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A New Type of Insurgency? A Case Study of the Resistance in Iraq

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A New Type of Insurgency?
A Case Study of the Resistance in Iraq

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2 Literature Review.....	4
Defining Insurgency.....	4
Carl von Clausewitz: <i>On War</i>	10
Mao Tse-tung: <i>On Revolution and War</i>	13
Che Guevara: <i>On Guerilla Warfare</i>	18
Dr. Steven Metz: <i>Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century</i>	20
Chapter 3 Framework for Analysis.....	28
Chapter 4 Case Study: Iraq.....	39
The Overall Situation (preconditions).....	39
The Goal(s) of the Insurgency.....	42
The Program for Gaining Power (insurgent strategies).....	46
Popular Support.....	55
The Insurgent Organization and Unity.....	60
External Support.....	68
Chapter 5 Conclusion.....	74
References.....	79

List of Tables

Table 1	US Military poll rating Iraqi confidence in security	58
Table 2	US Military poll of Iraqi support of Coalition presence	58
Table 3	CPA poll about the Iraqi perceptions of the insurgents	59

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ABSTRACT

Insurgency is considered to be the principal form of conflict in the world today. Since the end of WWII, large-scale conventional war between states has been minimal. In Iraq, a band of insurgents are attempting to defy the strongest power in the world. This insurgency in Iraq may be the beginning of a new phenomenon of insurgency conflict.

This thesis argues that the Iraqi insurgency has no center of gravity, with no clear apparent leader or leadership. As seen in other examples of insurgency throughout history, no leadership has emerged in response to any of the conditions present in Iraq. There is no attempt to seize and actually hold territory, and no single, defined, or unifying ideology. Most important, through the research of this project, there has been no identifiable insurgent organization. It is true that there are multiple organizations involved, such as Al Qa'ida and Al Ansar, but there is no clear indication of any cohesion in the insurgency.

This insurgency involves small groups who communicate, coordinate, and conduct their campaigns without a precise central command. The command and control

is a very loose environment where individuals gravitate toward one another to carry out armed attacks, exchange intelligence, trade weapons, and then disperse at times never to operate together again.

The immediate goal of the insurgency in Iraq is to disrupt the political process and drive US forces out of Iraq. However, each element of the insurgency is also driven by its own unique motivations. No matter the differences, they fight together for a common cause. Their strategy is to seize power by draining the Coalition financially and winning popular support through coercion and fear. Their resources may be unlimited, and with support coming in from all corners of the earth, they may be unstoppable. The future will determine whether or not the insurgency in Iraq is a new type of insurgency. If the Iraqi example fails to spread to other countries, then it can be said that the insurgency in Iraq was a phenomenon unique only to Iraq and its conditions.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Insurgency has existed throughout history but only occasionally has any strategic significance in international affairs. At times insurgency was considered a secondary problem within a conflict between great powers. At other times, insurgency has been strategically significant by threatening regional stability, and drawing subversives into direct conflict, ultimately causing complete disaster. In almost every conflict, insurgent methods have been involved, and in some cases, were extremely crucial to the outcome of the conflict. Examples of insurgency can go back as far as the sixth century B.C. when the Chinese tactician and military historian Sun Tzu engaged in insurgency and also analyzed it perceptively. Other classic examples in history were: the Peloponnesian Wars, the Romans against Hannibal, Rogers's Rangers during the French and Indian War, the "Swamp Fox", Francis Marion, in the Revolutionary War, Russian insurgency against Napoleon, General Scott's Mexico City campaign, T.E. Lawrence and the Arabs against the Turks, and Mao Tse-tung's famous communist insurgency in China.

Since the end of WWII the international system has been spared from major conflict. The world has entered another period when sustained, large-scale conventional war between states is unlikely, at least in the near term. With mounting discontent from globalization, the failure of economic development to keep pace with expectations, the

collapse of traditional political, economic, and social orders, widespread anger and resentment, population pressure, the presence of weak regimes, and the widespread availability of arms are making insurgency common and strategically significant. In fact, insurgency is considered to be the principal form of conflict in the world today. Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart, a British army captain in the post 1945 period, said that “campaigns of this . . . (insurgency) kind are the more likely to continue because it is the only kind of war that fits the conditions of the modern age.” (Hamilton 4)

Counterinsurgency support has been part of American strategy since Vietnam, but it must be thoroughly examined whether or not the insurgency in Iraq can be compared with insurgencies in the past. It may be true that there are fundamental principles involving insurgency and countering insurgency that will never change, but it is critical for the United States military and other government entities to confront the new variants of insurgency and compare them with the lessons learned from the past. In these times understanding insurgency is essential. In order to understand insurgency it is important to review the famous theorists on the subject. Some consider Mao Tse-tung and his writings on communist revolution as the key to understanding insurgency doctrine; while others consider Carl von Clausewitz and Sun Tzu as the premier authority on questions about insurgency. Regardless, insurgency doctrine can be attributed to a number of theorists, and it encompasses a wide range of concepts and definitions.

The objective of this thesis is to review the nature of insurgency thoroughly in order to have a complete and comprehensive understanding of the subject, and to hopefully better understand this continuing phenomenon. A clear definition of insurgency is necessary, and is explored in detail during the literature review. Without a

clear understanding of insurgency there is little chance that it can be countered, or more precisely, defeated. The desire is to be able to explain the process and existence of insurgency, not simply in political terms, but both as a method and as a type of war. Insurgency can therefore better be represented as a strategic tool for policymaking.

The focus is purely on the nature, attributes, and character of the insurgency in Iraq. The goal will be to provide an assessment as to whether or not the insurgency in Iraq has developed into a new type of insurgency. It is important to examine this thoroughly in order to monitor any trends or replications of the insurgency in other areas of the world. The debate has been whether or not the insurgency in Iraq is a national insurgency, liberation insurgency, both, or a new type of insurgency which has not yet been defined or seen in modern history. The specific questions that will be analyzed are defined in the analytical framework. By researching and providing information on these questions, hopefully policy issues (military as well as political) can better be explained and prosecuted.

The insurgency in Iraq is important to study because it may be the beginning of a new phenomenon of insurgency conflict. Iraq also has strategic importance to the West, specifically the US, due to its rich oil resources and the potential for democracy in that region. It can arguably be said that the Middle East is the most unstable region in the world. In the current climate of global terrorism, the outcome of the war in Iraq will have an enormous effect on stability of the Middle East as well as the world in general. A small band of insurgents are attempting to defy the strongest power in the world. Therefore, the outcome will have huge ramifications in altering regional stability.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining Insurgency

It is debatable as to whether or not a valid concept of insurgency war exists today in a single or clear manner within US military doctrine. The theories created after 1945 were only marginally effective in their response to insurgency. In addition, most counter-guerilla operations were mainstreamed into the conventional fighting force of the US military effort in Vietnam and did not represent a complete understanding of the subversive threat posed by the existing insurgency. Many argue that the response in Vietnam was doomed to fail because it was only a military response. The distrust and confusion between military commanders and policymakers during the most critical times was evidence of this failure. Donald Hamilton is clear in stating that the flaws in counterinsurgency theory were not part of a misdiagnosis of the strategic problem in Vietnam, “the wrong war”, but rather the flaws were indicative of not having complete understanding of insurgent strategy from the beginning and thus maintaining a defensive or reactionary posture toward combating subversive insurgent threats. Hamilton states, “A clear understanding of both the theory, and the realities of insurgency war, as well as the events that took place early in America’s involvement with Vietnam, reveal that the US was not at all misled by a revolutionary model of warfare, but misunderstood its insurgency parameters and how to effectively wage war against such a threat.” (Hamilton

7)

The beginning of the 1960s saw an outpouring of effort toward an unconventional warfare doctrine. US military leaders, politicians, and academics alike responded with a flurry of effort. These existing studies representing insurgency warfare, however, looked primarily at the political and social consequences and did not accurately explain insurgency as a separate facet in war making or as a separate strategic thought.

In 1962, the official army definition for insurgency was:

A condition of subversive political activity, civil rebellion, revolt, or insurrection against a duly constituted government or occupying power wherein irregular forces are formed and engage in actions which may include guerrilla warfare, that are designed to weaken or overthrow that government or occupying power.

(Hamilton 5)

As a part of this definition, the term counterinsurgency was described as “the entire scope of actions (military, police, political, economic, psychological, etc.) taken by or in conjunction with the existing government of a nation to counteract, contain, or defeat an insurgency.” (Hamilton 5)

In the early 1980s, the US military settled on a document which officially merged the term insurgency with the phrase low-intensity conflict:

Low intensity conflict is a limited politico-military struggle to achieve political, social, economic, or psychological objectives. It is often protracted and ranges from diplomatic, economic, and psycho-social pressures through terrorism and insurgency. Low intensity conflict is generally confined to a geographic area and is often characterized by constraints on the weaponry, tactics, and the level of

violence. (Hamilton 6)

It is also important not to confuse the term insurgency with other terms. Terms that may often be confused with insurgency are: subversion, coup d'etat, terrorism, guerrilla war, revolution, and even civil war. An English translation of the Latin word *insurgere* occurred as early as 1765. Insurgency came to be commonly recognized as having to do with internal political revolution perpetrated by a certain group publicly acknowledged as being nonbelligerent. Two centuries later, Jack C. Plano describes insurgency as a revolt against an established government not reaching the proportions of a full-scale revolution. Under international law, an insurgency is considered a rebellion not recognized as a belligerency or civil war. Others believe that insurgency is a term used in international law that describes an uprising against a constituted government that falls short of revolution, rebellion, or civil war. (Hamilton 14)

In 1964, David Galula wrote *Counterinsurgency Warfare*. It was considered to be one of the first Western works to establish a hierarchy that attempted to explain insurgency as a separate concept, a part of political revolution and war. Galula lists three stages to this hierarchy: revolution, plot (coup d'etat), and insurgency. Galula points out that these terms embody the elements of "revolutionary war" which is an explosive upheaval that can be better explained after the fact. Galula states:

. . . an insurgency is a protracted struggle conducted methodically, step by step, in order to attain specific intermediate objectives leading finally to the overthrow of the existing order (China, 1927-49; Greece, 1945-50; Indochina, 1945-54; Malaya, 1948-60; Algeria, 1954-62). To be sure, it can no more be predicted than a revolution; in fact, its beginnings are so vague that to determine exactly when an

insurgency starts is a difficult legal, political, and historical problem An insurgency is usually slow to develop and is not an accident, for in an insurgency, leaders appear and then the masses are made to move. (Galula 4)

To Galula, insurgency is civil war. But it's not clear whether or not Galula replaces the notion of civil war with insurgency, or if he believes that insurgency is a growing discontent that leads to civil war. The criticism of Galula is that he never expands upon the definition of insurgency, but that he only speculates on just how insurgency differs from revolution. (Galula 5)

In his 1967 book *Counter-Insurgency Operations*, Julian Paget states that insurgency describes a kind of armed rebellion against a government where, "the rebels have the support or acquiescence of a substantial part of the populace; the methods that they adopt to achieve their aim of overthrowing the Government may include guerrilla warfare, but insurgents may equally well resort to civil disobedience, sabotage or terrorist tactics." (Paget 14)

In 1969, Andrew Scott and his coauthors wrote, "The term insurgency refers to efforts to obtain political goals by an organized and primarily indigenous group (or groups) using protracted, irregular warfare and allied political techniques." This definition excludes sudden coups, short-lived outbreaks of violence, or invasion by non-indigenous guerrilla forces. (Scott 5) Scott makes a distinction between insurgency and irregular warfare by saying that irregular warfare refers to only military activities, whereas insurgency is irregular warfare plus politics. (Scott 10)

Scott develops the idea of insurgency around two political themes: "protracted war strategy" and "indigenous movements", which he says is unexplainable. According

to Scott, there is no real way of determining just when a conflict becomes protracted, and there is no specific way to determine how great a degree of outside intervention is compatible with a group being considered primarily indigenous. Scott believes that without these two ingredients, there can be no insurgency. Insurgency is then reduced to a revolutionary political and social phenomenon. (Scott 10)

Brigadier Frank Kitson of the British military wrote a unique tactical exposition on insurgency war in 1971 entitled *Low Intensity Operations*, where he breaks insurgency into two distinct parts. The first part represents pure tactics and is called “The Handling of Information.” The second part, entitled “Direction, Units and Equipment,” explains the logistical details needed for effectively countering an insurgency. According to Kitson, as a final phase in the overall scope of revolutionary guerrilla war:

. . . armed insurgents come out into the open and fight the forces of the government by conventional methods, but in the earliest stages the war is fought by people who strike at a time and place of their own choosing and then disappear. Sometimes their disappearance is achieved by the physical process of movement into an area of thick cover such as a jungle, and at other times by merging into the population. (Kitson 95)

Kitson’s treatment of the tactical aspects is representative of a time when insurgency was accepted as a kind of phenomenon. He explains this time as a period of fixed beliefs about conventional warfare, and the focus was solely on a new kind of war for the atomic age. Because overt military response was unsuccessful, as seen in Korea and Vietnam in 1954, the response needed was a more subtle, covert method in dealing with communism and the Third World. (Kitson 95)

Sir Robert Grainger Ker Thompson contributed to the study of insurgency by emphasizing that an insurgency is not a people's revolutionary war. Using government intelligence figures, Thompson says that by 1965 the number of insurgents and their supporters' active in South Vietnam never exceeded 1 percent of the total population. He then concludes that insurgency was not qualified to be a people's revolutionary war, but only a "revolutionary form of warfare designed to enable a very small ruthless minority to gain control over the people." (Hamilton 21) Thompson's working definition and explanation is as follows:

Insurgency is a political-military conflict waged against a specific faction(s), implementing irregular military actions in support of a unified political outcome, short of revolution and civil war. While regular forces may be employed, irregular operations rooted in political subversion, selective terrorism, and guerrilla operations, play an integral, if not primary, role in the outcome. Political subversion, selective terrorism, and guerrilla operations are then tactics that, when combined, may or may not represent an insurgency. Insurgency is a strategic political development that implements these tactics as a means to sustain itself until further development can occur. Consequently, an insurgency, as a type of war, may lead to and be part of a large conventional conflict, revolution, or civil war. (Hamilton 21)

What's important to note is that when Thompson spoke of insurgency, he spoke directly about communist insurgency, and thus communist subversion. He believed that insurgency was a unique tool of the communists. However, his working definition does have universal qualities that set it apart as a separate strategic concept from revolution

and civil war. He identifies three major elements as tools in an insurgency: political subversion, selective terrorism, and guerrilla operations. Any other aspect, political or military, that might be attributed to an insurgency will fall under one of these elements. Thompson divides an insurgency into two phases. The first phase begins with subversive activity. If the subversion is successful enough to continue the insurgency, but not successful enough to achieve the objective by subversion alone, then insurgency moves to a second phase: open insurgency or the armed struggle. The second phase consists of the use of guerrilla operations combined with terrorist activities and will typically result in a protracted struggle. (Hamilton 22)

Clausewitz: On War

In his book, *On War*, Carl Von Clausewitz writes a chapter on insurgency or insurrection, which he calls, “The People in Arms”. In the nineteenth century, Clausewitz considers war by means of popular uprisings a phenomenon, but he also considers it as another means of war. He believes that this type of warfare is not very common, and that it has not been reported about enough. He addresses this topic to discuss the strategic plans for a nation’s defense. He believes that a general insurrection can be either a last resort after a defeat or a natural auxiliary before a decisive battle.

