybah areas. These rural tribal areas were some of the most dangerous in the Ramadi AO, and intelligence indicated they harbored a large support network for the insurgents operating inside the city. AQIZ learned that one of the major sheiks of the Sufia area was considering supporting the Awakening and that he had erected checkpoints to keep out insurgents. Facing a threat to its vital support areas outside of town, AQIZ acted quickly to maintain its grip there.

On 25 November, 30 to 40 gunmen in cars drove into the Albu Soda tribal area and began murdering members of the tribe. AQIZ forces took the tribal militiamen attempting to defend their homes by surprise, killing many while looting and burning their homes. A group of civilians fled in boats across the Euphrates River and reached an Iraqi Army outpost where they breathlessly described what was happening. The IA battalion relayed the information to our brigade TOC [Tactical Operations Center], where the operations staff reallocated ISR platforms and immediately called for Captain Patriquin to provide an Iraqi account of the situation.

Within an hour, Patriquin had gained an understanding of the situation through phone calls to the local sheiks. The brigade headquarters quickly made a crucial decision—we would support the Albu Soda tribe in defending itself. The BCT commanders and staff cancelled a planned battalion-sized combined operation in east Ramadi that was just hours from execution. The battalion commander who was responsible for that area, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Ferry of 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry (Manchus), quickly diverted his force away from the planned operations to assist the Soda tribe in defending its homes. The decision was immediate and the response rapid, underscoring the brigade's flexibility in recognizing and adapting quickly to take advantage of opportunities, rather than following plans in lockstep.

U.S. Marine Corps aircraft arrived overhead to perform "show of force" sorties designed to intimidate the insurgents and convince them that air attack was imminent. Next, a ground reaction force from Task Force 1-9 Infantry began preparations to move to the area and establish defenses for the Albu Soda tribe. Because we were viewing the area using aerial sensors, our vision of the fight was indistinct, and we were unable to separate insurgents from the friendly tribesmen. We did not want to attack the friendly tribe by mistake, so we undertook actions to intimidate the insurgents by firing "terrain denial" missions. Explosions in empty nearby fields raised the possibility of suppressive artillery fire in the minds of the enemy. Complemented by the roar of fighter jets, the startled AQIZ forces became convinced that massive firepower was bearing down on them. They started to withdraw, separating themselves from their victims.

As AQIZ gunmen began fleeing the area, they loaded into several cars, three of which our sensors identified. Our UAV observed a body dragging behind one of the cars, evidently an Albu Soda tribesman. The insurgents obviously meant to terrorize and insult the tribe through this act of mutilation, but they also triggered a boomerang reaction by clearly identifying themselves. The Ready First TOC coordinated F-18 attacks that overtook and destroyed the fleeing vehicles in a blazing fury as M1A1 tanks maneuvered to engage. Armed Predator UAVs and M1A1 tanks in ambush positions finished off others attempting to escape. In the end, the Al Qaeda forces suffered far more casualties than the Albu Soda tribe. By nightfall, several companies of infantry and some M1A1 tanks had reinforced tribal

defenders, further demonstrating Coalition commitment.

Once again, AQIZ's intimidation attempt spectacularly backfired: tribes joined the Awakening movement at a rate that proved difficult to keep up with, even expanding into the neighboring Fallujah and Hit AOs. Within two months, every tribe in Sufia and Julaybah had declared support for the Awakening, and four new combat outposts had been constructed to secure the populations. An area previously deemed high threat and used as a staging ground for AQIZ mortar attacks became almost completely secure. Tribal members inside Ramadi began supporting the Awakening as well, and security rapidly improved. Once a tribal area joined the Awakening, enemy contact in those areas typically dropped to near zero, as IP, IA, and U.S. forces provided security. Bases once under daily mortar and small arms attacks became secure areas and transitioned to IP control, freeing U.S. forces to pursue AQIZ elsewhere.

Overall, by February 2007, contacts with insurgents dropped almost 70 percent compared to the numbers in June 2006, and they had dramatically decreased in complexity and effect. The combination of tribal engagement and combat outposts had proved toxic to AQIZ's efforts to dominate Ramadi.

Rebuilding

Clearing and holding are the bloody but relatively straightforward part of any counterinsurgency effort; building the infrastructure to sustain military success is the complicated part. In Ramadi, it was essential to begin building at the beginning of a clearing operation, so there would not be a gap between establishing security and implementing projects.

While civil affairs projects are obviously vital to the success of a clear, hold, build campaign, building human infrastructure, which includes installing government officials and agency directors, is just as vital. One of the keys to success in Tal Afar was the establishment of a credible local government with a mayor respected by the populace. In Ramadi, there was no local governance when we arrived. We prevailed upon the provincial council to appoint a mayor—one acceptable to the tribes—to coordinate development for the city. This appointment was important because it relieved the governor of municipal level duties and allowed him to focus on issues elsewhere in the province. We then worked with the mayor to ensure that schools, hospitals, sewers, power stations, and other infrastructure all returned to pre-war normalcy as soon as possible. In fact, the western part of Ramadi was undergoing redevelopment even while combat operations in east Ramadi continued during autumn. This rebuilding effort demonstrated that normal services could function again and helped convince the people of Ramadi that local security improvements were permanent.

We wanted to encourage people living in still-embattled neighborhoods that joining the Awakening was both possible and in their best interest. To that end, we held the first "Ramadi Reconstruction Conference" in January 2007 at Sheik Sittar's home. Sheik Sittar invited all of the local sheiks, any government officials we could find, and local contractors. Following a brief on all ongoing projects, we explained the different ways Coalition forces could be of assistance in reconstruction. The participants broke down into geographically based small groups, led by our five maneuver task force commanders and their local partners, to design and refine plans for reconstruction. The commanders discussed local needs and, just as importantly, local reconstruction capabilities. Everyone was asked to return in March to brief plans. Accordingly, we were able to begin reconstruction in cleared parts of Ramadi before the fighting was over elsewhere. Maintaining the initiative in this way was the single most important thing we did throughout the campaign.

Why We Succeeded

Clearly, a combination of factors, some of which we may not yet fully understand, contributed to this pivotal success. As mentioned before, the enemy overplayed its hand and the people were tired of al-Qaeda. A series of assassinations had elevated younger, more aggressive tribal leaders to positions of influence. A growing concern that the U.S. would leave Iraq and leave the Sunnis defenseless against al-Qaeda and Iranian-supported militias made these

younger leaders open to our overtures. Our willingness to adapt our plans based on the advice of the sheiks, our staunch and timely support for them in times of danger and need, and our ability to deliver on our promises convinced them that they could do business with us. Our forward presence kept them reassured. We operated aggressively across all lines of operation, kinetic and non-kinetic, to bring every weapon and asset at our disposal to bear against the enemy. We conducted detailed intelligence fusion and targeting meetings and operated seamlessly with special operations forces, aviation, close air support, and riverine units. We have now seen this model followed by other BCTs in other parts of Iraq, and it has proved effective. Indeed, the level of sophistication has only improved since the Ready First departed in February 2007. Although, perhaps groundbreaking at the time, most of our tactics, techniques, and procedures are now familiar to any unit operating in Iraq today.

The most enduring lessons of Ramadi are ones that are most easily lost in technical and tactical discussions, the least tangible ones. The most important lessons we learned were:

- Accept risk in order to achieve results. Once you gain the initiative, never give the enemy respite or refuge.
- Never stop looking for another way to attack the enemy.
- The tribes represent the people of Iraq, and the populace represents the "key terrain" of the conflict. The force that supports the population by taking the moral high ground has as sure an advantage in COIN as a maneuver commander who occupies dominant terrain in a conventional battle.
- No matter how imperfect the tribal system appeared to us, it was capable of providing social order and control through culturally appropriate means where governmental control was weak.

Conclusion

The men assigned and attached to the Ready First paid a terrible price for securing Ramadi. In nine months, 85 of our soldiers, sailors, and Marines were killed, and over 500 wounded in some of the toughest fighting of the war. Only the remarkable results they achieved, and the liberated citizens of Ramadi who can now walk the streets without fear, temper the grief caused by their sacrifice. It is gratifying to see our model adapted and used elsewhere in the war on terror. It proves once again that America's Army is truly a learning organization. In the end, probably the most important lesson we learned in Ramadi was that, as General Petraeus said, "Hard is not hopeless."

Notes

Military Review, March-April 2008, 41-52. Reprinted by permission.

1. Frederick W. Kagan, "The Gettysburg of This War," *National Review*, 3 September 2007.
2. Megan K. Stack and Louise Roug, "Fear of Big Battle Panics Iraqi City," *Los Angeles Times,* 11 June 2006.
3. For the purposes of this essay, the multiple insurgent groups are broken into two main categories: former regime elements (FRE), consisting of former Ba'athists and other nationalists, and al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQIZ), consisting of Islamic fundamentalist insurgent groups.
4. The "How to Win in al-Anbar" presentation became famous quickly, even gaining mention on several news talk shows. It can be downloaded at <http://abcnews.go.com/images/us/how_to_win_in_anbar_v4 .pdf>.
5. Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2000).

About the Authors

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Colonel Sean B. MacFarland, USA, has been promoted to brigadier general since publication of this article and is now commander of Joint Task Force North. From 2005 to 2006, he was commander of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.

Ramadi: From the Caliphate to Capitalism

by Andrew Lubin
U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, April 2008

By the summer of 2006 the Bush administration and many of the generals fighting the war in Iraq considered the city of Ramadi a lost cause. The terrorist organization al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) had announced that Ramadi was now the capital of their new caliphate, an Islamic state in which a single ruler exercises both civil and religious power; the Marines stationed in the government center, in the middle of the city, were under fire day and night; the Army stayed in bases on the outskirts of the city. In August, the Marines' in-country intelligence chief, Colonel Pete Devlin, delivered a bleak-and highly classified-assessment of the city and surrounding al-Anbar Province that shocked the administration, Congress, and the American public when it was leaked to the *Washington Post's* Thomas E. Ricks.

Devlin, Ricks wrote, had recently filed "an unusual secret report concluding that the prospects for securing that country's western al-Anbar Province are dim and that there is almost nothing the U.S. military can do to improve the political and social situation there."

Americans had grown to know Ramadi from stories of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) ripping through unarmored humvees, or Marine patrols being attacked only a few dozen yards outside outposts with names like Snake Pit. In August 2006, the month that Colonel Devlin completed his report, 33 Marines and soldiers were killed in action in and around Ramadi. The successes and euphoria enjoyed by the politicians and the American people in the afterglow of the quick and successful March 2003 invasion had long since been replaced by the growing killed in-action reports from the daily fighting in Ramadi, Fallujah, and other cities in al-Anbar Province.

As the casualty count mounted, the situation grew worse, and in November the *Post* followed up with another article, by Ricks and Dafna Linzer, which said the Devlin report had been updated to say:

"The U.S. military is no longer able to defeat a bloody insurgency in western Iraq or counter al-Qaeda's rising popularity there." The story went on to quote a senior U.S. intelligence official as saying that, as of mid-November, "the problems in troubled Anbar Province have not improved."

But unknown to few outside of al-Anbar, the situation on the ground was already changing. Although the improvements would not become apparent until April-May 2007, by early September 2007, only 10 months after the *Post's* despairing report, the Ramadi City Council sponsored a 5K race that attracted some 120 competitors and live television coverage from Baghdad. Currently, salaries have increased almost 40 percent due to the recent construction boom; Ramadi's mayor, Latif Obaid, with a full year in office, has sponsored three well-attended business development councils; and in January 2008 the Marines approved patrolling without wearing flak jackets and Kevlar helmets.

This is a turnaround of historic proportions.

Soldier, Marine, Sheikh

The peace and prosperity enjoyed in Ramadi today was earned primarily by the leadership and initiative shown in the 2006-2007 time period by three men: Colonel Sean MacFarland of the Army's 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 1st Armored Division, known as "The Ready First," Lieutenant Colonel William Jurney of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines (1/6), and Sheikh Sattar Abdul Abu Risha and his Sons of Anbar, the first organized group of Iraqis to turn on AQI.

In 2006, the Army was fighting to control the Shia areas in Iraq, and the Marine Corps was given responsibility for al-Anbar Province. Major General (now Lieutenant General) Richard Zilmer arrived in June to take command of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) (Fwd) and began to develop the strategy to secure Ramadi.

"Ramadi was the missing key to Anbar Province," Zilmer said in a January 2008 interview with

Proceedings, "but we needed to stabilize the security situation first."

But Ramadi needed more than security if it were to again be thought of as viable city. There were no basic services. Two years of constant IED blasts, 70-ton M1 Abrams tanks barreling through the streets, and Marine counterattacks had left the city devastated. Raw sewage ran down the streets from shattered pipes. There was little to no city-supplied electrical power. Shops and other businesses had long ceased to open, and the school system had collapsed. Those citizens who had not fled the city huddled in their homes as Marines and insurgents fought through the streets day and night.

With General Zilmer responsible for all of al-Anbar Province, responsibility for gaining control of Ramadi fell to Colonel MacFarland of the "Ready First" as it assumed area responsibility in early June 2006.

The situation was grim; the Army had control of the outskirts of the city through its "bookend" camps to the west and east (Camp Ramadi and Camp Corregidor). A tank company operated in the southern part of Ramadi, and the 3d Battalion, 8th Marines (3/8) under Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Neary were based at Camp Hurricane Point, in the far western end of the city. Neary had established three tenuous outposts within the city limits; one at the Government Center, another in the Iraqi veterans affairs building known as OP VA, and the third, OP Hawk, close to the Government Center.

"2006 needed to be the Year of the Iraqi police (IP)," Zilmer said. "We needed to build up their army and police so that governance could follow." But for this to occur, the local Iraqis had to be convinced that the Americans would stay and fight—just as the Americans needed to be convinced that the Iraqis would stand and fight with them.

Enter Sheikh Sattar Abdul Abu Risha.

Sattar Delivers

Shortly after the "Ready First" arrived in June 2006, Lieutenant Colonel Tony Deane, commander of Task Force 1-35 Armor, approached Sattar to recruit his tribesmen to the police force.

To accomplish this, Colonel MacFarland's deputy, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Lechner, and his police implementation officer, Marine Major Teddy Gates, decided to change the location for IP recruiting. They wanted a more secure location close to Sattar's house, as this would enable them to build a police station north of the Euphrates River in an area where many potential recruits lived.

Having already had his father and three brothers killed by AQI, Sattar liked the idea, and the Iraqi response was overwhelming at the next week's recruiting drive. Sattar promised even more recruits for August, and with AQI's help, he delivered.

In August, the new Jazeera police station north of the river, manned mostly by Abu Ali Jassim tribe members, was attacked and the sheikh of the tribe killed. AQI then hid the sheikh's body so it was not found for several days, a gross violation of Islam's strict burial rules that call for interment within 24 hours.

The attack on the station killed several Iraqi police and also caused a number of burn casualties. MacFarland offered the police evacuation to Camp Blue Diamond, an American Army camp outside of Ramadi, while they repaired the station, but the Iraqis refused to abandon their post. Instead, in a scene reminiscent of Iwo Jima, they put their flag back up, and began patrolling again that same day.

With the locals outraged by AQI's disregard of Islamic funeral laws, the charismatic Sheikh Sattar stepped forward to continue the push toward working with the Americans. He began as the spokesman for what is now known as the Anbar Awakening movement, and soon became the leader. McFarland attended the meeting when the sheikhs officially began the Awakening, and the next week he and they agreed to a list of principles and requirements.

McFarland later said, "I told them that I now knew what it was like to be in Independence Hall on 4 July 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was signed."

Keeping Pressure on AQI

Three weeks later, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines (1/6) relieved 3/8. Its mission: "Provide security and stability for Ramadi, working with and through the Iraqi Army (IA)."

The battalion moved into the camp on the western end of Ramadi known as Hurricane Point and immediately began to plan its advance into the city. "We

were told to expand our permanent presence with the Iraqi security forces" (ISF), said Lieutenant Colonel Jurney, the CO, "and so we began conducting some pretty serious offensive ops within the first 30 days."

Initially Jurney and 1/6 were on their own in West Ramadi, although they had theoretical support from an Iraqi Army battalion that in reality was not able to fight. Jurney saw the need to fight aggressively, and he pushed his companies out into the city quickly.

"I tried to give my battalion commanders a clear intent for their role in the Brigade's fight, provide them with the resources they need to execute, and let them fight their fight as they see it," explained MacFarland.

Jurney quickly dispatched his companies into the city. Alpha Company under Captain Stephen Sloan took over OP VA. Captain Jason Arthaud, Bravo Company, pushed out to the Government Center, and Charlie Company, Captain Jody White, ran OP Hawk. Captain Todd Mahar's Weapons Company escorted convoys around the city, conducted mobile patrols, and provided the heavy quick reaction force presence.

Additionally, MacFarland provided Navy SEALs and Seabees, Army scouts, civil affairs, and PSYOPS teams, UAVs, engineers, artillery, and attack helicopters as needed. He also stationed a tank platoon at Hurricane Point to support the Marines. Based on reports from his field commanders, the colonel adjusted his forces to maintain maximum pressure on the enemy at all times.

"We pushed our Marines into the most heavily contested areas," said Jurney, the 1/6 battalion commander, "where AQI ruled primarily by murder and intimidation."

Jurney ordered regular patrolling, enhancing security street by street. His Marines also supplied generators, other equipment, medical assistance, and a variety of services that elevated living conditions for Ramadi's citizens.

Night Calls

Knocking unbidden on the doors of residents after midnight, a practice known as "night calls," resulted in intelligence about the workings of the neighborhood that had the collateral benefit of helping the Marines distinguish between friend and foe. Captain Sloan's troops would depart OP VA through the twisted wires, trash, and IED craters to knock on doors at 0100 or later. If not fighting, Second Lieutenant Micah Steinpfad would drink chai with the head of the household as he inquired about family, schooling, employment (or lack of), and other demographic questions so Marines could build a database of local knowledge for each street.

Simultaneously, the company corpsman, Chris "Doc" Anderson, would be treating children who needed basic medical aid. Returning to base at about 0400, the teams would often hear gunfire and IED blasts from other sections of the city where Marine patrols were engaged in nocturnal firefights.

Lieutenant Colonel Jurney took the concept of "clear-hold-build" and refined it: he believed all three activities needed to be conducted concurrently. There were kinetic and non-kinetic operations done simultaneously, but in different parts of the city, and to different degrees.

Part of the non-kinetic operations was Voice of Ramadi, a radio broadcast to the citizens via huge loudspeakers from the top of the Government Center, and other newly established strong points. The brainchild of Major Tiley Nunnick, the Information Officer, the goal was to communicate news and events to the local population.

"Your brave Iraqi police stopped a suicide bomber this morning" the citizens were told, or "750 more of your loyal Sons of Anbar have signed up as Iraqi police in order to protect their homes and families."

Voice of Ramadi broadcast at set times each day, like the prayers chanted from the mosques. Led by Majors Nunnick and Daniel Zappa, Lieutenant Colonel Jurney's executive officer, 1/6 formed a working group that developed these culturally effective messages. In an unusual move, Jurney and Zappa installed their lead interpreter as a special adviser, his knowledge and familiarity with the local culture and religion playing a big part in the communications operation.

In addition, the district police chiefs, Mayor Latif, and Anbar's governor, Ma-moun Sami Rashid al Alwani, all took part in bringing public service messages and updates to the people. Their messages had to do with security and improving critical services as redevelopment projects got underway.

Working Together

As the Marines struggled to win the battle in the

streets, Jurney and MacFarland fought to prevail on a governmental and tribal level. Governor Ma-moun shuttled between his office at the Government Center and the Ministry of the Interior in Baghdad pleading for funds to pay the police and other city workers. His knowledge of the local political scene proved invaluable to the Marines of 1/6; one day he brought Jurney a list of 120 names of Sunnis volunteering to join the police force—all of whom withstood a security check.

Jurney and MacFarland also worked with Sheikh Sattar in planning each new outpost. They would build one in a day, then assign both Marines and Iraqi troops to operate from it. After the surrounding area was secured, they would construct another one several hundred yards away.

While the Marines of 3/8 had labored mightily to train the Iraqi Army battalion prior to the arrival of 1/6, it finally achieved acceptable combat readiness when Jurney and McFarland started co-locating Marines and Iraqi units. Previously, the IA rotated companies in and out of the fight for leave, but this was changed to platoon rotations so that companies could permanently partner with the Marines and own the same battlespace.

Captain Patriquin

MacFarland and his civil affairs officer, Captain Travis Patriquin, met regularly with Sheikh Sattar, and the relationship developed into an essential ingredient in successfully engaging the locals.

Patriquin was a former Special Forces officer who spoke passable Arabic. Smart and highly personable, he accompanied McFarland to his meetings with Sattar. He became personally close to the sheikh and his family, who soon "adopted" him, and gave him the honorary tribal name Hisham Abu Resha (Patrick of Abu Resha). When Patriquin learned of medical problems or other local needs, he told MacFarland's staff, which quickly responded, further improving relations.

MacFarland, Patriquin, and Sheikh Sattar huddled regularly to discuss ways to persuade tribesmen to join the Iraqi security forces, to induce more tribes into the Awakening movement, to bring a functional government back to Ramadi, and to rebuild the city. "It was a partnership built on mutual respect" said MacFarland "and neither of us (he or Patriquin) ever made a commitment that we did not honor"

"Patriquin was one more very good reason for the sheikhs to trust us," McFarland explained.

The captain's death from an IED blast in December 2006 was a huge blow to the sheikhs, who turned out in force for his memorial service and often became teary eyed when speaking of him afterward. They named a police station in his honor.

But at this point Jurney's Marines were still going door-to-door, providing the muscle that gave Sattar the "face" he needed when talking with the other sheiks. The fighting inside the city remained ferocious; on this author's first night at Hurricane Point, in October 2006, four Marines at OP Hawk were killed when their humvee was IED'd, and a month later Doc Anderson and Captain Patriquin were lost. The Marine KIA [Killed in Action] and WIA [Wounded in Action] toll continued to mount.

Seizing the Security Station

The first major Marine offensive was seizing the 17th Street Security Station, which they did in mid-October. Taking control of this three-story building signaled both the locals and AQI that the Marines were serious about reclaiming the city. Sloan's Alpha Company Marines were moved from OP VA into the security station, and it became the first joint Marine-Iraqi outpost in the city.

Meanwhile, AQI's campaign of terror had not abated. Beheadings of adults and teens continued. Smokers had their fingers cut off.

Now, though, Marines, Iraqi Army troops, and police were patrolling together three times a day. They went street by street, knocking on doors, meeting the residents, opening two schools, fighting if necessary. The continuous on-the-ground presence of the Marines gave the locals the courage to stand up to AQI.

The break came when the Abu Alwani tribe "flipped," meaning they switched their loyalties and began working with the Marines. The tribe lived in West Ramadi, where Jurney's Marines first began patrolling, and were convinced by Governor Mamoun, a fellow Alwani tribesman, to build a police station in their section of the city.

The station was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Salaam al-Dalaimi, a dynamic Iraqi officer who aggressively began clearing AQI out of the area. But AQI

went after him equally aggressively, murdering him in his home using a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBID). His deputy, however, quickly stepped up and followed Salaam's lead. The West Ramadi police station became even more active in working with the Marines to rid their part of the city of AQI. Salaam became a police hero, a martyr, and his picture still adorns every police building in the city today.

The Marine-Army-Tribal alliance was successful: The Abu Alwanis flipped because the governor and Sattar convinced them to do so—and was himself convinced by MacFarland, Patriquin, and the courage of Jurney's Marines.

City Coming Back to Life

In January 2007, Governor Mamoun appointed a mayor, Latif Obaid. Protected by Jurney's Marines, Mayor Latif vigorously and visibly promoted stability, and began appointing fellow businessmen to an increasingly active city council. Working with civil affairs Marine Major Scott Kish and Gunnery Sergeant Matthew Knight, the mayor also pressed for the repair of sewage pipes, the resumption of trash collection, the removal of burned-out cars from the streets, and other basic services—and he did it by hiring the locals and paying them in cash. These were the first jobs available in Ramadi since 2004, and were much sought-after.

The improved security situation enabled Latif and the Americans to rebuild and improve other municipal services; electricity reached more parts of the city for more hours each day, houses and neighborhoods had clean water, and the oddly named Route Michigan, the main road through the city, had the concrete blast barriers removed as traffic volume increased to pre-war levels.

While Jurney's Marines were extended for three months, MacFarland and the "Ready First" returned to Germany. Colonel John Charlton and the Army's 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3d Infantry Division, replaced them in February 2007. Charlton continued MacFarland and Jurney's tactics. With Jurney's Marines continuing to clear street-by-street, Charlton's troops assisted by manning the newly opened joint security stations where Americans and Iraqis lived and worked side by side.

As the violence of winter 2007 eased, and spring and summer arrived, the combined concept of security = jobs = more security = more jobs took hold and the locals joined the Iraqi police by the thousands to continue to drive out AQI. Gunny Knight's initial clean-up program grew as the locals, with Marine and Army managerial assistance, rebuilt the streets, the buildings, and reopened the hundreds of small businesses and markets that are the hallmarks of a prosperous city.

