



# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

## THESIS

AN ANALYSIS OF COUNTERINSURGENCY IN  
IRAQ: MOSUL, RAMADI, AND SAMARRA FROM  
2003-2005

by

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December 2006

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## **ABSTRACT**

After defeating the Iraqi military, Coalition Forces spread out across Iraq to stabilize and transition control of the country back to Iraqis. This historical analysis of Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra studies military operations intended to stabilize these three cities from April 2003 to September 2005. Prior to and after the reestablishment of Iraqi sovereignty, Coalition Forces worked with Iraqi citizens at the local level to reestablish control of the population. In order to achieve this, the counterinsurgent force must understand that when consensus for non-violent political opposition does not exist within the governed populace, coercive measures must be taken to enforce local security. This analysis evaluates the effects of military operations over time and through frequent unit transitions with varying numbers of U.S. and Iraqi security forces. The conclusions gleaned from this analysis are summarized as unit approaches that either achieved control or failed to achieve control at the local level. This study suggests that a distributed light-to-medium equipped ground force operating within urban centers and in continuous close proximity to the population is best able to establish local control and partner with local police and military forces. This force should be enabled with language and cultural skills. Necessary combat multipliers include human intelligence collectors and social network analysts.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. HYPOTHESIS

The purpose of this thesis is to identify effective approaches to defeat or contain an insurgency in a post-conflict or weak government environment. We will accomplish this by using McCormick's "Diamond Model of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency"<sup>1</sup> to identify successful and unsuccessful unit approaches during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) 2003-2005.

Hypothesis: Counterinsurgency operations conducted during OIF1, OIF2, and OIF3 were executed sub-optimally because military units responsible for Mosul, Ramadi and Samarra did not persistently apply the locally appropriate approach to successfully control<sup>2</sup> and protect the population.

## B. BACKGROUND

Insurgency and its tactics are not new. Joint doctrine defines an insurgency as an organized movement to overthrow a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict. Counterinsurgency is the conglomeration of those political, economic, military, paramilitary, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency.<sup>3</sup> An insurgency is an organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon H. McCormick, "Seminar in Guerrilla Warfare" (lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, Summer 2005). Gordon McCormick is the Director of the Department of Defense Analysis (Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict) at the Naval Postgraduate School.

<sup>2</sup> Army and Marine Corps Doctrine on counterinsurgency states that insurgents strive to weaken governmental control and increase their own control. The counterinsurgent is thus working to achieve control at the expense of insurgent groups. Government control is contingent upon its ability to control the behavior of the population through a combination of consensual and coercive law enforcement. Gordon McCormick defines control as the ability to see and understand what is transpiring down to the neighborhood level and influence what is seen. This thesis uses McCormick's definition of control due to its inclusion of both the ability to see and influence.

<sup>3</sup> *Department of Defense Joint Publication 1-02, DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new\\_pubs/jp1\\_02.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf) (accessed November 20, 2006), 134, 274.

governmental control and legitimacy, while increasing insurgent control. Insurgencies normally seek to both overthrow the existing social order and reallocate power within the country, or to break away from state control and form an autonomous area.<sup>4</sup>

According to U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* (COIN):

COIN is not an approach to war that can be classified simply as foreign internal defense. It features full spectrum operations, including stability operations, like any other campaign. The course of an insurgency involves significant variations in the proportion of effort devoted to the different types of operations by region and time. In all cases, however, insurgencies will not be defeated by simply killing insurgents.<sup>5</sup>

The proliferation of non-state actors attempting to undermine state authority is characteristic of the Contemporary Operating Environment. Military professionals must honestly assess performance in counterinsurgency and be open to new ideas. Military professionals may be required to make course corrections to achieve success, or adjust plans based on political considerations.

The approaches used at the neighborhood level during military operations associated with OIF1 through OIF3 were variable and at times sub-optimal. The Coalition was unable to identify the potential for insurgency in Iraq, because it misunderstood the population. This misunderstanding prevented forces from applying a centralized counterinsurgency strategy, executed in a decentralized manner at the neighborhood level. This was critical to the insurgency's growth and survival, enabling it to grow faster than U.S. forces could adjust.

## **C. METHODOLOGY**

This thesis studies post conflict security operations aimed at achieving the stability of three very different cities in three varied regions of Iraq. This is a

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<sup>4</sup>*Department of the Army, FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006), 1-1.

<sup>5</sup> *FM 3-24*, 1-3.

historical analysis of counterinsurgency operations in Iraq from 2003 through 2005. The authors used case studies of brigade sectors in Iraq from 2003 through 2005 in order to identify counterinsurgency approaches that were effective in gaining control of the population. The authors chose the cities of Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra because of their uniqueness in terms of demographics, units of occupation, and the capabilities of insurgent forces. The time period studied was selected in order to better understand each city's security environment over time. This study attempts to show that frequent unit transitions lessen local expertise and interpersonal influence. By studying these cities from 2003 to late 2005, the authors attempt to identify the impact of the aforementioned unit transitions.

There are differences in the type and volume of data collected for these cities during this particular period. Military reporting was used when available. When it was unavailable, open source historical data and interviews were used. With respect to civilian casualties incurred through coalition or insurgent violence, military reports acquired during this research included little data. Thus, civilian websites such as *The Iraq Body Count Database*<sup>6</sup> and *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*<sup>7</sup> were used to identify the number of civilian casualties per month over time. In some cases the historical data simply does not exist, because some units did not collect the information the authors sought. Interviews and questionnaires submitted to Soldiers and Marines who served in these cities were the primary tools used in the research. Unit commanders, staff officers and security force advisors were queried for input based on their experience in Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra. A list showing the number of sources by duty position is included in the bibliographic review at the end of this thesis. In addition, Iraqi-

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<sup>6</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php> (accessed May 15, 2006). Casualty figures are derived from a comprehensive survey of online media reports from recognized sources.

<sup>7</sup> *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*, <http://icasualties.org/oif/default.aspx> (accessed May 15, 2006). This site provides a list of names and a resource detailing when, where and how fatalities occurred. In addition to documenting fatalities, the site also maintains aggregate counts for wounded U.S. service members.

American civilians with recent experience living in Iraq provided an Iraqi perspective on the situation in these cities.

This thesis is organized in the following manner: Chapter I, the introduction, provides the background of our research. It includes a bibliographic review, as well as an explanation of political space, population protection and control, the Diamond Model of Counterinsurgency, and measures of analysis. Chapter II contains the analysis of counterinsurgency operations conducted in Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra from 2003 through 2005. Chapter III describes methods used by security forces that successfully gained and maintained control of the population.

#### **D. BIBLIOGRAPHIC REVIEW**

The primary sources used for this research were the Soldiers and Marines who served in Mosul, Ramadi and Samarra. When available, interviews and unit reports provide the basis for assessing the actions taken by units on the ground. In addition, many units compiled extensive unit histories that describe their specific contribution to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The authors gained insight into military operations in the city of Mosul through several sources. These include the *101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Chronology*, which covers February 2003 until February 2004; the 3rd Brigade, *2nd Infantry Division (SBCT) Unit History and Significant Activities*, which covers from September 2003 until September 2004; the *1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (SBCT) Historical Report*, which covers October 2004 until October 2005; and the *1-25 SBCT Irregular Warfare Presentation*.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, information from Special Forces units was obtained from individual interviews that explained how these organizations operated and contributed to the mission in the city of Mosul.

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<sup>8</sup> Jim Page, *101st Airborne Division Chronology of OIF1*, January 14, 2004. Captain Page, an infantry officer, served as the division historian during OIF I with the 101st Airborne Division. He subsequently deployed again with the 101st as the unit historian in 2005 for another one year tour.