Clausewitz believes that any nation that can use its home guard intelligently will gain some superiority over those who disdain its use. (Clausewitz 578) But Clausewitz argues that the resources expended in an insurrection might be put to better use in other kinds of warfare. He believes that the nature of such a resistance will not lend itself to major actions. He states, “The greater the surface and the area of contact between it and

the enemy forces (regular army), the thinner the latter have to be spread, the greater the effect of a general uprising.” (Clausewitz 579)

Clausewitz describes the only conditions in which a general uprising can be effective: 1) the war must be fought in the interior of the country, 2) it must not be decided by a single stroke, 3) the theater of operations must be fairly large, 4) the national character must be suited to that type of war, and 5) the country must be rough and inaccessible, because of mountains, or forests, marshes, or the local methods of cultivation. (Clausewitz 579) He doesn't believe the make-up of the population plays a decisive part because wealth and sheer numbers rarely make a difference. In fact, it is the poor men, used to hard work and deprivation that are generally more vigorous and more warlike. He feels that the effectiveness of an insurrection is enhanced by the scattered distribution of houses and farms. He states, “The conditions of the country will be more cut up and thickly wooded, the roads poorer if more numerous; the billeting of troops will prove infinitely more difficult, and, above all, the most characteristic feature of an insurgency in general will be constantly repeated in miniature: the element of resistance will exist everywhere and nowhere.” (Clausewitz 580)

On engaging the military forces, Clausewitz advises against militias and bands of armed civilians being employed against the main military force. They are meant to operate in areas just outside the theater of war – where the military forces will not appear in strength – in order to deny him these areas altogether. It will be the people not yet conquered who will be the most eager to arm against this enemy, and they will set an example that will spread like wildfire. These peasants, as Clausewitz calls them, will scatter and vanish in all directions, without requiring a special plan, and will fight in

areas which have long been cleared of enemy troops. The military force's only answer to the insurgent actions is to send out escorts as protection for their convoys, and as guards on all the stopping places, bridges, defiles, and the rest. Clausewitz believes that the early efforts of the militia may be weak, and so will the detachment of forces, but the courage and appetite for fighting will spread until it reaches the climax that decides the outcome. (Clausewitz 581)

This insurgency or general uprising, according to Clausewitz, should never materialize as a concrete body, otherwise the enemy can direct sufficient force at its core, crush it, and take many prisoners. If this happens, the people will lose heart and drop their weapons. However, Clausewitz does advocate concentrating on the flanks of the military forces theater of operations. He believes the insurgents should build up larger units, better organized, with parties of regulars that will make them look like a proper army and enable them to tackle larger operations. The strength of the insurgency must increase as it nears the military's vulnerable rear. This will arouse uneasiness and fear, and deepen the psychological effect of the insurgency as a whole. (Clausewitz 581)

Clausewitz believes that insurgent actions start out full of vigor and enthusiasm, but have little level headedness and tenacity in the long run. According to Clausewitz, an insurgency should not be allowed to go to pieces through too many men being killed, wounded or taken prisoner. He states, "Their actions should be slow, persistent, calculated business, entailing a definite risk; mere attempts that can be broken off at will can never lead to a successful defense." (Clausewitz 582) He advises that the home guard must avoid getting involved in a major defensive battle, or else they will perish. They should defend points of access, crossing points of rivers and mountain areas, but

once the area is breached, the best method of defense is surprise attacks. A national uprising must be waged at a distance so that the uprising is not wiped out by one single stroke.

Clausewitz concludes his commentary by stating that the people's existence does not hang on the outcome of a single battle, no matter how decisive. Even after a defeat, the insurgency can experience a turn of fortune in the form of new sources of internal strength, or means of help from abroad. He states, "There will always be time enough to die; like a drowning man who will clutch instinctively at a straw, it is the natural law of the moral world that a nation that finds itself on the brink of an abyss will try to save itself by any means." (Clausewitz 583)

Mao Tse-tung: On Revolution and War

Mao Tse-tung is often referred to as the mastermind of insurgency. His communist takeover of China, and the revolutionary political influence he maintained throughout Asia is classic. During his era, insurgency was spreading regionally: Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaya, the Philippines, and Vietnam; as well as globally: Algeria, Greece, Angola, and Cuba. Mao was influenced by Sun Tzu as seen in a number of his writings. Mao's terminology was recognized as new to the modern war vocabulary. His phrases such as "controlled terror", winning over the hearts and minds," and "people's war" became classic terminology for insurgency.

Mao writes about guerrilla war in regards to China's situation of Japanese invasion. Due to China being a large and weak country, the protracted nature of war with Japan made it imperative for guerrilla warfare to undertake many unusual tasks. Mao

believes guerrilla warfare is vital to his endeavor, and therefore discusses the subject not on a tactical basis, but strategically. “No matter what kind of war you’re engaged in, the main objective is to preserve one’s own strength and weaken that of the enemy.”

(Sarkesian 205)

Mao outlined six specific problems of strategy for guerrilla warfare: (1) the use of initiative, flexibility and planning in conducting offensives....battles of quick decision within protracted war...; (2) co-ordination with regular warfare; (3) the establishment of base areas; (4) the strategic defensive and the strategic offensive; (5) the development of guerrilla warfare into mobile warfare; and (6) correct relationship of command. Either way, Mao can be argued as a master designer of guerrilla warfare, and thus a major contributor to insurgent/low-intensity conflict.

In a “War of Resistance”, Mao feels that, “It is possible and necessary to use tactical offensives within the strategic defensive, to fight campaigns and battles of quick decision within a strategically protracted war and to fight campaigns and battles on exterior lines within strategically interior lines.” (Sarkesian 206) He believes, it is vital in guerrilla warfare to have the initiative, freedom of action, because most guerrilla units operate in very difficult circumstances, fighting without a rear, and with their own weak forces facing the enemy’s strong forces. Mao considers flexibility a concrete expression of the initiative. He in fact says that the flexible employment of forces is more essential in guerrilla warfare than in regular warfare:

The nature of guerrilla warfare is such that guerrilla forces must be employed flexibly in accordance with the task in hand and with such circumstances as the state of the enemy, the terrain and the local population; and the chief ways of

employing the forces are dispersal, concentration and shifting of position...

(Sarkesian 207)

As part of his first main principle in a guerrilla war, Mao concludes by stating that planning is the most important part in achieving victory. He states, “grasping the situation, setting the tasks, disposing the forces, giving military and political training, securing supplies, putting the equipment in good order, making proper use of people’s help, etc. – are part of the work of the guerrilla commanders.” (Sarkesian 208)

Mao’s second principle of guerrilla warfare is to coordinate with the regular forces. This can be seen as vital in most insurgencies such as Vietnam, but should not be applied to insurgency as a whole. However, looking throughout history, most wars have an insurgent/guerrilla war phase. In sum, Mao believes that coordination with regular battles is the task of all guerrilla units in the vicinity of an interior-line battlefield, and the guerrilla unit must perform whatever task it is assigned by the commander of the regular forces. (Sarkesian 208)

Mao’s third principle is the establishment of base areas. This is important and essential because of the protracted nature of the war. Mao feels that it is impossible to sustain guerrilla warfare behind the enemy lines without base areas, thus being unable to carry out any of the strategic tasks. The base areas then become the rear for guerrilla warfare. In the example of China, the base areas were mainly in the mountains, on the plains, and in the river-estuary regions. Here we can not discount other, more urban types of base areas. Mao does address the urban areas by saying that due to the heavy enemy presence, guerrilla warfare can only extend to the fringes and not right into the cities. For Mao, the fundamental condition for establishing a base area is the proximity

of that base to regular armed forces. His belief is that all sources must be used in a struggle against a superior power. (Sarkesian 210)

The fourth problem of strategy in guerrilla war that Mao points out is carrying out the policy of offensive and defensive warfare. Mao suggests counterattacking when the enemy attacks guerrillas and their bases. With repeated surprise attacks, the enemy will be weakened and often withdraw. Mao recommends a tactic called “Relieving the state of Chao by besieging the State of Wei.” This tactic involves the dividing of forces to induce the enemy to withdraw and attack the main force. (Sarkesian 211) The point is to defeat the enemy’s offensive, not to attack an enemy’s defensive. Managing this while they systematically destroy or drive out the small enemy units and puppet forces in certain areas, which the guerrilla units are strong enough to handle. (Sarkesian 212)

The fifth basic principle is to develop guerrilla units into regular forces. To Mao, this requires an increase in numbers and an improvement in quality. Doing this is difficult because of localism and the reluctance to centralize. However, the last and final point Mao makes regarding strategy in guerrilla war is the relationship of command. Regular and guerrilla warfare must have their operations properly coordinated. Mao states, “The principle of command in guerrilla war should be centralized strategic command and decentralized command in campaigns and battles.” (Sarkesian 213)

What must be gleaned from Mao is his skill in knowing the enemy and understanding his own people. He understood what it would take to win, and in his overall strategy was the utilization of great numbers of guerrilla units among the peasants. He states, “The Chinese peasants have very great latent power; properly organized and directed, they can keep the enemy busy twenty-four hours a day and worry

it to death...” This may be the ultimate purpose in any insurgency. He understood that the only way an inferior force could defeat a superior force was through a protracted war. Mao brilliantly mapped out the stages of the war with Japan, and in doing so, created the blue prints for defeating a military superpower. The war would be conducted in three stages. The first stage is the period of the enemy’s strategic offensive and China’s strategic defensive. The second stage is the period of the enemy’s strategic consolidation, and the third stage is the period of strategic counteroffensive and the enemy’s strategic retreat. It is that second stage, in which the guerrilla warfare will prove vital by creating havoc with the enemy. Together, with a well conducted guerrilla war and a reliance on international forces, Mao was confident that he could succeed.

Whether Mao’s revolution was actually an insurgency is debatable, seeing that most scholars on the subject do not consider an insurgency a revolution. Hamilton believes that Mao’s revolutionary guerrilla war is critical to understanding Western misperceptions about insurgency warfare. However, it is Hamilton’s opinion that Mao’s works represent to a large extent, the terminology of the “people’s war,” not an understanding of insurgency. Hamilton states, “While an explanation of revolutionary guerrilla war using Mao’s terminology may be acceptable, using the same terminology to explain the strategic design of insurgency is not.” (Hamilton 18)

This causes confusion due to the terminology. Hamilton explains that a revolution may be the end strategic value, but guerrilla war is the tactical force that carries the insurgency forth amongst the people. However, according to Hamilton, insurgency is not always the result of a revolutionary upheaval. An insurgency may exist to acquire political recognition within the political and social framework. Therefore it

would not be political or social revolution. Hamilton states, “The phrase ‘people’s revolutionary war’ implies revolution from the outset of subversive activity... while an insurgency might in the beginning only focus on political and social inclusion.”

(Hamilton 20) Hamilton believes that Mao only partially addresses the specific concept of insurgency.

Che Guevara: On Guerrilla Warfare

Che Guevara was considered to be one of the world’s top-ranking guerrilla fighters of the twentieth century. His experience included Guatemala, Cuba, the Congo, and perhaps other parts of the world. The debate continues to go on whether or not his theories regarding revolution and guerrilla warfare were correct. Regardless, Che Guevara is a major contributor to the development of guerrilla warfare and insurgency. His main contribution, which can be applied to all insurgencies, revolved around the theory that necessary conditions to revolutionary situation can be created through the emergence in rural areas of highly trained guerrilla fighters organized into a highly cohesive group called the ‘*foco*’. (Moreno 396) The issue of preconditions is important to study in any conflict, but what is unique about Che is his emphasis on a small group of fighters’ ability to persuade a population which has a limited amount of political-socio or economic unrest.