Even the September 13 assassination of Sheikh Sattar did not break the momentum towards stability and peace. Shortly after Sattar was photographed at al Asad air base with President George W. Bush, AQI suicide bombers attacked him at his home during the opening days of Ramadan, killing him and his guards. But his brother, Sheikh Ahmed Abu Risha, promptly took charge of the Anbar Awakening Movement. Unusual in the Middle East, where loyalty normally goes to the man and not the institution, Sheikh Ahmed was successful in maintaining Ramadi's charge toward reconstruction and governance.

As of 15 February 2008, with police intelligence becoming more effective daily, Ramadi has not had a gun fired in anger in 262 days, and the few IED incidents that occur do so outside the city.

The city of Ramadi today is a work in progress in a country undergoing a transition from a government-managed petroleum dictatorship to a free-market democracy. Thanks to Jurney, MacFarland, and the late Sheikh Sattar, Ramadi's citizens, 99 percent of them Sunni, finally understand that their survival depends on banding together against AQI and their historic Shia enemies. These three men built the base that enabled Charlton and Latif to continue reconstruction efforts—all of which gave the citizens of Ramadi the courage, and the opportunity—to stand up for themselves.

Notes

U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, April 2008, 54-61. Reprinted by permission. Copyright © 2008 by U.S. Naval Institute (www.usni.org).

About the Author

Andrew Lubin is a journalist and a member of the USMC Combat Correspondents Association. Between 2006 and 2008, he has been imbedded with Marine and Army units in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Daily Diary of an al-Qaeda Sector Leader

by Abu-Tariq
Diary captured and transcribed by United States Forces-Iraq

Editor's Note

On 3 November 2007, soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team captured the diary of an Iraqi named Abu-Tariq. This is an unclassified, full translation of the diary with names redacted. Abu-Tariq was an al-Qaeda emir in control of five battalions within two sectors.

Soldiers found the diary during a patrol conducted about 15 kilometers south of Balad. It gives a strong indication of how the tide had turned against al-Qaeda in Iraq as the Awakening movement grew. As Abu-Tariq noted in his first entry, he at one time commanded more than 600 men before the impact of the Awakening movement took root, ultimately leaving him with a roster of 38 men he listed at the end of the diary, many of whom were unavailable for duty.

In the Name of Allah the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate.
Date:Third of Shawaal of 1428 Hijri (H)
[Gregorian: 15 October 2007]

This is My Will:

I am Abu-Tariq, emir [leader] of al-Layin and al-Mashahdah Sector. There were almost 600 fighters in our sector before the tribes changed course 360 degrees under the influence of the so-called Islamic Army (Deserter of Jihad) and other believer groups.

Many of our fighters quit and some of them joined the deserters, and later on I will mention the names of fighters who stood by us (faithful fighters), but things started getting worse ever since, and as a result of that the number of fighters dropped down to 20 or less which led us to move some of our vehicles to another location (al-Muthanna establishment area) for security reasons where our brother [NAME REDACTED] is stationed at (I will also mention the type vehicles at the end.)

There are many details known by brothers [NAMES REDACTED] and [NAME REDACTED] regarding the spoils, buying and selling vehicles such as:

1-Lorry (6-wheeled) in Mosul sold later and we received some of the money for it.

2-[NAME REDACTED] still owes us [$10,000] which is the remainder of the money that is still with them after they sold two Lorries for us at the car dealerships in the al-Saqlawiyah area which we have not received yet. We gave him our business and received [$10,000] from him as a down-payment but he still owes us another [$10,000], and later we gave him [$28,000] to get the Lorry back, but he did not return it yet. (The actual owner of the dealership is [NAME REDACTED].)

3-The value of another Lorry is [$25,000] is still in the possession of a person in Tikrit known by brother [NAME REDACTED]

4-We bought a pickup model 2000 from a person called [NAME REDACTED] (his phone number is [NUMBER REDACTED]) of which he did not pay its value yet, and the deal was to trade in this vehicle with a truck or pay its value in al-Shirqat at al-Nahar dealership close to the house of brother [NAME REDACTED] (killed) and the price of the pickup is [$7,500].

Date: 9-10 of Shawaal of 1428 H
[Gregorian: 21-22 October 2007]

A BKC [7.62mm machine gun], ammunition and other light weapons are still in the possession of [NAME REDACTED] and his brother [NAME REDACTED] which belong to us and brother [NAME REDACTED] knows about that, and the weapons that are in the possession of [NAME REDACTED] are 2,000 C5 Rockets plus an RPG-9 but he refuses to give us any of it lately and we do not know what is his intention is in that regard, therefore, we have to keep trying with him to get our weapons and ammunition back due to the present condition and especially since the al-Sahwah [Awakening] groups started opposing us.

Weapons and ammunition such as 30 containers of bullets and four BKCs in the possession of brother [NAME REDACTED] also belong to us.

Brothers, I want you to know that I will only mention the names of fighters who were faithful to our cause and stood by us when we needed them, and later I will mention the names of the traitors so that they may be punished when time comes.

Date: 12 of Shawaal of 1428 H
[Gregorian: 24 October 2007]

There are very few tribe members who stood by us and supported us, such as members of [NAME REDACTED] tribe that were surrounded by al-Sahwah [Awakening] fighters and even though they did not quit plus members of [NAME REDACTED] and [NAME REDACTED] sub-tribe members. After the raid that we did against the houses and safe heavens of the deserters, which led to killing and injuring a lot of them, burning some of their vehicles, and spoiling some of their vehicles and weapons, which affected their morale and resources tremendously, knowing that the number of fighters who did the raid and not 150 fighters as they claimed after that.

Date: 16 of Shawaal of 1428 H
[Gregorian: 28 Oct 2007]

My request to you is not to be negligent with the deserters/traitors at all, because

those kinds of people look like the cancer that grew up in the body of al-Jihad movement, therefore, we should have no mercy on them even if they joined the Iraqi government security forces and do not let them have any sense of relief despite the fact that some of them ran away from our strong hand to unknown locations with their families. Even though our Jihadi movement goals at the early stages were to recruit as many as possible of the government employees in order to have access, sources and supporters among them in order to gain more information about the government security forces and the infidel's military and tactical movements in order to ease our movements and missions against them despite the fact that I was against such goals for security reasons. Dear brothers, I would like you to know that even though the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) achieved a lot of projects for the benefit of the people of Iraq such as bringing water, electricity and agricultural help to a lot of areas such as [NAME REDACTED] we were mistreated, cheated, and betrayed by some of our brothers who used to be part of the Jihadi Movement, therefore we must not have mercy on those traitors until they come back to the right side—The ISI side—or get eliminated completely in order to achieve victory at the end. And I would like to mention here the name of one of [the] families [sub-tribe] who betrayed us and lost our trust is the [NAME REDACTED] family who were very good, faithful Jihadi fighters, but later on we found out that these people were nothing but hypocrites, liars, and traitors and were waiting for the right moment to switch sides with whoever pays them most and at the end they fought against us and they tried to prevent us from attacking the *al-Sahwah* [Awakening] groups blocking our entrance to that area.

Information about the old battalion of fighters in my sector:

1-Battalion of Laylat al-Qadr Martyrs [Laylat al-Qadr is the 27th Night of Ramadan]: Its group emir called [NAME REDACTED] (detained), and the number of fighters in this battalion were 200. All of them were very well equipped with weapons and 37 vehicles, and they did a lot of good activities against the invaders and its followers, but in the meantime, there are few fighters left who are actually fighting, and some were killed and some arrested, but the majority betrayed us and joined al-Sahwah [Awakening]. This battalion was one of the first battalions whose numbers of fighters was tarnished after Abu-Haydar al-Ansari Battalion, and the number of fighters is now only 10.

2-Battalion of Abu-Haydar al-Ansari: The emir of this battalion [NAME REDACTED] was the first renegade in this group. He ran away one month before the al-Sahwah [Awakening] movement started in our sector, and we still do not know where he is hiding. It is no wonder that most of the information we got from him was deception and lies. There were 300 fighters in the battalion equipped with good weapons and 17 vehicles, and since [the Emir] deserted us, the number of fighters dropped down to 16 and then to two; one of whom was arrested [NAME REDACTED], and the second one was injured [NAME REDACTED], and the rest joined the al-Sahwah [Awakening] groups.

3-Battalion of Hudhayfah Ibin al-Yaman: The Emir of this battalion is [NAME REDACTED], and the number of fighters are almost 60. They are very well equipped with weapons and other supplies. All of them are true and good believers, plus their activities against the invaders and their followers were very good, but for the present time, their activities are frozen due to their present conditions plus their families' conditions.

4-Battalion of al-Ahwal: Most of its members are scoundrels, sectarians, non-believers, and the worst one of them was [NAME REDACTED], and he was the first one to desert his battalion and ran away to Syria, then later on came back from Syria and joined the traitors, while the rest of the battalion was gone except for [NAME REDACTED] and his sons, and the military person who was in charge of the battalion, his name is [NAME

REDACTED] (bad not good), and he still has in his possession three BKCs and two sniper rifles, and he claims that one of those rifles was given back to its original owner [NAME REDACTED]. (I will try to take back the rest of the weapons from him soon, and I will mention that later.)

5-Battalion of Muhammed Bin Muslimah: The leader of this battalion was the martyr [NAME REDACTED] who was killed by the traitors of the Islamic Army with help of the invaders' helicopters, which also led to the destruction of some of our vehicles and weapons. Some of the fighters of this battalion deserted, and especially the ones who came from [NAME REDACTED] tribe like the traitor [NAME REDACTED], who became an officer with the al-Sahwah [Awakening] group, plus others who ran away with their weapons to Diyala and then disappeared, like [NAME REDACTED] who has in his possession a sniper rifle, and his brothers, except for one [NAME REDACTED] who was injured with [NAME REDACTED] who possesses a BKC.

Technical Department:

Members of this department are [NAME REDACTED] and his sons, who are still working with us, plus [NAME REDACTED], who was injured recently.

Air Defense:

One person left in this department who is still working with us [NAME REDACTED], who is willing to work with us to the end, and he has in his possession three operative batteries (one inoperative), plus eight C5 launchers and one 23mm gun.

Names of people who are still working with al-Qaeda:

[NAME REDACTED]
[NAME REDACTED] and his brothers
[NAME REDACTED] and his brothers
[NAME REDACTED]
[NAME REDACTED]
[NAME REDACTED]

their area. So far and we have no further information about the situation over there.

Notes

Reprinted from an unclassified translation posted by Multi National Force-Iraq (now United States Force-Iraq) on 10 February 2008 (http://www.usf-iraq.com/?option=com_content&task=view&id =16935&Itemid =128).

About the Author

Abu-Tariq was an emir (leader) of al-Qaeda in Iraq fighters in the al-Layin and al-Mashahdah sector at the time his diary was captured in the fall of 2007.

Part V: Stability, Progress, and the Future

As U.S. Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker told journalist Thomas E. Ricks for a piece published in February 2009, "What the world ultimately thinks about us and what we think about ourselves is going to be determined much more by what happens from now on than what's happened up to now."[1] As of this writing, Iraq is a much more stable and secure country than it was in 2004. However, sectarian tensions remain, and there is doubt about whether or not Iraq can remain stable without the presence of substantial U.S. forces The following selections present an overview of the questions and problems that Iraq will face in the future, as well as the concerns many observers feel about the consequences of the surge and al-Anbar Awakening. Timothy Williams's piece from *The New York Times* considers the sense of optimism that pervaded much of western Iraq as Marines withdrew from Camp Fallujah in the fall of 2008. Steve Simon's article presents a warning against too much optimism, however, noting that the Awakening strategy may have been successful for the short term, but that it has strengthened forces that could undermine the cohesion of the Iraqi state in the long term. In response, Colin H. Kahl and William E. Odom argue that Simon's assessment is too pessimistic and that the Awakening presents a foundation from which more can be done to strengthen the Iraqi state.

1. Quoted by Ricks in "The war in Iraq isn't over. The main events may not even have happened yet," *Washington Post*, 15 February 2009.

American Exit Increases Optimism in Falluja

by Timothy Williams
New York Times, 30 December 2008

Falluja, Iraq—In Falluja, a town that rises abruptly out of the vast Syrian Desert an hour west of Baghdad, nearly every building left standing has some sort of hole in it.

Mosques are without their minarets. Apartment walls have been peeled away by artillery shells. A family's kitchen is full of tiny holes made by a fragmentary grenade.

Of all the places fighting has raged since the American invasion nearly six years ago, Falluja—the site of two major battles and the town where American security contractors were killed and their bodies hung from a local bridge—stands out as one of the bloodiest and most intractable.

This month, as the last American Marines prepare to leave Camp Falluja, the sprawling base a few miles outside of town where many of the American troops who fought the two battles were stationed, Falluja has come to represent something unexpected: the hope that an Iraqi town once at the heart of the insurgency can become a model for peace without the United States military.

As part of the reduction of United States troops from Iraq, by Thursday there will be few Marines left in or around this mostly Sunni city of about 300,000 people. The closing of Camp Falluja is one of the most prominent symbols yet that America's presence in the country, which at times had seemed all encompassing, is diminishing.

As recently as a year ago, the base closing was cause for alarm. The calm that seemed to have taken hold here was fragile enough that both Iraqi and American officials feared the potential consequences of the Marines' departure.

Today they look forward to it.

"That will make our job easier," said Colonel

Dowad Muhammad Suliyman, commander of the Falluja Police Department. "The existence of the American forces is an excuse for the insurgents to attack. They consider us spies for the Americans."

To be sure, the threat of violence has not vanished. But the police said they were proud that a place that suffered a major attack a week just a few years ago had had only two in the last six months.

The view that the town is better off taking care of itself was echoed by residents, even in the neighborhood hit by the most recent big attack, in early December, when suicide truck bombers linked to al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia killed 19 people, wounded dozens of others and leveled nine houses and two police stations.

"Our sons will take care of the security issue," said Khalil Abrahim, 50, a resident of the neighborhood, as he walked over the rubble of his house, wondering aloud how he could afford to rebuild. "They can do a better job."

Camp Falluja will be handed over to the Iraqi Army, with most of its Marines relocated to Al Asad Air Base, about 90 miles to the west. A smaller contingent will remain at nearby Camp Baharia.

The move reflects the confidence of the American command that major violence will not return here.

"It won't happen again because the Iraqis don't want it to happen again," said Colonel George H. Bristol, the bald, heavily muscled commanding officer of the I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group at Camp Falluja.

"We've certainly turned a page," he said. "The conditions are now there where we can close it and turn it over to the people who fought beside us. It's a great thing. If you look at the city, it has really come to life."

The city, which had been emptied of much of its population before the second Battle of Falluja in November 2004, now bustles with people, its streets filled with honking cars inching their way to the Old Bridge that spans the placid, green Euphrates River.

In a small building at the foot of the bridge, freshly painted green, not far from where the bodies of two Blackwater security guards were hung, Falluja has established an Office of Citizen Complaints.

At the elementary school where in 2003 members of the 82d Airborne Division fired on protesters—some of whom may have been armed—killing 17 people, dozens of girls were at play during recess. A sign out front said the school was a voter registration center for the coming provincial elections.

Not far away, a restaurant named KFC—not affiliated with the American fast-food chain but adorned with unlicensed pictures of Colonel Sanders—sells a fried chicken lunch for about $3.50.

All around the city, people are rebuilding houses and clearing away rubble.

If a rocket-propelled grenade launcher symbolized Falluja during the height of the insurgency, its new symbol may well be the broom. They are sold in bunches at roadside markets and are in almost constant use by workers in bright orange jumpsuits trying to keep the town's narrow roads free of desert sand.

At Camp Falluja, Major James R. Gladden and Master Gunnery Sergeant Ray SiFuentes are overseeing the dismantling of a base that had once been home to 14,000 Marines and contractors.

The 2,000-acre post had its own fire department, water treatment plant, scrap yard, voter registration booth, ice-making factory, weather station, prison (for insurgents), beauty shop, power plant, Internet cafe, Turkish bazaar, and dog catcher.

Its chapel could fit 800 Marines for religious services, a Toby Keith concert, or a performance by the Philadelphia Eagles cheerleaders, all of which were held there.

"We had basically everything a small town had," said Major Gladden, 34, who is known by other Marines as the mayor of Camp Falluja. "Everything except fast-food outlets," he said, which were deemed too unhealthy.

There are only 200 Marines left now, and about 170 truckloads a day leave the base, most headed for other United States military installations.

Even the gaggle of geese from the camp's artificial pond, which some Marines had adopted as pets, has been taken away. One by one, they

were trapped and set loose at a larger pond at Camp Baharia.

A good deal of packing up involves making sure nothing is left behind that later could be used against American forces. Obsolete armor for trucks, ballistic glass plates for Humvees and concertina wire are cut to pieces. Thousands of mammoth concrete barriers are being trucked to other military bases.

Back in town, where residents have been required to be fingerprinted and to submit to iris scans, Hashim Harmoud, 69, a caretaker at a mosque that had been said to be a center for insurgent activity, said he was thankful for the city's newfound peace.

But as testament to the town's dual nature, he was hesitant to discuss an insurgency that could rise up again at a moment's notice. "Al-Qaeda?" he asked, a bit cagily. "I don't know anything about them. I go from the mosque to my house, and that's all."

Notes

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The Price of the Surge: How U.S. Strategy Is Hastening Iraq's Demise

by Steven N. Simon
Foreign Affairs, May-June 2008

In January 2007, President George W. Bush announced a new approach to the war in Iraq. At the time, sectarian and insurgent violence appeared to be spiraling out of control, and Democrats in Washington—newly in control of both houses of Congress—were demanding that the administration start winding down the war. Bush knew he needed to change course, but he refused to, as he put it, "give up the goal of winning." So rather than acquiesce to calls for withdrawal, he decided to ramp up U.S. efforts. With a "surge" in troops, a new emphasis on counterinsurgency strategy, and new commanders overseeing that strategy, Bush declared, the deteriorating situation could be turned around.

More than a year on, a growing conventional wisdom holds that the surge has paid off handsomely. U.S. casualties are down significantly from their peak in mid-2007, the level of violence in Iraq is lower than at any point since 2005, and Baghdad seems the safest it has been since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime five years ago. Some backers of the surge even argue that the Iraqi civil war is over and that victory on Washington's terms is in sight—so long as the United States has the will to see its current efforts through to their conclusion.

Unfortunately, such claims misconstrue the causes of the recent fall in violence and, more important, ignore a fatal flaw in the strategy. The surge has changed the situation not by itself but only in conjunction with several other developments: the grim successes of ethnic cleansing, the tactical quiescence of the Shiite militias, and a series of deals between U.S. forces and Sunni tribes that constitute a new bottom-up approach to pacifying Iraq. The problem is that this strategy to reduce violence is not linked to any sustainable plan for building a viable Iraqi state. If anything, it has made such an outcome less likely, by stoking the revanchist fantasies of Sunni Arab tribes and pitting them against the central government and against one another. In other words, the recent short-term gains have come at the expense of the long-term goal of a stable, unitary Iraq.

Despite the current lull in violence, Washington needs to shift from a unilateral bottom-up surge strategy to a policy that promotes, rather than undermines, Iraq's cohesion. That means establishing an effective multilateral process to spur top-down political reconciliation among the major Iraqi factions. And that, in turn, means stating firmly and clearly that most U.S. forces will be withdrawn from Iraq within two or three years. Otherwise, a strategy adopted for near-term advantage by a frustrated administration will only increase the likelihood of long-term debacle.

The Surge's False Start

After the February 2006 bombing of the Askariya shrine in Samarra, the White House started to become increasingly concerned that there were too few U.S. troops in Iraq. A network of retired army officers led by Jack Keane, a former vice chief of staff of the U.S. Army, had been pushing from the outside for an increase in forces, and Senators John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) kept up a drumbeat of criticism of what they saw as a lackluster military effort. The November 2006 congressional elections, which handed the House and the Senate to the Democrats, added to the sense that a new strategy was needed. In a December 2006 memo, Bush's national security adviser, Stephen Hadley, somewhat gingerly noted that the United States might "need to fill the current four-brigade gap in Baghdad with Coalition forces if reliable Iraqi forces are not identified."

On December 13, 2006, Bush met with the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon to persuade them to allocate more troops to Iraq. It was not an easy sell. U.S. ground forces are not configured to fight such

a long war, and the repeated deployment of the same active-duty and Reserve units had taken a toll. The reenlistment rate of young captains, for example, had fallen to an unprecedented low; about half of the West Point classes of 2000 and 2001 had decided against an Army career. The pace of unit rotations and the tempo of operations had also taken their toll on equipment, which was wearing out at nine times the normal rate, faster than it could be replaced. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff made clear his concern about the army being stretched too thin. A shortfall of 10,000 company-grade officers meant that the Reserve units would have to rob both people and materiel from other units. Meanwhile, the mounting expense of the war was crowding out the procurement of new combat systems for the Navy and the Air Force, and there was a growing risk that the military might find itself without the capacity to meet other strategic challenges, whether from Afghanistan, Iran, or elsewhere.

Bush tried to allay these worries, pledging to, among other things, increase the size of the U.S. Army and the Marine Corps and boost defense spending. But the Joint Chiefs also conditioned their reluctant support of the surge on a promise from the president to hold Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's feet to the fire on political reconciliation. So when Bush unveiled his surge strategy in January 2007 (the deployment of an additional 21,500 troops, through September, with the initial military objective of restoring order to Baghdad), the stated purpose was to ensure that "the [Iraqi] government will have the breathing space it needs to make progress in other critical areas. Most of Iraq's Sunni and Shi'a want to live together in peace—and reducing the violence in Baghdad will help make reconciliation possible." Bush quoted Maliki's promise that the Baghdad security plan would "not provide a safe haven for any outlaws, regardless of their sectarian or political affiliation."

Even then, however, the administration was already starting to doubt Maliki's competence and willingness to pursue reconciliation, the principal determinant of long-term stability in Iraq. Two months earlier, Hadley had visited Iraq to assess the prospects for a cross-sectarian political rapprochement and come away unsure of Maliki's stance. "Do we and Prime Minister Maliki," Hadley had wondered in his December 2006 memo, "share the same vision for Iraq? If so, is he able to curb those who seek Shi'a hegemony or the reassertion of Sunni power? The answers to these questions are key in determining whether we have the right strategy in Iraq." Hadley proposed several ways to test Maliki's intentions and bolster his resolve, including initiatives to rejigger parliamentary support to free Maliki from his Shiite base linked to Muqtada al-Sadr and enable him to take conciliatory steps toward the Sunnis. The United States, however, lacked the influence necessary to put this approach into practice. Before long, events in Iraq revealed the answers to Hadley's questions: in both cases, a resounding no.

The deployment of the five new brigades proceeded more or less as planned, but from the start there was little headway made toward the broader goals of the surge, particularly reconciliation, as measured by the Iraqi government's inability to meet key benchmarks. The Constitutional Review Committee, which was charged with redressing Sunni grievances, made little progress, and there was no progress on de-Baathification reform, amnesty, provincial elections, or the implementation of oil legislation. The Sunni Iraqi Accordance Front had walked away from Maliki's cabinet, and Bush's reportedly regular calls to Maliki urging him to mobilize his government were ineffective. The Iraqi committees created to support the Baghdad security plan were left unfilled, and the three Iraqi brigades needed to help implement it arrived late and understrength. Diplomatic efforts to get Iraq's neighbors involved fizzled.

From Top Down To Bottom Up

The president's hopes for the top-down political efforts that were supposed to accompany the surge quickly faded. As a substitute, however, a new bottom-up strategy was embraced. Bush had observed in his January surge speech that the Sunnis were challenging al-Qaeda's presence in Iraq, and a February 2007 National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq recommended "deputizing, resourcing, and working more directly with neighborhood watch groups and establishing grievance committees—to

help mend frayed relationships between tribal and religious groups, which have been mobilized into communal warfare over the past three years." A few months later, the president signaled a formal shift in strategy in a speech at the Naval War College: "To evaluate how life is improving for the Iraqis, we cannot look at the country only from the top down. We need to go beyond the Green Zone and look at Iraq from bottom up. This is where political reconciliation matters the most, because it is where ordinary Iraqis are deciding whether to support new Iraq or to sit on the fence, uncertain about the country's future." What the president was proposing was a shift in the U.S. approach to counterinsurgency. Now, the United States would work to exploit a grass-roots anti-al-Qaeda movement already under way by taking the pressure off the insurgents who had begun to point their weapons at the jihadists and funneling money to tribal leaders. In theory, this would help dismantle the jihadist infrastructure and create islands of stability that would eventually join up like "oil spots."

After the U.S. invasion, the Sunni groups that would go on to make up the insurgency arrived at a marriage of convenience with the foreign and local jihadists who made up al-Qaeda in Iraq. The two shared a common goal: to reverse the triumph of the Shiites and restore the Sunnis to their lost position of power. For the Sunni insurgents, the presence of foreign jihadists also helped divert the attention of U.S. forces. Up to a point, therefore, al-Qaeda's excesses—such as its attempt to impose strict Wahhabi-style rule by banning music and satellite dishes and compelling women to cover themselves entirely—were to be tolerated.

But for al-Qaeda, the link with the insurgents was supposed to serve two additional purposes that went well beyond the shared goal of chipping away at Shiite predominance—and ultimately went against the interests of the Iraqi Sunnis themselves. The first was to establish an al-Qaeda-dominated ministate as a base for carrying out jihad against enemies outside of Iraq. (The November 2005 attack against three Western tourist hotels in Amman, Jordan, allegedly ordered by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, then the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, was a harbinger of this wider strategy.) The second was to seize a leading position within the insurgency and thereby block a power-sharing arrangement between Baghdad and the Sunni nationalists, an arrangement that would entail the selling out of al-Qaeda by the Sunnis.