With respect to the city of Ramadi, unit histories from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment; the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division Valorous Unit Award packet; and After Action Reports from the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division provided significant insight. Unit reports and interviews provided detailed accounts of military operations. Information from individual interviews explained how Special Forces units operated and contributed to the mission in Ramadi.

In Samarra, the unit accounts from the 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized), the 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), the 42nd Infantry Division (U.S. Army National Guard), and Task Force Liberty provided the information about military occupation of this city. Information from individual interviews explained how Special Forces units operated and contributed to the mission in Samarra.

## **E. THE NATURE OF COIN AND THE POLITICAL SPACE**

Insurgency is a struggle for power over a common political space between a state (or occupying power) and one or more organized, popularly based internal challengers. The objective of the state is to retain power and defeat or displace its competitor(s). The insurgency's objective is to expand its popular base of support and defeat or displace the state.<sup>9</sup> This contest between the counterinsurgency and the insurgency begins with the counterinsurgent as a force in being, while the insurgent begins as a force in development.<sup>10</sup> To win, the insurgency must reverse the force ratio that defines the two competitors at the outset of the conflict, to the point where it can either openly defeat its opponent or force him to concede or withdraw. The insurgency begins the contest with an informational advantage, but a force disadvantage. It can see security forces while remaining hidden. The counterinsurgent begins with an informational disadvantage, but has a force advantage. Whichever side can fix

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<sup>9</sup> Gordon H. McCormick, Steven Horton, Lauren Harrison, "Things Fall Apart: The 'Endgame' Dynamics of Internal Wars," *Third World Quarterly* 28 (forthcoming).

<sup>10</sup> Gordon H. McCormick, "A Systems Model of Insurgency," Department of Defense Analysis, (Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 2006).

its disadvantage and maintain its comparative advantage will achieve its desired outcome.<sup>11</sup>

Because the insurgency initially lacks sufficient force to challenge the counterinsurgent directly, it must remain underground, hidden within the population. The population is critical to the insurgent because it provides the requisite concealment and resources for the insurgency's survival. The population is important to the government, because the population is critical to the insurgency. Therefore, the conflict between the insurgent and counterinsurgent is a contest for control of the population. Control is defined in this thesis as the ability to see and then influence what is seen. The insurgency has the potential to exist wherever the counterinsurgency does not control. Because of the insurgent's inherent ability to hide among the population, the counterinsurgent must gain and maintain control of the population to reveal the members and organization of the insurgency.

Political space is a function of many factors that define an insurgent's ability to maneuver. These factors are geographical and sociological. In any single village or neighborhood, the insurgent is constrained or enabled by terrain and social relationships. The political space is finite. To the degree that the counterinsurgent fills the political space, the insurgency cannot exist. The force asymmetry that defines the two sides at the beginning of the contest indicates that successful insurgencies must evolve in size and complexity over time. As this occurs, the scope and intensity of the conflict will naturally increase, reflecting the fact that the insurgency is gradually becoming stronger and the state is becoming weaker. The more space that the counterinsurgent occupies, the greater ability he has to see the insurgent organization. The insurgency then has three choices: he must leave, fight, or cease to operate.

The counterinsurgent must maintain control of the political space in order to prevent the growth of the insurgency. Releasing control of the political space gives the insurgency room to maneuver and grow. Even if the counterinsurgent is successful, the insurgency may never completely break. Its ideology may

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<sup>11</sup> McCormick, "A Systems Model of Insurgency."



continue to exist, but without the political space to continue its operations, the counterinsurgent can continue to suppress it.<sup>12</sup>

## **F. CONTROL AND PROTECTION OF THE POPULATION**

The governmental control of a city is dependant on the degree to which the government is able to protect the population from violence.<sup>13</sup> In order to accomplish this, the government's security forces are legally authorized to use lethal force against armed opposition or criminal groups to enforce law and order. In order to protect the population, the counterinsurgency must control the population. That is, it must be able to see what is occurring at the local level, and then be able to influence what is observed. Thus, counterinsurgency efforts are characterized by the struggle to control the population at the local level.<sup>14</sup> When the counterinsurgent has control at the local level, reconstruction and political reforms are more likely to succeed. Without control, reconstruction endeavors become difficult to implement. When the state is engaged in operations against armed opposition groups, the state should strive to first achieve control at the local level. Once control is accomplished, the state then gains the trust and confidence of the population. Only after the state earns these key elements can it win the population's hearts and minds.

Control at the local level is about influencing behavior. Both the insurgent and the counterinsurgent seek the support of the population. This is the desired behavior sought by each side. This support can be either passive or active. The population's motives for support are based on four primary factors: socialization,

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<sup>12</sup> McCormick, "A Systems Model of Insurgency."

<sup>13</sup> Kalev Sepp, "Best Practices in Counterinsurgency," *Military Review* (2005): 9-11. In this article, Kalev Sepp discusses how the security of the population must be assured; it is a basic need along with food, water, and shelter. The article details important counterinsurgency operational practices that relate to human rights, law enforcement, population control, political processes, counterinsurgency warfare, border security, and executive authority. Kalev Sepp (Lieutenant Colonel, Retired) is a Professor in the Defense Analysis Department (SO-LIC) at the Naval Postgraduate School. As an Army Special Forces officer, Dr. Sepp served two tours as an advisor to the El Salvadoran Army during that country's battle against insurgents.

<sup>14</sup> McCormick, "Seminar in Guerrilla Warfare."

pure preferences, selective incentives, and expectations. With regard to socialization, individuals are the product of their environment and therefore have a societal frame of reference. This may be called one's "going-in position". Pure preferences are choices one would make if they could be guaranteed anonymity. One's pure preferences generally remain constant. Expectations are based on the perception that past actions are predictors of future action. Expectations influence people's behavior when faced with a choice. Behavior can be manipulated through selective incentives. These incentives can be positive or negative and are commonly referred to as the carrot and stick. The credibility of the incentives, whether positive or negative, can influence expectations.<sup>15</sup> Thus, someone's pure preference may be to support the local government, yet when threatened in the middle of the night by a local insurgent group, the citizen may stop supporting the local government if the citizen expects the threat to be a credible one.

Once control is achieved and the capability to sustain control by local security forces is developed, external security forces can withdraw. The ability to sustain control by local forces is a difficult, yet critical capability that defies simple assessment. Experience has demonstrated that prior to the departure of external security forces, a well developed human intelligence (HUMINT) network must be organized. This network supports the local security forces that are prepared to immediately combat any encroachment by insurgent elements.<sup>16</sup> This condition must be present prior to the full departure of supporting external security forces. Without it, local forces are inadequately informed, thus resulting in the opportunity for armed groups to grow in strength at the expense of the local population, until they are ready for overt action against the city's governing and security apparatus.

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<sup>15</sup> McCormick, "Seminar in Guerrilla Warfare."

<sup>16</sup> H.R. McMaster, (Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, July 25, 2006. Colonel McMaster gave a presentation on his experience with counterinsurgency operations in Tal Afar in northern Iraq. The presentation was to the World Affairs Council of Northern California. During the presentation Colonel McMaster highlighted the importance of securing the population from insurgent violence and intimidation, as well as developing quality intelligence, ensuring unity of effort and planning for permanent effect.

McCormick's "Diamond Model of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency" illustrates an effective means through which an insurgent or counterinsurgent gains control of the population.