According to Che, the guerrilla fighter must be a social reformer with impeccable morality, and thus be ideologically motivated. (Moreno 397) Che’s perception of a guerrilla fighter or insurgent is not just a person with a gun and is hunted by the police, but a person who is revolutionary and who ultimately becomes a man. (Moreno 397) The

foco was made up of 25 to 35 men who would be under the leadership of one man, and would not receive orders from any organized group. Its sole purpose is to create a revolutionary situation. A high percentage of the membership should be peasant due to the social composition of the population, and they must be in good shape to operate in the given environment. Che believes the peasant is more capable of serving, but it must be an intellectual who provides the leadership. (Moreno 398)

Che explains that the function of the *foco* is to challenge the legitimacy of the government and their right to use force to maintain stability. The primary function of the *foco* is to minimize, neutralize and exterminate the ability of the government to curb opposition and maintain stability. Therefore, the armed forces become the primary target of the guerrillas. (Moreno 398) In order to engage a superior enemy, Che recommends the use of constant mobility, constant vigilance, and constant wariness. “Moral and psychological rather than physical extermination of the enemy is sought in planning ambushes and in selecting tactics and strategies.” (Moreno 398) The tradeoff will be an increase of police repression against government opposition in the urban areas, but the peasants who are often terrorized by the military will begin to realize the common cause they have with the guerrillas and will cooperate by furnishing them with information on the environment along with information about troop movements, etc. And most importantly, the peasants will begin to join the guerrilla groups. What tends to happen next is the military’s retaliation against the peasant for helping the guerrillas, but this will only further enrage the peasants who will then seek protection and justice from the rebels. (Moreno 399)

In conclusion, Che’s theory of the *foco* is dependent on the assistance of others

also opposing the established order. He sees the early stages of the *foco* as weak and dependent on city leaders for weapons, logistic support and recruits, but not on subordination to the leaders. Che's approach differs with the more classical theorists such as Mao in that the guerrilla band is the political and military center and does not take orders from higher leadership or a party. Initiative, power of decision making, direction of the struggle, tactics and strategies, are entirely dependent upon the leadership of the *foco*. It is suggested that Che's model is most appropriate for Latin America.

Dr. Steven Metz: Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century

Dr. Steven Metz, Director of Research for the Strategic Studies Institute at the Army War College, may probably provide the best insight into the current state of insurgency. He defines insurgency as a strategy adopted by weak groups to alter the balance of power characterized by protracted, asymmetric violence, ambiguity, the use of complex terrain, psychological warfare, and political mobilization. He states that insurgents may attempt to seize power and replace the existing government, or they may have more limited aims such as separation, autonomy, or alteration of a particular policy. The brilliance, or danger, is that insurgency can target the balance of power within a nation, an entire region, or even globally. According to Dr. Metz, insurgency is usually a long-shot strategy adopted out of desperation, but can seek outright victory or something less. He states that insurgency has always existed because, "there have always been weak groups that wanted to supplant strong ones." (Metz 2) And today, insurgency has become enormously strategic by challenging the most powerful nation on earth along with its allies.

He claims that insurgencies take two forms. He describes these forms as “national” insurgencies, the insurgents against some type of legitimate government, and “liberation” insurgencies, insurgents against a ruling group of outside occupiers. In a national insurgency, the difference with the regime will be based on economic class, ideology, or identity (ethnicity, race, religion). The government may have external supporters, but the conflict is primarily between the insurgents and the regime. What is important to a national insurgency is the neutral party, whether it is the populace, external states, or other organizations. The goal is to weaken the other and simultaneously win over the neutrals. (Metz 2)

The goal of a liberation insurgency is to liberate their nation from alien occupation. Metz points out that alien occupation may not be of a different race, ethnicity, or culture. Examples would include the insurgency in Rhodesia, South Africa, the Palestinian insurgency, Vietnam, the Afghan insurgency against the Soviets, Chechnya, the current Taleban/al Qaeda insurgency in Afghanistan, and the Iraq insurgency. Metz explains that a distinction between a national and a liberation insurgency is not always clear, and an insurgency can sometimes contain elements of both or even shift the emphasis during its lifespan. A case in point was the Chinese communist insurgency which began as a national insurgency, shifted to a combination of liberation and national during the Japanese occupation, and then shifted back to a national one. Metz points out that government reforms, which can work with national insurgents, does not work well because the outsider status cannot be overcome. Insurgents are not motivated by the lack of jobs, schools, or the right to vote, but by the occupation, interference, and rule by outsiders or those perceived as outsiders. (Metz 3)

Metz believes that insurgencies do vary, but most follow a common life cycle. Survival is usually the priority, therefore insurgents may use an underground approach, organizing, recruiting, training, accumulating resources, but at some point they must open direct operations against the regime in order to succeed. Their action may include guerrilla warfare, terrorism, assassinations, sabotage, and other types of irregular or asymmetric violence. It is also essential for the insurgents to accumulate resources and mobilize support. This can be done through external alliances, as well as internally, through methods of propaganda and information warfare, in which the insurgents will seek to target the young males who are faced with boredom, anger, and lack of purpose. Insurgency can provide a sense of adventure, excitement, and meaning that transcends its political objectives. Metz claims that it is even easier for an insurgency to mobilize support and acquire resources in a liberation conflict since there is an inherent dislike for the outsiders. (Metz 4)

In Metz's opinion, an insurgency will continue as long as both sides feel that they can prevail, or that the cost of stopping the conflict will be greater than the cost of continuing. Also, insurgencies will drag on because generations will know nothing but the conflict. He says that the normal practice is for large segments of the population to throw their support to the side they believe will win. The result may be a negotiated settlement, or the conflict may just fizzle out with the insurgents melting back into the population or into exile. It is not often, he explains, that insurgencies will end in a decisive victory for the insurgents or the regime eradicating all the insurgents and preventing the recruitment of new ones. (Metz 5) In fact, most insurgencies failed in the 20th century. Insurgencies were successful when they could employ effective force

protection and counterintelligence capabilities, and by shifting the balance of power before the regime could move the conflict into a military realm. This was done by weakening the government through guerrilla, political, and psychological operations. (Metz 5)

In terms of waging an effective insurgency, Metz believes it is very difficult and requires a specific set of conditions. When facing a determined regime, that understands counterinsurgency and can use its resources wisely, all of the following conditions must be present for any degree of success:

- Preconditions – a frustrated society widely accustomed to conspiratorial activity.
- An effective strategy – force protection (via dispersion, sanctuary, the use of terrain, effective counterintelligence); actions to erode the legitimacy of the regime (via violence and political-psychological programs); and augmentation of resources and support.
- An effective ideology – unlike national insurgencies, where the ideology inspired and explained why the existing system was unjust or illegitimate, liberation insurgencies depend less on an ideology because they have an organic mobilizing force, alien occupation.
- Effective leadership – successful insurgent leaders are those who can unify diverse groups and organizations, can persevere with the odds being against them, and believe so strongly in their cause that they become completely ruthless.
- Resources – Insurgents will need in the broadest terms: manpower, funding,

equipment/supplies, sanctuary, and intelligence. Most insurgencies would prefer to be provided resources, but will seize or create them if none are provided or, in some cases, if provided resources come with too many strings attached. (Metz 6-8)

In conclusion, Metz makes four observations of insurgency as a global phenomenon. First, insurgency is now a major mode of conflict because there is no other way of opposing the US dominated global order. Second, “the antagonists are the United States and its allies against radical Islam, but at a deeper level, the antagonists are the people and entities who have adapted to globalization against those who continue to oppose it.” Third, global insurgency will be hard to eradicate, but it is built on negative ideology which can be countered. He states, “Unlike the communist and nationalist ideologies of the Cold War era, which provided both a critique of existing orders and a countervision, radical Islam issues a critique but can offer no acceptable alternative....and the flaws of its radical alternatives are laid bare before the world by the same modern communications that carry the insurgency’s message. (Metz 13) And fourth, there needs to be a grand strategy that can placate anger and frustration on a global scale, and can enable the disenfranchised to identify with the system. (Metz 12) To explain this phenomenon further, Metz has identified some key changes or mutations of insurgency that need to be fully understood:

The meaning of sanctuary. Because there are few geographical areas outside government control, the initial stages of insurgencies tend to take place in cities and other developed areas. Due to the ability of governments to find and destroy remote targets, embedding and dispersal is the preferred form of protection, not isolation. However,

dispersion will make it difficult for insurgent movements to seize control of a state. They may never develop enough military power to undertake conventional operations and thus have to rely on terrorism and psychological and political means.

Diversification of support. Because of the United States and United Nations ability to pressure external supporters, insurgent movements can no longer rely on it to the extent that Cold War insurgents could. Instead, insurgencies tend to be associated with organized crime, and therefore only need the passivity of the public rather than its active support.

Extended connections. Due to the increase of information technology, insurgent movements can be linked globally. The best example is the transnational Islamist insurgency and all of its subcomponents.

Asymmetric power projection. Insurgents have developed the capability for strategic power projection (terrorism), strategic intelligence, and the building of global linkages without the assistance of the Soviet Union or Cuba.

Shifting Rallying Cries. Transnational, radical Islam is on the ascent. In some ways this poses greater challenges than Marxism. The clerics play a central role in political mobilization but are considered protected and unacceptable targets. Radical Islam can inspire suicide terrorists – a phenomenon uncommon in secular insurgencies. However, radical Islam is a less forward looking and inclusive ideology than Marxism, and does not appeal outside its cultural realm. It decries the injustice of globalization, and defines the United States as the engineer of the existing world order, thus making them and their partners the enemy.

Transparency. Transparency has changed the nature of psychological warfare,

making it easier to transmit information, but harder to sustain perceptions or themes that do not closely match existing predispositions. (Metz 12-14)

Ian Beckett, Professor of Military Theory at the Marine Corps University, would also agree with Metz on the changing of insurgency in the 21st century. He believes that Islamic fundamentalism has emerged as a new imperative behind insurgency. Along with the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, he cites the Soviets in Afghanistan between 1979 and 1989 to the continuing conflicts in the Philippines, Indonesia, Algeria, Sudan, Kashmir, and Chad. Notwithstanding the fact that insurgents are better armed, more fanatical, and in some cases better attuned to the information, there are still basic requirements for a successful insurgency. He describes insurgency as a highly political act arising from some sense of grievance, or upon the exploitation and manipulation of grievance. He feels that insurgency will still be the choice of the weaker, and though possibly less protracted than in the past, an insurgency will still be largely dependent on substantial external support. (Matthews 23)

Beckett's fundamental question in today's times is whether or not a conflict is insurgency or terrorism, or merely a traditional form of guerrilla warfare or resistance. He states that prior to the 20th century, guerrilla warfare was understood as a purely military form of conflict, with classic hit and run tactics employed by indigenous groups in opposition to foreign or colonial occupation. Therefore, modern guerrilla warfare increasingly was termed insurgency, with guerrilla tactics being employed strategically to achieve a particular political and/or ideological end. He explains that the transition from guerrilla warfare to insurgency does not depend upon the size of any particular group, but upon the intention to bring about fundamental political change through a political-

military strategy of organized coercion and subversion. Though insurgents may employ tactics of terror or intimidation, they have rarely done so at the strategic level. It is important to note that terrorist groups, even if motivated by an ideology similar to that of insurgent groups, have tended to employ terrorism indiscriminately and as political symbolism without the same intention of taking over the state apparatus themselves. (Beckett 24)

It is the opinion of Beckett that there are basic patterns of insurgency, specifically in the Middle East, and that the essentials of counterinsurgency have also remained constant. He outlines the basic requirements for a counterinsurgency to be successful. First, there needs to be a recognition of a political rather than a purely military response to insurgency; second, a need for coordination of the civil and military response; third, a need for the coordination of intelligence; fourth, a need to separate insurgents from the population; fifth, a need for the appropriate use of military force; and finally, the need to implement long-term reform to address the grievances that led to support for the insurgency in the first place. He feels that these principles are as applicable in today's insurgencies as they were in the twentieth century with the British mandate in the Middle East. (Beckett 24)

Chapter 3

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

In analyzing an insurgency it is necessary to develop a structure of analysis which will serve as a conceptual format for ordering, interpreting, and presenting vast amounts of information related to any given insurgency. This framework is not a model nor a theory, but a facilitator. The framework will hopefully expose the important relationship among the factors of the insurgency in Iraq. Each of these factors will represent an area of inquiry that may be crucial for explaining the nature and depth of the insurgency. How important the factors are varies from case to case and can only be determined by careful empirical investigation.

Most of the framework used for this case study must be attributed to Bard O'Neill's *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare*. However, there is no one model or formula that can be applied to all cases. The variables for this case study were carefully considered based on the current situation in Iraq. Much debate has been about whether or not there is an insurgency in Iraq. Case studies like this one will attempt to answer those questions. However, the premise of this case study is that there is an insurgency in Iraq, and the objective of this research will be to define it. It is not enough to just describe the insurgency as an urban-warfare style insurgency, but the objective is to examine the factors that are unique to this insurgency to see if a new

phenomenon is developing.

This framework will be helpful in analyzing the status of the insurgency, observing possible transformations or other developments that have occurred since the beginning of the insurgency. The framework can be used by analysts and supervisors involved in the policy process. However, the objective of this case study is not to critique the policies already made regarding the conflict in Iraq. Even though government response is critical in analyzing any insurgency, in this case, studying the Coalition's strategy in countering the insurgency would be a project in and of itself. This framework will hopefully provide a clear organizational format for determining what is known, only partly known, and unknown. Ascertaining what is unclear or unknown in an insurgency can be as important as finding out what is known.