The Iraqi Sunnis' enthusiasm for the alliance waned as al-Qaeda increasingly attempted to assert its leadership. In October 2006, al-Qaeda declared the formation of an Islamic state in Iraq, demanding that Sunni insurgent leaders pledge allegiance to the new (and many believed fictional) jihadist commander Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, whose name was supposed to signify an authentically Iraqi origin. To the nationalist insurgents, accepting the declaration of a separate state and ceding leadership to al-Qaeda made little sense. Doing so would have fueled the process of decentralization, emboldened those Kurds and Shiites who sought their own fiefdoms, and, crucially, further distanced the Sunnis from eventual access to Iraq's potentially massive oil revenues. Moreover, despite the spectacular successes that had been attributed to al-Qaeda, it was the nationalist Sunnis who provided the backbone of the insurgency and had done most of the killing and dying.

Some tribes had also grown increasingly resentful of al-Qaeda's efforts to seize control of resources. The Albu Risha tribe, for example, had lost control over portions of the road from Baghdad to Amman, undermining its ability to raise revenue by taxing or extorting traders and travelers. When the Albu Rishas' leaders protested, the chieftain, Sheik Bazi al-Rishawi, was killed along with one of his sons, and two more of his sons were abducted. In response, Rishawi's fourth son, Sheik Abdul Sattar, assembled a small group of tribal figures (with the help of funds from the local U.S. military commander) under the banner of the Anbar Salvation Council to roll back al-Qaeda's influence. The bodies of al-Qaeda personnel soon began turning up in alleyways.

This strategic schism might have been papered over had the jihadists not overreacted to the opposition of other insurgent groups. In 2007, there was a wave of sensational killings of Sunni leaders by al-Qaeda, including Abdul Sattar (who had met with President Bush two weeks before his death). The assassinations of Sunni leaders warranted retaliation under the prevailing tribal code, opening the

door to more systematic cooperation between the tribes and U.S. forces. In the wake of Abdul Sattar's death, a Sunni leader complained that al-Qaeda's assassinations had "left resistance groups with two options: either to fight al-Qaeda and negotiate with the Americans or fight the Americans and join the Islamic State of Iraq, which divides Iraq. Both options are bitter." After their defeat in the battle of Baghdad—thanks to the entrenched power of Sadr's Shiite Mahdi Army and the arrival of additional U.S. troops—the Iraqi Sunnis went decisively with the first option, marking the start of the Sunni Awakening groups.

The United States, for its part, had its own incentive to cooperate with the insurgents: June 2007, with 126 troop deaths, was the second-worst month for the U.S. military in Iraq, and General David Petraeus, the U.S. ground commander, was facing pressure to reduce casualties quickly. The most efficient way to do so was to strike deals with the newly pliable insurgents.

The deals were mediated by tribal leaders and consisted of payments of $360 per month per combatant in exchange for allegiance and cooperation. Initially referred to by the United States as "concerned local citizens," the former insurgents are now known as the Sons of Iraq. The total number across Iraq is estimated at over 90,000. Although the insurgents turned allies generally come well armed, at least one unit leader, Abu al-Abd, commander of the Islamic Army in Iraq, who controls Sunni neighborhoods in Baghdad, has said that he receives weapons as well as logistical support from U.S. units. His arrangement is probably typical. In November 2007, he agreed to a three-month pact, open to extension.

This strategy has combined with other developments—especially the fact that so much ethnic cleansing has already occurred and that violence in civil wars tends to ebb and flow, as the contending sides work to consolidate gains and replenish losses—to bring about the current drop in violence. The Sunni sheiks, meanwhile, are getting rich from the surge. The United States has budgeted $150 million to pay Sunni tribal groups this year, and the sheiks take as much as 20 percent of every payment to a former insurgent—which means that commanding 200 fighters can be worth well over a hundred thousand dollars a year for a tribal chief. Although Washington hopes that Baghdad will eventually integrate most former insurgents into the Iraqi state security services, there are reasons to worry that the Sunni chiefs will not willingly give up what has become an extremely lucrative arrangement.

Tribal Realities

The surge may have brought transitory successes—although if the spate of attacks in February is any indication, the decrease in violence may already be over—but it has done so by stoking the three forces that have traditionally threatened the stability of Middle Eastern states: tribalism, warlordism, and sectarianism. States that have failed to control these forces have ultimately become ungovernable, and this is the fate for which the surge is preparing Iraq. A strategy intended to reduce casualties in the short term will ineluctably weaken the prospects for Iraq's cohesion over the long run.

Since the mid-19th century, ruling powers in the Middle East have slowly and haltingly labored to bring tribal populations into the fold, with mixed success. Where tribes and tribalism have remained powerful, the state has remained weak. The Ottomans attempted forced sedentarization of the tribes, weakening tribal authorities by disrupting settlement patterns and replacing tribal sheiks with smaller cadres of favored leaders who became conduits for patronage. The colonial powers after World War I faced a different problem: the threat of nationalist urban elites opposed to foreign rule. In an effort to counter defiant urban leaders, they empowered rural tribes on the periphery. In Iraq, the British armed the tribes so that the sheiks could maintain order in the countryside and balance the capabilities of the nominal local governments operating under League of Nations mandates. Thus, the tribal system that Ottoman rule sought to dismantle was revitalized by British imperial policy, and the power of the nominal Iraqi government was systematically vitiated. In 1933, Iraq's King Faisal lamented, "In this kingdom, there are more than 100,000 rifles, whereas the government has only 15,000."

The tribes lost some power over the subsequent decades. This was in part a result of increasing direct British involvement in activities such as law enforcement, land tenure, and water distribution and in part a result of urbanization: as Iraqis moved from the country to the city, their affiliations shifted from the tribe to urban institutions—principally the trade union and the mosque—even as they held on to tribal symbols. When the Baathists took power in 1968, they explicitly rejected "religious sectarianism, racism, and tribalism . . . the remnants of colonialism." The tribes, in their minds, were inevitable rivals of a centralizing state. But after taking control in a coup in 1979, Saddam leaned on his own Sunni tribal networks to staff his security services, army leadership, and bureaucracy, while suppressing other tribal life. He tried to rein in tribes by dispersing Baathist apparatchiks throughout the hinterland, but he nonetheless came to rely on the tribal system as a whole to make up for the shortcomings of the state as times became harder.

During the Iran-Iraq War, Saddam used Shiite tribes to defend regions near the Iranian border, and elsewhere tribal leaders regained some of their traditional authority as the war forced the redeployment of Baathist officials to the front. Amid the hardships created by the conflict, the flow of resources from the center shrank, leading to greater self-reliance in tribal areas and the renewed importance of tribal leaders. The Gulf War, and the grinding international sanctions that followed, accelerated these trends. In 1996, a high council of tribal chiefs was established and was granted political privilege, weapons, and land. Selected tribal leaders were allowed to enrich themselves by any means, fair or foul, and in return they were expected to defend the regime. Saddam, in effect, fostered a process of retribalization in Iraq.

Iraq's Arab neighbors, particularly Jordan and Saudi Arabia, provide a counterexample. They won enduring stability by corralling the tribes through a combination of reward and punishment. In Transjordan, King Abdullah I and the British—helped by famine and the effects of the Great Depression—confronted recalcitrant tribes militarily and then secured their allegiance with a steady flow of resources from the emerging state. More recently, Jordan's Hashemite monarchy has preserved the tribes' loyalty by guaranteeing them prestigious positions in the government and the military and by playing them off against the Palestinians. In Saudi Arabia, the al Saud dynasty consolidated its state by subduing the tribal challenge of rebellious Ikhwan and then endowing them with status and a military role. Strategic marriages between the al Saud family and the tribes cemented these ties. Although such efforts occasionally faltered, the thrust of the policy was always clear: to subordinate the tribes to the state.

Now, U.S. strategy is violating this principle by fostering the retribalization of Iraq all over again. In other countries in the region, such as Yemen, the result of allowing tribes to contest state authority is clear: a dysfunctional country prone to bouts of serious internecine violence. Such violence can also cross borders, especially if neighboring states are willing to use the tribes as their own agents. Pakistan provides a particularly ominous example of this dysfunctionality: its failure to absorb its Pashtun population has threatened the viability of the Pakistani state. The continued nurturing of tribalism in Iraq, in a way that sustains tribes in opposition to the central government rather than folding them into it, will bring about an Iraqi state that suffers from the same instability and violence as Yemen and Pakistan.

U.S. officials in Iraq have taken note of how the current U.S. approach has exacerbated the dangers of tribalism. Last month, a senior U.S. military adviser conceded, "We're not thinking through the impact of abetting further corruption and perpetuating tribal power." In December, a U.S. diplomat warned, "The absence of government in a lot of areas has allowed others to move in, whether militias or others." The net effect has been a splintering of the country rather than the creation of a unified nationalist Sunni front that, having regained its confidence, would be prepared to deal constructively with Baghdad.

The Crumbling Center

The growth of warlordism is another consequence of the surge. By empowering the tribes and other networks without regulating their relationship to the state, the United States has enabled them to

compete with one another for local control and what is mostly criminal revenue. It is worth noting that warlordism is not just a creeping Sunni phenomenon. Kurdish and Shiite criminals have been equally adept at exploiting the current security situation to their advantage. Indeed, warlordism appears even to be altering the sectarian divide. In Najaf, where gang warfare has erupted on more than one occasion, supporters of Sadr's Mahdi Army are engaged in street battles with members of the Badr Organization, even though both are Shiite groups.

Last December, a committee of British MPs charged with examining the security situation in Basra as British forces began to draw down concluded that warlords and criminal gangs had all but taken over the city. "Although the reduction in attacks on UK forces can only be welcome," the committee's report noted, "this alone cannot be a measure of success. The initial goal of UK forces in South Eastern Iraq was to establish the security necessary for the development of representative political institutions and for economic reconstruction. . . . This goal remains unfulfilled."

The United States' bottom-up strategy is also worsening sectarianism. For many Sunnis, reconciliation means restoration—not inclusion in power-sharing arrangements but regaining control of the state. Instead of discouraging this mindset, the evolution of the surge into a bottom-up operation has validated it, fostering the impression that Washington has at last recognized that its strategic interests lie with the Sunnis. As the Sunnis see it, the current U.S. strategy is a policy of organizing, arming, and training them to challenge Shiite supremacy.

The Shiites and the Kurds naturally have sharply different notions of what reconciliation means. For the Kurds, reconciliation means respect for their claims to autonomy as well as for their potential territorial gains. The Shiites have tended to emphasize the need for justice before reconciliation, which, as they see it, requires that they be compensated for their suffering under previous regimes (not only Saddam's). This, in their mind, necessitates the subordination of Iraq's Sunni population to the Shiite community. Some Shiite leaders have defied such thinking—Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani most prominently—but Sadr has made clear that he will use violence to secure Shiite hegemony, and Maliki's government has shown no willingness to be pried away from Sadr and like-minded Shiites. Indeed, in postconflict situations, reconciliation often founders on the unwillingness of victims to surrender their claims to justice.

Some Sunnis have started to recognize that the United States has no intention of restoring their supremacy. The realization that civilian jobs and vocational training is all that is in store for the 80 percent of the former insurgents who are blocked from membership in the Iraqi Army (Shiite leaders want to dominate the army in order to use it as their own instrument of control) has eroded Sunni cooperation with U.S. forces. As one volunteer told a reporter, "The Sunnis were always the leaders of the country. Is it reasonable that they are turned into service workers and garbage collectors? . . . We had not anticipated this from the American forces. Of course we will not accept that." One response has been to head back to al-Qaeda. An Awakening commander in the Diyala provincial capital of Baqubah, which has never been fully pacified, said in February, "Now there is no cooperation with the Americans. . . . We have stopped fighting al-Qaeda." This was doubtless an exaggeration, but one that pointed to the hard truth that for many Sunnis, Shiite rule remains unacceptable. When former Sunni insurgents no longer believe that Washington will restore them to dominance, their current U.S. paymasters will once again be their targets.

Given the current trajectory, significant Sunni segments of the postsurge Iraqi state will continue to be funded by the United States, but they will remain beyond the control of either Baghdad or Washington. They will also be in a position to establish ties with neighboring countries. All of this may well accelerate the centrifugal forces unleashed by the bottom-up strategy. When it withdraws from Iraq, the United States will be leaving a country more divided than the one it invaded—thanks to a strategy that has systematically nourished domestic rivalries in order to maintain an illusory short-term stability.

This could mean that Iraq will remain essentially unreconstructed. The authority of the state would plummet, and the United States' ability to influence events, already limited, would become even weak-

er. Iraq would become a running sore, and successive crises within the country and on its borders would distract Washington from other priorities and sap its ability to normalize relations with Iran. For the Iraqis, safety, security, and economic advancement would remain uncertain. Those who could leave would. Stability would become an ever-receding prospect.

One plausible consequence of this turmoil would be the emergence of a U.S.-trained and U.S.-equipped Iraqi Army, increasingly open to former officers of Saddam's military, as a powerful force in Iraqi politics. The professionalism and esprit de corps of the army is already on the rise. Officers who see themselves as having to navigate a maelstrom of unregulated militias, weak and irresponsible government officials, tribes emboldened and then embittered by their U.S. connections, and overbearing but uneven U.S. assertions of control could turn inward, as they did under the British and under Saddam. They might adopt a posture of superiority to politicians, impatience with upstart tribal leaders, and passive-aggressiveness toward their U.S. patrons and then sideline the civilian government and take control of the state. This result might be less disastrous than complete long-term breakdown: to the degree that Iraq needs a mediating military presence to sustain a fragile peace, this role might ultimately be better served by a military with its own corporate identity rather than by U.S. troops. But still, the United States would be confronted by a strong, centralized state ruled by a military junta that would resemble the Baathist regime Washington overthrew in 2003. Rather than an anarchic situation, the United States would face potentially aggressive nationalism and a regime unsympathetic to U.S. regional priorities.

Responsible Retreat

At this stage, the United States has no good option in Iraq. But the drawbacks and dangers of the current bottom-up approach demand a change of course. The only alternative is a return to a top-down strategy. To be more effective this time around, Washington must return to the kind of diplomacy that the Bush administration has largely neglected. Even with 160,000 troops in Iraq, Washington lacks the leverage on its own to push the Maliki government to take meaningful steps to accommodate Sunni concerns and thereby empower Sunni moderates. (The legislative package and the de-Baathification reform law passed earlier this year were seriously flawed and did more to spur the Sunnis' anxieties than redress their grievances.) What the United States could not do unilaterally, it must try to do with others, including neighboring countries, European allies, and the United Nations (UN).

In order to attain that kind of cooperation, Washington must make a public commitment to a phased withdrawal. Cooperation from surrounding countries and European partners is unlikely to be forthcoming without a corresponding U.S. readiness to cede a degree of the dubious control it now has over events in Iraq. Currently, the dominant U.S. presence in Iraq allows the rest of the world to avoid responsibility for stability in and around Iraq even as everyone realizes the stakes involved. A plan to draw down U.S. forces would therefore contribute to the success of a larger diplomatic strategy, prompting Middle Eastern states, European governments, and the UN to be more constructive and proactive in working to salvage stability in the Persian Gulf.

The point, therefore, is not to focus on the precise speed and choreography of a troop withdrawal. Rather, what is necessary is to make clear that the United States intends to withdraw. Should the Bush administration suspend the currently programmed withdrawals of the surge force, it would send precisely the opposite message. President Bush, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, and General Petraeus have all signaled their interest in halting any further drawdowns after the last surge brigade has come home this summer. Petraeus, who has already begun to lay out his case in interviews, argues that "the key is to hang on to what you've got." The president has suggested that he is unwilling to withdraw additional troops until after the Iraqi provincial elections—which, although originally scheduled for October, could very well be delayed. It is therefore possible that the next U.S. president will have to decide what to do with approximately 140,000 troops, a considerably larger number than most observers assumed would still be

on the ground in Iraq at the end of 2008. (Some consideration will also have to be given to the problem of removing 56,000 contractors and facilitating the departure of a segment of the 30,000-50,000 Iraqi and foreign workers supporting the U.S. presence.)

Given that the laws of physics are as relevant to troop redeployments as are the laws of strategy and politics, the higher baseline bequeathed by Bush would mean a longer timeline for withdrawal. As of last summer, there were 1,900 tanks and other armored vehicles, 43,000 trucks, and 700 aircraft in Iraq. Equipment is scattered over 70 bases throughout the country, along with 38 major supply depots, 18 fuel-storage centers, and 10 ammunition dumps. According to the conservative rule of thumb used by military logisticians, the U.S. Army and the Marine Corps could move a brigade per month from the Iraqi theater. Moving the 15 brigades likely to be in Iraq in January 2009 would require up to 10,000 truck trips through potentially hostile zones within Iraq.

Although fixating on an exact timetable for withdrawal might be unhelpful at this juncture, a new administration should begin to draw down deliberately and in phases as soon as its internal deliberations are complete and the process has been coordinated with Baghdad. These steps could take months, as the new team conducts its policy-review process; military planners plot safe and efficient withdrawal routes; congressional consultations are carried out; conclusions are reached about where the forces being drawn down should be redeployed; planners determine the size, roles, and missions of the residual force; and the numerous dependencies created by the occupation and the surge are gradually shed. Once under way, however, a drawdown of most of the troops now in Iraq could be completed within two years. The redeployment might proceed more quickly if U.S. public support for the war collapsed, the Iraqi government demanded a swifter withdrawal, or the political situation in Iraq settled down; alternatively, the process might take more time if U.S. forces were under attack, an atrocity claiming the lives of many Americans occurred, or a responsible, reconciliation-minded Iraqi government and a concerned international community sought a slower drawdown.

Reconciliation From Above

Announcing a withdrawal will entail certain risks. Aware that U.S. forces will finally be departing, Iraqi factions might begin to prepare for a new round of fighting. The Sunnis, aware of their vulnerabilities to attack by militant Shiite forces without the United States to protect them, might resuscitate their alliance with al-Qaeda. The government in Baghdad might be concerned about its own exposure to attack in the absence of a U.S. shield and proceed to forge tighter links with Tehran or encourage greater activism by the Mahdi Army. It is all the more vital, therefore, that the drawdown take place as part of a comprehensive diplomatic strategy designed to limit these risks. The interval between a decision to withdraw and the removal of the bulk of U.S. forces should provide the space in which the UN can convene a multilateral organization to foster a reconciliation process in Iraq.

There is much that can be done to revitalize a top-down approach to reconciliation if it is under UN auspices and led by a credible special envoy. First, the international community should be energized to help Iraq move forward on provincial elections, which would test the popularity of the new Sunni leaders who have emerged during the surge and lash them up to Baghdad. This would have the added benefit of isolating the radical federalists from the majority of Shiites, who would prefer to live in a united Iraq. A UN envoy would have a better chance of brokering a deal on the distribution of provincial and federal powers, the issue that led to the veto of the provincial election law, than would Washington. In a multilateral setting that is not conspicuously stage-managed by the United States, regional states, including Iran and Saudi Arabia, could play a pivotal role in this process. Although Tehran's cooperation is inevitably hostage to its broader relations with Washington, UN sponsorship of this effort might provide the leaders of Iran with the cover they need to act in their own interest. The Saudis, for their part, would like to see the UN involved and are prepared to use their influence and money to impel the parties in Iraq toward reconciliation.

Second, an institutionalized multilateral group of concerned states should mobilize the broader inter-

national community to assist with the care, feeding, and permanent housing of the millions of refugees and internally displaced Iraqis who have not been able to get to the United States or Europe. This is essential, since refugee camps and squatter settlements are incubators of radicalism and radiate violence. The longer these populations remain unmoored and cut off from education, employment, and access to adequate social services and health care, the harder it will be to resettle them permanently, whether in Iraq or elsewhere.

Third, before a new and more intense phase of the civil war begins, there should be a multilateral process put in place to prod Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states to finance investment projects that provide real employment in Iraq. Furthermore, Iraq's neighbors, including Iran, should be pressing the Iraqi government to bring far more Sunni Awakening volunteers into the regular Iraqi Army and, crucially, into the provincial police forces funded by the central government. The latter step would reinforce the positive effects of the provincial elections and the emergence of politically legitimate local leaders. The current commitment to enlist 20 percent of the Awakening's members is far too small to have an impact.

Finally, the tribes feeding off the surge must be weaned from U.S. assistance and linked firmly to Baghdad as their source of support. Intertwining the tribes with Baghdad in this way, as the Iraq specialist Charles Tripp has noted, would yield something very much like the imperial protectorates in the Middle East of the first half of the 20th century. The "club of patrons" in the capital would dole out goods to tribes through favored conduits. At this juncture, the U.S. military is performing the role of the patrons—creating an unhealthy dependency and driving a dangerous wedge between the tribes and the state. Through coordinated action by the UN sponsors of the multilateral process, the government in Baghdad, and U.S. commanders on the ground, payment responsibilities will have to be transferred from the U.S. military to Iraqi government representatives.

There is no guarantee that the old way of giving tribes a taste of the lash followed by a dollop of state largess—the model that successfully integrated tribes in Jordan and Saudi Arabia in the 20th century—can be successfully applied to a divided Iraq today. Iraq is heterogeneous, unlike Jordan or Saudi Arabia, where the state and the tribes shared a religious heritage. Furthermore, overestimating Iranian or Saudi influence on Iraqi politics and the willingness of the UN Security Council to plunge into the existing morass is all too easy. In any event, it will be a slow and hazardous undertaking. Many things have to happen more or less simultaneously in a carefully coordinated chain of actions. Washington has to announce that it will begin withdrawing the bulk of its forces. The UN secretary-general, with the backing of the Security Council, must select a special envoy. A contact group of key states must be formed under UN sponsorship. Priorities and milestones will need to be set for the distribution of resources within Iraq, the recruitment of Sunnis to the army, provincial elections, foreign investment, dealing with refugees, and development assistance. Crucially, the phasing of the troop drawdown will have to mesh with this diplomatic process but not hinge on its ultimate success. This course is risky and possibly futile. Yet it is still a better bet than a fashionable, short-term fix divorced from any larger political vision for Iraq and the Middle East.

Notes

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About the Author

Steven N. Simon is an adjunct senior fellow for Middle East Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. His publications include *After the Surge: The Case for U.S. Military Disengagement from Iraq* (2007), *The Next Attack: The Failure of the War on Terror and the Strategy for Getting It Right* (2005), and *The Age of Sacred Terror* (2002). He was also director for global issues and senior director for transnational threats at the National Security Council from 1994 to 1997.

When to Leave Iraq: Today, Tomorrow, or Yesterday?

by Colin H. Kahl and William E. Odom
Foreign Affairs, July-August 2008

Walk Before Running

by Colin H. Kahl

In "The Price of the Surge" (May-June 2008), Steven Simon correctly observes that the Sunni turn against al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), known as the Sunni Awakening, has been a key factor in security progress during the period of "the surge." Simon is also on point when he notes that the Awakening, which began before the surge, was not a direct consequence of additional U.S. troops. But although Simon gets much of the past right, he ultimately draws the wrong lessons for U.S. policy moving forward.

Rather than unilaterally and unconditionally withdrawing from Iraq and hoping that the international community will fill the void and push the Iraqis toward accommodation-a very unlikely scenario—the United States must embrace a policy of "conditional engagement." This approach would couple a phased redeployment of combat forces with a commitment to providing residual support for the Iraqi government if and only if it moves toward genuine reconciliation. Conditional engagement—rather than Simon's policy of unconditional disengagement—would incorporate the real lesson from the Sunni Awakening.

The Awakening began in Anbar Province more than a year before the surge and took off in the summer and fall of 2006 in Ramadi and elsewhere, long before extra U.S. forces started flowing into Iraq in February and March of 2007. Throughout the war, enemy-of-my-enemy logic has driven Sunni decision making. The Sunnis have seen three "occupiers" as threats: the United States, the Shiites (and their presumed Iranian patrons), and the foreigners and extremists in AQI. Crucial to the Awakening was the reordering of these threats.

When U.S. forces first arrived in Anbar, upending the Sunni-dominated social order, they were viewed as the principal threat. Because AQI fought the United States, it was seen by the tribes as a convenient short-term ally, despite deep distrust. This ordering of threats changed in 2005 and 2006. For one thing, U.S. forces became more effective and discriminating in their counterinsurgency activities. AQI, meanwhile, became more brutal and indiscriminate, forcing the tribes to start defending themselves. In the fall of 2006, it also declared the establishment of the Islamic State in Iraq, asserting political and economic hegemony over Anbar and other provinces with significant Sunni Arab populations. It started demanding brides, enforcing harsh fundamentalist social norms, and cutting into the tribes' smuggling revenues.