## The Diamond Model

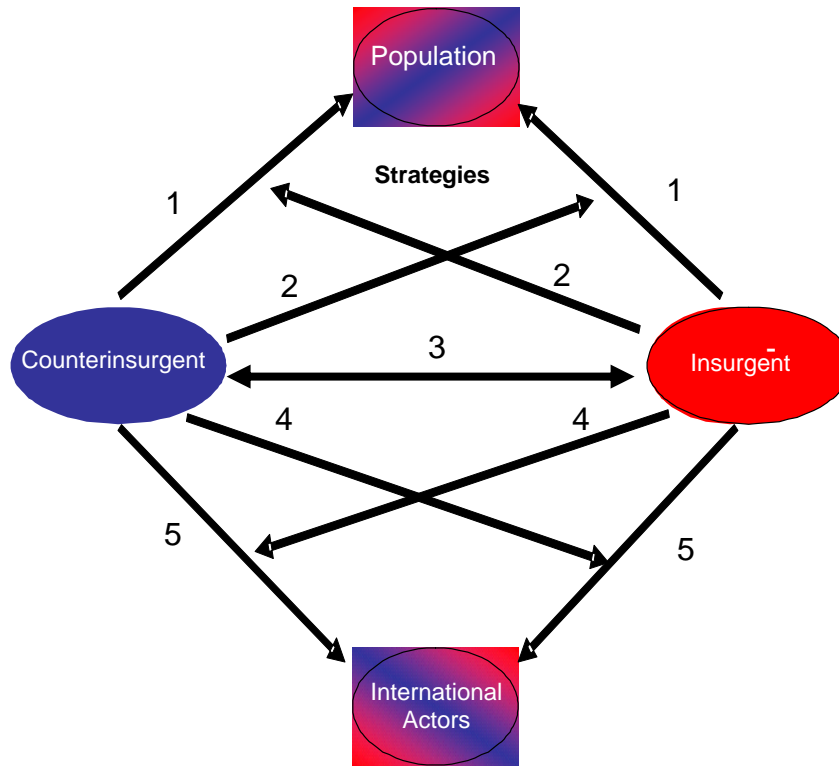


Figure 1. McCormick's "Diamond Model" of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency<sup>17</sup>

- 1: *Gaining Control and Support of the Population*
- 2: *Disruption of Opponent's Control over the Population*
- 3: *Direct Action*
- 4: *Disruption of Opponent's Ties with the International Community*
- 5: *Gaining Support from the International Community*

1. Gaining Control and Support of the Population: The counterinsurgent and insurgent compete to gain and then maintain control of the population. Whoever controls the population will be successful. Establishing control of the population is the first and primary approach in counterinsurgency. Control is

<sup>17</sup> McCormick, "A Systems Model of Insurgency."

achieved through a combination of consensus and coercion. Initially small and weak, an insurgency is quickly forced to go underground. The insurgency can remain there as long as it receives passive support from the populace. It cannot survive without it. Similarly, the counterinsurgency effort cannot succeed without accurate information from the populace. Thus, the first and most direct path in a counterinsurgency campaign is to control the population. By doing so, the people will be protected and willing to aid the government with the information needed to identify and influence insurgent groups.

2. Disruption of Opponent's Control over the Population: The counterinsurgent must drive a wedge between the population and the insurgent, just as the insurgent strives to disrupt the link between the counterinsurgent and the population. Either side must establish control in order to gain trust and confidence. Disrupting the insurgent's ties to the population is the second approach in order of importance. The second approach becomes increasingly apparent as the counterinsurgent establishes control over the population. As this occurs, the counterinsurgent can selectively disrupt the insurgent's ties to help increase his control and support from the population.

3. Direct Action: This approach directly and precisely strikes the opponent in order to disrupt operations, destroy or capture forces, and weaken the opposition's means to continue. This approach can only be used when opponents can see each other. Because the insurgent maintains an information advantage and remains hidden, the counterinsurgent must develop the capability to identify the insurgent and target him when he is exposed. This can only be achieved through actionable intelligence developed as part of the first and second approaches in the model.<sup>18</sup> Once the counterinsurgent can see the insurgent, he can selectively target insurgent networks in order to influence it in the desired way.

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<sup>18</sup> McCormick, "Seminar in Guerrilla Warfare."

These tasks should be executed in order 1, 2, 3. By using approach 1 first, the counterinsurgent can develop the intelligence necessary to target the insurgency and its connection to resources. Once sufficient intelligence has been gained, the counterinsurgent should conduct approaches 2 and 3 as the opportunity presents itself.

## **G. MEASURES OF ANALYSIS**

As previously mentioned, this analysis explores military operations in Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra during Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2003 through 2005. McCormick's Diamond Model provides a framework through which counterinsurgency operations can be conceived, coordinated, and conducted. The authors used this framework to derive measures through which one can analyze counterinsurgency approaches.

From Approach 1, the authors derived measures to analyze approaches to gain control and support of the population.

**Security Forces.** Current academic studies recommend a security force per civilian population ratio of between 13.26 and 20 troops/police-per-1000 during nation-building operations.<sup>19</sup> Peaceful populations require force ratios of somewhere between one and four police officers per thousand residents. The United States has approximately 2.3 sworn police officers per thousand residents (2.3-per-1000). Larger cities typically have higher ratios of police to population. For situations warranting outside intervention, the required force ratio is much

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<sup>19</sup> James T. Quinlivan, "Burden of Victory: The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations," *RAND Review*, Summer (2003), <http://www.rand.org/publications/randreview/issues/summer2003/burden.html>, (accessed October 18, 2006). In this paper, James Quinlivan argues that 20-per-1000 is the number troops needed for successful nation-building activities. In establishing this number, the author used the U.S. experiences in Panama, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan as examples. In another study titled "Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations," John J. McGrath espouses a 13.26 troops-per-1,000 inhabitants ratio as a more historically accurate guideline using the experiences of the U.S. military in the Philippines, Germany, Japan, Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo. This article can be accessed from [http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/mcgrath\\_boots.pdf](http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/mcgrath_boots.pdf). While the term nation-building is often used to describe post-conflict reconstruction such as Germany, Bosnia and Kosovo, the term is more accurately described as state-building. This is because the institutions of a state can be started with foreign assistance, while the characteristics that define a nation are much more difficult to externally influence.

higher. Although numbers alone do not constitute a security strategy, many successful strategies for population security and control have required force ratios either as large as or larger than twenty security personnel (troops and police combined) per thousand inhabitants. This figure is roughly 10 times the ratio required for simple policing of a tranquil population.<sup>20</sup> For this study, the authors use the 20-per-1000 ratio as comparative tool that helps to place the counterinsurgency operations in Mosul, Ramadi and Samarra in historical context. We do not declare this to be a historical standard that must be met. Rather, given the experience of several past conflicts, this thesis seeks to determine how the current operation in Iraq compares.



Figure 2. Troop Density Required for Successful Nation-Building<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Quinlivan, "Burden of Victory: The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations."

<sup>21</sup> Quinlivan, "Burden of Victory: The Painful Arithmetic of Stability Operations."

**Information Gained from the Population.** The counterinsurgent's ability to gain information about the insurgent through the population enables the counterinsurgent to effectively target the insurgent. This measure indicates that the counterinsurgent understands the nature of the struggle as well as the ability of his intelligence gathering apparatus. Information is acquired through the development of interpersonal relationships with members of the community and local security forces. Counterinsurgency forces (U.S and Iraqi) that are able to gain the trust and confidence of the populace will be able to gather more accurate information on the insurgency.

**Civilian Casualties.** Protecting the population is an indicator of the ability to establish strong ties with the population. A low number of non-combatants killed by insurgent action or counterinsurgent negligence is a measure of the counterinsurgent's ability to protect the population. Civilian casualties, whether caused by legitimate government forces or the insurgent, may cause the local population to become angry and withdraw support from the government. The counterinsurgent's failure to address the issue of civilian casualties risks pushing the population into the arms of the insurgency.