Much of the data used in this case study is considered secondary data (i.e. journals, media articles, data from research institutes, published interviews from key individuals, etc.). Many research institutions have undergone the process of collecting statistical data relative to the insurgency in Iraq, and are publishing indexed data either monthly or quarterly via the web. Anthony Cordesman and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Michael E. O'Hanlon and The Brookings Institution, Lionel Beehner and the Council on Foreign Relations, and Bruce Hoffman and the Rand Corporation must be credited for providing most of this research. Their work of providing current data of the conflict and insurgency in Iraq can not be underscored. Without this information there would be no analysis, and ultimately no possible solution for this growing problem. The goal of this research was to find as much empirical data as possible in order to make an objective assessment of the insurgency in Iraq. It would be

quite simple to inject an ideological and moral predisposition into the assessment or even the search for information pertaining to the factors involved. Nothing can really foolproof this from happening, but this framework will hopefully allow the margin of error or bias to be minimal and obvious.

There is little doubt that insurgency will continue to pose challenges for many nations, including the superpowers. The variables of the insurgency in Iraq are explained in the following terms:

The overall situation (preconditions)

The most basic precondition for insurgency is frustration and the belief that this cannot be alleviated through the existing political system. This may be widespread among a population or limited to radical elite which then has to convince the more passive population of the need for violent change. A conspiratorial history and culture are also important. In such societies, insurgents can utilize or take over existing patterns of underground activity, webs of secret societies, or widespread criminal activity. A society already accustomed to conspiratorial activity is a naturally fertile ground for insurgency.

The goal(s) of the insurgency: stated objectives and visions of the insurgents (Effective ideology)

It is true that most insurgencies may be difficult to classify because of the ambiguity in their goals, but the goals of many insurgencies are straightforward, consistent with behavior, and easy to identify. Ascertaining the goals of insurgent

organizations is the crucial first step in any analysis. Different goals will usually place different demands on insurgents with respect to resources. Some insurgencies are by their nature less likely to compromise and thus normally result in strong resistance from authorities. This in turn, means that in nearly all cases the insurgents must mobilize greater support and be prepared for a sustained commitment if they are to have any hope of success. Other insurgent groups may find that limited insurgent activity can convince the authorities to make concessions. This is because their aims do not require the political system to collapse. The result may be the authorities cutting their losses by agreeing to a more equitable distribution of political and economic benefits. Clarifying insurgent goals and ambitions is also important when looking at outside powers that are thinking about becoming involved on one side or the other.

Understanding if the insurgent movement is nationalistic or just liberationist will help define the strategy the insurgents will employ and thus allow the governing authority to develop an effective plan in countering the insurgency. Ultimately, glossing over insurgent goals, or misinterpreting their objectives, can lead to an ill-informed and costly entanglement and the creation of enemies where none existed before.

The program for gaining power (insurgent strategies)

- Strategic Approaches

For the purpose of this paper, strategy is defined as the systematic, integrated, and orchestrated use of various means to achieve goals. What kind of goals are chosen, which means are emphasized, and how systematic the plans are will differ considerably from case to case. Insurgents implement their strategies in less than ideal fashion

because of the interplay of conflicting political interests, limited material resources, and unanticipated events or because insurgents sometimes adopt strategies that others have used successfully but that are inappropriate for the different environment in which they are operating. In order to evaluate the insurgent's strategy, I will concentrate on the strategic approach the insurgents seem to have taken in Iraq, the urban-warfare strategy. It will be essential to analyze the writings and statements of the insurgent leaders or members, as well as their plans and operational directives.

In the urban-warfare strategy, terrorism plays the key role. The emergence of this strategy is due to the resiliency and strengths of governments, and the increased urbanization in many parts of the world. Insurgents are compelled to locate in the cities and operate on a small scale in order to survive. This is also the case in less-developed countries. Insurgent leaders have exploited the poor, psychologically disoriented people for carrying out, and gaining support for their cause. Moreover, the urban environment makes it difficult for the military to use its assets such as aircraft, artillery, mortars, etc.

The ultimate goal is to erode the government's will to resist. Like the other strategies, mass support is important, but the process of achieving it is different. The strategy is to turn political crisis into armed conflict by performing violent acts that will force those in power to transform the political situation of the country into a military situation. This will then alienate the masses, who from then on will revolt against the army and the police and thus blame them for the state of things. Urban insurgents will engage in actions such as: ambushes, kidnappings, assassinations, assaults on major civilian and military targets, car bombings, and now suicide bombings. In addition, they will want to infiltrate the police and military to foster a breakdown from within. The

organization responsible for these actions is basically a small one with cells that have a “link man” in each. The acts of violence will thus create havoc and insecurity, which will eventually produce a loss of confidence in government.

- *The Means: forms of warfare*

Insurgents will use political resources to accomplish their goals such as: propaganda, protest demonstrations, recruiting insurgent officials, training and infiltrating agents into official establishments, persuading outside powers to assist, raising and managing finances, creating supportive groups, providing services to the people, and devising and implementing strategies and plans. Success in marshaling and utilizing resources will depend on effective organization. There may be a selective organization, where small elite groups carry out the violence, or a mobilizational organization, where large segments of the population are relied upon to carry out the insurgency.

Popular support

Due to the difficulty of surveying people in countries where insurgencies are taking place, precise calculations of popular support may not be possible. However, through source documents, polling data, observations from journalists and statements by key participants, estimates can be made. Popular support must then be understood in terms of (1) the types of support, and (2) the various techniques that insurgents use to gain support.

- *Types of popular support*

There are two types of popular support: passive and active. Passive support includes individuals who quietly sympathize with the insurgents but are unwilling to

provide material assistance. It is important that they do not betray or impede the insurgents when the government attempts to acquire information from the people. Active support encompasses those who are willing to make sacrifices and risk personal harm either by joining the movement or by providing the insurgents with intelligence information, concealment, shelter, hiding places for arms and equipment, medical assistance, and guides. It is assessed that some degree of active support is necessary.

When analyzing the popular support it is also important to factor in the education levels, socioeconomic classes, race, ethnicity, and religion. Education levels will provide the basis for dividing the insurgents into two categories, the intellectual class and the masses. The intellectuals are important because they will usually make up the leadership positions. However, it is debatable as to how much support needs to come from the masses.

The insurgent organization and unity

When examining an insurgent organization, three structural dimensions—scope, complexity, and cohesion—and two functions—instrumental services and channels for expressive protest—are of primary interest.

- Scope

Scope refers to the numbers and kinds of people across the political spectrums that either play key roles in the movement or provide active support. Most estimates will be rough estimates. Because of all the different factors, success and failure will not hinge upon the numerical factor. It is assessed that single-direction increases or decreases in insurgent numbers over the course of several months or longer can suggest the trends of

an insurgency.

- *Complexity*

The effective use of people will depend on the skill of insurgent leaders in identifying, integrating, and coordinating the different tasks and roles essential for success in combat operations, training, logistics, communications, transportation, and the medical, financial, informational, diplomatic, and supervisory areas.

Insurgents who subscribe to conspiratorial and urban-warfare strategies stress small closely knit and secretive organizations with minimal complexity; those who adopt military-focus or protracted-popular-war strategies require more-sophisticated organizational structures because they normally anticipate a long struggle that will involve support for substantial military activity.

- *Cohesion*

The pressure or absence of cohesion or unity among insurgents can have a profound effect on the developments and outcomes of insurgencies. The cohesion will affect both political and military organizational efforts as well as the political and military policies. A result of disunity may be a deficiency in combat support. In this case, insurgent groups may insist on autonomy and distrust one another, the flow of logistical support will be unbalanced, the training inadequate, and the communications will be lacking. Cohesion will affect the insurgencies ability to plan, orchestrate, and integrate multiple military operations. Other issues involving unity is the ability to obtain external support. There may be a reluctance of outside actors to commit themselves to fragmented insurgents. The causes of disunity can be identified in seven areas – social, political-cultural, personal, teleological, theoretical, strategic, and tactical. It will not be

necessary to go into each of these areas, unless it can be identified that an insurgency is fragmented and is lacking cohesion.

To provide this cohesion, insurgents will use propaganda and political education to inculcate loyalty and a common sense of purpose. They will emphasize the need to close ranks against the common enemy; they will promote an ideology or theology that transcends group differences; and they will state clearly the mutual benefits to be derived from success. There are several organizational schemes in establishing cohesion. One scheme, the politicians are in charge. This often happens in Communist movements with a chain of command derived from the politburo through the central executive committee, which exercises control over state, district, and branch committees. Another scheme, the political and military exist independent of one another. A third type organizational scheme is one which the military element takes charge. Another form of organizational unity is one without any organization. A leaderless resistance!

External support

External support is often necessary for insurgents to succeed; even if there is a substantial amount of popular support. Facing a long struggle against government forces with superior arsenals, insurgents must turn to sympathetic nations, other insurgent movements, private institutions in other states, and international organizations in order to increase their political and military capabilities.

- The global context

Since the end of WWII, the world has seen vast improvements in transportation and communication, worldwide proliferation of armaments, and the rise of activity from

non-state actors or groups. Materials can be moved farther and faster than ever before, and the progress of communications has allowed insurgent groups to reach for wider audiences by mounting propaganda campaigns. Insurgent movements have much greater opportunities for gaining external support than at any previous time in history. Whether they take advantage of this depends on their organization capability.

- *Types of external support*

There are four basic types of external support in an insurgency: moral, political, material, and sanctuary.

Moral support consists of private and public statements that indicate sympathy for insurgents in very general terms. There may be an emphasis on grievances, which justify and explain the insurgents' recourse to violence; attacking governments for denying political rights and for repression, as well as for the social and economic deprivations they permit. They may also praise the courage and persistence of insurgents in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. What has become common is linking the insurgent movement and its righteousness with larger global forces seeking to end government or global trends.

Political support is marked by explicit and active backing for the ultimate goals of insurgents in the diplomatic arena. Political support can be more risky than moral support because governments whose very existence or territorial integrity is challenged by political support for its adversaries are more apt to adopt diplomatic and economic policies detrimental, if not hostile, to those giving such support.

Material support consists of tangible resources that are either used on behalf of the insurgents or given to them directly. This is very crucial for insurgents. It is not only

military-related materials but nonmilitary resources such as basic necessities (food, clothing, medicine, shelter, etc.), financing, communications, and training. Outside powers may help by using their own forces to assist the insurgents directly or indirectly.

Sanctuary can be used for training, arms stockpiling, operational planning, and providing safe havens for leaders and facilities for rest and recuperation. These bases will provide substantial and sustained logistical support to any operation. It has been stated that the success or failure of all rebellions since WWII have depended on the use of sanctuaries. However, when analyzing an insurgency, there may be exceptions to sanctuaries because their contributions may vary from case to case. There may be an absence of fixed bases but a tolerance of the movement of weapons and personnel.

Attention must be paid to the types of external support rendered and the effect on their insurgency. The durability and continuation of the support must also be examined in terms of the motivations and changes in domestic, regional, and international political context. This may lead to adjustments in strategies and plans as well as changes in foreign policy.

Chapter 4

CASE STUDY: INSURGENCY IN IRAQ

The Overall Situation (preconditions)

During the rule of Saddam Hussein, Iraq was governed by the small, largely rural Sunni Arab elite that used the Ba'ath Party and the state to maintain itself in power. It is assessed that during Saddam's reign, the population of Iraq was 60% Arab Shi'ite and 20% Kurdish and other minorities, with the remainder being Arab Sunni. Throughout this period the country's economy remained undeveloped, agriculture was never modernized or made productive, and development was undercut by inefficient state-industries, a rigid state-controlled financial sector, and a combination of barriers to trade and outside investment. Saddam Hussein used the nation's wealth to secure power and support his ambitions, and his ruling elite exploited their positions for their own personal benefit. (Hoffman 1)

In the 1980's Iraq was impoverished and driven into massive debt due to the Iran-Iraq war. In 1990, Saddam Hussein tried to solve his economic woes by invading Kuwait which led to a massive military, a new substantial burden of reparations for the war, and more than a decade of UN and international sanctions further crippling every aspect of Iraq's development. (Hoffman 1)

During these times, Iraq experienced severe political and physical repression.

Kurdish efforts of gaining autonomy or independence were met with murder. Most Arab Shi'ites were driven out of the country, while the remainders were kept under constant surveillance often facing imprisonment or even death. The 1990's further impoverished Iraq. Significant local clashes occurred between Iraqi government forces and those of Shi'ite opposition movements based in, and backed by Iran. The division between Sunni and Shi'ite was becoming greater, as the resentment was intensifying toward the US and Britain for not supporting the Shi'ites against Saddam. (Hoffman 2)

The situation in the Kurdish north was similar. However, the Kurds were left in an indeterminate state where they had de facto autonomy, but lived with nearly one-third of Iraq's military forces deployed on the edge of their security zone. All of this increased the Kurdish desire for independence. Saddam contributed to the domestic turmoil by encouraging tribal divisions and favoring those tribes and clans that supported his rule. He publicly embraced Islam, but penalized Shi'ite religious leaders and centers he saw as a threat. Funds were poured into Sunni areas in the West, government and security jobs were given to Sunnis, and scarce resources went into military industries that heavily favored Sunni employment. Sunnis towns such as Tikrit, Samarra, Fallujah, and Ramadi were heavily favored. (Hoffman 2)

Rationing, control of imports, state funds, and the UN oil for food program were all used for his benefit. The funding of education, medical services, and infrastructure was used as a political weapon in an effort to exploit the suffering of the Iraqi people to break out of the UN sanctions. Saddam used propaganda to blame the US and the UN for the plight of his people. (Hoffman 2)

After the events of September 11, 2001 and multiple UN resolutions, the US

decided to wage a conventional war to disarm and remove Saddam Hussein and his Ba'athist regime. The basic rationale for going to war was the threat of Saddam's capability to create weapons of mass destruction. The result has been an unforeseen situation by the Bush administration and senior leadership in the US military in which a climate of significant resistance or insurgency has developed. Since March 19 2003, there have been a total of 1,947 US troop fatalities, 198 non-US Coalition fatalities, and 3,339 Iraqi military and police fatalities, mostly at the hands of the insurgency. This does not include the number of civilian deaths caused by the acts of war which is estimated to be in the neighborhood of 25,000-30,000. (Brookings)

The criticism of many experts has been that the US failed in its military operations to properly plan, implement, and most importantly coordinate the aftermath of the invasion of Iraq and the removal of Saddam's Ba'athist regime. It is the belief of many experts that this failure has breathed life into the insurgency that emerged and has only continued to gain momentum. At the heart of this criticism is the apparent neglect in the planning for post-invasion stability operations following the initial military assault on Iraq, the defeat of its military, and the destruction of Saddam's regime.