At the same time, U.S. forces had to convince the Sunnis that they were not occupiers—that is, that they did not intend to stay forever. Here, growing opposition to the war in the United States and the Democratic takeover of both houses of Congress in the November 2006 elections were critical. Major General John Allen, the Marine Corps officer responsible for tribal engagement in Anbar in 2007, recently told me that among Sunni leaders, the Democratic victory and the rising pro-withdrawal sentiment "did not go unnoticed. . . . They talked about it all the time." According to Allen, the Marines, from top to bottom, reinforced the message sent by the Democratic takeover by saying, "We are leaving. . . . We don't know when we are leaving, but we don't have much time, so you [the Anbaris] better get after this." As a result, U.S. forces came to be seen as less of a threat than either AQI or the Shiite militias—and the risk that U.S. forces would leave pushed the Sunnis to cut a deal to protect their interests while they still could. As Major Niel Smith, the operations officer at the U.S. Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center, and Colonel Sean MacFarland, the commander of U.S. forces in Ramadi during the pivotal period of the

Awakening, wrote recently in *Military Review*, "A growing concern that the U.S. would leave Iraq and leave the Sunnis defenseless against Al-Qaeda and Iranian-supported militias made these younger [tribal] leaders [who led the Awakening] open to our overtures." In short, contrary to the Bush administration's claims, the Awakening began before the surge and was driven in part by Democratic pressure to withdraw.

It was also critical, however, that U.S. forces did not leave immediately. According to Allen, the continued U.S. presence allowed U.S. commanders to argue that their troops would be the Sunnis' "shock absorbers" during the transition. In other words, the surge and the threat of withdrawal interacted synergistically: the threat of withdrawal made clear that the U.S. commitment was not open-ended, and the surge made clear that U.S. forces would be around for a while. Together they provided a strong incentive for the Anbaris to cooperate with the United States and turn on AQI.

This revised history of the Sunni Awakening has significant implications moving forward. Now, the principal impediment to long-term stability in Iraq is the reluctance of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's central government to engage in genuine political accommodation. That will require a hydrocarbon law designed to equitably share oil revenues, better budget execution and service provision, steps to resettle and compensate victims of sectarian violence, resolution of the disputed status of Kirkuk, and efforts to demobilize and co-opt the Shiite militias (principally Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army). It will also require that the Shiite government integrate or otherwise employ the 90,000 "Sons of Iraq," mostly Sunni tribal militia members and former insurgents. After considerable cajoling, Maliki has agreed to integrate about 20 percent of the Sons of Iraq into the Iraqi Army and police and provide the remainder with nonsecurity jobs. But his government has been very slow in carrying out this pledge, and the 20 percent figure is unlikely to be sufficient. Brigadier General Shija al-Adhami, the head of the Awakening force in Baghdad's Ghazaliya neighborhood, recently told the *Washington Post*, "This is a big failure-either they take us all in or this is not going to work."

Convincing the Iraqi government to make the tough decisions needed for accommodation requires following the same logic that drove the Awakening: using the risk of abandonment to generate a sense of urgency while committing to protecting groups that make tough choices. The Bush administration has thus far failed to generate the leverage such a strategy would produce because it has effectively given the Iraqi government a blank check. To the degree that minimal political progress has occurred, it can be attributed at least as much to the prospect that the Democrats in Congress might force a withdrawal as to overt threats from the Bush administration. secretary of Defense Robert Gates admitted as much last April: "The debate in Congress . . . has been helpful in demonstrating to the Iraqis that American patience is limited. The strong feelings expressed in the Congress about the timetable probably has had a positive impact . . . in terms of communicating to the Iraqis that this is not an open-ended commitment."

As the United States moves forward in Iraq, more leverage is required, but the positions now being advanced by many Republicans and Democrats fail to offer the right mix of incentives to get the Iraqis to act. President George W. Bush has signaled his intent to "pause" the planned troop withdrawals when the surge ends, and Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) speaks of staying in Iraq for a hundred years, no strings attached. This policy of unconditional engagement will not work, because there are no consequences for Iraq's leaders if they fail to accommodate one another. Some Democrats, on the other hand, side with Simon and are calling for a unilateral timetable for the complete withdrawal of all U.S. forces, regardless of the conditions on the ground. This policy of unconditional disengagement also gives up too much leverage, because it provides no ability to the Iraqi government to affect the pace of redeployment or the nature of U.S. support in exchange for making tough choices. Unconditional engagement is all carrots, no sticks; unconditional disengagement, all sticks, no carrots.

A new policy of conditional engagement would take advantage of the ongoing talks aimed at shaping a long-term U.S.-Iraqi security framework to push the Iraqis toward political accommodation. U.S. negotiators should exploit the continuing dis-

content among Democrats in Congress and the impending presidential election to signal that a long-term U.S. commitment to Iraq is not politically sustainable unless there is tangible evidence of reconciliation. Because the Iraqi government has an interest in a long-term security relationship with the United States, especially continued U.S. support for the Iraqi security forces, this tactic could prove very effective.

The presidential candidates from both parties should reinforce this strategy by publicly endorsing the conditions the Iraqi government must meet in order to influence the pace of future U.S. withdrawals and gain their future administrations' support for the Iraqi security forces in the years ahead. This will require the Democratic nominee to clarify his or her stance on the disposition of residual forces in Iraq after a withdrawal of most of the combat troops (only Senator Barack Obama [D-Ill.] has proposed explicit conditions to be placed on continued support for the Iraqi security forces), and it will require McCain to abandon his unconditional pledge to stay in Iraq.

When the new administration takes office in January 2009, it must follow up on this approach by initiating a down payment on redeployment. Starting from the roughly 15 combat brigades (a total of 130,000-140,000 troops) it is likely to inherit, the new administration should signal its intention to transition to a "support," or "overwatch," role by announcing the near-term reduction of U.S. forces to perhaps 12 brigades. The new administration should also immediately sign a formal pledge with the Iraqi government stating unequivocally that it will not seek, accept, or under any conditions establish permanent or "enduring" military bases in Iraq. Taken together, these actions would signal to the Iraqi government that the U.S. commitment is no longer open-ended while still maintaining enough forces in the near term to prevent a major reversal of progress on security. These steps would also signal to groups inside the Iraqi parliament that strongly oppose the occupation (especially the Sadrists), as well as to the organizations representing the nationalist wing of the Sunni insurgency, that the United States does not intend to stay forever. This might open up additional avenues for bringing those Sunnis into formal and informal negotiations.

Simultaneous with these decisions, the United States should start negotiations to establish a broad time horizon for the transition of the remaining U.S. forces to an overwatch role and the conditions for continued U.S. support for the Iraqi government. Once U.S. forces have reached a sustainable overwatch level, the primary mission of the U.S. military in Iraq will switch to counterterrorism, training and advising of the Iraqi security forces, and force protection for U.S. civilians and advisers. U.S. negotiators should make clear, however, that continued economic and diplomatic support, as well as continued support for the Iraqi security forces (something the Iraqi government deeply desires and needs), will hinge on continued progress toward political accommodation. U.S. negotiators should emphasize that over the long run, the United States intends to normalize its relationship with the Iraqi government and redeploy all of its remaining forces as conditions permit. This policy of conditional engagement should be nested within a wider regional diplomatic initiative that seeks to leverage the U.S. drawdown in Iraq and the common interest among Iraq's neighbors in avoiding a failed Iraqi state.

In the end, this approach may not work. If the Iraqis prove unwilling to move toward accommodation, then no number of U.S. forces will be able to produce sustainable stability, and the strategic costs of maintaining a significant presence will outweigh the benefits. If so, the new administration should shift to Simon's unconditional disengagement as Plan B.

Rush to the Exit

by William E. Odom

Simon provides a brilliant analysis of Iraq's political realities, past and present, exposing the effects of the U.S. occupation. Sadly, neither the administration nor all but a few outside analysts foresaw them. More recently, most media reporting has wholly ignored the political dynamics of the new "surge" tactic. And peripatetic experts in Washington regularly return from their brief visits to Iraq to assure the public that it is lowering violence but fail to explain why. They presume that progress toward political consolidation has

also been occurring, or soon will be. Instead, as Simon explains, political regression has resulted, a "retribalization" of the same nature as that which both the British colonial rulers and the Ba'athist Party tried to overcome in order to create a modern state in Iraq.

This should hardly come as a surprise. The history of tribalism in Iraq is well known. When the United States replaced the British in the Middle East after World War II, it set "stability" above all other interests there, maintaining it through a regional balance of power. President Bush's invasion of Iraq broke radically with this half-century-old strategy. The prospects of success, as Simon shows, were worse than poor.

Until recently, the wisdom of this new strategy has not been challenged. Instead, just as happened with regard to the war in Vietnam, the mainstream discussion has focused on tactics, "nation building" through elections, and diplomacy aimed at reconciling irreconcilable Iraqi elites. As a result, the domestic dialogue has not been serious, not even in this magazine, until the appearance of Simon's analysis.

Serious discussion today must be about how to deal with the repercussions of the tragic error of the invasion. The key to thinking clearly about it is to give regional stability higher priority than some fantasy victory in Iraq. The first step toward restoring that stability is the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq. Only then will promising next steps be possible. Simon moves in the direction of such an approach, although not far enough. He shows unambiguously why the United States must withdraw from Iraq, but his hesitant formula for withdrawal risks sustaining the paralysis U.S. strategy now suffers from and could make regional stability far more difficult to restore.

Fear of the chaos that a U.S. withdrawal would catalyze is the psychological block that prevents most observers from assessing the realities clearly. As such observers rightly claim, the United States will be blamed for this chaos, but they overlook the reality that the U.S. military presence now causes much of the chaos and has been doing so since 2003. The United States cannot prevent more chaos by remaining longer. Preventing it is simply not an option. The United States can, however, remove the cause of disorder by withdrawing its forces sooner rather than later. That is the only responsible option.

I was convinced that Simon understood this until he began speaking of "a top-down approach to reconciliation" to be implemented "under UN auspices and led by a credible special envoy." Why should a UN special envoy move into the U.S.-guarded Green Zone as long as insurgents and militias occasionally fire mortar rounds and rockets into it? Some sort of UN-led effort may eventually become possible, but it is not likely as long as U.S. forces remain. And even a UN envoy could not "reconcile" Iraq's warring factions "from the top down."

Simon does understand that the United States' departure will force other countries, especially in Europe, to reconsider their hands-off policies toward Iraq. It will also lead Iraq's neighbors to rethink their hands-on policies. They all want stability there, but some are meddling in ways that exacerbate instability. Once U.S. forces leave, instability may be even less in their interests. Thus, the faster U.S. forces depart, the greater the shifts in other countries' policies will be. A two-year schedule for removing U.S. forces, as Simon proposes, would fail to achieve most of this shock effect.

After recognizing the breakout potential of withdrawal, Simon effectively reembraces strategic paralysis. Otherwise, he would not insist that Iraq's tribal fragmentation must be overcome by means other than civil war and violence. He recognizes that U.S. legitimacy for sponsoring such an effort has been lost—if it ever existed—and so he wants to try a multilateral substitute involving the UN. Its prospects for success, however, are dubious in the extreme. If it consists only of Western countries, it will never be seen as legitimate, only as a crusade in another form. If it includes countries from the region, they are unlikely to agree on fundamental issues about the kind of Iraq they will permit. Moreover, a UN entity's military component would prove far less effective in dealing with insurgents, militias, and the Ministry of Interior's death squads. Its weakness would invite violence, not reduce it. And

neighboring countries would support militant resistance for their own interests.

Tribalism will not be subdued in a couple of years, or even a couple of decades. Two well-known British officials in the 1920s, fluent in Arabic and deeply knowledgeable about the Arabs, T. E. Lawrence and Gertrude Bell, slowly relinquished their hopes for such an outcome in Iraq. And the fragmentation there today is not just along tribal lines. The larger Sunni-Shiite sectarian divide, although often overemphasized, has been made far more serious as a result of the U.S. occupation and the holding of democratic elections before a political consolidation was achieved. Kurdish separatism is probably as strong as it has ever been. These divides are unlikely to be bridged by any means other than a civil war fought to a decisive conclusion. This reality indicates that Iraq's eventual rulers are not now in the Green Zone, and when they one day occupy the capital, all foreign elements will be gone. Association with U.S. forces contaminates any would-be Iraqi regime. A UN entity would not overcome that handicap; at best, it could only sustain political instability and abet conflict.

Simon also argues that logistical imperatives require at least two years for the withdrawal of U.S. forces. That is probably true if all U.S. weapons and materiel are to be removed, but much of it is not worth the costs of hauling it back to the United States. Vast numbers of trucks and other equipment withdrawn from Kuwait in 1991 have never been used again and have been left in costly storage to rust. At least a thousand five-ton trucks can be found stored in Italy today, unused yet costing money to retain. If the highest priority is given to the withdrawal of personnel, not materiel, the required time can be dramatically shortened.

Other factors favor speed. Retrograde movements in war are risky affairs. They must be made when one has lost the initiative or when one's own forces are poorly deployed, which means the opponent has the advantage. More time favors the opponent even more. More speed reduces his opportunities. Speed would also improve diplomacy abroad and boost public morale at home. In the very best circumstances, uncertainties abound during strategic withdrawals.

Most critical in the long run is recognizing that the primary U.S. strategic interest in this part of the world was and still is regional stability. That means subordinating the outcome in Iraq to the larger aim. Getting out of the paralysis in Iraq, chaotic or not, is the sine qua non of any sensible strategy for restoring regional stability.

Finally, some kind of rapprochement with Iran is essential. Regional stability from the 1950s to the fall of the shah in 1979 rested on three pillars: cooperative relations with Iran, moderate Arab states, and Israel. That arrangement served the strategic interests, if not always the tactical interests, of all parties. When the United States lost its footing in Iran, U.S. military requirements for maintaining the balance rose dramatically. That explains the rapid buildup and eventual creation of the Central Command during the Carter administration. The only way to reduce U.S. military requirements in the region is to restore the United States' diplomatic straddle between the region's two major conflicts—the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Persian-Arab conflict. The invasion of Iraq not only destroyed the balance but is now imposing additional military requirements on the United States that cannot be sustained indefinitely.

Notes

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Colin H. Kahl is assistant professor in the security studies program in the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. His publications include *States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World* (2006).

William E. Odom was director of the National Security Agency from 1985 to 1988. A retired three-star general in the U.S. Army, he was a professor at Yale University and a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies at the time this article was published.

Appendix A[1]
Command List

I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward)/Multi National Force West
March 2004–February 2005

Commanding General: LtGen James T. Conway (until September 2004)
LtGen John F. Sattler
Deputy: MajGen Keith J. Stalder (until May 2004)
BGen Dennis J. Hejlik
Chief of Staff: Col John C. Coleman
G-1: Col William J. Hartig (until May 2004)
Col Eric D. Bartch
G-2: Col James R. Howcroft (until June 2004)
Col Ronald S. Makuta
G-3: Col Larry K. Brown (until June 2004)
Col Michael R. Regner
G-4: Col Bruce E. Bissett (until June, 2004)
Col Andrew Reynosa III
G-5: Col Anthony L. Jackson (until June 2004)
Col Richard O. Bartch
G-6: Col Marshall I. Considine III (until June 2004)
LtCol Martin E. Lapierre Jr.

I MEF Headquarters Group:
Commanding Officer: Col John C. Cunnings (until June 2004)
Col Joseph A. Bruder IV

11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC)
Commanding Officer: Col Anthony M. Haslam

24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC):
Commanding Officer: Col Robert J. Johnson

31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Walter L. Miller Jr.

3d Civil Affairs Group
Commanding Officer: Col Michael M. Walker

4th Civil Affairs Group
Commanding Officer: Col John R. Ballard

Marine Ground Combat Element

1st Marine Division (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding General: MajGen James N. Mattis (until August 2004)
MajGen Richard F. Natonski

Assistant Division Commander: BGen John F. Kelly (until July 2004)
BGen Joseph F. Dunford Jr.

Chief of Staff: Col Joseph F. Dunford Jr. (until July 2004)
Col Robert J. Knapp

1st Marine Regiment (-) (Reinforced) (Regimental Combat Team 1)
Commanding Officer: Col John A. Toolan (until September 2004)
Col Lawrence D. Nicholson (14 September, 2004)
Col Michael A. Shupp

7th Marine Regiment (-) (Reinforced) (Regimental Combat Team 7)
Commanding Officer: Col Craig A. Tucker

1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (U.S. Army)
Commanding Officer: Col Arthur W. Connor Jr., USA

2d Brigade, (-) (Reinforced), 1st Cavalry Division "Black Jack" (U.S. Army)
Commanding Officer: Col Michael D. Formica, USA

2d Brigade (-) (Reinforced), 2d Infantry Division, "Strike Force Brigade" (U.S. Army)
Commanding Officer: Col Gary S. Patton, USA

Marine Aviation Combat Element

3d Marine Aircraft Wing (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: MajGen James F. Amos (until May 2004)
MajGen Keith J. Stalder

Assistant Wing Commander: Col Roy A. Arnold

Chief of Staff: Col Gerald A. Yingling Jr. (until July 2004)
Col Rex C. McMillian (until October 2004)
Col Rick W. Schmidt

Marine Aircraft Group 16 (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Stuart L. Knoll (until April 2004)
Col Guy M. Close

Marine Air Control Group 38 (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Ronnell R. McFarland (until June 2004)
Col Jonathan G. Miclot

Marine Wing Support Group 37 (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Juan G. Ayala

Marine Combat Service Support Element

1st Force Service Support Group (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: BGen Richard S. Kramlich

Deputy Commander: Col John L. Sweeney Jr.
Chief of Staff: Col Tracy L. Mork

Combat Service Support Group 11 (-)
Commanding Officer: Col David B. Reist

Combat Service Support Group 15 (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Michael E. Kampsen

I Marine Expeditionary Force Engineer Group
Commanding Officer: RAdm Charles R. Kubic
RAdm Raymond K. Alexander

II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward)/Multi National Force-West
March 2005–February 2006

Commanding General: MajGen Stephen T. Johnson (until January 2006)
MajGen Richard A. Huck
Deputy: BGen Charles S. Patton
Chief of Staff: Col John L. Ledoux
G-1: LtCol John R. Armour (until September 2005)
Maj Blair S. Miles
G-2: Col John T. Cunnings
G-3: Col Glenn T. Starnes (until October 2005)
Col Thomas L. Cariker
G-4: Col John J. Fitzgerald Jr. (until July 2005)
Col. Donald C. Hales
G-5: Col Kenneth D. Bonner
G-6: Col Sean T. Mulcahy

II MEF Headquarters Group: (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Daniel D. Leshchyshyn

13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (-)
Commanding Officer: Col James K. LaVine

15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC)
Commanding Officer: Col Thomas C. Greenwood

22d Marine Expeditionary Unit
Commanding Officer: Col Kenneth F. McKenzie

5th Civil Affairs Group (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Steven E. McKinley

6th Civil Affairs Group
Commanding Officer: Col Paul W. Brier

155th Brigade Combat Team (Reinforced) (Army National Guard)
Commanding Officer: Col Augustus L. Collins, USA (until April 2005)

Marine Ground Combat Element

2d Marine Division (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding General: MajGen Richard A. Huck (until January 2006)

Assistant Division Commander: BGen Joseph J. McMenamin
Chief of Staff: Col Robert G. Sokoloski

2d Marine Regiment (-) (Reinforced) (Regimental Combat Team 2)
Commanding Officer: Col Stephen W. Davis

8th Marine Regiment (-) (Reinforced) (Regimental Combat Team 8)
Commanding Officer: Col Charles M. Gurganus (until August 2005)
Col David H. Berger

2d Brigade, 2d Infantry Division (Reinforced) (U.S. Army)
Commanding Officer: Col Gary S. Patton, USA

2d Brigade, 28th Infantry Division (Reinforced) (Army National Guard)
Commanding Officer: Col John L. Gronski, USA

Marine Aviation Combat Element

2d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward)
Commanding General: BGen Robert E. Milstead
Chief of Staff Col John T. Rahm (until August, 2005)
Col Thomas M. Murray

Marine Aircraft Group 26 (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Thomas M. Murray (until February 2006)
Col David J. Mollahan

Marine Air Control Group 38
Commanding Officer: Col Jonathan G. Miclot

Marine Air Control Group 28 (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Mark R. Cyr

Marine Wing Support Group 27 (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Scott M. Anderson

Marine Combat Service Support Element

2d Force Service Support Group (Forward)
Commanding General: BGen Ronald S. Coleman (until June 2005)
BGen John E. Wissler

Chief of Staff: Col James E. McCown III

Combat Logistics Regiment 25
Commanding Officer: Col Robert W. Destafney (until September 2005
Col Dennis W. Ray

I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward)/Multi National Force-West
March 2006–February 2007

Commanding General: MajGen Richard C. Zilmer
Deputy Commanding General for Operations: BGen Robert B. Neller

Deputy Commanding General for Support: BGen David G. Reist
Chief of Staff: Col George F. Milburn
G-1: Col Eric D. Bartch
G-2: Col Peter H. Devlin
G-3: Col Michael P. Marletto
G-4: Col Scott A. Dalke
G-5: Col Chad W. Hocking
G-6: Col Kirk E. Bruno

I MEF Headquarters Group:
Commanding Officer: LtCol Thomas Ward

15th Marine Expeditionary Unit:
Commanding Officer: Col Thomas C. Greenwood (Until August 2006)
Col Brian D. Beaudreault

Marine Ground Combat Element

1st Marine Division (Forward)
Commanding General: MajGen Richard F. Natonski (until August 2006)
MajGen John M. Paxton
Assistant Division Commander: Col Kevin A. Vietti
Chief of Staff: Col Kevin A. Vietti

5th Marine Regiment (-) (Reinforced) (Regimental Combat Team 5)
Commanding Officer: Col Lawrence D. Nicholson

7th Marine Regiment (-) (Reinforced) (Regimental Combat Team 7)
Commanding Officer: Col William B. Crowe

1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division (U.S. Army)
Commanding Officer: Col Sean B. MacFarland, USA

Marine Aviation Combat Element

3d Marine Aircraft Wing
Commanding General: MajGen Samuel T. Helland
Assistant Wing Commander: Col Jonathan G. Miclot (until June 2006)
Col Howard F. Baker
Chief of Staff: Col Rick W. Schmidt (until September 2006)
Col Guy M. Close

Marine Aircraft Group 16
Commanding Officer: Col Guy M. Close (until May 2006)
Col John C. Kennedy

Marine Aircraft Group 31
Commanding Officer: Col Robert Walsh (until May 2006)

Marine Air Control Group 38 (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Jonathan G. Miclot (until June 2006)
Col Mark G. Cianciolo

Marine Combat Service Support Element

1st Marine Logistics Group (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding General: BGen David G. Reist[2]
Col David M. Richtsmeier (CO Fwd)[3]
Deputy Commander: Col Elvis E. Blumenstock[4]
Chief of Staff: Col Michael D. Malone (until January 2007)
Col Juan G. Ayala

Combat Logistics Regiment 17
Commanding Officer: LtCol Todd A. Holmquist (until July 2006)
LtCol James C. Caley (July-August 2006)
LtCol Kirk C. Wille

Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (-) (Reinforced)
Commanding Officer: Col Charles L. Hudson (until June 2006)
Col Brian J. Vincent III

Notes

1. To present a comprehensive order of battle for the entire period covered by this anthology (2004-2008) would require a volume unto itself. The goal of this appendix is to give as comprehensive a list as possible within the space provided. Consequently, not all Marine Corps units deployed to Iraq between 2004 and 2008 are listed.

The majority of Marines deployed to Iraq during this time period were under the command of Multi National Force-West (MNF-West), which was coterminious with either I MEF (2004-2005), II MEF (2005-2006) or I MEF (2006-2007). The appendix is divided by MEF deployment, and lists commanders down to the regimental level and units down to the battalion level that were at one time under the command of MNF-West during each MEF deployment.

The information is drawn from the following sources: I Marine Expeditionary Force Presidential Unit Citation Recommendation (2005), II Marine Expeditionary Force Presidential Unit Citation Recommendation (2006), I Marine Expeditionary Force Presidential Unit Citation Recommendation (2007), LtCol Kenneth W. Estes, "U.S. Marine Corps Operations in Iraq, 2003-2006" (Quantico, VA: History Division: United States Marine Corps, 2009), USMC History Division Reference Branch, "Chronology of U.S. Marines and Global War on Terror," at http://www.tecom .usmc.mil/HD/Chronologies/Campaign/GWOT_2001-2005.htm (accessed 3 June, 2009), and Institute for the Study of War, "Order of Battle, Coalition Combat Forces" at http://www.understandingwar.org /IraqOrderofBattle (accessed 3 June, 2009).

2. BGen Reist served as 1st MLG commanding general and as Deputy Commanding General for Supply. See 1st Marine Logistics Group (MLG), Command Chronology (CC), July-December 2006, p.2.

3. Col David M. Richtsmeier was Commanding Officer, 1st MLG (Fwd). See Cpl Daniel J. Redding, "Combat zone ingenuity protects Marines," Operation Iraqi Freedom—Official Website of Multi National Force-Iraq, 10 August, 2006, at http://dr15.ahp.dr1.us.army.mil/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2005&Itemid=225. accessed 25 August, 2009.

4. Col Blumenstock served as Acting Commander, 1st MLG, while BGen Reist was deployed to Iraq as Deputy Commanding General for Supply, I MEF (FWD). See 1st MLG Command Chronology, July-January, 2006, p.3.