**Building the Population's Trust in Government Institutions.** By strengthening institutions and reestablishing services, the population can gain trust in the government as the preeminent provider of the population's needs. These concepts were used to examine the counterinsurgent's ability to build ties to the population. Trust in government reflects a citizen's assessment of the government's ability to provide security and basic services. The components of trust include the citizen's assessment of the organization's reputation, performance and appearance.<sup>22</sup> Trust in government helps the citizen to determine how much risk to accept when faced with insurgent intimidation. If the citizen trusts counterinsurgent forces to protect him and his family, then he will be more likely to continue to support the local government. Initially, the population

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<sup>22</sup> Piotr Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 69-86. Defines trust as a concept that rests on someone's assessment of another person or organization that helps to determine how much risk to place on that person or organization's future actions. The components of trust include reputation, performance and appearance.

will likely trust the government and its efforts. If the government fails to meet the population's expectations, it will lose the population's trust. It then becomes more difficult for the government to regain the population's trust than had it met expectations initially. Through effective institutions and functioning services, the government can gain the population's trust and confidence.

With regard to Approach 2, the authors analyzed coalition efforts to disrupt the insurgent's control over the population.

**Insurgent Propaganda.** The battle of the story is one that must be won by integrity through the accomplishment of stated goals. At the local level, perception is reality. Whoever best influences local perceptions will better influence local expectations and behavior. If a community perceives counterinsurgent forces as protecting them from insurgent intimidation, then the community's perception will result in behavior more supportive of government activities. Thus, counterinsurgent information operations must closely reflect local realities in a way that best shapes local perception. Furthermore, propaganda distributed by the insurgent must be discredited by the counterinsurgent in order to prevent community perceptions of insurgent influence.

**Sources of External Resources.** The insurgent's ability to extract and distribute resources enables the insurgency to operate and grow. If the insurgent cannot extract resources from within the city, he must seek them from elsewhere. Resources provided from outside of the city illustrate the degree to which the insurgency does not have control of the population of the city. These measures seek an understanding of the contest between the counterinsurgent and the insurgent and its impact on ties between these contestants and the populace.

In Approach 3, the analysis explores the coalition's ability to precisely target insurgent forces and disrupt their operations.

**Insurgent Casualties / Detentions resulting from Coalition Operations.** Casualties inflicted on the insurgency and the numbers of insurgents that are detained indicate units' effectiveness at approaches 1 and 2.



However, using the number of casualties inflicted on the insurgency or the number of apprehensions as a metric to determine the counterinsurgency's effectiveness can be misleading. Without knowing the total strength of the organization or its recruitment rate, one can only establish a rough estimate of attrition. This metric can, however, give insight into the counterinsurgent's intelligence apparatus' ability to positively identify insurgents and their activity, as well as to verify the reliability of information sources.

**U.S. Casualties / Successful Insurgent Attacks.** The number of insurgent attacks against security forces and the number of casualties suffered by security forces indicates the insurgent's ability to operate and grow.

There are many more analysis points that can be used to evaluate units' actions in Iraq in a COIN environment.<sup>23</sup> The authors derived these metrics from an analysis of existing metrics and from an analysis of those metrics that describe the extent to which an organization is gaining control and support of the population, disrupting the links between the insurgents and the population, and conducting effective direct action. While necessary, it is important to understand that any metrics used in counterinsurgency are more subjective than quantifiable. Also, all data used for this analysis was derived from primary source interviews and unclassified documents. In some areas, gaps in data can be attributed to its classification.

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<sup>23</sup> There are many metrics that in varying degrees measure governmental effectiveness and the strength of insurgent forces. The number of actionable tips received from the population and the tone of messages broadcasted from mosques may give insight to the counterinsurgent's ability to gain information from the population. Another useful metric described by LTC Chris Gibson, in his article "Battlefield Victories and Strategic Success: The Path Forward in Iraq," *Military Review*, September-October (2006), advocates using the number of successful insurgent attacks and the number of effective insurgent attacks followed up by effective, precision targeting by the counterinsurgent to indicate the degree to which the counterinsurgent is able to enlist the support of the population in pursuing insurgent terrorists. In many cases, these types of data were classified and were therefore unavailable for this analysis.

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## II. ANALYSIS OF MOSUL, RAMADI, AND SAMARRA

### A. 2003

#### 1. Mosul

In April 2003, Coalition Forces seized the initiative in Mosul and were able to establish relative stability in the city. After Special Forces units working with Kurdish militia forced Ba'ath Party security organizations to depart the city, the Coalition reinforced the potentially volatile northern city with additional forces. With the arrival of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT) into Mosul, the city began progress toward the establishment of a functioning local government, security forces and businesses. Major General Petraeus, the Division Commander of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), established three significant local policies that set conditions for increased stability. The first policy was the prioritization of three areas that contributed to the improved public welfare. They included security within the city, payments to Iraqi civil servants and alleviating the fuel shortage. The second policy was to keep 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT) reinforced with additional forces (+) in Mosul for the entire year and to make the city the organization's main effort.<sup>24</sup> The third policy that significantly increased stability was 2nd BCT's (+) occupation of the city in platoon and company outposts throughout the city. While the focus of this analysis is on the brigade level and below, it is important to note that the brigade received significant augmentation from the 101st Airborne Division Headquarters, staff and attached combat support battalions. This augmentation focused on partnership and institution building with provincial ministries located in the city, thus contributing to improved governance.

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<sup>24</sup> 2nd BCT (+) consisted of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Battalions of the 502nd Infantry Regiment; 3rd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment; the 503rd Military Police Battalion; 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment; 2nd Battalion, 17th Cavalry Regiment; B Company, 326th Engineer Battalion; B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment; B Company, 311th Military Intelligence Battalion; B Company, 501st Signal Battalion; 526th Forward Support Battalion.

### a. **Gaining Control and Support of the Population**

**Security Forces.** These three policies enabled 2nd BCT to establish stability in Mosul in spite of falling well below the 20-per-1000 security-to-population guideline.<sup>25</sup> The population of Mosul in 2003 was estimated to be approximately 1,700,000. Historical guidelines suggest a population of this size would require a security force of approximately 34,000 troops and police (22,500 using the McGrath study). In Mosul, the ratio of international security forces to the population from late April to the end of December 2003 was approximately 6-per-1000.<sup>26</sup> In spite of this, a foundation of relative stability was established by 2nd BCT. While 2nd BCT's surge of infantrymen into the city on April 22, 2003 was necessary to stop looting and establish local control, institution building measures that began within days of the unit's arrival were necessary follow-on tasks that appear to have reduced widespread popular opposition to Coalition efforts.

**Information Gained from the Population.** Colonel Joseph Anderson, the brigade commander in charge of Mosul, dictated that the establishment of a "stable and secure environment" was the mission of his organization.<sup>27</sup> 2nd BCT (+) worked to build a secure environment through dismounted patrolling and daily interaction with the population in neighborhoods.<sup>28</sup> Infantry battalions within the city worked to accomplish this by operating largely from platoon and company combat outposts. Small units

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<sup>25</sup> In order to maintain the approximate 6-per-1,000 ratio, the unit used a less concentrated force presence in Tal Afar, the Tigris Valley, and the Al Jazeera desert and along the Syrian border. This was mitigated by the utilization of the significant helicopter assets that augmented the unit's mobility and force projection.

