

POSITION PAPER

Subj: DEALING WITH A BAATHIST PROTO-INSURGENCY IN IRAQ

1. **BACKGROUND.** In March, I predicted that the Baath Party's most probable post-war course of action would be to morph themselves into a popular insurgent movement and attempt to wage a guerilla war against coalition forces. In recent days, there have been a series of well- organized attacks on US in central Iraq that resemble the classic nascent first stage of the three stages of insurgency. If this is the case, we should apply classic counterinsurgency doctrine early and energetically.
2. **DISCUSSION**
 - a. The first phase of a classic insurgent strategy is to conduct low level hit and run attacks, build political cadres and sanctuaries in areas where disaffection is greatest, and seek sanctuaries in third nations.
 - b. The classic successful response to this first phase has been to remove the potential causes of popular dissatisfaction, eradicate the insurgent cadres before they mature, insert government alternatives to the insurgent.
 - c. Ambassador Bremmer appears to have grasped the first principle and the administration has made it clear that it will tolerate no third nation sanctuaries. The devil in counter-insurgency remains in the details.
 - d. The nexus of the problem appears to be in Fallujah, a predominately Sunni city, where Baathist loyalties remain strong although sections of Baghdad remain problematical.
 - e. Another problem is the assignment of Army mechanized infantry in a potential insurgent zone. This is not a criticism of mechanized infantry that has performed magnificently in conventional combat. But mechanized infantry has two strikes against it in counterinsurgent warfare, particularly in urban areas: (1) there aren't enough dismounted infantry for counter-insurgent area control operations. (2) They aren't prepared by training or temperament for such operations. None have gone through the Fort Polk urban rotations that stress the "three block war".
 - f. There is not a local Iraqi alternative to the Baath hardliners in most locales. Such mechanisms must be created.
 - g. The most obvious message being sent by Baathist hardliners is that, "you are not better off today than you were three months ago". This is the only popular message they have. In the long run, it will be discredited, but the Iraqi's need a clear message that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and they must see definite glimmers along the way.
 - h. The Baathists cannot be allowed to merge in a temporary alliance with Shiia radicals in a National Liberation Front. The Israelis allowed natural enemies in Lebanon to band together due to political ineptitude. We cannot repeat this mistake.
 - i. We must avoid making the mistake of assuming the Baath loyalists will always be inept. Freed of the suffocating day- to- day supervision of a

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corrupt government and party leadership, the younger cadres can be expected to learn from experience and adapt. It is likely that they will eventually challenge the senior leadership. We must stamp them out before they get to that point.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. Secretary Bremmer must develop a road map to reconstruction with milestones. It must be widely publicized with milestones met celebrated and milestones missed honestly admitted. This will go a long way toward taking away the potential causes of dissatisfaction among the majority of the population that can be expected to be the swing vote in any insurgency or revolutionary situation.
- b. We need to engage the IOs, NGOs, and PVOs in a constructive manner in national recovery. They are a pain in the neck to deal with, but they are reasonably cost effective, and that cost does not come out of the DOD budget.
- c. A Marine Corps Task Force should be dispatched to get a handle on Fallujah. They specialize in "tough love" and the three- block war. The Marines won't like it, but they will do what they are told. The citizens of Fallujah won't like it, but they'll be glad to have the Army back when the Marines get done with them.
- d. Mobile Training teams proficient in counter-insurgent operations should be dispatched to get the mechanized infantry up to speed on counter-insurgent operations, and they should be replaced as quickly as possible with light infantry that have been through the Fort Polk rotation.
- e. Groups of anti-Baath Iraqi "young Turks" should be recruited and trained to provide armed anti-Baath cadres for villages and urban neighborhoods. If properly trained in military skills and democratic values by special ops teams, they could provide the cadre for effective long-term local leadership and an antibody against insurgent infection.
- f. An effective means of interagency coordination is needed at the national and regional level. IOs, NGOs, and PVOs should be included in the reconstruction effort to ensure against duplication of effort. Not all will participate in a cooperative effort, but those who do will be value added in the long run.

Most respectfully,

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