The insurgency must also be attributed to the occupying governments plan or strategy to keep the peace and win the hearts and minds of the people, not to mention rebuilding the infrastructure of Iraq. This lack of planning and proper doctrine has been a key topic among many experts who have attempted to understand and explain the insurgency in Iraq. Experts have stated that there was no effective plan to terminate the conflict and reconstruct Iraq. They believed that a critical window of opportunity was lost because of the failure to anticipate the widespread civil disorders and looting that

followed the capture of Baghdad. There have been operational disconnects documented between the US Departments of Defense and State in pre-invasion/post-conflict planning and the inadequacy of the initial ORHA (Organization for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance) effort that continues to plague the Coalition and US military commanders. (Hoffman 2)

Whether or not planning was undertaken or possibly not enough time was given to put together a clear and concise post-conflict plan, initial missteps seriously undermined the US effort in Iraq from the outset, and have caused major revisions in military and reconstruction policy and doctrine. The US has made major efforts to restructure its forces, and has set up a more effective effort to create a new government with more funding for major aid programs. However, the objective here is not to examine US post war planning or to assess the US effort of nation building. What is important to understand, is that the US's failure in either properly planning or properly executing a post-conflict strategy must seriously be considered as a contributing cause and precondition to the insurgency in Iraq.

The Goal(s) of the Insurgency

It is quite clear that the immediate goal of the insurgency in Iraq is to disrupt the political process and drive US forces out of Iraq. However, it may be difficult to ascertain exactly what principal force is fueling the insurgency. It is commonly believed that the insurgency in Iraq is comprised of several groups of fighters – among them former Baathists, foreign jihadis, and Iraqi nationalists – united by their desire. But each element of the insurgency is also driven by its own unique motivations. The different

groups of fighters will be addressed in a later section.

There are a variety of theories about the goals galvanizing the various insurgent groups. Among them:

A return to Ba'athist rule. The hard-line loyalists of Saddam Hussein, including former high-ranking military or intelligence officers of the Ba'ath Party, may be seeking to regain power through a so-called "third coup." In 1963 and 1968, Ba'athists came to power in Iraq by taking control of the Iraqi military and seizing political power. The Ba'athists now fighting in the insurgency are a powerful group, well-funded and stocked with military officers trained during Saddam Hussein's regime in conventional urban warfare. It is believed that the Ba'ath Party strategy has always been to get control of the security forces, and that some former Ba'athists joining the Iraqi security forces are waiting until the political process fails and Iraq becomes further destabilized. They will then emerge – perhaps violently – and present themselves as the only solution to the nation's security problem. Hiwa Osman, training director of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting in Iraq, stated, "Their goal is the return of Baathist rule through a military coup...and to do that, they are willing to make common cause with people who do not share their secular outlook." (Beehner May 20, 2005)

Establishment of Islamic rule. This appears to be the goal of those who organize foreign fighters infiltrating Iraq from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, Yemen, and other Arab countries. By creating chaos, Islamist militants are hoping to force US forces out of Iraq and create a fertile recruiting ground, not unlike Afghanistan in the 1990s, from which to train and recruit jihadis. Their ultimate purpose is to restore an Islamic caliphate, a theocracy based on Islamic law that for 12 centuries spanned the Muslim

world. (Beehner May 20, 2005)

Nationalism. What may be considered the strongest force in an insurgency, nationalism, is also what motivates many of Iraq's insurgents. These include Iraqis who, after Saddam Hussein's regime fell, were fired from their military or other government jobs but do not favor a return to Saddam Hussein's secular form of Arab socialism. Most of them are Sunnis who fear a Shi'ite-led government, support a strong state run by Sunnis, and want US forces out of Iraq quickly. Some say these fighters are less likely to target Iraqi civilians or engage in suicide bombings. These insurgents, like the Ba'athists, may be using the foreign jihadis as "cannon fodder" to fight US forces, says Steven Metz, director of research at the US Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute. (Beehner May 20, 2005)

Other factors that may explain the insurgency in Iraq is organized crime, tribal feuds, revenge, and collusion by neighboring countries.

Organized crime. The rise in insurgent attacks may be related to organized criminal activity. These attackers are motivated more by greed than politics. Some are leftovers from the 100,000 to 200,000 prisoners Saddam Hussein released before the US invasion. Others may be what Steven Metz calls "casual insurgents": out-of-work Iraqis drawn to crime because it pays. Detonating an improvised explosive device can pay \$100 to \$200, Metz says; killing an American can pay upwards of \$1,000. There are around 20 criminal gangs operating in Iraq, according to a recent report by Olive Security, a British security-consulting firm. Many of them kidnap high-level Iraqi officials or foreigners and then sell hostages to the highest bidder; other kidnappings are subcontracted out by militant groups. (Beehner May 20, 2005)

Tribal feuds. Prominent throughout Iraq's rural regions and the so-called Sunni triangle, extended families and clans command strong loyalty and are a common source of group identity among Iraqis. It's unclear how much of the recent surge in violence stems from tribal leaders, but as Steven Metz points out: "Local elites recognize that in a secular, modernized Iraq, their power would be challenged." (Beehner May 20, 2005)

Revenge. Some Iraqi civilians join or collaborate with the insurgency for more personal reasons: they cannot feed their families or they lost loved ones during the war. "There's a need to prove their manhood," Metz says. "One can't overemphasize factors like honor and justice in this culture." These civilians may take up arms because they are fed up with the US-backed government's inability to provide basic staples like security, running water, or electricity. (Beehner May 20, 2005)

Collusion by neighboring countries. Many of the countries on Iraq's borders – Iran and Syria in particular – are believed to be indirectly abetting the insurgency. The United States and Iraq accuse Syria of not doing enough to prevent foreign jihadis from crossing its 380-mile porous border with Iraq. Iran has been accused of funneling money to insurgent groups in Iraq, though Tehran's primary concern, according to a recent report by the International Crisis Group, is "to prevent Iraq from re-emerging as a threat, whether of a military, political, or ideological nature." Many experts suppose that some Middle Eastern countries may be provoking a degree of instability in Iraq because they do not want a democracy on their doorsteps. More importantly, these states may not want to see Washington succeed in its experiment to remake the Middle East to its liking. (Beehner May 20, 2005)

The Program for Gaining Power

- Strategic Approaches

The Iraqi insurgents have exploited the fact the media tend to focus on dramatic incidents with high casualties, and spend little time analyzing the patterns of the insurgency. Because there are different groups of insurgents, there have been a wider range of tactics that each group of actors use and have refined over time and practice. In terms of the methods and tactics used for political, psychological, and information warfare, the insurgents have made a concerted effort to attack the legitimacy of the government and nation building process. They have sought to intimidate and subvert the military and security forces, attacked the government officials and institutions at the national, regional, and local levels, and attacked the infrastructure, utilities, and services in ways that appear to show that the government cannot provide essential economic services or personal security. (Cordesman 13)

The insurgents have created alliances of convenience and informal networks to attack the US, elements of the Iraqi Interim Government and elected government, and any efforts at nation building. These alliances are based more on the principle that the “enemy of my enemy” is my temporary friend. (Cordesman 14)

Insurgents will attack Iraqi elites and ethnic and sectarian fault lines in order to prevent nation building. As the US and Coalition phased down its role, and a sovereign Iraqi government increased its influence and power, insurgents shifted the focus of their attacks to Iraqi government targets, military, police, and security forces. They also stepped up attacks to cause growing tension and conflict between Sunni and Shi’ite. (Cordesman 14)

The insurgents' strategies have used asymmetric warfare to increase crime and looting for the purpose of exploiting poverty and creating economic desperation. They use criminals to support attacks on infrastructure and nation building activity, and they have exploited unemployment to strengthen dedicated insurgent and terrorist cells. (Cordesman 14)

Insurgents have attacked petroleum and oil facilities, electric power, water, and other critical infrastructure. The attacks on power and water facilities have offset the impact of US aid and caused Iraqi anger against the government. Al Qaeda and Ba'athist groups found oil facilities and pipelines to be particularly attractive targets because they deny the government revenue, affect both power and Iraqi ability to obtain fuel, get extensive media and foreign business attention, and prevent investment in one of Iraq's most attractive assets. (Cordesman 15)

The insurgents have maintained a strategy of constant attrition, but will not relinquish the opportunity to strike hard when there is high political, social, and economic impact at stake. They know the importance of a constant low-level body count and the creation of a steady climate of violence. With this strategy, the insurgents hope to economically drain the US, prevent the Iraqi forces from taking hold, and ensuring constant media coverage. (Cordesman 15)

The insurgents have focused on large US installations because they can capture more major media attention. Case in point was the attack on Abu Graib prison, where 3,446 detainees were held. The attack was conducted by 40-60 insurgents, lasted almost 40 minutes, and wounded up to 20 US troops. This was an example of the insurgents moving from the smaller hit and run firings to a much larger and better organized raid.

Even if such a raid failed, it would still prove to capture major media attention. Other evidence of more sophisticated tactics is the use of Iraqi uniforms, security and army vehicles, false IDs, and intelligence gained from infiltrators. (Cordesman 16)

Insurgent strategy has also found that attacks planned for maximum political and psychological effects have often provoked over-reaction. One example was the long series of attacks on the secure areas in the “Green Zone” in Baghdad and along the road from that zone to Baghdad airport. Attacking the airport road kept up constant psychological and political pressure. It passed through a hostile Sunni area, was almost impossible to secure from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), vehicle born IEDs (VBIEDs), rocket and mortar attacks, and sniping without pinning down large numbers of troops. (Cordesman 16)

The strategy of kidnapping and killing foreigners, particularly those working in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and aid projects, and other soft targets provides the insurgents great media attention and leads some organizations to leave the country. The kidnappings and killings put political pressure on their governments, received high local and regional media attention, and sometimes lead governments to stop their workers from going to Iraq. Insurgents also hope that these acts will make governance difficult, create major problems for security and police forces, weaken the economy, and create a general feeling of insecurity to the point where people lose faith in the Iraqi government, Coalition, and political process. Among these soft targets, Insurgents killed 80 professors, 50 physicians, and 31 journalists. (State Department 28 Feb 2005)

The insurgents believe that horrific attacks and atrocities, such as beheadings and desecrating corpses, are effective political and psychological weapons serving to divide

the West from the Islamic world. They are not seeking to negotiate with those they terrorize, but rather create conditions that can drive the West away, undermine secular and moderate regimes in the Arab and Islamic worlds, and create the conditions under which they can have “Islamic States according to their ideas of “Puritanism”. Anthony Cordesman points out that the goal of Osama bin Laden is to alienate the West from the Islamic and Arab world and ultimately control or eliminate the Western secular influence. However, he states that the goal of the Iraqi insurgents is narrower – “drive the US and its allies out of Iraq”. (Cordesman 17)

Insurgents have also attempted to try and confuse the identity of the attacker and create conspiracy theories by having multiple claims of attacks and creating new names for attacking organizations. Their strategy has been to charge the US with deliberately or carelessly failing to provide an adequate defense. Also, in order to raise the media profile, create a defensive deterrent, and make the US look anti-Islamic, the insurgents seek to create sanctuaries like Fallujah, take shelters in mosques, shrines, and high value targets, and targets with high cultural impact. (Cordesman 18)

The main strategy of warfare the insurgents hope will ultimately give them victory is to fight a political, ideological, and psychological war. Their hope is to use the media, rumor, and conspiracy theory to exploit the US and its effort, or lack thereof, to fight the same political, ideological, and psychological war. US misconduct, such as the Abu Graib debacle, is a case in point.

- **The Means: forms of warfare**

It is difficult to distinguish the exact means or tactics insurgents use to fight conventional military versus softer targets, but some of the forms of warfare in these

terms are as follows.