<sup>26</sup> 2nd BCT had approximately 6,000 soldiers under the command of Colonel Anderson. In addition to divisional and attached soldiers operating in the city, the authors estimated the additional number of soldiers operating from the Mosul airfield and from vicinity of the Division headquarters to be 4,000 (this number includes division staff, the military intelligence battalion, the signal battalion, the engineer battalion, the division support command, 159 Aviation brigade headquarters, Division artillery, etc). The total of 10,000 soldiers yields a ratio of just under 6-per-1,000. It is possible that additional combat support and service support soldiers operated in Mosul that the authors have not accounted for. If there were an additional 1,000 soldiers, the ratio would change to 6.4-per-1,000.

<sup>27</sup> "2nd BCT Mosul Stability and Support Operations, 1 May 2003 – 1 Feb 2004" (Power Point briefing, Mosul, Iraq, February 2004), 7.

<sup>28</sup> "2nd BCT Mosul Stability and Support Operations, 1 May 2003 – 1 Feb 2004."

operating in Mosul neighborhoods helped to protect the population. The ability to function and operate within a densely populated urban setting characterized the initial U.S. force presence in Mosul. The use of rifle companies “immersed” in their respective areas of operations day and night developed local situational awareness in the soldiers and built strong ties with the population.<sup>29</sup> This enabled U.S. forces to acquire information resulting in useful intelligence against organized armed opposition groups. The prominent example of information gained from the population involved the operation that killed Uday and Qusay on July 22, 2003. Based on an Iraqi source from within the city, units from 2nd BCT killed the second and third most valued targets in Iraq using direct fire weapons.<sup>30</sup> While the building Uday and Qusay occupied was destroyed in the process, no one outside of the building was injured in the operation.

**Civilian Casualties.** The number of civilians targeted and killed by insurgent groups during the first three months of 2003 was limited. Assassinations did occur and were explained as being the tactics used by desperate Ba’athist.<sup>31</sup> As explained by company commanders in 2nd BCT, platoons operated out of neighborhood patrol bases distributed throughout the city. These platoon and company patrol bases or combat outposts allowed soldiers to patrol and engage the population in every sub-sector of the battle space. The availability of 22 companies operating in this way throughout the city limited the ability of criminal and insurgent groups to swiftly organize and operate in Mosul.<sup>32</sup> Platoons regularly conducted counter black-market operations throughout the city. The ability to limit illegal activity helped to reduce the flow of money into the hands of groups likely to associate with insurgent groups.

<sup>29</sup> Paul Stanton, “Unit Immersion in Mosul: Establishing Stability in Transition,” *Military Review* (July-August 2006): 69, 67, 63.

<sup>30</sup> Page, 444-445.

<sup>31</sup> Page, 522. An example is the murder of Sheik Shalon in August 2003. While insurgent actions may at times be desperate, attacks against city contractors, intellectuals and government leaders are commonly used by insurgent groups to increase their ability to influence the population through intimidation. This action should not be seen as the last gasp of insurgent action, rather, a concerted effort to impose their will on the local population.

<sup>32</sup> The number of companies was determined from task organization reports and interviews with officers who served in Mosul. This number includes 16 infantry companies, 3 military police companies, and 3 artillery batteries (these batteries conducted primarily infantry tasks).

Limiting the financial assets available to criminal and insurgent groups further helped to protect the population. In Mosul, data shows that after a surge in civilian deaths in May caused by U.S. Air Force bombing, the number of civilian deaths in combat dropped to almost zero. An increase in November and December 2003 was due to insurgent and criminal violence.

2003	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Civilian Casualties	0	40	0	2	0	0	3	5	6

Table 1: Civilian Casualties in Mosul in 2003<sup>33</sup>

Civilian casualties caused by U.S. forces are a problem when conducting operations on foreign territory. A unit's capacity to gain the support of the population is affected by the unit's record of causing civilian deaths. The initial Special Operations Forces (SOF) and Marine units in Mosul lacked the manpower necessary to sufficiently address the growing concerns of the city's population.<sup>34</sup> The arrival of a reinforced brigade combat team with a division headquarters brought order to the streets and a plan for Moslawis to participate in their own political future. According to Colonel Anderson, the precise use of the minimum force necessary to maintain order was essential to gaining support of the population. Thus, troop leaders in Mosul under 2nd BCT kept civilian casualties to a minimum by emphasizing the prevention of indiscriminate fire.<sup>35</sup> Forces used direct fire with precision in most cases, while indirect fire and fixed wing close air support were not allowed in the city of Mosul.<sup>36</sup> The conscious decision to not fire artillery or drop bombs into the city demonstrates a willingness to take short term risk in order to achieve the longer term objective. By forbidding the use of the most powerful weapons in the military's arsenal, ground forces were required to engage in operations that were close range and that

<sup>33</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with U.S. Army Officer serving in Mosul during 2003, September 21, 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Joe Anderson, (Brigadier General, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, November 10, 2006.

<sup>36</sup> David Petraeus, (Lieutenant General, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, November 20, 2006 LTG Petraeus' guidance to subordinate commanders was based on the understanding that it was not logical to use indirect fire in the city. Other, more precise, weapons were available in the event a target developed that U.S. or Iraqi ground forces were unable to kill or capture.

required precision with hand held weapons. This is the style of fighting required for building the trust and confidence of the population.<sup>37</sup> This is the kind of fighting that light infantry and Special Forces soldiers are best trained to conduct. This practice reduced civilian casualties, thus eliminating a potential source of insurgent propaganda.

### **Building the Population's Trust in Government Institutions.**

The looting in Mosul in April 2003 reduced the population's trust in the Coalition.<sup>38</sup> Much of the population of Mosul initially viewed Coalition Forces as liberators; however, many Iraqis saw the breakdown of law and order as an intentional tactic used to weaken Iraq and ensure the need for a U.S. presence. The people of Iraq found it hard to believe that the invading forces did not have a plan to immediately maintain law and order at the local level. As they saw it, the Ba'ath Party maintained order at the local level. No one but the Coalition would be able to maintain order once the regime fell.<sup>39</sup> In Mosul, the fall of the regime ushered in a period of lawlessness that was only partially contained by city religious leaders and U.S. Army Special Forces augmented with Marines. Following the arrival of 2nd BCT of the 101st Airborne Division, Major General Petraeus and Colonel Anderson focused Coalition efforts on establishing political, judicial and security institutions that gave Moslawis the ability to participate in running their own city. Importantly, the U.S. Commander immediately held city elections to create a city government and political organization, thus allowing the citizens to participate in their own governance. By the time the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was officially established on

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<sup>37</sup> Ralph O. Baker, "The Decisive Weapon: A Brigade Combat Team Commander's Perspective on Information Operation," *Military Review*, (May-June 2006): 20. This article provides a brigade commander's experience in Baghdad and his realization that his focus needed to be more heavily weighted towards Information Operations, demonstrating to the Iraqi community leaders that Coalition Forces were worthy of Iraqi's trust and confidence.

<sup>38</sup> Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 69-83. In Iraq, America did not have a good reputation within the Arab community, but the promises made through the leaflet drop across Iraq guaranteed a better life. The subsequent performance of units in Iraq reduced the people's willingness to trust U.S. efforts. This in turn makes it easier for opposition groups to recruit people into their organization.

<sup>39</sup> Ibrahim Marogy, in discussion with the authors, October 27, 2006. Mr. Marogy was born and raised in Mosul. He lived in Iraq until 2003. He worked as an engineer throughout the country during his adult life. He visited Mosul regularly since his family still lived there.