Appendix B:
Unit List

U.S. Marines in Operation Iraqi Freedom
March 2004-February 2007

I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) [I MEF]/Multi National Force–West [MNF-W]
March 2004-February 2005

Command Element

11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) [11th MEU (SOC)]

Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 4th Marines [BLT 1/4]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 166 (Reinforced) [HMM-166]
Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 11 [MSSG-11]
Task Force, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry (U.S. Army) [TF 1st Bn, 5th CavReg]
1st Battalion, 227th Aviation (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 227th AvReg]
153d Engineer Battalion (U.S. Army) [153d EngrBn]
1st Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) (U.S. Army) [1st Bn 5th SFG]

24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) [24th MEU (SOC)]

Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 2d Marines [BLT 1/2]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263 (Reinforced) [HMM-263]
Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 24 [MSSG-24]
Task Force 2d Battalion, 24th Marines [TF 2d Bn 24th Mar]
Task Force "Blackwatch" (United Kingdom) [TF "Blackwatch"]

31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (-) (Reinforced) [31st MEU]

1st Battalion, 23d Marines (Reinforced) [1st Bn 23d Mar]
Task Force Naha [TF Naha]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265 (Reinforced) [HMM-265]
1st Battalion, 7th Marines (Reinforced) [1st Bn 7th Mar]
Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 3d Marines [BLT 1/3]
3d Battalion, 5th Marines [3d Bn 5th Mar]
Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 31 [MSSG-31]
2d Force Reconnaissance Company (-) [2d ForReconCo]
2d Battalion, 11th Marines (-) (Reinforced) (Provisional MP Battalion) [2d Bn 11th Mar]

I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group [I MEF HqGru]

2d Intelligence Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [2d IntelBn]
2d Radio Battalion (-) [2d RadBn]
9th Communications Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [9th CommBn]
Battery E, 2d Battalion, 10th Marines [Btry E, 2d Bn, 10th Mar]
Battery C, 1st Battalion, 10th Marines [Btry C, 1st Bn, 10th Mar]
Detachment, 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company [Det, 1st ANGLICO]

3d Civil Affairs Group [3d CAG]
4th Civil Affairs Group [4th CAG]

Marine Ground Combat Element

1st Marine Division (-) (Reinforced) [1st MarDiv]

Headquarters Battalion (Reinforced) [HqBn]
Small Craft Co (-) [Small Crft Co]
2d Battalion (-) 11th Marines (Reinforced) [2d Bn, 11th Mar]
3d Battalion, 24th Marines [2d Bn, 24th Mar]
3d Battalion (-) 11th Marines (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 11th Mar]
2d Battalion, 4th Marines [2d Bn, 4th Mar]

1st Marines (-) (Reinforced)/Regimental Combat Team 1 [1st Mar/RCT-1]

2d Platoon (-), 1st Force Reconnaissance Company [2d Plt, 1st ForReconCo]
Fire Control Team, 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company [FCT, 1st ANGLICO]
2d Battalion, 1st Marines [2d Bn, 1st Mar]
3d Battalion, 1st Marines [3d Bn, 1st Mar]
2d Battalion, 2d Marines [2d Bn, 2d Mar]
3d Battalion 4th Marines (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 4th Mar]
1st Battalion, 5th Marines [1st Bn, 5th Mar]
3d Battalion, 5th Marines [3d Bn, 5th Mar]
3d Battalion, 8th Marines (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 8th Mar]
Task Force 2d Battalion 7th Cavalry (U.S. Army) [TF 2d Bn, 7th Cav]
Task Force Light Armored Reconnaissance [TF LAR]
1st Reconnaissance Battalion [1st ReconBn]
2d Reconnaissance Battalion [2d ReconBn]
Company B, 1st Battalion 4th Marines (-) (Reinforced), [Co B, 1st Bn, 4th Mar]
Company D, 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion (Reinforced) [2d AABn]
Company C, 2d Tank Battalion (Reinforced) [2d CmbtEngBn]
Company B, 2d Combat Engineer Battalion, (-) (Reinforced) [2d CEB]
Battery M, 4th Battalion, 14th Marines (Reinforced) [Btry M, 4th Bn, 14th Mar]

7th Marines (-) (Reinforced)/Regimental Combat Team 7 [7th Mar/RCT-7]

1st Battalion, 7th Marines [1st Bn, 7th Mar]
2d Battalion, 7th Marines [2d Bn, 7th Mar]
3d Battalion, 7th Marines [3d Bn, 7th Mar]
1st Battalion, 8th Marines (Reinforced) [1st Bn, 8th Mar]
1st Battalion, 23d Marines [1st Bn, 23d Mar]
Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 3d Marines (Reinforced) [BLT 1/3]
1st Force Reconnaissance Company [1st ForReconCo]
2d Force Reconnaissance Company [2d ForReconCo]
3d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion [3d LAR Bn]
Task Force 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry (-),(U.S. Army) [TF 2d Bn, 2d Inf]
Company C, 3d Battalion, 82d Field Artillery (U.S. Army) [Co C, 3d Bn, 82d FldArty]
Company A, 2d Tank Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [Co A, 2d Tank Bn]
Detachment, Company C (-), 2d Combat Engineer Battalion [Det, Co C, 2d CmbtEngrBn]

Detachment, Company A (-), 3d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion [Det, Co A, 3d LAR]
Marine Expeditionary Force Service Support Group 31 [MSSG-31]

2d Brigade (-) (Reinforced), 1st Cavalry Division "Black Jack" (U.S. Army) [2d Bde, 1st CavDiv]

15th Forward Support Battalion (U.S. Army) [15 FwdSptBn]
Task Force 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry "Stryker" (U.S. Army) [TF "Stryker"]
Task Force 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry (U.S. Army) [TF 1st Bn, 5th Cav]
Battery A, 3d Battalion, 82d Field Artillery (U.S. Army) [A Btry, 82d FldArty]
Attack Helicopter (U.S. Army) [Atk Helo]
Company B, 312th Military Intelligence Battalion (U.S. Army) [B Co, 312th MilIntelBn]
Company B (-), 13th Signal Battalion (U.S. Army) [B Co, 13th SigBn]
759th Composite MP Battalion (U.S. Army) [759th Comp MPBn]
2d Reconnaissance Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [2d ReconBn]
Company A (Reinforced), 2d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, [Co A, 2d LAR Bn]
Detachment, Explosive Ordinance Disposal Platoon (-), 63d Ordnance Battalion [Det, EOD Plt, 63d OrdBn]

1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (U.S. Army) [1st Bde, 1st InfDiv]

2d Battalion, 4th Marines [2d Bn, 4th Mar]

2d Brigade (-) (Reinforced), 2d Infantry Division "Strike Force Brigade" (U.S. Army) [2d Bde, 2d Inf]

2d Battalion, 2d Force Support Battalion (Reinforced) (U.S. Army), [2d Bn, 2dForSuppBn]
Task Force 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry (-), (U.S. Army) [TF 1st Bn, 503d IR]
Task Force 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry (-) (U.S. Army) [TF 1st Bn, 506th Inf]
Task Force 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry (U.S. Army) [TF 1st Bn, 9th Inf]
Task Force 2d Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (U.S. Army) [TF 2d Bn, 17th FldArty]
44th Engineering Battalion (-) (U.S. Army) [44th EngrBn]
Company A, 102d Military Intelligence Battalion (U.S. Army) [Co A, 102d MilIntel Bn]
Company B(-), 122d Signal Battalion (U.S. Army) [Co B, 122d SigBn]
Company B, 5th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery (U.S. Army) [Co B, 5th Bn, 5th AirDefArty]
2d Battalion 5th Marines (Reinforced) [2d Bn, 5th Mar]

Marine Aviation Combat Element

3d Marine Aircraft Wing (-) (Reinforced) [3d MAW]

Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 (-) (Reinforced) [MWHS-3]

Marine Aircraft Group 16 (-) (Reinforced) [MAG-16]

Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367, MAG-39 [HMLA-367]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169 (-), MAG-39 [HMLA-169]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268, MAG-39 [HMM-268]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 365, MAG-29, 2d MAW [HMM-365]

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 774, MAG-42, 4th MAW [HMM-774]
Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron [HMH-361]
Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (All-Weather) 242, MAG-11 [VMFA(AW)-242]
Marine Attack Squadron 542 [VMA-542]
Marine Attack Squadron 311 [VMA-311]
Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 (-) (Reinforced) [MALS-16]

Marine Air Control Group 38(-) (Reinforced) [MACG-38]

Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron (-) (Reinforced) [MTACS-38]
Marine Air Support Squadron 3 (-) (Reinforced) [MASS-3]
Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 (-) (Reinforced) [MWCS-38]
Marine Air Control Squadron 1 (-) (Reinforced) [MACS-1]
Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 [VMU-1]
Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 2 [VMU-2]

Marine Wing Support Group 37 (-) (Reinforced) [MWSG-37]

Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 [MWSS-373]
4th Low Altitude Air Defense Battalion (Reinforced), 4th MAW (Prov Sec Battalion, Al Asad) [4th LAAD Bn]
Battery F, 2d Battalion, 10th Marines (Tactical Control from 1st FSSG) [Btry F, 2d Bn, 10th Mar]
Battery K, 4th Battalion, 14th Marines [Btry K, 4th Bn, 14th Mar]
Battery P, 5th Battalion, 14th Marines [Btry P, 5th Bn, 14th Mar]
Detachment, Marine Air Control Squadron 1 [Det, MACS-1]

Marine Wing Support Squadron 472 [MWSS-472]
Detachment, 9th Communication Battalion [Det, 9th CommBn]
326th Area Support Group (U.S. Army) [326th AreaSptGru]
1439th Engineer Team (U.S. Army) [1439th EngrTm]
767th Engineer Team (U.S. Army) [767th EngrTm]

Marine Combat Service Support Element

1st Force Service Support Group (-) (Reinforced) [1st FSSG]

Headquarters and Service Battalion [HqSBn]
2d Battalion, 10th Marines (-) (Reinforced) [2d Bn, 10th Mar]

Combat Service Support Group 11 (-) [CSSG-11]

Combat Service Support Battalion 1 [CSSB-1]
Combat Service Support Battalion 7 [CSSB-7]

Combat Service Support Group 15 (-) (Reinforced) [CSSG-15]

I Marine Expeditionary Force Engineer Group [I MEFEngrGru]

Task Force Charlie [TF Charlie]
Task Force Echo [TF Echo]
Task Force Sierra [TF Sierra]

Task Force Tango [TF Tango]

With Participating Members From

1st Naval Construction Battalion [1st NCB]
7th Naval Construction Regiment [7th NCR]
22d Naval Construction Regiment [22 NCR]
20th Seabee Readiness Group [20th CRG]
31st Seabee Readiness Group [21s CRG]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 3 [NMCB 3]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 4 [NMCB 4]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 7 [NMCB 7]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 14 [NMCB 14]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 15 [NMCB 15]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 17 [NMCB 17]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 23 [NMCB 23]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 74 [NMCB 74]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133 [NMCB 133]
120th Engineer Battalion (Combat Heavy) (U.S. Army) [120th EngrBn]

II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward)/Multi National Force-West [II MEF (FWD)/MNF-W]
March 2005-February 2006

Command Element

13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (-) [13th MEU]

Command Element
Battalion Landing Team 2d Battalion, 1st Marines [BLT 2/1]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 [HMM-163]
Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 13 [MSSG-13]

22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (-) [22d MEU]

Command Element
Battalion Landing Team 1st Battalion, 2d Marines [BLT 1st Bn, 2d MarDiv]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 261 [HMM-261]
Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 22 [MSSG-22]

II MEF Headquarters Group (-) (Reinforced) [II MEF HqGru]

Headquarters and Service Company [HqSCo]
Headquarters and Service Company, 4th Tank Battalion, 4th Marine Division (Provisional MP) (Reinforced) [HqSCo 4th Tank Bn, 4th MarDiv]
Company A, 4th Tank Battalion [A Co, 4th Tank Bn]
Company B, 4th Tank Battalion [B Co, 4th Tank Bn]
Battery C, 1st Battalion, 14th Marines [Btry C, 1st Bn, 14th Mar]
Battery D, 2d Battalion, 14th Marines [Btry D, 2d Bn, 14th Mar]
Headquarters Battery, 5th Battalion, 14th Marines [HqBtry, 5th Bn 14th Mar]
Battery N, 5th Battalion, 14th Marines [Btry N, 5th Bn, 14th Mar]
Battery O, 5th Battalion, 14th Marines [Btry O, 5th Bn, 14th Mar]
Company E, 2d Battalion, 25th Marines [Co E, 2d Bn, 25th Mar]

Battery D, 2d Battalion, 14th Marines [Btry D, 2d Bn, 14th Mar]
Battery C, 1st Battalion, 14th Marines [Btry C, 1st Bn, 14th Mar]
Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 23d Marines [Wpns Co, 1st Bn, 23d Mar]
1st Platoon, 2d Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team Company [1st Plt, 2d FAST]
Antiterrorism Battalion, Combined Antiarmor Team [AT Bn, CAAT 3]
1st Intelligence Battalion (-) (Reinforced), I MEF [1st IntelBn]
2d Radio Battalion (-) [2d RadBn]
8th Communications Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [8th CommBn]
5th Civil Affairs Group
6th Civil Affairs Group

155th Brigade Combat Team, Army National Guard (Reinforced) [155th MissANG]

Task Force 2d Battalion, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (U.S. Army) [TF 2d Bn, 11th ArmCavReg]
Marine Air Support Squadron 1 [MASS-1]
Marine Aircraft Group 14 [MAG-14]
Marine Air Control Squadron 2 [MACS-2]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 271 [MWSS-271]
Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 [MWCS-38]
30th Naval Construction Brigade (U.S. Navy) [30th NCBde]
Task Force 2d Battalion, 198th Armor Regiment [TF 2d Bn, 198th AR]
Task Force 1st Battalion, 198th Armor Regiment [TF 1st Bn, 198th AR]
Task Force 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment [TF 1st Reg, 155th BCT]
106th Service Battalion [106th ServBn]
150th Engineer Battalion (-) [150th EngrBn]
Task Force, 2d Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment [TF 2Bn, 114th FldArtyReg]
5th Battalion, 14th Marines [5th Bn, 14th Mar]

Marine Ground Combat Element

2d Marine Division (-) (Reinforced) [2d MarDiv]

Headquarters Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [HqBn]
2d Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (-) (Reinforced) [2d ANGLICO]
1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (-) (Reinforced) [1st ANGLICO]
Detachment, 3d Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (-) [Det, 3d ANGLICO]
1st Force Reconnaissance Company (-) (Reinforced), I MEF [1st ForReconCo]
2d Force Reconnaissance Company (-) (Reinforced) [2d ForReconCo]
74th Multi-Role Bridge Company, 130th Engineering Brigade (U.S. Army) [74th MRB Co, 130th EngrBde]
1st Battalion, 5th Marines [1st Bn, 5th Mar]
3d Battalion, 7th Marines [3d Bn, 7th Mar]

2d Marines/Regimental Combat Team 2 (-) (Reinforced) [2d Mar, RCT-2]

3d Battalion, 1st Marines (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 1st Mar]
3d Battalion, 2d Marines (-) (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 2d Mar]
3d Battalion, 6th Marines (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 6th Mar]
3d Battalion, 25th Marines [3d Bn, 25th Mar]
3d Battalion, 504th Infantry [3d Bn, 504th Inf]

1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [1st LAR Bn]
2d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [2d LAR Bn]
Detachment, 2d Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company [Det 2d ANGLICO]
4th Battalion, 14th Cavalry Regiment, (U.S. Army) [4th Bn, 14th CavReg]
Fleet Antit-Terrorism Security Team, 172d Brigade Support Battalion [FAST, 172d BSB]
Battery A, 2d Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment (U.S. Army) [A Btry, 2d Bn, 20th FldArtyReg]
Battery A, 1st Battalion, 11th Marines [A Btry, 1st Bn, 11th Mar]
Battery K (Reinforced), 3d Battalion, 10th Marines [Btry K, 3d Bn, 10th Mar]
Company A (Reinforced), 1st Tank Battalion [Co A, 1st TkBn]
Company A (Reinforced), 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion [Co A, 4th AABn]
Information Company, Azerbaijani [InfCo, Azj]

8th Marines (-) (Reinforced)/Regimental Combat Team 8 [8th Mar, RCT-8]

Company B (Reinforced), 2d Tank Battalion [Co B, 2d TBn]
Company B (Reinforced), 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion [Co B, 2d AABn]
Battery A (Reinforced), 1st Battalion, 10th Marines [Btry A, 1st Bn, 10th Mar]
3d Reconnaissance Battalion (-) (Reinforced), 3d Marine Division [3d ReconBn]
3d Battalion 1st Marines (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 1st Mar]
2d Battalion, 2d Marines (Reinforced) [2d Bn, 2d Mar]
1st Battalion, 4th Marines (Reinforced) [1st Bn, 4th Mar]
3d Battalion, 4th Marines (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 4th Mar]
1st Battalion, 6th Marines [1st Bn, 6th Mar]
2d Battalion, 6th Marines (Reinforced) [2d Bn, 6th Mar]
3d Battalion, 6th Marines [3d Bn, 6th Mar]
2d Battalion, 7th Marines (Reinforced) [2d Bn, 7th Mar]
3d Battalion, 8th Marines [3d Bn, 8th Mar]
1st Reconnaissance Battalion (Reinforced) [1st ReconBn]
Company D (Reinforced), 2d Tank Battalion [Co D, 2d TkBn]
Company A (Reinforced), 2d Assault Amphibian Battalion [Co A, 2d AABn]

2d Brigade (Reinforced), 2d Infantry Division) (U.S. Army) [2d BCT 2d Inf]

1st Battalion, 503d Infantry (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 503d Inf]
1st Battalion, 506th Infantry (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 506th Inf]
Air Defense Artillery, Battery B, 5th Battalion, 5th Field Artillery (-) [ADA, Btry B, 5th Bn, 5th FldArty]
1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 9th InfReg]
2d Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment (U.S. Army) [2d Bn, 17th FldArty]
44th Engineer Battalion (U.S. Army) [44th EngrBn]
3d Battalion, 82d CSE (U.S. Army)
Battery B, 1st Battalion, 4th Artillery, 2d Forward Support Battalion (U.S. Army) [Btry B, 1st Bn, 4th Arty, 2d ForSptBn]
1st Battalion (Reinforced), 5th Marines [1st Bn, 5th Mar]

2d Brigade, 28th Infantry Division (Reinforced) (Army National Guard) [2d Bde, 28th InfDiv]

228th Forward Support Battalion (U.S. Army) [228th FwdSptBn]

1st Battalion, 506th Infantry (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 506th Inf]
1st Battalion, 110th Infantry (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 110th Inf]
1st Battalion, 172d Artillery (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 172d Arty]
2d Battalion, 222d Field Artillery (U.S. Army) [2d Bn, 222d FldArty]
2d Battalion, 116th Field Artillery Regiment (U.S. Army) [2d Bn, 116th FldArty]
3d Battalion, 7th Marines (Reinforced) [3d Bn, 7th Mar]

224th Engineer Battalion (C) (M) (Reinforced) [224th EngrBn]

Company C, 4th Tank Battalion [Co C, 4th TkBn]

54th Engineer Battalion (U.S. Army) [5th EngrBn]

Battery E, 2d Battalion, 11th Marines (Provisional MP) [Btry E, 2d Bn, 11th Mar]

Marine Aviation Combat Element

2d Marine Aircraft Wing (Fwd) [2d MAW]

Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 2 (-) [MWHS-2]

Marine Aircraft Group 26 (-) [MAG-26]

Marine Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron 26 [MHHS-26]
Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 224 [VMFA-224]
Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 332 [VMFA-332]
Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 142 [VMFA(AW)-142]
Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 [VMFA(AW)-242]
Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 224, MAG-31 [VMFA(AW)-224]
Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 142, MAG 42 4th MAW [VMFA-142]
Marine Attack Squadron 223 [VMA-223]
Marine Attack Squadron 311 (-) MAG- 13, 3d MAW [VMA)-311]
Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 1 [VMAQ-1]
Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 2 [VMAQ-2]
Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron 4 [VMAQ-4]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 167 [HMLA-167]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 269 (-), MAG-26 [HMLA-269]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 [HMLA-369]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 775, MAG-46, 4th MAW [HMLA-775]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 [HMM-161]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 264, MAG-26 [HMM-264]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 266 [HMM-266]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364, MAG-16, 3d MAW [HMM]-364
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 764, MAG-46, 4th MAW [HMM-764]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 774 [HMM-774]
Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 (-) (Reinforced), MAG-16, 3d MAW [HMM-465]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 466 [HMM-466]
Marine Transport Squadron 1 [VMR-1]
Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 26 [MALS-26]

Marine Air Control Group 28 (-) (Reinforced) [MACG-28]

Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 28 (-) (Reinforced) [MTACS-28]
Marine Air Control Group Headquarters [MACG-28 Hq]
Marine Air Control Squadron 2 (-) (Reinforced), MACG-28 [MACS-2]
Marine Wing Communications Squadron 28 (-) (Reinforced) [MWCS-28]
Marine Air Support Squadron 1 (-) (Reinforced), MACG-28, [MASS-1]

Marine Air Control Group 38 Headquarters [MACG-38 Hq]

Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 [VMU-1]
Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 2 [VMU-2]
Marine Air Control Squadron 1 [MACS-1]

Marine Wing Support Group 27 (-) (Reinforced) [MWSG-27]

Marine Wing Support Squadron 271 [MWSS)-271]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 [MWSS)-371]
2d Low Altitude Air Defense Battalion [2d LAAD Bn]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 272 [MWSS-272]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 372 [MWSS-372]

Marine Combat Service Support Element

2d Force Service Support Group/2d Marine Logistics Group (Forward) [2d FSSG]

Headquarters Service Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [HqSBn]
Communications Company (Reinforced) [CommCo]
8th Engineer Support Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [8th EngrSBn]
Combat Logistics Battalion 2 [ComLogBn 2]
Combat Logistics Battalion 8 [ComLogBn 8]

Combat Logistics Regiment 25 [ComLogReg 25]

Headquarter Service Company (-), 2d Transportation Support Battalion [HqSCo, 2d TransSptBn]

30th Naval Construction Regiment (-) (Reinforced), 1st Naval Construction Division (U.S. Navy) [30th NCR, 1st NCD]

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (-) 24 [NMCB-24]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (-) 1 [NMCB-1]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (-) 3 [NMCB-3]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (-) 5 [NMCB-5]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (-) 22 [NMCB-22]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (-) 23 [(NMCB-23]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (-) 24 [NMCB-24]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (-) 133 [NMCB-133]
983d Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), (U.S. Army) [983d EngrCbtBn]
46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy), (U.S. Army) [46th EngrCbtBn]

I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward)/Multi National Force-West [I MEF (FWD)/MNF-W]
March 2006–February 2007

Command Element

15th Marine Expeditionary Unit [15th MEU]

Battalion Landing Team 2/4 [BLT 2/4]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 165 [HMM-165]
Combat Logistics Battalion 15 [CLB-15]

I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group (-)(Reinforced) [I MEF Hq Gru]

1st Intelligence Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [1st IntelBn]
2d Intelligence Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [2d IntelBn]
1st Radio Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [1st RadBn]
2d Radio Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [2d RadBn]
9th Communication Battalion (-) (Reinforced) [9th CommBn]
1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (-) (Reinforced) [1st ANGLICO]
1st Force Reconnaissance Co (-) (Reinforced) [1st ForRecon Co]
3d Civil Affairs Group [3d CAG]
4th Civil Affairs Group [4th CAG]
6th Civil Affairs Group [6th CAG]

Marine Ground Combat Element

1st Marine Division (Forward) [1st MarDiv]

Headquarters Battalion [HqBn]
1st Battalion, 14th Marines [1st Bn, 14th Mar]
3d Battalion, 14th Marines [3d Bn, 14th Mar]
5th Battalion, 14th Marines [5th Bn, 14th Mar]

5th Marines/Regimental Combat Team 5 (-) (Reinforced) [5th Mar/RCT-5]

1st Battalion, 1st Marines [1st Bn, 1st Mar]
2d Battalion, 2d Marines [2d Bn, 2d Mar]
3d Battalion, 2d Marines [3d Bn, 2d Mar]
3d Battalion, 5th Marines [3d Bn, 5th Mar]
2d Battalion, 6th Marines [2d Bn, 6th Mar]
2d Battalion, 8th Marines [2d Bn, 8th Mar]
1st Battalion, 24th Marines [1st Bn, 24th Mar]
1st Battalion, 25th Marines [1st Bn, 25th Mar]
1st Reconnaissance Battalion [1st ReconBn]
2d Reconnaissance Battalion [2d ReconBn]
3d Reconnaissance Battalion [3d ReconBn]

7th Marines/Regimental Combat Team 7 (-) (Reinforced) [7th Mar/RCT-7]

1st Force Reconnaissance Company (-) (Reinforced) [1st ForReconCo]
4th Force Reconnaissance Company (-) (Reinforced) [4th ForReconCo]
2d Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment (U.S. Army) [2d Bn, 37th AR]
1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (-) [1st LAR Bn]
2d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (-) [2d LAR Bn]
3d Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion (-) [3d LAR Bn]
1st Battalion, 7th Marines [1st Bn, 7th Mar]
3d Battalion, 1st Marines [3d Bn, 1st Mar]

3d Battalion, 3d Marines [3d Bn, 3d Mar]
3d Battalion, 6th Marines [3d Bn, 6th Mar]
3d Battalion, 4th Marines [3d Bn, 4th Mar]
3d Battalion, 7th Marines [3d Bn, 7th Mar]
3d Battalion, 8th Marines [3d Bn, 8th Mar]
1st Battalion, 6th Marines [1st Bn, 6th Mar]
1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment (Mechanized) (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 36th Inf]
4th Battalion, 14th Stryker Cavalry Regiment (U.S. Army) [4th Bn, 14th Stryker CavReg]