The combined use of crude and sophisticated IEDs has been seen quite often. The insurgents in Iraq have made extensive use of IEDs and VBIEDs by exploiting its massive stocks of arms. After the removal of Saddam's Ba'athist regime, the insurgents were able to draw on large stocks of explosives, as well as large bombs and artillery shells. Nearly 400 tons of plastic explosives disappeared from the Qaqaa weapons facility alone. The insurgents mixture of threats and methods have made it much more difficult to counter. They have based many of their initial efforts on relatively simple weapons designs, some of which have been adapted from the Arabic translations of US field manuals on booby traps and similar improvised devices. Over time, the insurgents learned to use more sophisticated detonators to counter US electronic countermeasures, and increase their distance away from the bomb. Reports have shown that only 10% of the IEDs used in Iraq as of May 2005 were modeled on the pressure-detonation devices shown in the US Army Field Manual 5-31 and in a direct Iraqi translation published in 1987. (Graham and Priest 15)

The insurgents have also changed their behavior based on the lessons learned from US intelligence collection methods, and counter IED operations. They have improved their methods of concealment, like digging holes in a road and then paving over it, and stealing police, military, and government vehicles, as well as uniforms and IDs, to penetrate secure areas. They have also linked bombings to ambushes with rifles and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs). As of May 2005, the number of IED incidents is reported to be around 30 per day. Estimates were around 500-600 per month with roughly half of them harming US personnel or damaging US vehicles. It is also

estimated that 70% of all coalition casualties since the fall of Saddam Hussein were caused by IEDs. (Scully 22)

Iraqi insurgents have also effectively improved their ability to carry out complex attacks where an IED might be set off, continuing the attack with either more IEDs or employing other methods against the follow-on forces. On April 11, 2005, insurgents used a mix of gunmen, suicide car bombs, and a large fire truck filled with explosives to attack a US marine base near the Syrian border. (Knickmeyer 12 Apr 2005)

The frequency of suicide attacks have also proven to be effective for the insurgents. There are several possible factors explaining why there has been a surge in suicide attacks. Mia Bloom, author of *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Terror* states, "A suicide attack kills six times as many people as regular terrorist tactics. It wounds twelve times as many. And it really gets a lot more press." It has been clear that suicide attacks have hobbled reconstruction efforts in Iraq, as exemplified in 2003, when bombings of the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations prompted both organizations to pull most of their personnel out of Baghdad. Kidnappings and beheadings, both commonplace early on in the insurgency, have fallen somewhat out of favor. Peter Bergen, author of *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden*, stated, "Suicide bombings have a religious and ideological aura that beheadings never did," he says, adding that beheadings were "not seen as a legitimate means of slaughter or sacrifice for God." (Beehner 1 Aug 2005)

Reports have indicated that the insurgents have not made effective use of the more sophisticated anti-tank weapons and manportable surface to air missiles (MANPADS). They have instead improved their tactics from single fire ambushes to

multiple firings of RPGs against the same target from multiple firing positions with a mix of small arms, RPGs, and light automatic weapons. Insurgents learned to “swarm” coalition forces by rushing from different points or firing simultaneously from multiple locations. Some vehicles have taken up to eight RPG rounds in a single encounter.

(Knickmeyer 22 Apr 2005)

Snipers have also been very effective for the insurgents in Iraq. Initially, Iraqis had very poor marksmanship and tended to fire off their weapon in sustained and poorly armed bursts. The insurgents now have not only developed effective snipers, but trained spotters have learned how to position and mix their snipers with other elements of Iraqi forces. They have also developed signals and other communication systems to improve their tactical ability. They have acquired new types of rifles, anti-armor ammunition, and body armor from outside Iraq, but their marksmanship and fire discipline is still considered to be deficient. However, reporting indicates they are steadily increasing their sniper training. (Cordesman 21)

The insurgents have learned to stop using communication assets, and to bypass the efforts to control cash flow and money transfers. Instead they have used messengers, direct human contact, coded messages through the Internet, propaganda web pages, and more random methods of electronic communication. They have adapted to cells and elements that operate with considerable autonomy, and they have loosely linked their operations by using the media and reporting on the overall pattern of attacks to help determine the best methods and targets. They have utilized text messaging to communicate in an effort to avoid electronic listening by the US. Insurgents will often use more than one phone to communicate a message, so that those listening will only hear

part of the message. (Cordesman 22)

These insurgents, like many previous insurgent groups, have used children to provide tactical scouting, intelligence, and warning through the use of cell phones, signals, and runners. These methods have been very difficult for the Coalition to detect and stop. Along with this method, the insurgents found that cities with supportive and/or accepting populations can be made into partial sanctuaries and centers for defensive fighting and ambushes, and that tactical defeat can normally be dealt with by dispersal and hiding among the civilian population. (Cordesman 22)

The insurgents have used cross border operations and have taken advantage of the difficulties in securing the the Syrian, Iranian, and Saudi borders. They have used the “Ho Chi Minh Trail tactic” from the Euphrates to the Syrian border along the road to Abu Kamal. They effectively use these partial sanctuaries to disperse and rapidly move their operations and centers. They have mixed these tactics with “die hard” facilities designed to to fight and defend themselves if attacked, while also using sleeper cells to stay behind operations to recover after an area has been attacked, captured, and secured by Coalition and Iraqi forces. (Cordesman 22)

The insurgents have effectively been able to dig in, hide, and reemerge when defeat seems likely. They will let the US take an empty city or objective , and resurge when the US tactical presence declines. Blending into the civilian population has worked well for the insurgents, and they have learned they can exploit rules of engagement where the US and Iraqi forces do not have soldiers on the ground to perform targeting and Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) functions. (Cordesman 23)

While the US and Iraqi forces have captured large numbers of weapons and

supplies, it is assessed that the insurgents do not face any near term supply problems given the numbers of weapons looted from Iraq's vast arms depots during and after the fighting that brought down Saddam. General Casey stated in March 2005 that insurgents operating from the Sunni areas had enough manpower, weaponry, ammunition, and money to launch between 50 and 60 attacks a day, and that the insurgents had retained enough ammunition and arms to continue fighting for years. (Cordesman 35)

Iraqi and foreign journalists have provided an inadvertent propaganda arm, for the media coverage of insurgent activity and attacks provides a command and communications network to insurgents. This informal network provides warning, tells insurgents what attacks do and do not work, and allows them to coordinate their attacks to reinforce those of other insurgent cells and groups. They have exploited Arab satellite television as well as traditional media by learning how to capture maximum exposure in the regional media. Insurgents pay close attention to media reactions, and tailor their attacks to high profile targets that make such attacks "weapons of mass media". (Cordesman 15)

Attack distribution has varied, with a steadily rising number of attacks in the area of Mosul in the north. Baghdad, however, has been the scene of roughly twice as many attacks and incidents as the governorates, with 300-400 a month on average. Al Anbar, Salah-al-din, and Ninewa have had roughly one-third to one half as many. Babil and Diyala average around 100 per month, and lower levels of attacks have taken place in Tamin and Basra. Since the Shi'ite fighting with Sadr has ceased, the peak of insurgent activity in the south has declined. There have been relatively low levels of attack in the Karbala, Thi-Qar, Wassit, Missan, Muthanna, Najaf, and Qaddisyaa governorates. Erbil,

Dahok, and Sulaymaniyah are northern governorates administered by the two Kurdish Regional Governments (KRGs) and have long been relatively peaceful. Attacks fit a broad pattern during the day, although 60% of the attacks reported are unspecified. Of those that do have a specific time reported, 10% are in the morning, 11% are in the afternoon, and 19% are at night. (Brookings)

Popular Support

Regarding the popular support of an insurgency, Bruce Hoffman stated, “It is more likely than not that a population will give its allegiance to the side that will best protect it, and will support the government if and when they are convinced that they will have a better life, and can be protected against the insurgents forever. They will continue to support the insurgents if there is no assurance of protection against reprisal.” (Hoffman 15)

It is then imperative that the insurgents in Iraq deprive the population of that sense of security. Through violence and bloodshed, the insurgents seek to foment a climate of fear by demonstrating the authorities’ inability to maintain order and thus highlight their weakness. The violence will demoralize the population and undermine the trust and confidence in the authorities’ ability to protect and defend them. The insurgents then do not have to defeat the Coalition or Iraqi government militarily; they simply must avoid losing. They bank on the hope that disruption caused to daily life and commerce by the military will alienate the population and make them look like oppressors rather than protectors. In a car bombing of an Iraqi police station that killed 24 policemen, 2 women, and 1 child, the “crowd gathered after the blast, didn’t seem angry at the insurgents

responsible for the carnage, and instead, many of them blamed the G.I.'s." (Hoffman 15)

A good example of how the popular support in Iraq can be persuaded is an Iraqi insurgent who was quoted as saying, "They promised to liberate us from occupation, the Americans promised us rights and liberty, and my colleagues and I waited to make our decision on whether to fight until we saw how they would act. They should have come and just given us food and some security...It was then that I realized that they had come as occupiers and not as liberators and my colleagues and I then voted to fight." (Hoffman 16)

Many say that the insurgency in Iraq is not a national insurgency, and that it is driven by a relatively small part of Iraq's population concentrated in part of the country. However, many Iraqis believe the Minister of Defense was correct when he said there were some 200,000 sympathizers or passive support. He stated, "It does no one any good to deny that insurgents have major public support, particularly in Sunni areas..." The Sunni population is only about 20% of Iraq's total population, and only 6-8% of Iraq's total population is located in the areas most hostile to the Coalition. Moreover, the total population of all the scattered cities and areas where insurgents and terrorists largely dominate does not exceed 6-9% of Iraq's total population. It is assessed that most Iraqi's do passively support the insurgency by providing political support for attacks on Coalition forces. One Coalition private poll, conducted in February 2005, showed that as many as 45% of those polled supported attacks on Coalition forces while only 15% strongly supported the Coalition. Out of those native Sunni Iraqis who supported the insurgency, most only provided sympathy or passive support. And there is also evidence that even some Iraqi Sunnis are actively opposing the actions of outside Islamist

extremists and terrorists. (Cordesman 32)

There are indications that some Sunnis are moving toward participation in the government and evolving Iraqi political process. Though most Sunnis boycotted them, the elections were successful enough in legitimizing majority Shi'ite rule. In time the elections may show that some Sunni continued opposition could simply end in isolation and result in a loss of wealth and power. A total of 64 Sunni clerics signed a fatwa legitimizing Sunni participation in the Iraqi military, security forces, and police forces on April 8, 2005. Sunni sermons have included similar themes, and effectively stated that violence against the Iraqi forces was wrong. (Cordesman 32)

The popular support may have also been affected by Osama bin Laden's possible strategic error of declaring Zarqawi "emir" of Al Qaeda in Iraq in December 2004. Iraqis are deeply distrustful of outsiders and, in particular, neighbors in the region. Bin Laden's declaration could be seen by Iraqis in highly nationalistic terms as a Saudi ordering a Jordanian to kill Iraqis. Some feel that this will motivate those Iraqis that were previously unsure of whether to offer their support to the elected government. (Cordesman 45)

The Iraqi Arab Shi'ites resent the US presence, but most seem to realize that the fact they are 60% of the population will give them political dominance if Iraq is secure. Sadr seems to be committed to participating in Iraq's political process. His Mahdi army did present a serious threat to the Coalition in Najaf, in Sadr City in Baghdad, and in other Shi'ite areas in the south during much of the summer and early fall of 2004. General Abizaid said in March 2005 that, "we have not seen the end of Muqtada Sadr's challenge. In fact, it is feared that the Sadr faction might leave the United Iraqi Alliance

and become an active part of the opposition.” (Tyson 5)

In order to grasp a sense of the popular support of the insurgency in Iraq, many polls have been taken to try and assess the situation. Here are some of the data that is applicable to this study:

A poll was taken February 2-11, 2005 by the US military with 90% of the sample taken from Baghdad, and 10% taken from Mahmoudiya, Istiqlal, and Taji.

Table 1. US Military poll rating Iraqi confidence in security		
How would you rate your confidence in...		
...the Iraqi national guard improving the situation in Iraq?	...the US military improving the situation in Iraq?	...the armed insurgency improving the situation in Iraq?
A great deal/quite a lot: 76%	A great deal/quite a lot: 15%	A great deal/quite a lot: 20%
Not very much/none at all: 17%	Not very much/none at all: 76%	Not very much/none at all: 51%
Don't know: 7%	Don't know: 9%	Don't know: 29%

(The Brookings Institute 10 October 2005)

Table 2. US Military poll of Iraqi support of Coalition presence
How much do you support or oppose the presence of Coalition Forces in Iraq?
Support: 23%
Oppose: 71%
Don't know: 6%

(The Brookings Institute 10 October 2005)

One survey of 2,500 Iraqis released in March 2004 found that while they were happy to be rid of Saddam Hussein, 41 percent said they were humiliated by the invasion,

four in ten had no confidence in occupation troops, and one in five believed attacks on foreign soldiers in Iraq were justified. In a January 19 – 23, 2005 Abu Dhabi TV/Zogby International poll, 53% of Sunni Arabs believed that the ongoing insurgent attacks were a legitimate form of resistance. (Brookings)

In a poll done by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), May 14-23, 2004, questions were asked about the Iraqi perceptions of the insurgents:

Table 3. CPA poll about the Iraqi perceptions of the insurgents	
Please indicate if and how the following statements apply to those who attack the Coalition Forces and those who work with them	
They believe that the Coalition is trying to steal Iraq's wealth	Totally true: 66% Partially true: 12% Not true: 7%
They believe all foreign forces must leave at once	Totally true: 59% Partially true: 15% Not true: 11%
They believe national dignity requires the attacks	Totally true: 53% Partially true: 15% Not true: 13%
They want democracy, but don't believe the coalition will help democracy	Totally true: 41% Partially true: 22% Not true: 15%
They want to establish an Islamic state with no outside influence	Totally true: 31% Partially true: 28% Not true: 21%
They are trying to undermine the transfer of responsibility to Iraqi forces	Totally true: 27% Partially true: 18% Not true: 36%
They are trying to help us create a better future	Totally true: 23% Partially true: 23% Not true: 32%
They do not want democracy in Iraq	Totally true: 17% Partially true: 21% Not true: 45%
They are angry because they lost the privileges they had under Saddam	Totally true: 15% Partially true: 17% Not true: 48%
They want to return to Saddam and the Ba'ath party	Totally true: 9% Partially true: 11% Not true: 61%