May 15, 2003, the 101st Airborne Division in Mosul was already working with elected local government leaders to rebuild the city and its institutions. This reduced Iraqi suspicion regarding Coalition intentions to control the city outright. As explained by division commander General Petraeus on May 22, 2003, Coalition Forces immediately began to rebuild institutions and infrastructure at the local level:

Our soldiers have deployed throughout our area of operation, securing cities and key infrastructure facilities; helping the new interim city and province government get established; conducting joint patrols with Iraqi policemen and manning police stations in the city; helping organize and secure the delivery of fuel and propane; assisting with the organization of the recently begun grain harvest, a huge endeavor in this part of Iraq; building bridges and clearing streets; helping reopen schools and Mosul University; assisting with the reestablishment of the justice system in the area; distributing medical supplies; helping with the distribution of food; guarding archeological sites; working to restore public utilities...<sup>40</sup>

These institution-building efforts by Coalition units helped to rebuild trust. The performance of 2nd BCT and the direct, yet non-aggressive daytime patrol tactics, improved the level of trust conferred on Coalition actions in Mosul. In performing the myriad of reconstruction and institution-building tasks, the key idea that propelled the trust building efforts of Coalition Forces was the partnerships established between divisional non-maneuver units or staff sections and their logical Iraqi government counterpart. Examples include the division staff judge advocate with the Ministry of Justice, the division engineer battalion with the ministry of public works, the division signal battalion with the ministry of telecommunications, the corps support group with the Ministry of Education. In helping to get the city and provincial government started, the partnerships established by the 101st Airborne Division were significant during 2003.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> David Petraeus, "101st Airborne Division Commander Live Briefing from Iraq," *Defense LINK*, May 13, 2003, <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20030513-0181.html> (accessed October 3, 2006).

<sup>41</sup> Petraeus, e-mail message to authors, November 20, 2006.



The Commander's Emergency Relief Program (CERP) funds provided \$4,280,000 (USD) to the city of Mosul, while additional sources of financial aid added an additional \$9,100,000 (USD).<sup>42</sup> These efforts helped to rebuild trust, although the impact of the relief effort was lessened by a two month period during which no CERP funds were available to the commanders in the field. Further limitations to the effectiveness of the rebuilding effort resulted from the reliance on civilian contractors for much of the reconstruction effort.

The 101st Airborne Division in Mosul had to request permission to do work for Bechtel since the company was not intending to address a correctable reconstruction project for another several months.<sup>43</sup> The availability of combat engineers allowed the unit to ameliorate many situations similar to this one. In spite of the many efforts in Mosul to build strong ties, the lack of material support to provide the population with what was expected seriously impaired this effort. The shortage of propane and diesel was not corrected in spite of constant reporting that the shortage was a crisis affecting the unit's ability to generate electricity and deliver food.<sup>44</sup> The failure to support this material need demonstrated a shortcoming that was out of the hands of the local unit, yet impacted the ability of the unit to help gain support of the population.

**b. Disruption of Opponent's Control over the Population.**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** Insurgents and terrorists influence the population through propaganda and coercion that capitalizes on cultural and religious ties. To target visible propaganda messages, Coalition Forces organized groups of city day laborers who specialized in the correction of minor city infrastructure problems. They limited the visible signs of insurgent propaganda by painting over graffiti and picking up trash. At a minimum, these efforts effectively limited the amount of visible propaganda apparent to the population, as well as reduced a potential topic of exploitation for insurgent propaganda.

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<sup>42</sup> "2nd BCT Mosul Stability and Support Operations, 1 May 2003 – 1 February 2004," 55.

<sup>43</sup> Page, 476.

<sup>44</sup> Page, 435, 458, 462, 466, 476,490, 505, 597, 613.

Messages from the city's mosques were varied during 2nd BCT's time in Mosul. By tracking the messages that were coming from the mosques, the unit was able to identify areas that contained imams who preached anti-Coalition messages. Unclassified data was unavailable to illustrate the level of insurgent propaganda that was transmitted from mosques or the number of imams who were supporting the insurgency. The unit did identify and engage with the local religious community. This effort was led by the unit chaplains and lasted for the duration of 2003.<sup>45</sup> Like the unit's effort to stand up and assist the city and provincial judiciary, engagement with local religious leaders was a key effort designed to influence those who influenced the populace.

**c. Direct Action**

**Insurgent Casualties / Detentions Resulting from Coalition Operations.** With 22 companies of infantry and military police operating in the city, augmented by elements of U.S. government agencies and SOF, U.S. Army units in Mosul were able to attack insurgent forces during the night at will. Intelligence driven raids and searches of specific individuals and materials occurred throughout the city. The target folder of each target included a 10 digit grid coordinate, name and background of the individual, and a picture of the target location. In this way, units were able to verify the site with the provided grid. In many cases, local Iraqi Security Forces (ISF)<sup>46</sup> were able to confirm the location of the target shortly before conducting the operation. The following chart summarizes the number of Iraqis detained during 2nd BCT's operations in Mosul.

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<sup>45</sup> "2nd BCT Mosul Stability and Support Operations, 1 May 2003 – 1 Feb 2004," 18.

<sup>46</sup> The term Iraqi Security Forces in this thesis refers to both army and police forces. Members of ISF were best able to conduct day and night time reconnaissance of targeted location due language and culture skill. Importantly, using this technique requires close coordination and detailed planning with ISF.

2003	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
AIF KIA	8	Unk	Unk	Unk	5	Unk
AIF Captured	105	100	135	120	95	295

Table 2: AIF Killed and Captured in Mosul in 2003<sup>47</sup>

The raid was a typical tactical mission conducted by the maneuver companies in the city. This mission was reserved for the targets considered most dangerous. The cordon and search mission was typically used for targets with potential intelligence value or who were suspected of insurgent activity. This tactic was further refined with the addition of the cordon-and-knock approach. This less violent and more culturally savvy technique allowed the units to pursue less dangerous, but potentially active members of insurgent groups without alienating entire neighborhoods. Due to an increase in insurgent activity in Mosul during the month of December, units conducted more raids focused on killing and capturing insurgents. These missions account for the increase in detentions during December. According to Colonel Anderson, this surge in offensive operations effectively removed many former Ba'ath Party members from the streets of Mosul.<sup>48</sup>

**U.S. Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.** The following chart shows insurgent attacks and U.S. casualties. The number of attacks increased in November and December. In response, 2nd BCT conducted many more raids and searches in these months based on actionable intelligence.

<sup>47</sup> "2nd BCT Mosul Stability and Support Operations, 1 May 2003 – 1 February 2004," 37.

<sup>48</sup> Joe Anderson, (Brigadier General, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, November 10, 2006.

2003	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV <sup>49</sup>	DEC
Attacks	Unk	Unk	45	21	72	54	81	112	121
US WIA	Unk	0	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk
US KIA	0	0	0	4	3	0	1	24	4

Table 3: Attacks and Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces in Mosul in 2003<sup>50</sup>

In addition to the out of sector raids conducted against terrorist camps, the city-wide nighttime raid against multiple targets simultaneously marked the cornerstone of this unit's counter-guerrilla effort to take the enemies of the new Iraq off the streets. These precisely targeted operations were made possible by a functional and effective joint-interagency task force that integrated the collection and analysis efforts of the 101st Airborne Division's intelligence battalion, special operations forces, and U.S. Government agencies.<sup>51</sup> The largest of the night raids occurred in December 2003, when 23 targets were simultaneously killed or captured across the city.<sup>52</sup> The operation was planned and synchronized at brigade level with intelligence provided from a division sponsored joint interagency task force. It was directed by battalion headquarters in each of the main four city zones, and executed at the platoon and company level. As units gained more information from the targets and target locations, they pursued and exploited new targets that emerged. This capability was employed by U.S. Army infantry units in the summer and fall of 2003 and continued to be employed when units maintained strong local knowledge of the population and terrain. Importantly, direct action operations used to kill or

<sup>49</sup> More than half of these deaths (17) are attributed to a helicopter crash on November 15, 2003.