1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division "Ready First" (U.S. Army) [1st BCT, 1st ArmDiv]

1st Battalion, 6th Marines [1st Bn, 6th Mar]
3d Battalion, 8th Marines [3d Bn, 8th Mar]
1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 506th InfReg]
1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 9th InfReg]
1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 37th ArmReg]
2d Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment (U.S. Army) [2d Bn, 37th ArmReg]
1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 77th ArmReg]
1st Battalion, 35th Armor Regiment (U.S. Army) [1st Bn, 35th ArmReg]

Marine Aviation Combat Element

3d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) (Reinforced) [3d MAW]

Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 1 (-) [MWHS 1]

Marine Aircraft Group 16 [MAG-16]

Marine Aircraft Logistics Squadron 16 (-)(Reinforced) [MALS-16]
Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 533 [VMFA(AW)-533]
Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 [VMFA(AW)-242]
Marine Attack Squadron 223 (-) [VMA-223]
Marine Attack Squadron 513 (-) [VMA-513]
Marine Attack Squadron 211 (-) [VMA-211]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 [HMLA-369]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169 [HMLA-169]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 269 [HMLA-269]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367 [HMLA-367]
Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 167 (-) [HMLA-167]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 [HMM-268]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364 [HMM-364]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 774 [HMM-774]
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 266 [HMM-266]
Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463 [HMH-463]
Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363 [HMH-363]
Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466 [HMH-466]
Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361 [HMH-361]
Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 [HMH-465]
Det, Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252 [VMGR-252]
Det, Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 [VMGR-352]

Marine Aircraft Group 31 [MAG-31]

Marine Air Control Group 38 (-) (Reinforced) [MACG 38]

Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 [VMU-1]
Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 2 [VMU-2]
Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 38 [MTACS-38]
Marine Air Support Squadron 3 [MASS-3]
Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38 [MWCS-38]
Marine Air Control Squadron 1 [MACS-1]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 37 (-) (Reinforced) [MWSG-37]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 273 [MWSS-273]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 373 [MWSS-373]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 274 [MWSS-274]
Marine Wing Support Squadron 374 [MWSS-374]
3d Low Altitude Air Defense Battalion [3d LAADBn]

Marine Combat Service Support Element

1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) (-) (Reinforced) [1st MLG]

Combat Logistics Regiment 17 [CLR-17]

Headquarters Company (-) (Reinforced), 7th Engineer Support Battalion [HqCo, 7th ESB]
Combat Logistics Battalion 5 [CLB-5]
Headquarters and Service Co, Combat Logistics Battalion 7 [H&SCo, CLB-7]
Combat Logistics Battalion 1 [CLB-1]

Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (-) (Reinforced) [CLR-15]

9th Engineer Support Battalion [9th EngrSptBn]

30th Naval Construction Regiment (-) (Reinforced) [30th NCR]

46th Engineer Battalion (U.S. Army) [46th EngrBn]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133 [NMCB-133]
84th Engineer Construction Battalion (U.S. Army) [84th EngrConBn]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 22 [NMCB-22]

3d Naval Construction Regiment (-) (Reinforced) [3d NCR]

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 18 [NMCB-18]
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 74 [NMCB-74]

Appendix C
Selected Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

AIF–Anti-Iraqi Forces
ACR–Armored Reconnaissance Regiment
AFDD–Air Force Doctrine Document
AQI/AQIZ–al-Qaeda in Iraq/al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia
AOR–Area of Responsibility
ASC–Anbar Salvation Council
BATS–Biometric Automated Tool Set
BBC–British Broadcasting Company
BCT–Brigade Combat Team
BIAP–Baghdad International Airport
BLT–Battalion Landing Team
BPC–Building Partnership Capacity
CAP–Combined Action Program
CAV–Cavalry
CEB–Combat Engineering Battalion
CERP–Commander's Emergency Reconstruction Program
CENTCOM–U.S. Central Command
CF–Coalition Forces
CG–Commanding General
CGS–Common Ground Station
CIA–Central Intelligence Agency
CJTF–Combined Joint Task Force
CLB–Combat Logistics Battalion
CLR–Combat Logistics Regiment
CMO–Civil-Military Operations
CMOC–Civil-Military Operations Center
CP–Command Post
CPA/CPA–Coalition Provisional Authority
CSS–Combat Service Support
CSSB–Combat Service Support Battalion
DIA–Defense Intelligence Agency
DOD–Department of Defense
ECP–Entry Control Points
EFDC–Expeditionary Force Development Center
EFIC–East Fallujah Iraqi Camp
EKMS–Electronic Key Management System

EOD–Explosive Ordnance Disposal
FLT–Fallujah Liaison Team
FOB–Forward Operating Base
FSS–Fast Sealift Ships
FSSG–Force Service Support Group
GIC–Gulf Investment Company
GCE–Ground Combat Element
HIDACZ–High Density Airspace Control Zone
HQMC–Headquarters Marine Corps
IA–Iraqi Army
IDF–Israeli Defense Force
IECI–Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq
IED–Improvised Explosive Device
IED WG–Improvised Explosive Device Working Group
IIF–Iraqi Intervention Force
IIG–Interim Iraqi Government
IMO–Information Management Officer
ING–Iraqi National Guard
IO–Information Operations
IPT–Integrated Process Team
IPSA–Intermediate Pumping Stations
IRMO–Iraq Reconstruction Management Office
ISF–Iraqi Security Forces
ISR–Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance
IW–Irregular Warfare
JCC–Joint Coordination Center
JDAM–Joint Direct Attack Munition
JIDI–Joint IED Defeat IPT
KIA–Killed in Action
LAR–Light Armored Reconnaissance
MA–Mortuary Affairs
MACCS–Marine Air Command and Control Squadron
MAG–Marine Air Group
MAGTF–Marine Air-Ground Task Force
MARCORSYSCOM–Marine Corps Systems Command
MarDiv–Marine Division
MAW–Marine Aircraft Wing
MCCDC–Marine Corps Combat Development Command
MCIA–Marine Corps Intelligence Activity
MCWL–Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory
MCWP–Marine Corps Warfighting Publication
MEB–Marine Expeditionary Brigade

MEF–Marine Expeditionary Force
MEG–MEF (Marine Expeditionary Force) Engineer Group
MEU–Marine Expeditionary Unity
MHG–Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) Headquarters Group
MLG–Marine Logistics Group
MNC-I–Multi National Corps-Iraq
MNF-I–Multi National Force-Iraq
MNF-W–Multi National Force-West
MNSTC-I–Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq
MNSTC-I–Multi National Support and Training Command-Iraq
MOD–Ministry of Defense (Iraq)
MOI–Ministry of the Interior (Iraq)
MSR–Main Supply Route
MWSG–Marine Wing Support Group
MWSS–Marine Wing Support Squadron
NCO–Noncommissioned Officer
NCR–Naval Construction Regiment
NGO–Nongovernment Organization
OEF–Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF–Operation Iraqi Freedom
OIF II–Operation Iraqi Freedom II
PA–Public Affairs
PL–Phase Line
POE–Points of Entry
POW–Prisoner of War
PRDC–Provincial Reconstruction Development Committee
PRT–Provincial Reconstruction Teams
PSYOP–Psychological Operations
RCT–Regimental Combat Team
RLT–Reconstruction Liaison Team
RPG–Rocket-Propelled Grenade
RROC–Regional Reconstruction Operations Center
SAM–Surface-to-Air-Missile
SVBIED–Suicide Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device
SERT–Seabee Engineer Reconnaissance Teams
SOF–Special Operations Forces
TACON–Tactical Control
TAL–Transition Administrative Law
TF–Task Force
TOC–Tactical Operations Center
TTP–Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures
UAV–Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

USAF–United States Air Force
USA–United States Army
USMC–United States Marine Corps
USN–United States Navy
VBID/VIED–Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device
VCP–Vehicle Checkpoints
WIA–Wounded in Action

Appendix D
Chronology of Events, 2004–2008

2004

March 20	The 82d Airborne Division transfers command of Multi National Force-West to I Marine Expeditionary Force takes responsibility for al-Anbar Province.
March 31	Four civilian Blackwater USA contractors are ambushed and their bodies mutilated by insurgents in Fallujah.
April 5	Units from I Marine Expeditionary Force launch Operation Vigilant Resolve in Fallujah.
April 9	Gen John P. Abizaid, USA, Commanding General of U.S. Forces Central Command, orders Marines to suspend offensive operations against the insurgency in Fallujah.
April 9-April 30	Units from I Marine Expeditionary Force engage in skirmishes and firefights throughout Fallujah.
May 1	I Marine Expeditionary Force withdraws from Fallujah and hands authority over to the Fallujah Brigade.
June 28	The official transfer of sovereignty to Iraq, dissolution of the Coalition Provisional Authority, and transfer of power to the Iraqi Interim Government. Two days later, Marines raise the American flag over the new U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.
July 16	First units of the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit arrive in an-Najaf.
July 23	Six Marines from 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division, complete the first combat, high-altitude parachutedrop in the history of the Marine Corps.
July 31	11th Marine Expeditionary Unit assumes operational control of an-Najaf and al-Qadisiyah Provinces.
August 2	Marines from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Force begin battling units of the Mahdi Militia insurgency in Najaf and Kufa.
August 9	Multi-National Force-West assumes tactical control of 11th Marine Expeditionary Force with the arrival of I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) Command Element.

August 11	11th Marine Expeditionary Force forces engage insurgents southwest, northwest, and northeast of Najaf.
August 21	1st Battalion, 4th Marines raid Kufa.
August 26	In Najaf, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, surround the Imam Ali Mosque. Shrine. Multi National Corps-Iraq orders Marines to cease offensive activities and allow Iraqi officials to peaceably resolve the removal of Mahdi Militia forces.
August 27	Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani negotiates a truce in Najaf. Iraq government declares that hostilities will officially end at 1000.
September 10	The Fallujah Brigade disbands, having failed in its efforts to secure the city.
September 12	LtGen John F. Sattler becomes commanding general, I Marine Expeditionary Force, relieving LtGen James T. Conway.
September 26	Two suicide car bombers try to drive into a base used by U.S. Marines and Iraqi National Guardsmen in Karma, near Fallujah. When challenged, they detonate the cars. No injuries are reported.
October 5	More than 3,000 U.S. and Iraqi troops, including the 24th Marine Expeditionary Force, launch an offensive operation in the southern approaches to Baghdad and take control of a bridge across the Euphrates River.
October 14	Marines launch air and ground attacks against an insurgent stronghold in Fallujah after peace talks are suspended. The peace talks fizzle over the demand that the insurgent mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and other foreign fighters be handed over to the authorities.
November 7	Marines from I Marine Expeditionary Force conduct operations in preparation for a second battle to clear Fallujah of insurgents. These include securing key bridges, surgical air strikes, and seizing insurgent nodes outside the city.
November 2	George W. Bush reelected as U.S. President.
November 8	I Marine Expeditionary Force launches Operation Phantom Fury (Operation al-Fajr) against insurgents in Fallujah. The second battle of Fallujah begins.
November 11	Northern area of Fallujah falls to U.S. Marine forces.
November 13	The initial attack on Fallujah is completed. Search and attack operations commence.

November 14	3d Battalion, 5th Marines, takes the Jolan district in Fallujah. Marines successfully occupy the city.
November 23-27	Elements of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Force, along with U.S. Army soldiers and Iraqi forces, launch Operation Plymouth Rock against insurgents in North Babil Province.
December 21	The 11th Marine Expeditionary Force assumes operational control of Karbala Province from the Polish-led Multi National Division Central-South.
December 23	Operation Phantom Fury concludes. Fallujah secured and cleared of insurgents. Repopulation of the city commences.

2005

January 14	All districts of Fallujah are opened for resettlement.
January 26	CH-53 helicopter crashes in western Iraq, claiming the lives of 30 Marines and one sailor. Currently the single deadliest event for U.S. forces during the war.
January 30	Iraqi national elections held for a Transitional National Assembly. Sunnis largely boycott the vote.
February 20-March 5	Marines and Iraqi security forces launch Operation River Blitz throughout al-Anbar Province. The operation targets insurgents in cities along the Euphrates River including Hit, Ramadi, and Baghdadi.
March 10-25	Regimental Combat Team 7 and its relieving unit, Regimental Combat Team 2, conduct Operation River Bridge.
March 27	II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) relieves I Marine Expeditionary Force as Multi National Force-West.
March	II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) builds 1,700-man police department in the city of Fallujah.
April 1-May 4	Marines from the 2d Marine Division conduct Operation Outer Banks and Operation Patriot Shield to clear the Haditha-Hit corridor of insurgent operations.
April 11	Insurgents attack Camp Gannon at Husaybah. Three Marines are wounded.
March-June	II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) disbands the 60th Iraqi National Guard and integrates 2,000 former ING soldiers into the regular Iraqi Army.

May 2	Two FA-18 Hornet fighters from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 323 collide over Iraq, killing both pilots.
May 7-14	Regional Combat Team 2 conducts Operation Matador against insurgents operating along the Syrian border.
May 25-29	Marines conduct Operation New Market in Haditha to battle entrenched insurgents.
June 6-July 31	Operation Guardian Sword: 2d Marine Division conducts operations against insurgents to support Iraqi Constitutional Referendum.
June 17-22	Operation Spear: Marines focus on the rebel stronghold of Karabilah near the Syrian border.
June 18	Regional Combat Team 8 launches Operation Dagger against insurgent networks in al-Anbar Province.
June 23	Iraqi insurgents carry out the deadliest attack involving U.S. female service members to date when a suicide car bomber rams a convoy in Fallujah. Five Marines and one female sailor (three males and three females) are killed in the attack and 13 others are wounded, 11 female.
June 28-July 6	Regional Combat Team 2 conducts Operation Sword in Hit and Haditha.
July	Marine, Army, and Iraqi Army units conduct Operation Sayaid (Hunter) to continue efforts to secure Anbar Province.
July 7	Operation Scimitar begins with raids in the village of Zaidan, approximately 20 miles southeast of Fallujah, and at least 22 suspected insurgents are detained.
August 3	Fourteen Marine reservists and a civilian interpreter are killed in Haditha when the amphibious assault vehicle they are traveling in is struck by a roadside bomb. Two days earlier, six other Marines are killed near the same city by enemy gunfire.
August 3-10	Marines participate in Operation Quick Strike, an offensive operation aimed at disrupting insurgent activities in Haditha, Haqliniyah, and Barwanah. Marines net nine car bombs, 28 other explosive devices, and capture 36 suspected insurgents.
October 1	Marines from Regional Combat Team 2 conduct Operation Iron Fist to disrupt insurgents filtering into the country from Syria.
October 4-October 19	Marines conduct Operation River Gate in Haditha, Haqlaniyah, and Barwanah to disrupt insurgent activities and secure the triad region.

October 15	The referendum on Iraqi Constitution, and the first phase of Operation Liberty Express.
October 18	The deputy governor of Anbar Province, Talib al-Dulaimi, is assassinated in Ramadi.
November 5-November 17	Regional Combat Team 2 participates in Operation Steel Curtain against insurgents in al-Qa'im along the Iraq-Syria border.
November 19	Haditha Incident: Marines from the 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, are attacked by an insurgent land mine. In the aftermath, several civilians are killed or wounded over questionable circumstances.
November 19	Roughly 150 Iraqi Army soldiers and 300 U.S. Marines and soldiers launch Operation Dhibbah (Bruins) in Ramadi.
November 26	Approximately 400 U.S. Marines and 150 Iraqi Army troops launch a new offensive in the Ma-Laab district of eastern Ramadi, Operation Tigers (Nimur).
November 30	Operation Iron Hammer conducted by Marine and Iraqi armed forces to rid the Hai al-Becker region of insurgents traveling from Syria into Iraq.
December 2	Three hundred Marines from the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, and 200 Iraqi Army soldiers from the 1st Brigade, 7th Division, conduct Operation Harba (Shank) in Ramadi to secure the Anbari capital for elections on 15 December.
December 15	The election for the Iraqi National Assembly. Operation Liberty Express provides security for polling.
December 17	Iraqi soldiers begin Operation Moonlight to disrupt insurgent activity along the Euphrates River near the border with Syria.

2006

January 15-27	Marines with Battalion Landing Team 1/2, and Iraqi Army soldiers conduct Operation Koa Canyon along the western Euphrates River Valley.
February 22	The bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra sparks an outbreak of sectarian violence.
February 28	I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) assumes control of the Multi National Force-West area of operations from II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward).

March 9	U.S. Army LtGen Peter W. Chiarelli, commander of Multi National Corps-Iraq, directs further investigation into events surrounding the 19 November 2005 attack in Haditha.
April 7	The battalion commander of 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, as well as two company commanders, are relieved of command amid the investigation into the Haditha shootings.
April 17	Marines repel an attack by Sunni Arab insurgents in Ramadi, when the insurgents launch a coordinated assault against the city's main government building and two U.S. observation posts. No U.S. casualties result from the 90-minute attack.
May 26	Gen Michael W. Hagee, Commandant of the Marine Corps, announces Marines will face criminal charges for the November 2005 shootings in Haditha.
June 7	Al-Qaeda in Iraq leader Abu Masab al- Zarqawi killed in an air strike.
June 14-July 20	Operation Together Forward: U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces establish curfews, security checkpoints, and more patrols in cities across Iraq.
June 17	1st Brigade Combat Team of the 1st Armored Division launches operations to prevent Ramadi from become a center of al-Qaeda in Iraq.
August 8-October 24	Operation Together Forward II: 15,000 U.S. soldiers clear disputed areas and cede security responsibilities to Iraqi soldiers. Iraqi troops ultimately fail to secure the cleared cities.
Summer-Fall	U.S. Army LtCol Sean B. MacFarland of the 1st Brigade Combat Team begins forging anti-al-Qaeda alliances with Iraqi tribal Awakening Councils.
September	Sheikh Sattar al-Rishawi of the Dulaimi confederation's Albu Risha tribe launches a campaign against al-Qaeda in Iraq.
October	Marines from 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, commanded by LtCol William M. Jurney fight to secure Ramadi in support of Awakening operations.
November 6	Saddam Hussein found guilty by Iraqi tribunal for the 1982 murder of 148 Shiites in Dujail and sentenced to death.
November 7	U.S. midterm elections end Republican control of both houses of Congress.
November 8	Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld resigns. His successor, Robert M. Gates, is confirmed by the Senate on 8 December 2006.

December 21	Eight Marines are charged for the killings of 24 Iraqi civilians in Haditha in November 2005. Four of the Marines, all enlisted, are charged with unpremeditated murder while four officers are accused of dereliction of duty for failures in investigating and reporting the deaths.
December 30	Saddam Hussein executed.

2007

January 10	President Bush announces implementation of "the surge" and appoints Gen David H. Petreaus, USA, commander of Multi National Force-Iraq.
January 15	The Marines of 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, complete an 18-day battalion-level operation in al-Anbar Province in an effort to disrupt insurgent activity along the Euphrates River Valley.
February 7	Five Marines and two sailors are killed when their Marine CH-46 helicopter is shot down by insurgents about 20 miles northwest of Baghdad. It is the fifth U.S. helicopter to be shot down in a three-week period.
February 9	I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) is relieved as Multi National Force-West by II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward).
May 8	Article 32 hearing for the first of four officers facing charges for failing to properly investigate the 19 November 2005 killings of Iraqi citizens in Haditha.
June 12	The second bombing of the Gold Dome Mosque in Samarra.
July 5-8	Marines with Battalion Landing Team 3/1 conduct Operation China Shop II in al-Anbar Province. The Marines conduct census surveys and carry out weapon sweeps.
July 11	Col Christopher C. Conlin, who presided over a preliminary hearing for LtCol Jeffrey R. Chessani, recommends that the former battalion commander be court-martialed on charges of dereliction of duty and violating general orders for failing to investigate allegations against his men that they killed Iraqi civilians in Haditha.
July 14	Regimental Combat Team 2 begins Operation Mawtini in towns along the Euphrates River long used as insurgent sanctuaries. The operation involves more than 9,000 U.S. and Iraqi troops and is aimed at establishing control in remote areas of western al-Anbar Province.
August 9	LtGen James N. Mattis dismisses all charges against LCpl Justin L.

	Sharratt, one of four enlisted Marines who originally faced murder and other charges in the deaths of Iraqi citizens in Haditha. Charges are also dismissed against military lawyer Capt Randy W. Stone.
September 5	The Marine Corps announces that three officers received administrative sanctions in connection with the killing of Iraqi civilians in Haditha because their actions in the aftermath of the incident did not meet the high standards expected of senior leadership. MajGen Richard A. Huck, former commanding general of 2d Marine Division; Col Stephen W. Davis, former commanding officer of Regimental Combat Team 2; and Col Robert G. Sokoloski, former chief of staff of 2d Marine Division, receive letters of censure from the Secretary of the Navy that are filed in their official military records.
September 10	Gen David H. Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker issue report to Congress on progress in Iraq.
	1stLt Andrew A. Grayson, one of four officers to face charges for failing to properly investigate the Haditha incident, rejects a plea deal that would dismiss the charges in exchange for an admission that he covered up the killings of Iraqi civilians. Two days later, another of the four officers, Capt Lucas M. McConnell, is fully exonerated.
September 13	Al-Qaeda in Iraq assassins murder Sheikh Sattar al-Rishawi.
October 19	LtGen James N. Mattis dismisses murder and negligent homicide charges against LCpl Stephen B. Tatum but orders him to general court-martial on lesser charges of involuntary manslaughter, reckless endangerment, and aggravated assault stemming from the Haditha incident. LtGen Mattis also orders criminal charges to proceed against the former battalion commander of 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, LtCol Jeffrey R. Chessani, for failing to accurately report and investigate the same incident.

2008

February 9	I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) relieves II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) as Multi National Force-West.
September 1	U.S. officially transfers authority for al-Anbar Province to the Iraqis.
November 4	Barak H. Obama elected as U.S. President.
December	Last Marines withdraw from Camp Fallujah.

Appendix E
Annotated Bibliography

(Selections in bold type appear in this anthology.)

Primary Material

Abu-Tariq. "Daily Diary of al-Qaeda Sector Leader Called Abu-Tariq." Translation by Multi National Force-Iraq, posted on 10 February 2008 (http://www.usf-iraq.com/?option=com_content&task=view&id=16935&Itemid=128).

> Diary of a member of al-Qaeda in Iraq, detailing the reversals suffered by AQI as a consequence of the alliance between the al-Anbar tribes and U.S. military forces.

Al-Anbar Awakening, vol. 1, *American Perspectives:U.S. Marines and Counterinsurgency in Iraq, 2004-2009.* Edited by CWO-4 Timothy S. McWilliams and LtCol Kurtis P. Wheeler. Quantico, Va.: Marine Corps University Press, 2009.

Al-Anbar Awakening, vol. 2, Iraqi Perspectives: U.S. Marines and Counterinsurgency in Iraq, 2004-2009. Edited by Col Gary W. Montgomery and CWO-4 Timothy S. McWilliams. Quantico, Va.: Marine Corps University Press, 2009.

> A two-volume collection of interviews with both Americans (mostly Marine Corps commanders, but also Army as well as State Department and USAID representatives) and local Iraqi leaders that traces the rise of the insurgency and the origins and development of the al-Anbar Awakening.

Baker, James A., III, and Lee H. Hamilton. *The Iraq Study Group Report.* New York: Vintage Books, 2006.

> The report presents the results of a study assessing conditions in Iraq and offering proposals for bringing stability to the country. The authors focus on two courses: an external approach that calls for engagement with Syria and Iran, and an internal approach that focuses on strengthening Iraq's security apparatus and places the onus for maintain stability on the Iraqis themselves.

Bremer, L. Paul, III, with Malcolm McConnell. *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006.

> Memoirs of Coalition Provisional Authority leader L. Paul Bremer III. Provides information on the inner-workings of the CPA during the critical year following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Campbell, Donovan. *Joker One: A Marine Platoon's Story of Courage, Leadership, and Brotherhood.* New York: Random House, 2009.

> Memoir of Donovan Campbell, commander of a Marine Corps platoon in the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, in 2004. Recounts his experience as a platoon leader and provides details on fighting the insurgency in Iraq and the battle for Ramadi in 2004.

I Marine Expeditionary Force Summary of Action, 2 August 2004-1 February 2005 (Unit Award Recommendation).

I Marine Expeditionary Force Summary of Action, February 2006-February 2007 (Unit Award Recommendation).

II Marine Expeditionary Force Summary of Action, 1 March 2005-28 February 2006 (Unit Award Recommendation).

Unit award recommendations. Provide detailed information and chronologies of operations of I MEF and II MEF during their deployments to Iraq between 2004 and 2007.

Sanchez, LtGen Ricardo S., with Donald T. Philips. *Wiser in Battle: A Soldier's Story*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008.

Memoirs of the chief U.S. commander in Iraq, 2003-2004. Provides information on the emerging insurgency, the capture of Saddam Hussein, the first battle of Fallujah, and the Abu Ghraib scandal.

U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps. *Counterinsurgency*. Army Field Manual 3-24; Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.5. Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army and Marine Corps Combat Development Command, 2006.

A comprehensive analysis and doctrine for conducting modern counterinsurgency operations developed by the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps.

Secondary Material

Alford, LtCol Julian D., and Edwin O. Rueda. "Winning in Iraq." *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 2006, 29-30.

Discusses the need for Marine Corps units to transform themselves into sizeable forces capable of maintaining order and security in the civil sphere at the termination of kinetic warfare. According to the authors, the Corps must also take great care in the recruitment and deployment of military advisers.