(The Brookings Institute 10 October 2005)

The Insurgent Organization and Unity

The Iraq insurgency has no clear apparent leader or leadership. As seen in other examples of insurgency throughout history, no leadership has emerged in response to any of the conditions present in Iraq, and there has been no identifiable insurgent organization. It is true, that there are multiple organizations, such as Zarqawi and Al Ansar, but there is no clear indication of any cohesion in the insurgency. However, General John Abizaid is quoted as saying, “there is some level of cooperation that's taking place at very high levels, although I'm not sure I'd say there's a national-level resistance leadership.” (Global) Former Ambassador to Iraq, Paul Bremer, was quoted as saying, “The most critical problem is intelligence... We're still weak on both FRLs and foreigners... Are getting better but still major problems in HUMINT collection and analysis... [We] do not have a reliable picture of who is organizing attacks, or the size and structure of various elements.” (Hoffman 12)

Both US and Iraqi officials believe that Ba'ath leaders in Syria coordinate with at least some of the Ba'ath sympathizers. Six senior members of the former regime were identified and in March 2005: Izzat Ibrahim al-Dur was believed to be the leader of the New Regional Command and New Ba'ath Party; Muhammed Younis al-Ahmad was the financial facilitator and operational leader of the New Regional Command and new Ba'ath Party; Rashid Ta'an Kazim was the Central Ba'ath Party Regional Chairman in the Al Anbar Province; Abd Al-Baqi Abd Al-Karim Al-Abdallah Al-Sa'adun was the recruiter and financier of terrorist activity in eastern and central Iraq; Aham Hasan Kaka Al-Ubaydi was a former intelligence officer and now associated with Ansar Al Islam; and Fadhi Ibrahim Mahmud Mashadani was the top member of the new Ba'ath Party and a

key financier of insurgent and terrorist activity. (Cordesman 37)

Field leaders reportedly include Mohammed Younis al-Ahmad, a former aide to Saddam Hussein, and Ibrahim Sabawi, Hussein's half brother and a former security director. Supposedly, there are still some elements of the Iraqi 5th Corps in Mosul, and Syria has provided a covert sanctuary for at least some Iraqi Ba'athist leaders. (Ciezdlo)

The most identifiable leader in the insurgency may be Abu Mus'ab al Zaraqawi. He may be considered the mastermind behind the insurgency in Iraq for various reasons. First of all, in December of 2004, Osama bin Laden officially declared Zaraqawi "emir" of Al Qa'ida in Iraq. Secondly, Zaraqawi by far, has received the most media attention for his despicable examples of kidnappings and beheadings for the purpose of invoking fear into the minds of the Iraqi people and to make foreign governments rethink their policy of supporting the Coalition in Iraq. The US State Department's assessment of Zarquawi was as follows:

...Jordanian-born Abu Mus'ab al Zaraqawi and his organization emerged in 2004 to play a leading role in terrorist activities in Iraq. In Iraq, the US Government designated Zaraqawi's group, Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn (or "The al-Qa'ida Jihad Organization in the Land of the Two Rivers"), as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). In December, there was a "merger" between Zaraqawi and Osama bin Laden's al-Qa'ida organization...In December, bin Laden endorsed Zaraqawi as his official emissary in Iraq. Zaraqawi's group claimed credit for a number of attacks targeting Coalition and Iraq forces...In February 2004, Zaraqawi called for a "sectarian war" in Iraq. He sought to create a rift between Shi'a and Sunnis through several large terror attacks against Iraqi

Shi'a. He also claimed credit for attacks during the Shi'a festival of Ashura and for a suicide attack against the leader of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), one of Iraq's largest Shi'a parties...(State Department 27 Apr 2005)

It is debatable as to the depth of Zarqawi's movement and his ties to bin Laden. The number of fighters that are Iraqi versus the number that are foreign and how many other Islamist extremist groups exist is unknown. Also uncertain is their dependence on Zarqawi and Al Qaeda. It is likely that some of them either only claim him as an inspiration or operate as almost totally independent groups and cells.

General John Abizaid has commented that, "the insurgency is getting more organized, and it is learning. It is adapting, it is adapting to our tactics, techniques and procedures, and we've got to adapt to their tactics, techniques and procedures." (Hoffman 6)

The scope of the insurgency may be difficult to define. In early 2005, the Iraqi Interim government claimed that 16 out of Iraq's 18 provinces were secure, but the reality has been that there is only a significant level of security in 12 provinces. Estimates have shown that some 40-60 towns and cities have been the scene of attacks, with many of them outside the Sunni Triangle and Al Anbar Province. The most violent city in terms of number of major incidents has been Baghdad, with 20-40 attacks a week. Mosul is second with 4-13 major attacks per week. On Feb 17, 2005, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld told the Senate Armed Service Committee that classified estimates on the size of the insurgency are not static, but that they are "a moving target." Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Myers, also avoided hard numbers but

described the insurgency as having limited capabilities; meaning that the insurgency can mount only around 50 to 60 attacks on any given day. (Cordesman 26)

Estimates on the number of insurgents have varied since the beginning. Much depends on the definition of insurgency and the level of activity and dedication involved. Most experts freely admit that such estimates are nothing more than “guesstimates.” A few estimates have been as low as 3,500 full-time active insurgents that make up the core forces, but most US military estimates range between 8,000 and 18,000, with even greater numbers during major operations. Iraqi intelligence officials believe the figure for sympathizers and insurgents could be as high as 200,000, with a core of anywhere between 15,000 and 40,000 fighters and another 160,000 supporters. (Brookings)

Since the elections, an independent count of Iraqi military and police casualties showed that some 1,300 had been killed between the fall of Saddam in April 2003 and the end of 2004. The increase in insurgent activity has seen 722 Iraqi forces killed in the first four months of 2005, raising the total to 3,339 killed. The total number killed in Iraq is 1,947 US forces, 198 allied military killed, and 25,000 – 30,000 Iraqi civilians. It is believed that there have been approximately 15,000 insurgent casualties. (Brookings)

A figure of 5,000 Iraqi insurgents or FREs also referred to as Former Regime Loyalists (FRLs) – mostly Sunni Muslims who belonged to the Ba’ath party or served in the military, police, or security and intelligence services – was cited by General Abizaid and appears to be the generally accepted number. It is also widely claimed that 95% of the attacks or 95% of the threat or over 90% of the violent insurgents consists of FREs – who either carry out attacks themselves or pay others to do so. It is increasingly reported that hired criminals or unemployed “angry young men” are being paid by FREs to attack

US forces, and the bounty is rising. It was believed to be about \$100 to conduct an attack against coalition forces, and \$500 if successful. It is now believed to be somewhere between \$1,000 and \$2,000 if one conducts an attack, and \$3,000 to \$5,000 if successful. It is also believed that some 70-80% of captured insurgents are paid attackers. (Hoffman 12)

The result of this research is unclear as to the extent of the Shi'ite involvement of the insurgency in Iraq. The US officials have portrayed Muqtada al-Sadr, a rebel Shi'ite cleric, as the catalyst of the rising violence within the Shi'ite community of Iraq. But intelligence officials now say that there is evidence that the insurgency goes beyond Mr. Sadr and his militia, and that a much larger number of Shi'ites have turned against the Coalition in Iraq, even if they are not all actively aiding the insurgency.

Initially, the Shi'ites rejoiced at the American invasion and the toppling of Saddam Hussein, but experts now believe that hatred of the American occupation has spread so rapidly among Shi'ites that Sadr and his forces represent just one element. Regardless, there have been no indications of any coordination between the Sunni rebellion in Iraq's heartland and the Shi'ite insurgency. General Myers has stated that "it's not a Shi'ite uprising. Sadr has a very small following." (Risen)

According to some experts on Iraq's Shi'ites, the uprising has spread to many Shi'ites who are not followers of Mr. Sadr. "There is a general mood of anti-Americanism among the people in the streets," said Ghassan R. al-Attayah, executive director of the Iraq Foundation for Development and Democracy in Baghdad. Al-Attayah continued to say, "They identify with Sadr not because they believe in him but because they have their own grievances." (Risen)

It is the common estimate that the insurgency remains largely Sunni dominated. Some 35 Sunni Arab “groups” have made some kind of public announcement of their existence, or claimed responsibility for terrorist or insurgent attacks. Much of this may be little more than individual cells making an effort to shift the blame for attacks or making the insurgent movement seem larger than it is. Some could be nothing more than tribal or clan groupings, since many elements of the Sunni insurgency have strong tribal affiliations or cells. One should also note that an overwhelming majority of those captured or killed have been Iraqi Sunnis, as well as 90-95% detained. (Cordesman 35)

The Sunni insurgents are divided into a complex mix of Sunni nationalists, FRLs, Sunni Iraqi Islamists, outside Islamic extremists, foreign volunteers with no clear alignment, and paid or politically motivated criminals. Some are organized so that their cadres are in relatively small cells, some as small as 2 or 3 men. They can recruit or call in larger teams, but the loss of even a significant number of such cells may not cripple a given group, and several Sunni groups operate in most areas. Others seem to operate as much larger, but normally dispersed groups, capable of coming together for operations of as many as 30-50 men. (Cordesman 35)

Even though the common term for Sunni nationalists may be “former regime loyalists”, it is generally misleading because many members of Sunni groups do not have ties to or family linkage to Ba’ath groups or the former Saddam regime. Rather, they are Sunni nationalists involved in a struggle for current power, and have allowed the insurgency to broaden its base and establish ties to Islamic groups as well. These Sunni groups are somewhat independent, but will at times participate in joint operations, giving in to some degree of central leadership and coordination. (Cordesman 38)

Some experts believe that the shift of attacks designed to target supplies of water, electricity, crude oil, gasoline and heating oil indicates that insurgents are carrying out a sophisticated plan to sabotage government services, hoping to convince residents that the government cannot provide for its people. Because of the technological expertise involved in these attacks, these experts believe that the former, Hussein-era officials are still aiding the insurgents, with in fact, a large pool of such expertise in the various insurgent forces. (Glanz)

Another key insurgent element includes Arab and Islamist extremists' integration of foreign volunteers. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's group is one such example. It is estimated that these groups make up less than 10% of the insurgent force, but in some ways they are the most dangerous element in the insurgency because of their efforts at provoking a civil war between the Sunnis, Shi'ites, and Kurds. (State Department 27 Apr 2005)

Zarqawi has used kidnapping and targeted assassinations to intimidate Iraqis and third-country nationals working as contractors. He has claimed credit for killing the chairman of the Coalition-appointed Iraqi Governing council, and the beheadings of multiple civilians, which he later posted on an al-Qa'ida associated website. (State Department 27 Apr 2005)

Other terrorist groups that have been involved in Iraq are likely in close association with Zarqawi is Ansar al-Islam. According to the US State Department, Ansar al-Islam (AI) is a radical Islamist group of Iraqi Kurds and Arabs who have vowed to establish an independent Islamic state in Iraq. The group was formed in December 2001, and in 2003, they called for all jihadists in Iraq to unite under the name Ansar al-

Sunnah (AS). They are closely associated with al-Qa'ida and abu Mus'ab al Zarqawi's group in Iraq. They have trained in al-Qa'ida camps in Afghanistan, and have become one of the leading groups engaged in anti-Coalition attacks in Iraq. They have approximately 500 to 1,000 members, and their location and area of operation is primarily central and northern Iraq. The group receives funding, training, equipment, and combat support from al-Qa'ida, Zarqawi, and other international jihadists backers throughout the world. (State Department 27 Apr 2005)

Another element that adds to the complexity of the insurgency is the role of crime and criminals. Some may claim that the insurgency in Iraq is nothing but criminal activity with little or no organization whatsoever. It is important that the criminals and the insurgents be distinguished and assessed. It is believed that most of Iraq's criminals have limited or no ties to the insurgents, although some clearly are hired to sabotage and create a climate of violence in given areas. US and Iraqi intelligence officers do believe that some criminal networks are under the influence of various former regime elements and do help the insurgency. It is difficult to know the strength of such elements and the extent to which they are tied to the insurgency, but due to the massive unemployment, the disbanding of the military, and the destruction of Iraq's military industries, the crime in Iraq has developed into a considerable epidemic. Many kidnappings might be the work of insurgent groups hiring out the job.