<sup>50</sup> "2nd BCT Mosul Stability and Support Operations, 1 May 2003 – 1 February 2004," 59, and *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*, <http://icasualties.org/oif/default.aspx>.

<sup>51</sup> Petraeus, e-mail message to authors, November 20, 2006.

<sup>52</sup> "2nd BCT Mosul Stability and Support Operations, 1 May 2003 – 1 February 2004," 29. Operation Reindeer Games was conducted by the four infantry battalions operating in the city plus a SOF unit. With one exception, every target captured was taken without any shots being fired.

capture insurgents were used to augment other efforts to influence the insurgent network.<sup>53</sup>

By the end of 2003, the relatively stable situation in Mosul was largely achieved by 2 BCT seizing the initiative early, and then maintaining momentum throughout the year. The momentum was maintained through intelligence gathering and institution building in the day, and insurgent targeted operations at night. The day was dominated by events that were focused primarily on building rapport with the population and institutions, while the night focused on targeting insurgent and terror cells. The organization available to do this included five battalions focused on providing a safe and secure environment; two battalions focused on training and advising local security forces (police and army); a civil affairs battalion focused on governance, commerce and infrastructure; and two combat engineer battalions dedicated to projects supported by both the city and the province. There were also staff experts at the division level who worked along side Iraqi judicial, civil and religious leaders to help establish a functioning city government with responsible leaders.

In spite of the numerous positive steps taken by Coalition Forces in Mosul, insurgent organization and violence increased throughout the year. While the initiative seizing efforts in May and June limited the room for insurgents to maneuver initially, they were able to eek out an existence and still recruit individuals to their organization. The inability to prevent this from occurring, in spite of a nuanced and skilled approach by Coalition Forces, is suggestive of existing conditions that made this growth more likely. The inability to prevent insurgent growth may also suggest that the applied approach required additional resources to influence former Ba'athists to join the new political process.

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<sup>53</sup> Kathleen Carley, Ju-Sung Lee and David Krackhardt, "Destabilizing Networks," Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburg, PA, (2002), Understanding the result when insurgent network nodes are killed or captured is important when attempting to influence armed opposition groups. An over reliance on killing and capturing can create multiple emergent networks that are more difficult to track and influence. Sometimes, the best way to influence insurgent leaders or groups involved was not to kill or capture them. Ultimately, the end state is for everyone to buy into the political process. Influencing insurgent leaders to end their armed opposition is the ultimate goal. This requires more discipline, skill and patience.

## **2. Ramadi**

Initially, Special Forces units arrived in Ramadi, quickly followed by a company from the 82nd Airborne Division. In late April 2003, 3rd ACR arrived in Anbar province. It relieved a company from the 82nd Airborne Division, and replaced it with one troop from 2nd Squadron, the Regimental Headquarters and a wheeled recon platoon. 3rd ACR then received 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment (1-124 IN) from the Florida Army National Guard, which was primarily used to train the Iraqi Police. Eventually, all of 2nd Squadron minus G Troop was in Ramadi for the months of June and July. In July 2003, 2nd Squadron moved to Fallujah and 3rd Squadron moved a TAC and a troop to Ramadi. The Regimental Headquarters and 1-124 IN remained along with the wheeled recon platoon. This organization remained until September 2003, when the 1st BDE, 1st ID (consisting of 2 battalions, and a brigade headquarters) moved into Ramadi along with the division headquarters for the 82nd Airborne Division. 1-124 IN also remained with the 82nd Airborne Division in Ramadi. This organization remained until units conducted a relief in place with Marines in the spring of 2004.

### **a. Gaining Control and Support of the Population**

**Security Forces.** The security force presence in Ramadi changed frequently during 2003, never reaching a 20-to-1000 troop-to-population ratio. The estimated population of Ramadi in 2003 was approximately 390,000. According to the recommended troop-to-population ratio, a population of this size would require a security force of 7,800 police and troops (5,170 using the McGrath study). With such a frequent force rotation in Ramadi, units had difficulty becoming intimate with their area of operations. This may have led to difficulty in gaining control. Security forces, at their highest strength, fell well short of the strength considered necessary to maintain security in a post-conflict environment.

Foreign counterinsurgency forces must transition responsibility for security to indigenous counterinsurgency forces as soon as indigenous forces are capable. Units attempted to train local security forces with varying degrees of

success. Units looked to co-op local police forces, but initially did not have the resources to train new forces while still conducting local security operations. Units established “neighborhood watch” systems and trained and equipped infrastructure police forces and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC). 3rd ACR established the first Highway Patrol in Iraq and hired over 1,500 police officers and other security personnel. They also established an ICDC training center in Anbar Province, eventually recruiting and training some 3,000 troops. This employment not only served as a source of income to the people, but it also placed more of the responsibility of security into the hands of the population.<sup>54</sup>

**Information Gained from the Population.** Units were able to gather intelligence from the population with a limited degree of success. When security forces had control in an area, the local populace appeared to be more willing to aid security forces. According to one company commander:

I found that a lot of the deployment is a credibility game with the public and the insurgents. I felt the insurgents targeted units that they felt were weak. The public didn't trust units that were not professional or couldn't provide security or assistance (especially if they promised such assistance). I was able to largely make good on any promise I made, which at times made me personally a target, but it also led to a lot of HUMINT and support from local leaders and ended up making the area relatively stable.<sup>55</sup>

The quality of information gained from the population varied over time and with location. Some of the information was accurate and some was fabricated to further tribal or personal agendas. Some areas were very good about reporting insurgent and other criminal activity as they began to trust security forces. When security forces did not have control of an area, civilians stopped giving information because of fear of reprisal from insurgent forces and from prisoners who had been released from detention.

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<sup>54</sup> *Blood and Steel! The History, Customs, and Traditions of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, 2006 Edition* (Fort Carson: Third Cavalry Museum, 2006), 39. These figures represent the number of security forces that 3 ACR trained across Anbar province. Significantly fewer forces were employed in Ramadi.

<sup>55</sup> Nick Ayers, (Captain, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, May 22, 2006.

The enemy is human and succumbs to patterns and routine. Because the insurgency operates in the local neighborhoods, the population holds the solution to gaining actionable intelligence. Actionable intelligence is verifiable information that can place a specific target at an exact location during a particular time, thus allowing deliberate planning of an operation. This information may be time sensitive, requiring units to have the flexibility to react quickly. Actionable intelligence is difficult to acquire. Ideally, targets are developed from information gained at the lowest level, the population. Some Army officers commented that their unit was often fed intelligence from division and national level sources that led to the planning of a deliberate operation. If a unit routinely receives its intelligence about its sector from higher level intelligence sources, this may indicate that the unit cannot effectively see and therefore cannot control its sector. It may also indicate a misallocation of intelligence gathering assets.

Most information in Ramadi was gained through mounted and dismounted patrols, route clearances, reconstruction projects, and meetings with local leaders. The local market often was a good place to gain information due to the numbers of people that congregated there and the activities that could be observed. Neighborhood and city council meetings were helpful as well. Some units established neighborhood tip lines that were connected directly to unit headquarters. These tip lines were to be used by the locals to report criminal activity without risking reprisals.

When attempting to gain intelligence from the population, units made extraordinary efforts to determine who was honest and who had an agenda. Units often reported frustration over the inability to persuade locals to give information. Units learned that it was difficult to act quickly on intelligence unless it was well developed and the accuracy of the source could be verified.<sup>56</sup>

**Civilian Casualties.** An accurate number of Iraqi civilians killed in Ramadi by insurgent and other criminal activity may never be known. According to the *Iraq Body Count Database*, there were approximately 30 civilian deaths in Ramadi from April 2003 through July 2003.