Anderson, Col Gary W. "Fallujah and the Future of Urban Operations." *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 2004, 52-58.

Examines the first battle of Fallujah and notes that the battle confirmed what Marines had predicted about the nature of modern urban warfare. The author argues that the Corps must focus on selecting and training the best urban fighters and squad leaders.

Angell, Maj Aaron A. "The Marine Wing Support Squadron." *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2008, 29-34.

Overview of the functions and responsibilities of the Marine wing support squadron. Describes how the MWSS both supports of the air combat element of a Marine air-ground task force and provides logistical support to other elements of the MAGTF.

Armstrong, LtCol Charles L. "Fresh Counterinsurgency Doctrine." *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 2007, 49-50.

Examination of the new Army and Marine counterinsurgency manual, FM 3-24, discussing its merits and contributions while also considering some of its drawbacks.

Axe, David. "Wild West: Marine Corps Aviators Support the Ground Troops in Iraq's Explosive Al Anbar Province." *Leatherneck*, August 2006, 20-24.

Discusses the use of close air support in al-Anbar Province, focusing on the pilots of Marine Fighter Attack All-Weather Squadron 332.

Ayers, Cynthia E. "Iraqi Resistance to Freedom: A Frommian Perspective." *Parameters,* March 2003, 68-70.

Using the psychological and sociological theories of German philosopher Erich Fromm, who argued that societies progress from a sense of insecurity to security as they develop, the author explores the causes of instability in Iraq.

Barno, LtGen David W. "Challenges in Fighting a Global Insurgency." *Parameters*, February 2006, 15-29.

Examines the nature of counterinsurgency and argues that the U.S. military has yet to adequately grasp the nature and character of irregular warfare. Asserts that the U.S. needs to improve its understanding of intelligence and perception in counterinsurgency warfare.

Belanger, Capt Tyson. "The Cooperative Will of War." *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2006, 62-64.

Chronicles the development and training of the Iraqi security forces, touching on the challenges of training soldiers in an environment where potential enlistees and their families are under the threat of intimidation and terror from insurgents.

Benhoff, LtCol David A. "Among the People: 5th Civil Affairs Group in Iraq." *Leatherneck*, July 2008, 36-40.

Documents the operations of the Team 3, Detachment 2, 5th Civil Affairs Group (CAG), as it helps to rebuild the civil infrastructure in al-Anbar Province.

Bergman, LtGen John W. "Marine Forces Reserve in Transition." *Joint Force Quarterly*, 4th Quarter 2006, 26-28.

Provides a broad overview of the activities of Marine Corps Reserve, focusing on civil and combat operations in Iraq and humanitarian relief operations in South Asia and New Orleans.

Biddle, Stephen, Michael E. O'Hanlon, and Kenneth M. Pollack. "How to Leave a Stable Iraq: Building on Progress." *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2008, 40-57.

Considers the successes of the surge and argues that the stability created by the U.S. change in strategy has paved the way for drawing down troops in the near future. The authors believe that stability and security can still be maintained while reducing troop numbers in the country, citing events in al-Anbar Province as an example.

Biddle, Stephen. "Seeing Baghdad, Thinking Saigon." *Foreign Affairs*, March-April 2006, 2-14.

Contends that comparing Vietnam to Iraq is the incorrect approach. Argues that while the war in Vietnam was a Maoist peoples' war, the conflict in Iraq is a communal civil war. Consequently, efforts at Iraqization are only strengthening ethnic divides and fanning the flames of civil conflict.

Bilas, Maj John E. "Developing the Iraqi Army: The Long Fight in the Long War." In *Applications in Operational Culture: Perspectives from the Field*, edited by Paula Holmes-Eber, Patrice M. Scanlon, and Andrea L. Hamlen, 49-78. Quantico, Va.: Marine Corps University Press, 2009.

Detailed case study of the development of an Iraqi Army brigade across 2006 and 2007. Analyzes the metrics used to measure progress.

Bingham, Col Raymond L. "Bridging the Religious Divide." *Parameters*, March 2006, 50-66.

Asserts that the war on terror can only be won if American planners have an understanding of Islam and Islamic culture. Appreciating what the Quran and Islam mean to Muslims and non-Muslims alike will help to strengthen U.S. understanding of the social factors influencing developments in the Middle East.

Birtle, Andrew. "Persuasion and Coercion in Counterinsurgency Warfare." *Military Review*, July-August 2008, 45-53.

Examines three major U.S. counterinsurgencies: the Civil War, Philippine Insurrection, and the Vietnam War. Argues that success in these conflicts was achieved by balancing coercive military operations with political operations that embraced moderation and reconciliation. While the U.S. achieved this balance in the Civil War and Philippine Insurrection, it failed to do so in Vietnam.

Bray, Sgt Jerry E. "A Letter to My Replacement." *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 2007, 31-33.

The author, a former adviser in Iraq, provides a comprehensive view of how his successor should approach his mission and treat his Iraqi colleagues. He stresses cultural understanding as well as being prepared to engage in unanticipated operations.

Broekhuizen, Capt Mark J. "Snipers." *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 2007, 41-45.

Highlights the dangers of snipers in Iraq and provides analysis and proposals for how Marine units should respond to sniper threats.

Byman, Daniel. "Friends Like These: Counterinsurgency and the War on Terrorism." *International Security* 31 (Fall 2006): 79-115.

Examines the role allies play in counterinsurgency operations. Outlines the challenges and problems caused by the fact that the U.S. has often had to rely on weak, corrupt, and often inept allies in its counterinsurgency operations.

Calvin, 1stLt Carin. "The Assaultman in an Urban Environment." *Marine Corps Gazette*, July 2005, 30-31.

Discusses the nature of the fighting during the second battle of Fallujah and presents a series of lessons learned from the battle. Argues that "assaultmen" proved decisive. Recommendations include increasing the number and effectiveness of shoulder launched multipurpose assault weapons (SMAW) and issuing the M4A1 close quarter battle weapon.

Cancian, Col Mark F. "Capitalizing on al Qaeda's Mistakes." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2008, 43-48.

Examines the origins of the Anbar Awakening, noting that al-Qaeda's drive to create a unitary caliphate led it to target the Iraqi tribal system and its leading Sheikhs. In response to these attacks, sheikhs such as Abdul Sattar Abu Risha formed a coalition of tribes to confront al-Qaeda in Iraq.

———. "A Counterinsurgency Dilemma in Al Anbar." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2007, 71-75.

Provides a general overview of the challenges and dilemmas faced by U.S. forces in Iraq. Although Marines have a history of developing counterinsurgency doctrine, they nevertheless continue to utilize heavy firepower. This impacts the Iraqi population, and many Iraqis fear American troops more than and the insurgency.

Carroll, Maj Patrick J. "Stealth Victory." *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 2004, 41-43.

A former adviser to L. Paul Bremer III lays out a number of proposals for creating stability and security in Iraq. They include building effective, indigenous security forces, recognizing that the U.S. and its allies will never have complete clarity on who it is fighting, and acknowledging that the Iraqis need to take the lead in rebuilding the country.

Cavagnol, Richard M., LtCol Richard L. Hayes, and Maj Daniel C. Turner. "From Vietnam to Iraq," *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2008, 10-16.

Presents recommendations for U.S. Marines going to Iraq to act as military advisers to Iraqi forces. The authors draw on the experience in Vietnam as a means of providing a point of comparison and as an example.

Chiarelli, MajGen Peter W., and Maj Patrick R. Michaelis. "The Requirement for Full Spectrum Operations." *Military Review*, July-August 2005, 4-17.

Synthesizes lessons learned by MajGen Chiarelli during his tour as commander of the 1st Cavalry Division in Baghdad. He advocates for a full spectrum approach to

operations in Iraq, in which military, civil affairs, information, and reconstruction operations are concurrently deployed. Anticipates many of the principles that would shape later counterinsurgency doctrine.

Claessen, Maj Erik A. "S.W.E.T. and Blood: Essential Services in the Battle Between Insurgents and Counterinsurgents." *Military Review*, November-December 2007, 91-98.

Belgian officer examines the use of economic support to combat insurgency. Notes that many Middle Eastern insurgency movements, such as Sadr's militia and Hezbollah, also use economic support measures to strengthen their movements. Consequently, counterinsurgent operations cannot assume they are acting unopposed in this arena.

Cloud, David, and Greg Jaffe. *The Fourth Star: Four Generals and the Epic Struggle for the Future of the United States Army.* New York: Crown, 2009.

Comparative biography of Generals David H. Petraeus, George W. Casey Jr., John P. Abizaid, and Peter W. Chiarelli. Examines their careers and explores how their training in the Army during the 1980s influenced the decisions they made as commanders during the Iraq War.

Cobb, Adam. "Iraq: A False Choice." *Small Wars Journal*, 5 November 2007 (http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2007/11/iraq-a-false-choice/).

Written as Gen David H. Petraeus delivered his first progress report to Congress in 2007, the article argues that focus on incremental progress in Iraq has masked the reality that a decades-long commitment is needed if the situation in Iraq is to be stabilized.

Coffey, Maj Ross. "Revisiting CORDS: The Need for Unity of Effort to Secure Victory in Iraq." *Military Review*, March-April 2006, 24-34.

Looks at the use of the civil operations and revolutionary development support system, which combined civil and military operations in South Vietnam. Considers the applicability of a similar model in counterinsurgency operations in Iraq.

Cohen, Eliot, LtCol Conrad Crane, LtCol Jan Horvath, and LtCol John A. Nagl. "Principles, Imperatives, and Paradoxes of Counterinsurgency." *Military Review*, March-April 2006, 49-53.

Broad overview of basic principles and apparent contradictions of modern insurgency warfare. Authors argue that the U.S. military's extraordinary conventional capabilities mean that its opponents will more frequently adopt irregular tactics in the future.

Connable, Maj Alfred B. "Ben." "The Massacre That Wasn't." In *Ideas as Weapons: Influence and Perception in Modern Warfare*, edited by G. J. David and T. R. McKeldin, 341-50. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2009.

An analysis of how the story that U.S. Marines destroyed a mosque during the first battle of Fallujah emerged and eventually spread across the world's media outlets.

The destruction of the mosque ultimately convinced Coalition authorities to suspend Marine activities in Fallujah. The author examines how the story developed and how many elements of it ultimately proved to be false.

Connally, Col Thomas J. "Leaving the Tubes at Home." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2005, 31-34.

Account of the transition of the 3d Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment from being an artillery unit to becoming a security unit in al-Anbar Province.

Cooper, Capt David E. "An Organizational Model for Marines Fighting an Insurgency." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2007, 49-52.

Argues that the current Marine expeditionary force is not adequately equipped for counterinsurgency operations. Recommends greater emphasis on acquiring local intelligence, civil engagement, and waging more effective information and media campaigns.

Cordesman, Anthony H., with Emma R. Davies. *Iraq's Insurgency and the Road to Civil Conflict*. 2 vols. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security International, 2008.

A close examination of the insurgency in Iraq, focusing on its emergence in 2003 and its general development from 2003 through 2007. Provides detailed information about the specific insurgent groups, their goals, and their tactics.

Covert, LtCol Craig H. "Marines on the Borders of Iraq." *Leatherneck*, October 2006, 22-25.

Account of the operations of the border transition team and its work training the Iraqi Department of Border Transition. Discusses U.S. Marine efforts to stem the flow of insurgents across the Iraqi-Syrian border.

———. "Navy Chaplains at War: A Test of Faith." *Leatherneck*, August 2007, 28-31.

Story about Navy chaplains serving in Iraq with Marine Regimental Combat Team 8. Provides an insightful, personal account of their duties and experiences in the field.

Cronin, Audrey Kurth. "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups." *International Security* 31 (Summer 2006): 7-48.

Considers al-Qaida's relationship to the broader Islamist terrorist movement, stressing that the U.S. needs to see the organization as a part of the broader terrorist threat. Argues against seeing jihadism as an unprecedented threat, warning that doing so only romanticizes jihadism and makes it all the more attractive.

Cuomo, Capt Scott A. "Embedded Training Teams." *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 2006, 62-67.

Presents an account of his experience as a captain of an embedded training team (ETT). Notes some successes but also criticizes the deployment of inexperienced ETTs and their lack of engagement with the local population in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Daily, Col Michael N. "Media Analysis in the Expeditionary Environment." *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 2004, 54-60.

Recommends that commanders use media analysis to ensure that they can anticipate negative reporting, emphasize positive accomplishments, and anticipate the impact of Marine Corps actions on populations.

Dalzell, LtCol Stephen. "Where the Streets Have No Names: Looking Past Operation Iraqi Freedom to Future Urban Operations." *Joint Force Quarterly*, 4th Quarter 2006, 40-42.

Considers the evolution of urban warfare in Iraq and anticipates how the U.S. experience and lessons learned will impact future urban operations.

David, Maj John G., and Capt E. Lawson Quinn. "A Tactical Staff Structure for an Ideological War." *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2006, 30-32.

Recommends creating a staff section tasked with conducting information warfare and gauging and managing public affairs.

DeAtkine, Norvell. "It's An Information War." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, January 2004, 64.

Argues that U.S. forces cannot win the Iraq War with massive sweeps of the enemy, but need to better grasp the psychological and civil elements of the struggle.

———. "Reconciliation in Iraq: Don't Hold Your Breath." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, January 2008, 44-47.

Examines the historical and customary obstacles to reconciliation in Iraq among its Kurdish, Sunni, and Shi'a groups. Compares the situation in Iraq to Reconstruction in the American South. In light of the Shi'a's complete lack of political experience, cautions observers against being too critical.

DeCarvalho, LtCol Frank B. "Reaching Out: Partnering with Iraqi Media." *Military Review*, July-August 2008, 87-95.

An examination of U.S. efforts to develop Iraqi media organs. The article sees this effort as part of the broader process of building security and civil relations in Iraq.

Desch, Michael C. "Bush and the Generals." *Foreign Affairs*, May-June 2007, 97-108.
Considers the relationship between George W. Bush's administration and senior U.S. commanders. Examines the history of civil-military relations since the Vietnam War and investigates why tensions existed between the senior military leadership and Bush administration.

Diamond, Larry. "What Went Wrong in Iraq." *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2004, 34-56.

Former adviser to the Coalition Provisional Authority considers the miscalculations and missteps of the Bush administration during the early months of the Iraq occupation.

Dillow, Gordon. "Building Karmah: Fighting Terrorism with Handshakes and Smiles." *Leatherneck*, August 2004, 14-17.

> Account of how Marines have changed tactics from the U.S. Army and begun patrolling openly, on foot, among the Iraqi population as a means of building a closer relationship between the U.S. forces and local Iraqis.

Dobbins, James. "Who Lost Iraq? Lessons from the Debacle." *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2007, 61-74.

> Examines the sources of failure in Iraq, arguing that reversals and setbacks were the consequence of individual and institutional failures. Contends that future leaders need to surround themselves with competent, experiences advisers, encourage disciplined dissent, and redefine the nature and character of the war on terror to prevent repeating the mistakes of the past.

Dunlap, MajGen Charles J., Jr. "Making Revolutionary Change: Airpower in COIN Today." *Parameters,* February 2008, 52-66.

> Discusses the impact of FM3-24 on air power and its implications for the Air Force. The author believes that both FM3-24 and the Air Force's AFDD2-3 still do not adequately confront the challenges of modern counterinsurgency warfare.

Dunne, Maj Jonathan P. "Twenty-Seven Articles of Lawrence of Arabia." *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2007, 10-13.

> Adapts T. E. Lawrence's central articles for the current situation in Iraq, tailored specifically for Marine Corps readers.

Dunn, Scott. "Corporal Becomes First Marine Awarded Medal of Honor in the War on Terror." *Leatherneck*, December 2006, 16-19.

> Story about Cpl Jason L. Dunham, the first Marine to earn the Medal of Honor in the war on terror for sacrificing his life to save two fellow Marines from an insurgent bomb.

Edelstein, David M. "Occupational Hazards: Why Military Occupations Succeed or Fail." *International Security* 29 (Summer 2004): 49-91.

> Surveys a range of military occupations throughout history and discerns a number of common factors and challenges that contributed to their success or failure. Observes that successful occupations were often characterized by the presence of an external threat that made the local population amenable to the presence of a foreign military power.

Eisenstadt, LtCol Michael. "Iraq: Tribal Engagement Lessons Learned." *Military Review*, September-October 2007, 16-31.

> Provides a summary of Iraq's tribes, describing different tribal groups and characteristics and giving readers an overview of the tribal system in Iraq. Argues that civilian

and tribal engagement represent the best and most effective means of providing stability to Iraq.

——— , and Jeffrey White. "Assessing Iraq's Sunni Arab Insurgency." *Military Review*, May-June 2006, 33-51.

An examination of the Sunni insurgency. The authors focus on the amorphous character of the insurgency, consider motivations, and provide a warning against encouraging non-Sunni groups from joining the ranks of the insurgency.

Ellah, Elaine. "Winning Over the Al Anbar Province." *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2007, 31-32.

Short account of U.S. military, State Department, and USAID projects for rebuilding and securing al-Anbar Province. Tactics used by U.S. forces include construction projects, aid programs, and forging tribal alliances.

Emery, LtCol Norman. "Irregular Warfare Information Operations: Understanding the Role of People, Capabilities, and Effects." *Military Review*, November-December 2008, 27-38.

Examines the utility of information operations. While the author stresses its importance in counterinsurgency operations, he also cautions planners from seeing information operations as a silver bullet capable of completely overturning enemy propaganda.

Fearon, James D. "Iraq's Civil War." *Foreign Affairs*, March-April 2007, 2-16.

Examines the nature and character of the civil war in Iraq. Compares the conflict with other civil wars since World War II, especially to Turkey's civil war (1977-80) and the Lebanese civil war (1975-90).

Felicetti, Capt Gary. "The Limits of Training in Iraqi Force Development." *Parameters*, Winter 2006-2007, 71-83.

Argues that an overwhelming focus on training local Iraqis is an inadequate means for building an efficient and reliable security force. Intensive training fails to build the experience and loyalty needed for a dependable force.

Filkins, Dexter. *The Forever War*. New York: Vintage Books, 2009.

Journalist's account of the war on terror, beginning with the rise of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan, the 11 September 2001 attacks, and the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Fore, Henriette Holsman. "Aligning 'Soft' with 'Hard' Power." *Parameters*, Summer 2008, 14-24.

Drawing on Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates's own contention that military success alone will not bring victory, this article argues that the Department of Defense must combine its efforts with those of the U.S. Agency for International Development to help rebuild Iraq and Afghanistan.

Gelpi, Christopher, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Reifler. "Success Matters: Casualty Sensitivity and the War in Iraq." *International Security* 30 (Winter 2005-2006): 7-46.

Authors examine the role that casualty reports have on public support for American military operations in Iraq. They conclude that, under the right circumstances, mounting casualties will not deter or hinder public support for war.

Gibson, LtCol Chris. "Battlefield Victories and Strategic Success: The Path." *Military Review*, September-October 2006, 47-59.

Account by the commander of 2d Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 82d Airborne Division describing the success of counterinsurgency operations in northern Iraq during his tour of duty.

Goodale, 1stLt Jason R., and 1stLt Jonathan F. Webre. "The Combined Action Platoon in Iraq." *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2005, 40-42.

Discusses the development and experience of the first newly implemented combined action platoon since 1971 in South Vietnam, the 3d Platoon, Company G, Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marines. Considers the history of the CAP and its effectiveness as a means of building local security forces in Iraq.

Gray, Colin S. "Stability Operations in Strategic Perspective: A Skeptical View." *Parameters*, Summer 2006, 4-14.

Argues that the United States is inherently an ideological power and that it pursues war in a distinctly "American" way. The author contends that this so-called "American Way of War" is hindering its efforts against terrorism and toward building civil societies in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Gray, Wesley. *Embedded: A Marine Corps Adviser Inside the Iraqi Army*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2009.

Author recounts his experience as a Marine adviser in the Iraqi Army operating in al-Anbar Province in 2006. Includes valuable details on the advising program and the process of training and building a new Iraqi Army.

Grayson, Capt Bryan K. "Holding the Cordon." *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 2005, 39-40.

Detailed analysis and description of cordon and search tactics for urban combat and counterinsurgency operations.

Grice, Maj Michael D. "The Command Elements for the Long War." *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 2007, 21-24.

Examines the impact of needing to ready and deploy a Marine expeditionary force command element every year. The author criticizes the process, noting that the annual tasking creates a constant cycle of preparation, deployment, and recovery that weakens the in-theater fighting capabilities of the MEFs.

———. "Going After Gunshot 66." *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2008, 23-29.

Description of the loss of Gunshot 66, a Cobra attack helicopter, and the problems and challenges that ensued during attempts to rescue it.

Groen, LtCol Michael S. "The Tactical Fusion Center." *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2005, 59-63.

Account and description of the tactical fusion center, a means of acquiring intelligence at the tactical level specifically in service for the ground element of the MAGTF task force.

Gunter, Col Frank R. "Marine Reserve Gets the Job Done." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, June 2004, 56-59.

Discussion of the positive transformation of the Marine Corps Reserve and its better integration into the regular Marine force. Article discusses both the Marine Corps Reserve's positive contribution to Corps operations and new methods designed to better integrate the Reserves.

Halloran, Richard. "Strategic Communication." *Parameters*, Autumn 2007, 4-14.

A critical assessment of communications warfare. The author examines how information and actions can both be deployed to send strategic messages. Ultimately, the author is critical of U.S. communications efforts and calls for a renewed emphasis on U.S. information operations.

Hamel, James. "Operation Iraqi Freedom Moves Forward with Herculean Effort from VMGR-252." *Leatherneck*, May 2006, 44-46.

Story about a Marine aerial refueler and transport squadron, VMGR-252. The account describes the unit's day-to-day operations and its efforts to supply Marines in the field and thus reduce the need for convoys vulnerable to land-mine attacks in Iraq.

Hammes, Col Thomas X. "Countering Evolved Insurgency Networks." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2007, 86-93.

Examines the nature and development of insurgencies. Notes that insurgencies all share a political character, a remarkable endurance, and a link to the will and resolve of the counterinsurgent's home population. The author argues that a common mistake of counterinsurgencies is to use the same tactics as the insurgents.

———. "The Message is the Insurgency." *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 2007, 18-30.

Contends that the current insurgency is primarily a strategic communications campaign supported by a military element rather than a military operation with strategic communications support. Notes that insurgents have drawn upon the lessons of past insurgencies and realize that they won by defeating the political will of their opponents.

Hashim, Ahmed S. *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006.

Analyzes the origins and nature of the Iraqi insurgency. Focuses on the U.S.-backed marginalization of Iraq's Sunni population as a critical factor breeding insurgent networks and bringing together religious and secular resistance groups against the U.S. occupation.

———. "Iraq's Civil War." *Current History* 106 (January 2007): 3-10.

Outlines the eruption of civil war in Iraq between Sunnis and Shi'a in 2005. The author criticizes individuals who use terms such as "sectarian violence" and argues that such terms merely cover up the true nature of the conflict.

Hassner, Ron E. "Islamic Just War Theory and the Challenge of Sacred Space in Iraq." *Journal of International Affairs* 61 (Fall/Winter 2007): 131-52.

Discussion of Islamic rules concerning using mosques and other sacred sites in warfare. Author argues that when planning to search mosques for insurgents and weapons, American soldiers need to be respectful of local values and ensure the complete cooperation of local religious authorities.

Hayden, LtCol H. Thomas. "Counterinsurgency in Iraq Started with Fallujah." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2007, 82-84.

Article criticizes the U.S. decision to cease operations in Fallujah in April 2004, claiming that the action helped encourage the insurgency. Author lays out a number of proposals and ideas for waging effective counterinsurgency operations against the Iraq insurgency.

———. "Measuring Success in Counterinsurgency." *Marine Corps Gazette*, November 2005, 50-51.

Discusses the history of how U.S. policy makers and military planners developed means for assessing the effectiveness of counterinsurgency operations. Considers the U.S. experience in Vietnam and Iraq and the British experience in Malaya.

Higgens, LtCol James B. "Culture Shock: Overhauling the Mentality of the Military." *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2006, 48-51.

Argues that soldiers and Marines need to better understand Iraqi culture when planning and implementing operations. This needs to go beyond just expressing cultural sensitivity, and instead understanding how cultural norms and ideas inform Iraqi perceptions and actions.

Hilgartner, Col Peter L., Maj R. James Caswell, and Capt Richard Zell. "Leading From the Front?" *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2006, 38-40.

Authors criticize Marine junior officers for putting themselves in unnecessary danger to prove their valor and leadership abilities. They argue that this approach only

exposes officers to needless risk and that many Marine officers can lead more prudently and not "from the front."

Hoffman, Frank G. "Neo-Classical Counterinsurgency?" *Parameters*, Summer 2007, 71-87.

Assesses the new Counterinsurgency Field Manual 3-24 and general counterinsurgency practices and argues that U.S. planners must go beyond drawing lessons from the past, treat all insurgencies as unique, and avoid only looking at similarities and patterns among insurgent movements.

Holt, 2dLt Tyler J. "Shoot, Move, and Communicate." *Marine Corps Gazette*, July 2006, 16-17.

Author recounts his experience leading a platoon in Ramadi. He notes the various tactics employed by Marines in Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, describing the nature of urban combat in al-Anbar Province.