Crime statistics had actually ceased to be reported in mid-2004, but the Ministry of Health, in the spring of 2005, did report that 5,158 Iraqis had died from all forms of criminal and insurgent activities. The Baghdad Central Morgue counted 14,027 deaths from unnatural causes in Baghdad, compared to only 1,800 in 2002, the last year of

Saddam's reign. The morgue reported that 60% of those killed were killed by gunshot wounds and were unrelated to the insurgency, and were largely a combination of crime, tribal vendettas, vengeance killings, and mercenary kidnappings. (Cordesman 51)

It is not clear as to whether the elements of the insurgency are dividing or coalescing. It is true, that there are multiple organizations, such as Zarqawi and Al Ansar, but there is no clear indication of any cohesion in the insurgency. The level of communication and cooperation between the various movements remains unclear. Bruce Hoffman describes the insurgency in Iraq as a "Netwar", where the insurgency has more linear networks rather than the pyramidal hierarchies and command and control systems that have governed traditional insurgent organizations. It involves small groups who communicate, coordinate, and conduct their campaigns in an internetted manner, without a precise central command. This is a good description of the situation in Iraq, where secular Ba'athists and other FREs cooperate with religious extremist jihadists along with Iraqi jihadists. It is a very loose environment where individuals gravitate toward one another to carry out armed attacks, exchange intelligence, trade weapons, or engage in joint trading and then disperse at times never to operate together again. No matter the differences, they can fight together for a common cause. (Hoffman 17)

External Support

Iraq's neighbors have conflicting interests and play a key role in the insurgency. Syria has supported and tolerated Sunni Islamist infiltrations as well as allowed ex-Ba'athists to operate from Syria. Turkey is primarily interested in ensuring that Iraq's Kurds do not become an example to Turkey's Kurdish dissidents. Iran has its own

interests in supporting Iraq's Islamic Shi'ites, creating an ally, and ending American "encirclement." The Arab states of the Gulf and Middle East do not want a Shi'ite dominated Iraq, and fear a Shi'ite "crescent" of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. Al Qa'ida and other Islamist extremist groups see Iraq more and more as a center of their operations because of the possibility of defeating the US and because it was one of the few theaters of operations that had significant public support in the Arab world. (Cordesman 33)

In the spring of 2005, US officials estimated that there might be as few as 1,000 or as many as 2,000 foreign fighters in Iraq. Many felt the number flowing in across the Syrian border and other borders was so high the total was rapidly increasing. A few press estimates went as high as 10,000 before the fighting in Fallujah. (Symon)

Most of the suicide bombers in Iraq seem to have been foreign jihadists recruited by Islamic extremist movements and Islamists in other countries. These recruits are then sent to Iraq with the goal of seeking "Islamic" martyrdom. Islamist extremist web sites have become filled with the claimed biographies of such martyrs. Experts differ over just how many such suicide bombers exist and where they come from. It was calculated that in March 2005, some 200 suicide bombers could be documented and that 154 had been killed in the previous six months. It was estimated that 61% were Saudi, and 25% were Iraqi, Kuwaiti, and Syrian. The total number of Saudi insurgents is estimated to be in the hundreds. There were 235 suicide bombers named on web sites since the summer of 2005, and it is estimated that more than 50% were Saudi. (Glasser)

The US and Iraqi Government both agree that Syria may overtly agree to try and halt any support of the insurgency through Syria, but it is believed that Islamic extremist groups are recruiting young men to come to Syria and then cross the border into Iraq. It

is also believed that Syria has allowed ex-Ba'athist cadres to operate from Syria, helping to direct the Sunni insurgency. General Casey warned that Syria has allowed Iraqi supporters of Saddam Hussein to provide money, supplies, and direction to Sunni insurgents, and continues to be a serious source of infiltration by foreign volunteers. In a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing in March 2005, he stated:

There are former regime leaders who come and go from Syria, who operate out of Syria, and they do planning, and they provide resources to the insurgency in Iraq. I have no hard evidence that the Syrian government is actually complicit with those people, but we certainly have evidence that people at low levels with the Syrian government know that they're there and what they're up to. (Scarborough)

The US State Department has requested that the Syrians do more along the border to tighten controls, and deal with the regime elements that are operating out of Syria. There have been confessions of several alleged insurgent who were captured in Iraq and confessed that they were trained in Syria. Three believed that they were trained, controlled and paid by Syrian intelligence officials. They were instructed to kidnap, behead and assassinate Iraqi security forces. Many of them expressed remorse and said they were driven by monetary rewards, not religion or nationalistic motivation. It is also reported that Zarqawi obtains most of his new young volunteers through Syria, and that his top lieutenants and perhaps Zarqawi himself, have met in Syria for planning sessions. (Cordesman 52)

Syria has long faced the problem of weak border forces. They lack training and equipment, and much of the border is only demarcated by an earthen berm. The route along the Euphrates into Syria has been a center and partial sanctuary for insurgent forces

and a conduit for volunteers and supplies coming in from Syria. By the spring of 2005, it became so serious a center for some of the insurgents who fled from the fighting in Ramadi and Fallujah that the US Marine Corps launched its largest offensive since 2004 against insurgent forces in that area. (Cordesman 53)

Iran's role in the insurgency in Iraq is highly controversial. Iran definitely has a presence in Iraq as well as ties to several key Shi'ite political parties. These include key elements of the Shi'ite-based United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) that emerged as Iraq's most important political coalition in the January 2005 elections: the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), Al-Da'wa and Al-Da'wa – Tanzim al-Iraq. The Revolutionary Guard and Iranian intelligence have been active in southern Iraq since the early 1980s, as well as other areas. (Cordesman 54)

Prime Minister Allawi repeatedly expressed his concern over Iran's actions during 2004 and 2005, and would clearly see Iran as a direct and immediate threat. The Iraqi interim Defense Minister Hazem ha'alan claimed in July 2004 that Iran remained his country's "first enemy", supporting "terrorism and bringing enemies into Iraq". He also stated that the Iranians "are fighting us because we want to build freedom and democracy, and they want to build an Islamic dictatorship and have turbaned clerics to rule in Iraq". He made further points saying the Iranian intervention and support of Sadr is taking place with Iranian pilgrims bringing arms, money, and drugs across the border. (Cordesman 54)

Many US experts in and outside Iraq do not support the existence of any major Iranian effort to destabilize or control Iraq through June 2005. It is no secret that Iran clearly fears the US presence in Iraq, and the risk of being encircled by the US presence

in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the gulf. Iranian officials have threatened to destabilize Iraq if the US brings military pressure against Iran because of its activities in nuclear proliferation. A split in Iraq's government could lead some Shi'ite factions to actively turn to Iran for support, as well as some divisions in Iran's government intervening in Iraq even if its government did not fully support such action. (Cordesman 55)

In the Shi'ite-dominated areas of Iraq, some Pentagon officials and other government officials believe that Hezbollah, an Iranian-backed Shi'ite extremist group, is now playing a key role in the Shi'ite insurgency. The Islamic Jihad Organization, a terrorist group closely affiliated with Hezbollah, is also said by some officials to have established offices in Iraq, and that Iran is behind much of the violence. (Risen)

C.I.A. officials disagree, however, and say they have not yet seen evidence that Hezbollah has joined forces with Iraqi Shi'ites. Some intelligence officials believe that the Pentagon has been eager to link Hezbollah to the violence in Iraq in order to link the Iranian regime more closely to anti-American terrorism. But C.I.A. officials agree that Hezbollah has established a significant presence in postwar Iraq. The Lebanese-based organization sent in teams after the war, American intelligence officials believe. Hezbollah's presence inside Iraq is a source of concern since it is widely recognized by counterterrorist experts to have some of the most effective and dangerous terrorist operatives in the world. (Risen)

In regards to external financial support of the insurgency, Caleb Temple, senior intelligence officer of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), stated that groups linked to the former regime of Saddam Hussein control enough assets to finance increased levels of insurgent violence. Temple added:

"We believe terrorist and insurgent expenses are moderate and pose little significant restraints to armed groups in Iraq. In particular, arms and munitions costs are minimal -- leaving us to judge that the bulk of the money likely goes toward international and local travel, food and lodging of fighters and families of dead fighters; bribery and payoffs of government officials, families and clans; and possibly into the personal coffers of critical middlemen and prominent terrorist leaders." (Kurata)

Temple said the main external sources of financing for the Iraqi insurgents are wealthy private donors in the Middle East and elsewhere, former elements of Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime, and corrupt members of transnational charities. Temple said many members of Saddam Hussein's regime fled to Syria, Jordan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other countries where they have established financial bases to support the insurgency. He said the prime method of transferring funds to the insurgents from outside the country is "the physical transportation of cash into Iraq, particularly across the Iraqi-Syrian border." (Kurata)

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

The question is whether or not the insurgency in Iraq is a classical type of insurgency, or is the situation in Iraq the development of a new phenomenon. Gen. Abizaid has been quoted as saying the current conflict in Iraq is a “classical guerrilla-type campaign” (Hoffman 6), but the reality is that it is not. The Iraq insurgency has no center of gravity, with no clear apparent leader or leadership. As seen in other examples of insurgency throughout history, no leadership has emerged in response to any of the conditions present in Iraq. There is no attempt to seize and actually hold territory, and no single, defined, or unifying ideology. Most important, through the research of this project, there has been no identifiable insurgent organization. It is true that there are multiple organizations, such as Zarqawi and Al Ansar, but there is no clear indication of any cohesion in the insurgency.

Bruce Hoffman describes the insurgency in Iraq as a “Netwar”, where the insurgency has more linear networks rather than the pyramidal hierarchies and command and control systems that have governed traditional insurgent organizations. (Hoffman 17) It involves small groups who communicate, coordinate, and conduct their campaigns in an internetted manner without a precise central command. This is a good description of the situation in Iraq, where secular Ba’athists and other FREs cooperate with religious

extremist jihadists along with Iraqi jihadists. It is a very loose environment where individuals gravitate toward one another to carry out armed attacks, exchange intelligence, trade weapons, or engage in joint trading and then disperse at times never to operate together again. No matter the differences, they can fight together for a common cause. In most insurgencies throughout history, a mobile conventional war would eventually develop in order for the insurgents to gain power, as seen by Mao's example. There isn't even a remote possibility of this occurring in Iraq. The strategy of the insurgents is to seize power by draining the Coalition financially and winning popular support through coercion and fear. Their efforts must not be underestimated.

It can be argued that Iraq's insurgency is a variant of Che Guevara's model of insurgency in that it operates without a need of popular support. In Che's model the victories of these guerrillas would ignite an organic revolution that would overthrow the government. However, the differences between the two cases seem to be quite obvious. The insurgency in Iraq is driven by ethnic, tribal, political, and religious loyalties, which give the insurgents a tremendous opportunity to exploit. Also, the US occupation serves as a focal point for insurgent activity and due to the elimination of the Ba'athist regime, the state of Iraq was severely weakened in many ways which made it easy for an insurgency to gain momentum. Also, Iraq's modern (although dilapidated) infrastructure is ripe for attack. This infrastructure is critical for its economic recovery and is in stark contrast to the sparse networks of developing nations 40 years ago. Additionally, the enhanced global media networks have allowed insurgents to circumvent state controls on information and establish a network among the individual groups.

Further comparison indicates that the insurgents in Iraq can survive and continue

to thrive from their tactical innovations, which are continuing to evolve. These innovations are allowing the insurgents the ability to survive, learn, and possibly deplete the Coalition of funds, authority, and legitimacy. In contrast, Che's model was unable to accomplish this. Also, the end point of this *New Type of Insurgency* isn't a new state but the destruction of the existing state, and the creation of an Islamic order. This *New Type of Insurgency* has improved upon the older model of insurgency through the creation of a diverse set of small groups with different motivations. These groups do not have a center of mass (hierarchy) that can be targeted, and their small size provides them with excellent operational security. In addition, the collapse of any subset of groups will not disrupt the whole insurgency. The insurgency in Iraq has also been quite effective in finding money, information, and other resources necessary for their rapid growth and improvement. With the leverage from markets and networks, this complex system has enabled Iraq's small groups to exceed the rate of improvement of centralized organizations, and provide rates of return far in excess of those expected for groups their size.

As far as the future of Iraq and the insurgency, it is not my objective to forecast and recommend strategic policy to the United States. It is also not my intention to analyze the current state of the conflict in Iraq by assessing whether the US led coalition's strategy is working, or whether or not the insurgency in Iraq is increasing their momentum which will eventually lead to an organic Islamic order. The choices do seem clear that the US will either continue to write a blank check for Iraq and run up deficits or claim a victory and withdraw. Whether or not that victory will be sustained by a free democratic state can only be determined in time. The alternative will be an organic Islamic order that arises out of the creation of weak state in Iraq. And with a failed state

in Iraq, a new organic Islamic state will probably mirror more of a Fallujah and Taliban model.

Many conditions would have to be met in order for this *New Type of Insurgency* to proliferate. The situation in Iraq may be so unique to the factors involved that it may be impossible to export or replicate this insurgency anywhere else in the world. Much analysis would have to be done on the conditions of countries to assess whether or not the Iraqi insurgency is actually a 21st century trend in insurgency that has the capability of being replicated, or is the Iraqi paradigm just that, a phenomenon that is occurring in Iraq and Iraq alone.

However, it must be considered that the tactics and techniques are so primitive and adaptive that any one, anywhere can easily replicate it. Because of the aforementioned reasons the insurgents in Iraq have proven to be very resilient and very difficult to defeat. As Bruce Hoffman suggests, the insurgency in Iraq may represent a new form of warfare for a new, networked century. He believes that it is too soon to determine whether or not this development, which involves loose networks of combatants who come together for a discrete purpose only to quickly disperse upon its achievement, will prove to be a lasting or temporary characteristic of postmodern insurgency. Time will only tell if this type of insurgency gains traction and popularity in the future, but if it does, then governments and militaries will have to thoroughly revolutionize the way they train, equip, and organize to combat this challenge.

However, it may be possible, given the factors that power Iraq's insurgency, to export this insurgency in other parts of the Middle East where regimes such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Pakistan may be one bullet away from a revolution that will lead to an

Iranian style Islamic state. If this were to happen, intervention by the US military would be expected in order to prevent the collapse of the government. It may not be too difficult to believe that even a civil war in Iraq may draw in adjacent states which can lead to the exportation of the insurgency. Regardless, through today's means of communication and information the insurgency in Iraq, whether it proves to be successful or not, is being monitored by the entire world. Will this *New Type of Insurgency* be the trend of the future? Let's hope not.

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