Houlgate, Maj Kelly P. "Urban Warfare Transforms the Corps." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, November 2004, 34-37.

Argues that the U.S. Marines must transform themselves into a combat force capable of waging urban warfare and counterinsurgency operations. The author further argues that less emphasis must be placed on the Marine Corps experience in World War II and more attention paid to operations in the Caribbean and Vietnam.

Housenick, Christopher E. "Winning Battles but Losing Wars: Three Ways Success in Combat Promote Failures in Peace." *Military Review*, September-October 2008, 91-98.

Considers the link between phase III and phase IV war planning, noting that often the success achieved during phase III planning can lay the seeds for difficulty during phase IV operations.

Hutson, CWO-3 William E. "Small Unit Action: In the City of Al Turbah." *Leatherneck*, June 2007, 30-35.

Account of the urban warfare experience of 1st Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 23d Marine Regiment, in the city of al-Turbah in al-Anbar Province.

Ieva, Maj Christopher S. "Significance in Semantics." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2007, 28-33.

The author argues that successful counterinsurgencies in areas such as Malaya lead U.S. military planners to assume that combating the insurgency in Iraq could be done in the same way. He contends that the uprising in Iraq must be seen by planners as something more than an insurgency and argues against a single doctrine solution for counterinsurgency.

Kahl, Colin H. "How We Fight." *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2006, 83-101.

Examination of U.S. rules of engagement and adherence to the principle of noncombatant immunity in Iraq. Author argues that protecting civilians is not only necessary

based on ethical and moral grounds, but also a critical part of building trust with the Iraqi population and defeating the insurgency.

———. "In the Crossfire or the Crosshairs? Norms, Civilian Casualties, and U.S. Conduct in Iraq." *International Security* 32 (Summer 2007): 7-46.

Analyzes the question of whether or not U.S. military actions excessively harm civilians. Argues that the U.S. adherence to noncombatant immunity is actually greater than critics contend.

———, and William E. Odom. "When to Leave Iraq: Today, Tomorrow, or Yesterday?" *Foreign Affairs*, July-August 2008, 151-57.

Response to "The Price of the Surge," written by Steven N. Simon, that focuses on the benefits, accomplishments, and drawbacks of the surge and Anbar Awakening.

Karcher, Mary D. "Female Marines Put Training to the Test." *Leatherneck*, February 2005, 44-47.

Story marking the 62d anniversary of the Women's Marine Reserve, discussing the various missions and services provided by women Marines in Iraq.

Keiler, Jonathan F. "Make the Military Justice System Fairer." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, November 2007, 80-81.

Considering events such as the shootings at Haditha, the author contends that the unfairness of the military justice system encourages many officers to avoid reporting potential war crimes committed in the field for fear of an unjust response on the part of the system.

———. "Who Won the Battle of Fallujah?" *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, January 2005, 57-61.

Examines the consequences of the battle of Fallujah and argues that it was a costly victory that U.S. forces can ill afford to repeat. Despite ultimate victory over the insurgency in December 2004, the withdrawal of April 2004 and the high casualty cost means that the insurgency was able to claim a partial victory.

Kilcullen, David. *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Examination of the nature and character of 21st-century insurgencies. Author analyzes modern small wars in relation to the wars of decolonization and the Cold War and considers new means and approaches to defeating the insurgent threat today.

———. "Twenty-Eight Articles." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2007, 53-60.

Brief summary of Australian officer and counterinsurgency adviser's 28 articles for waging effective anti-insurgent operations. Examples of these include knowing the territory, focusing on platoon and squads as opposed to larger units, avoiding knee-jerk reactions, and keeping the initiative.

Kimmage, Daniel. *The Al-Qaeda Media Nexus: The Virtual Network Behind the Global Message*. Washington, D.C.: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2008.

A comprehensive and detailed analysis of how the al-Qaeda and jihadist media networks operate. Among its conclusions are that Osama bin Laden's media operations account for only a fraction of jihadist media operations, that text products are the dominant form of media, and that jihadist media outlets are using established forms to gain legitimacy.

———, and Kathleen Ridolfo. *Iraqi Insurgent Media: The War of Images and Ideas: How Sunni Insurgents in Iraq and their Supporters Worldwide Are Using the Media*. Washington, D.C.: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2007.

Radio Free Europe/Liberty report examines the media techniques of the Iraqi Sunni insurgency, analyzing text, audio visual products, and the internet. Provides specific case studies from April 2007 of insurgent media activities.

Kozlowski, Francis X. *U.S. Marines in Battle: An-Najaf*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Marine Corps History Division, 2009.

Battle study of the battle of an-Najaf in August 2004, during which the Marines of the 11th MEU fought the militia of Muqtada al-Sadr.

Laird, Melvin R. "Iraq: Learning the Lessons of Vietnam." *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2005, 22-43.

Nixon administration Secretary of Defense considers the relevance of his experience as Pentagon chief and his Vietnamization strategy to how the Bush administration conducts the war in Iraq.

Langewiesche, William. "Rules of Engagement." *Vanity Fair,* November 2006, 312-28, 350-55.

Account of the Haditha incident, in which Marines killed Iraqi civilians following an insurgent attack. The author examines the event from the perspective of both the Marines and Iraqis.

Litaker, Col Eric T. "Efforts to Counter the IED Threat." *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2005, 29-31.

Story about the operations of improvised explosive device working groups, initially assembled to confront the challenge of IEDs to I MEF during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Discusses the contributions of IED WGs to OIF and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Long, Austin G. *Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006*. Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2008.

In the wake of the publication of FM 3-24, considers the influence of written counterinsurgency doctrine on U.S. military planning. Argues that doctrine alone does not

define U.S. tactics and strategy. Instead, U.S. forces need to be adaptive and responsive to changing situations.

——— . "The Anbar Awakening." *Survival*, April-May 2008, 67-93.

Scholarly account of the al-Anbar Awakening in western Iraq. The author considers the history of tribes in Iraq and their relationship to the Iraqi state under the monarchy, Saddam Hussein, and the United States.

Lubin, Andrew. "Ramadi: From the Caliphate to Capitalism." *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, April 2008, 54-61.

Recounts the dramatic and sudden development of the Anbar Awakening Councils. Focuses primarily efforts on the efforts of U.S. Army Col Sean B. MacFarland of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, Lieutenant Colonel William M. Jurney of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, and Sheikh Sattar Abdul Abu Risha to build a broad coalition arrayed against al-Qaeda in Iraq.

Malkasian, Carter A. "Counterinsurgency in Iraq: May 2003-January 2007." In *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, edited by Daniel Marston and Carter A. Malkasian, 241-59. New York: Osprey Publishing, 2007.

Overview of the Iraqi insurgency from its origins following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, through the eruption of civil war in 2005, to the appointment of Gen David H. Petraeus as commander of Multi National Force-Iraq in 2007.

——— . "The Role of Perceptions and Political Reform in Counterinsurgency: The Case of Western Iraq, 2004-2005." *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 17 (September 2006): 367-94.

Argues that the perception that the United States would withdraw from Iraq and that the insurgency would achieve victory helped fuel the Sunni insurgency. The author believes that inadequate attention has been paid to the role perception plays in insurgencies and the inclination of moderates to engage in the political process.

———. "Did the Coalition Need More Forces in Iraq? Evidence from Al Anbar." *Joint Force Quarterly*, 3d Quarter 2007, 120-26.

Examines the question of troop levels and their relationship to violence in Iraq. In looking at the case of I MEF in Fallujah, he concludes that deficient troops levels weakened the ability of Coalition forces to provide adequate security and helped to increase the strength and virulence of the insurgency.

———. "Signaling Resolve, Democratization, and the First Battle of Fallujah." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29 (June 2006): 423-52.

Analyzes how the decision to cease military operations against insurgents in Fallujah indicates a lack of decisive resolve on the part of the U.S. military that helped fuel the insurgency and severely weakened counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq. However, the author notes the refusal of the Iraqi Governing Council to support the U.S. effort

demonstrates that military force alone is an inadequate means for signaling resolve in a counterinsurgency.

———. "A Thin Blue Line in the Sand." *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*, Summer 2007, 48-58.

Describes the challenges of Iraqization. Recommends that, despite the threat it poses to weakening the centralized character of the Iraqi state, U.S. authorities entrust security operations to local Sunni groups rather than the Iraqi army. Focuses on U.S. operations in al-Anbar Province.

——— ."Will Iraqization Work?" Working paper, Center for Naval Analyses, Alexandria, Va., February 2007.

Paper examines the challenges of building a national army in Iraq, arguing that it will always be seen by Sunnis as an instrument for establishing Shi'a hegemony. The author posits that more efforts should be made to build local police forces based around communities to confront the security problems in Iraq.

Mann, Maj Morgan. "Steps to Winning." *Marine Corps Gazette*, March 2006, 43-45.

Brief summary of the experiences of Company F, 2d Battalion, 24th Marines, and its operations in Iraq's North Babil Province. Provides detailed descriptions of counterinsurgency operations.

———. "The Power Equation: Using Tribal Politics in Counterinsurgency." *Military Review*, May-June 2007, 104-8.

Discusses the importance of cultivating relationships with local tribes to provide security and stability. Focuses on the experiences of the 2d Battalion, 24th Marines.

Marshall, Maj David H. "Training Iraqi Forces." *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2006, 58-60.

Provides a case study for training local Iraqi forces, focusing on the efforts of the 1st Force Reconnaissance Company to train members of the 504th Iraqi National Guard.

Marston, Daniel, and Carter A. Malkasian. *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare.* New York: Osprey Publishing, 2007.

Anthology of essays describing the changing nature and character of insurgencies and counterinsurgency style warfare. Includes chapters on the Philippines, Malaya, and Iraq.

Martin, Capt Zachary D. "By Other Means." *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 2005, 68-71.

Argues that Marines must alter their approach from fighting large-scale formations to focusing on counterinsurgencies. Makes a case for resurrecting the Vietnam-era combined action platoon as a means of forging closer relations between Marines and Iraqi security forces.

McCary, John. A. "The Anbar Awakening: An Alliance of Incentives." *Washington Quarterly* 32 (January 2009): 43-59.

Provides a good analysis of the Anbar Awakening, exploring the motivations behind the tribal leaders and the pragmatic rationale for building relationships with tribal leaders.

McFate, Montgomery. "The Military Utility of Understanding Adversary Culture." *Joint Force Quarterly*, 3d Quarter 2005, 42-48.

Examines the renewed emphasis on the part of the U.S. military to understand the local customs and culture of Iraq. The author argues that this is a critical component for successfully combating the insurgency in Iraq and bringing about stability and security.

Millen, LtCol Raymond. "The Hobbesian Notion of Self-Preservation Concerning Human Behavior during an Insurgency." *Parameters*, Winter 2006-2007, 4-13.

Uses Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* to explain the role populations play in accepting either an insurgent or counterinsurgent's regime. The author contends that a population's desire for security means that the people will gravitate toward the force best able to provide it, rather than return to a Hobbesian state of nature.

Morris, LtCol Michael F. "Al Qaeda as Insurgency." *Joint Force Quarterly*, 4th Quarter 2005, 40-50.

Considers whether al-Qaeda is a terrorist group or an insurgency. Argues that it is a global, fascist, ideologically driven insurgency. Consequently, U.S. strategy needs to focus on the practices of counterinsurgency.

Moyar, Mark A. *A Question of Command: Counterinsurgency from the Civil War to Iraq*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009.

Book explores the role that individual leadership has played in the success or failure of counterinsurgency campaigns. Beginning with the American Civil War, the study examines leadership and insurrections in the Philippines, Malaya, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Muckian, LtCdr Martin J. "Structural Vulnerabilities of Networked Insurgencies: Adapting to the New Adversary." *Parameters*, Winter 2006-2007, 14-25.

Notes how planners are looking to past insurgencies as a means of determining the best strategies to use against the current insurgency in Iraq. However, the author believes that the older Maoist/Marxist insurgencies are not necessarily the best models and recommends that planners better grasp the current insurgency in Iraq before drawing on lessons from the past.

Mulrine, Anna. "Emphasizing Ethics Even as Bullets Fly; The Haditha Case Undermines U.S. Credibility," *U.S. News and World Report*, 19 June 2006.

Examines the Haditha shootings and notes that the event and the subsequent U.S. reaction have harmed U.S. counterinsurgency efforts and efforts to win the support of the population.

Murphy, Col Dennis M., and LtCol James F. White. "Propaganda: Can a Word Decide a War?" *Parameters*, Autumn 2007, 15-27.

Since the center of gravity in the war on terror is extremist ideology, the authors argue that the U.S. must use all means necessary to wage information war. The article also provides a detailed account of the history of U.S. wartime communications strategies and operations since World War I.

Nagl, John A. *How to East Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Analysis of counterinsurgency campaigns in Malaya and Vietnam. Author explores and compares the British and American approaches to warfare and considers the influence of both on how they battle insurgencies and fight irregular wars. Author subsequently was on the writing team that produced the FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 *Counterinsurgency* manual.

Nasr, Vali. "The Shia Revival." *Military Review*, May-June 2007, 9-13.

Examines the emergence of Shi'a Islam and its revival in Iraq. The author sees it as part of a broader phenomenon impacting the Middle East. The article also provides contextual information on the history and character of Shi'a Islam.

———. "When the Shiites Rise." *Foreign Affairs*, July-August 2006, 58-74.

Analyzes how the empowerment of Iraq's Shiites has sparked a Shiite revival and altered the religious and political face of the Middle East. The article considers the implications of the Shiite revival and the possibility of sectarian strife throughout the region.

Nieland, Capt Matthew A., and Capt Michael A. Dubrule. "Counterintelligence/Human Intelligence." *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 2005, 18-20.

Story about Human Intelligence Exploitation Teams and their acquisition of intelligence in the battlefield to help Marine Expeditionary Force operations.

Odierno, LtGen Raymond T., LtCol Nichoel E. Brooks, and LtCol Francesco P. Mastracchio. "ISR Evolution in the Iraqi Theater." *Joint Force Quarterly*, 3d Quarter 2008, 51-55.

Examines the importance of intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance in helping to build the conditions in which the Iraq surge could succeed.

O'Hara, SSgt Rory D. "ASCOPE." *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2007, 46-47.

Recommends that Marines waging counterinsurgency operations use area, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events (ASCOPE) as a means for assessing the effectiveness of COIN activities.

Ortiz, Col Paul R. "Unit Operations Center Getting High Marks in Iraq." *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2005, 34-40.

Examines the development of the united operations center, a mobile command and control center designed for Marine forces.

Packer, George. *The Assassin's Gate: America in Iraq*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005.

Account of the rise of the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the subsequent rise of the Iraq insurgency in 2003, written by a *New Yorker* staff writer.

Palazzo, Maj Louis J. "To Build a Nation's Army." *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 2005, 35-36.

Story about the development of the Iraqi security forces, an umbrella term that encompasses the Iraqi National Guard, the Iraq border patrol, Iraqi police, Iraqi regular army, and facility protection service. Describes U.S. Marine efforts to build up the force.

Patriquin, Capt Travis. "Using Occam's Razor to Connect the Dots: The Ba'ath Party and the Insurgency in Tal Afar." *Military Review*, January-February 2007, 16-25.

Argues that the U.S. needs to reassess its policy in Iraq by acknowledging that a sizeable portion of Iraq's population does not desire democracy. The author believes that the simplest and most effective means of bringing stability to Iraq is to engage the tribes and clans of that country, rather than attempt to bring about a fully functional democracy.

Payne, Kenneth. "The Media as an Instrument of War." *Parameters*, Spring 2005, 81-92.

Contends that the media stands as a critical element of warfare. However, the author also argues that international agreements designed to govern the use of media on the battlefield need to be reassessed and updated to come to terms with the Internet and 24-hour news networks.

Petraeus, LtGen David H. "Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq." *Military Review*, January-February 2006, 2-12.

Author presents an overview of lessons and observations learned during his tour of duty in Iraq, stressing the benefits and needs for adaptability and initiative taking on the part of commanders.

Reider, Col Bruce J. "Strategic Realignment: Ends, Ways, and Means in Iraq." *Parameters,* Winter 2007-2008, 46-57.

Argues that the U.S. must rethink its approach to the Iraq War and see that it has developed from an insurgency into a mixture of civil war, insurgency, and terrorism.

Recommends that the U.S. focus its efforts on resolving the sectarian divide and reducing civil strife.

Reist, BGen David G. "Twelve Things I Wish I had Known." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2007, 76-78.

The former deputy commanding general for support with Multi National Force-West recounts his experience in Iraq, focusing on the interconnectedness between economics and security, the dynamics of the Iraqi tribal system, and the use of strategic communications systems.

Ricks, Thomas E. *Fiasco:The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.

Examination of the U.S. involvement in Iraq in 2003-2004. Focuses on the lead up to the war and the unpreparedness of U.S. forces for both occupation and counterinsurgency operations.

——— . *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*. New York: Penguin Books, 2009.

Account of the surge, Anbar Awakening, and transformation of overall U.S. policy in Iraq beginning in 2006, with a focus on the contributions of Gen David H. Petraeus, USA.

Rueda, Edwin. "Tribalism in the Al Anbar Province." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2006, 11-14.

Concise history of the emergence of Iraq's tribal system and its influence on politics during the Ottoman, British, and Ba'athist regimes.

Sattler, LtGen John F, and LtCol Daniel H. Wilson. "Operation Al Fajr: The Battle of Fallujah—Part II." *Marine Corps Gazette*, July 2005, 12-24.

Account of the second battle of Fallujah, related by the commander of the I Marine Expeditionary Force, LtGen John F. Sattler. Article provides a commander's perspective to the operations.

Scales, MajGen Robert H. "Urban Warfare: A Soldier's View." *Military Review*, January-February 2005, 9-18.

Description of the nature and character of urban warfare operations in Iraq.

Schwarz, Lt Anthony J. "Iraq's Militias: The True Threat to Coalition Success in Iraq." *Parameters*, Spring 2007, 55-71.

Considers the role militias have played in fomenting sectarian and sectional strife in Iraq. Argues that the U.S. must focus on defeating the militias in order to bring civil order back to the country.

Searle, LtCol Thomas R. "Tribal Engagement in Anbar Province: The Critical Role of Special Operations Forces." *Joint Force Quarterly*, 3d Quarter 2008, 62-66.

Examines the development of tribal engagement in al-Anbar Province, initiated by special operations forces and carried out by Marines and soldiers.

Seifert, Maj Robert J. "Iraq and the AC-130: Gunships Unleashed." *Joint Force Quarterly*, 2d Quarter 2007, 78-83.

Discusses the deployment of AC-130 gunships in Iraq and their use in counterinsurgency combat.

Sepp, Kalev I. "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency." *Military Review*, May-June 2005, 8-12.

Presents an overview of counterinsurgency tactics throughout history, including a number of charts and graphics listing and describing important insurgencies.

Simon, Steven N. "The Price of the Surge: How U.S. Strategy Is Hastening Iraq's Demise." *Foreign Affairs,* May-June 2008, 57-76.

Considers the successes of the surge and acknowledges that it has helped bring order to Iraq. However, the author argues that the policy is not sustainable and will not lay the foundations for a long term reconstruction of Iraq.

Simpson, Ross W. "Fallujah: A Four Letter Word." *Leatherneck*, February 2005, 16-21; March 2005, 14-19.

A two-part article describing the experiences of a single platoon of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, during the battle of Fallujah. Detailed and comprehensive examination of the nature and character of the battle.

———. "In the Crosshairs: USMC Snipers in Iraq." *Leatherneck*, June 2004, 24-28.

Presents an overview of sniper activities in the Corps during the battle of Fallujah.

Skiles, SgtMaj William. "Urban Combat Casualty Evacuation." *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2008, 46-50.

Details the duties and operations of a casualty evacuation team in Iraq.

Skuta, LtCol Philip C. "Partnering with the Iraqi Security Forces." *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2005, 36-39.

Story about the activities of Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, in Iraq. The article discusses how 2/7 has worked to help build Iraqi forces and provides advice and recommendations to commanders for building relations with the local Iraqi soldiers.

Smith, Maj Niel, and Col Sean B. MacFarland. "Anbar Awakens: The Tipping Point." *Military Review*, March-April 2008, 41-52.

The authors, both veterans of stabilization efforts in al-Anbar Province, recount how members of the "Ready First" Brigade Combat Team engaged the local tribes and encouraged them to join anti-al-Qaeda awakening councils.

Snead, Cpl Micah. "Marine Air In Iraq: 2d MAW Concludes Successful OIF Deployment." *Leatherneck*, May 2006, 16-20.

Describes 2d Marine Air Wing's tour of duty. Provides a good general overview of air combat operations in Iraq.

Stubbs, Capt Paul D. "No Man's Water." *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2005, 20-21.

Story about Marine riverboat patrols of the small craft company (SCC). Article examines the Marines' activities and stresses their qualifications and capabilities, noting that the unit is the only one in Iraq equipped for river patrols.

Swabb, 1stLt Eric F. "Restrictive Rules of Engagement and Force Protection." *Marine Corps Gazette*, October 2006, 36-38.

Examines the rules of engagement and argues that Marines must be educated to see them as a critical part of effective counterinsurgency operations, not as a restrictive device that places Marines in danger.

Tomes, Robert R. "Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare." *Parameters*, Spring 2004, 16-28.

Review article of major scholarly works on counterinsurgency. Considers works by Roger Trinquier, David Galula, and Frank Kitson. The author warns U.S. planners not to look to the U.S. experience in Vietnam as a source for lessons on the current struggle in Iraq.

Vasquez, Capt Michael. "Tribalism Under Fire." *Marine Corps Gazette,* January 2008, 62-68.

Examines the Anbar Awakening, focusing specifically on how U.S. Marine counterinsurgency doctrine and activities helped to build tribal alliances arrayed against al-Qaeda in Iraq throughout al-Anbar Province.

Visconage, Col Michael D. "Turning the Tide in the West." *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2008, 8-13.

Summary of the emerging Anbar Awakening, focusing on the participation of U.S. Marines in forging tribal alliances in western Iraq.

Vlahos, Michael. "Fighting Identity: Why We Are Losing Our Wars." *Military Review*, November-December 2007, 2-12.

Provides historical background and context to insurgency and counterinsurgency. Author examines the failure of U.S. troops to learn the lessons of tribal engagement.

Walker, Martin. "The Revenge of the Shia." *Wilson Quarterly* 30 (Autumn 2006): 16-20.

Speculative article in which the author considers the possibility of a general war between Sunni and Shi'a groups erupting throughout the Middle East. He considers a range of possibilities and notes the apprehensions of Sunni Arab leaders such as King Abdullah of Jordan and Hosni Mubarek of Egypt about the rising power of Shi'a Iran.

Wallace, Col David A. “Battling Terrorism under the Law of War.” *Military Review*, September-October 2007, 101-3.

Asserts that U.S. forces must adhere to the laws of war when fighting the war on terror. The author argues that doing so supports the Geneva Convention, encourages enemies to surrender, promotes unit discipline, and maintains international support of the U.S. military effort.

West, Maj Owen. “Catch and Release.” *Marine Corps Gazette*, June 2007, 26-31.

Argues that the U.S. military’s obsession with Western-style rule of law comes at the expense of understanding the necessities of war. By focusing on detention, the U.S. military has committed itself to a counterinsurgency strategy that lacks funds and facilities.

West, F. J. “Bing.” “The Fall of Fallujah.” *Marine Corps Gazette*, July 2005, 52-58.

Story about Operation Phantom Fury, the U.S. Marine Corps operation launched in the winter of 2004 to clear Fallujah of terrorists. Provides firsthand description of the events.

———. *No True Glory: A Frontline Account of the Battle of Fallujah*. New York: Bantam Books, 2005.

Firsthand accounts of the battles of Fallujah. While it focuses on the accomplishments of Marines in the fights, it also explores reasons for the failures of the first battle of Fallujah, focusing on political-military tensions and a confused chain of command.

———. *The Strongest Tribe: War, Politics, and the Endgame in Iraq*. New York: Random House, 2008.

Explores more recent developments in Iraq, focusing on the new strategy implemented by Gen David H. Petraeus, USA. The author concentrates on the experiences of the Marines in the al-Anbar Province, continuing his account from where he left off in *No True Glory*.

Wheeler, LtCol Kurtis P. “Good News in Al Anbar?” *Marine Corps Gazette*, April 2007, 36-41.

An overview of I MEF’s accomplishments in al-Anbar Province during its deployment of 2007-2008. Focuses on the Awakening and the role of Marines and local tribes in building a local Iraqi police force.

Williams, Timothy. “American Exit Increases Optimism in Falluja,” New York Times, 30 December 2008.

Report on the withdrawal of U.S. Marines from Camp Fallujah, commenting on the symbolic nature of both the withdrawal and the new security and stability that has come to define the region.

Woodward, Bob. *Bush at War*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002.

———. *Plan of Attack: The Definitive Account of the Decision to Invade Iraq*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004.

———. *State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006.

———. *The War Within: A Secret White House History, 2006-2008*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008.

Series of books recounting the Bush administration's prosecution of the war on terror, the war in Afghanistan, and the war in Iraq. Provides inside accounts of the inner-workings of the administration and its decision-making process.

Back Cover: The device reproduced on the back cover is the oldest military insignia in continuous use in the United States. It first appeared, as shown here, on Marine Corps buttons adopted in 1804. With the stars changed to five points, the device has continued on Marine Corps buttons to the present day.