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<sup>56</sup> Christopher Kennedy, (Major, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, August 6, 2006.



2003	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Civilian Casualties	22	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	2

Table 4: Civilian Casualties in Ramadi in 2003<sup>57</sup>

Any civilian casualties, whether caused by legitimate government forces or insurgent forces, can cause the local population to become angry and withdraw support. Depending on the severity and the circumstances surrounding the incident, the population will often choose sides to either passively or actively support insurgent forces. Causing groups to hastily choose a side may force them toward the insurgency. Highly kinetic approaches (kill/capture) to battle insurgents can cause excessive collateral damage, pushing groups away from the counterinsurgent. Most units did not track civilians who were killed accidentally, because it was not always clear which casualties were caused by insurgents or which were insurgents themselves. The inability to identify non-combatants became extremely problematic. When units could determine that a non-combatant was inadvertently injured or killed by U.S. forces, they made sincere attempts to reconcile the incident. Most units made some sort of *solatia* payment to the family for its loss. These incidents were often personally handled by unit commanders to convey their sincerity.

#### **Building the Population's Trust in Government Institutions.**

Units attempted to reestablish government institutions and develop reconstruction projects. Units worked with local contractors to reestablish electricity and water services, because these were the most pressing needs of the local population. Unfortunately, the issue of electricity primarily stemmed from the looting of wires which provided electricity from the dams and power stations. Securing dams and power generation sites became a priority. Units had difficulty protecting hundreds of miles of wire which was continually looted. The inability to protect vital infrastructure hindered units' ability to gain the trust of the population. Units spent approximately \$12 million (USD) on reconstruction

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<sup>57</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

projects. Although noteworthy, these projects were small in scale and did not meet the expectations that the local population had for a better future.

The 3rd ACR conducted several civil-military operations (CMO). The first of these was the establishment of a Government Support Team (GST) in Ramadi. The GST opened its office in the Ramadi Municipal Building in order to establish a relationship with the civic leaders and directors of the local infrastructure. The close proximity of the GST to local leadership facilitated cooperation among the agencies.<sup>58</sup>

One of the challenges facing both the GST and local government officials was in developing a decentralized approach to operations. This was due to the distance to Baghdad and local authorities' preference for highly centralized control during Saddam's regime. In an attempt to alleviate some of this pressure, the Regimental Commander, Colonel David Teeples, the GST, and the staff provided guidance to local leaders to begin learning to operate independently. Colonel Teeples established bi-weekly meetings with the leadership of Anbar Province to help them adapt to this new system. At these meetings, units communicated Coalition goals and priorities for the province. These priorities were security, fuel, and employment. Later, mayors were invited to the meetings in order to strengthen the cooperation between Coalition Forces and local leaders.

In August 2003, when only one representative from Anbar Province was invited to sit on the new Iraqi Governing Council in Baghdad, the people of Anbar Province became outraged. In order to preserve the progress that had been achieved, local leaders were asked to participate in a new Anbar Provincial Council. Following the election of a Council Chairman and Vice Chairman, the council began work on resolving issues that affected the local community. This was the first time women were allowed to take part in the government process.

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<sup>58</sup> *Blood and Steel! The History, Customs, and Traditions of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment*, 38. Unless stated specifically, figures represent Anbar Province.

The outlook for the Provincial Council was encouraging because it showed a democratic process could work for the citizens of Anbar Province.<sup>59</sup>

In spite of the Iraqis' determination to take charge of their own affairs, their lack of resources prevented progress. In an effort to re-energize local government agencies and to get the population back to work, the GST channeled \$60 million (USD) to approximately 40,000 workers and 30,000 former soldiers of the disbanded Iraqi army in the cities of Ramadi, Fallujah, Habbaniyah, Hit, Hadithah, Al Qaim, and Ar Rutbah. Additionally, 3rd ACR hired 400 workers for the Ramadi Department of Sanitation.<sup>60</sup>

Units in Ramadi initiated many projects to rebuild the infrastructure and restore basic services. The United Nations World Food Program facility, operating out of Ramadi, was initially secured by elements of 3rd ACR. This facility received and distributed over 1,400 truckloads of food to the local citizens. The Task Force also distributed over 49,000 Humanitarian Daily Rations (HDRs) to various hospitals, clinics, and other facilities. In addition, units renovated hospitals and clinics. The task force provided medical care, supplies, and equipment.<sup>61</sup> Although significant effort was made in Ramadi, limited personnel and resources prevented dynamic change in the city.

**b. Disruption of Opponent's Control over the Population**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** Insurgent propaganda flourished in Ramadi. The insurgents' use of propaganda appeared to be more effective than Coalition Information Operations (IO) and Psychological Operations (PSYOP). Early in 2003, propaganda appeared to be distributed primarily through rumor and graffiti. Later, the insurgents began using multi-media means such as CDs and DVDs to spread their message. From this information, some units were able to determine which groups were operating in the city. Locals rarely came forward to report propaganda circulating in their neighborhoods. In one instance,

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<sup>59</sup> *Blood and Steel! The History, Customs, and Traditions of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment*, 39.

<sup>60</sup> *Blood and Steel! The History, Customs, and Traditions of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment*, 40.

<sup>61</sup> *Blood and Steel! The History, Customs, and Traditions of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment*, 41.

insurgents circulated propaganda stating that U.S. forces were kidnapping and raping Arab women in the neighborhood. The units inadvertently perpetuated the false rumor by conducting raids in that area in the middle of the night. Months later, the unit discovered the propaganda had been circulating, but no message was crafted to counteract it.<sup>62</sup> This example of propaganda used by the insurgency demonstrates how counterinsurgency forces can lose the population's trust. The counterinsurgent must, therefore, use information effectively to counter insurgent propaganda. In doing so, the counterinsurgent must be truthful.

Some units worked harder than others to counteract insurgent propaganda. They used radio and television, posters, meetings with local leaders, interaction with locals while on patrol, and leaflets. Units that routinely and aggressively engaged the population reported fewer incidents of violence by insurgents over time and were able to gain more information about insurgent activity.

### **c. Direct Action**

**Insurgent Casualties / Detentions Resulting from Coalition Operations.** According to those interviewed, an estimated 40-50% of individuals detained during this period were released. There were generally two categories of detainees who were released: those who were innocent, and those who were still suspected of being guilty, but for whom forces could not find sufficient evidence warranting further detention. Mistakenly detaining innocent individuals may cause resentment and push them toward the insurgency. Releasing suspected insurgents risks repopulating the network. This practice indicates difficulty in the ability to accurately identify insurgent cells and their operations. A high percentage of catch and release tactics used by the counterinsurgent indicates an ineffective intelligence network.

**U.S. Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.** In 2003, there were relatively few U.S. forces killed in action (KIA). The number of U.S. casualties may shed light on a unit's effectiveness in gaining the support of the population, showing the

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<sup>62</sup> Special Forces officer, email message to authors, August 23, 2006.

population’s active or passive support for the insurgency. Information during this period concerning attacks conducted by the insurgency was largely compiled at the provincial level.

2003	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Ramadi	0	0	0	1(RPG)	1(IED)	1(IED) 2(SAF)	0	1(IED)	1(IED) 1(VBIED)

Table 5: Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces in Ramadi in 2003<sup>63</sup>

### 3. Samarra

During the first days of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Samarra saw few occupation troops. The 4th Infantry Division focused on Tikrit, Kirkuk, and Balad.<sup>64</sup> In May of 2003, Coalition Forces deemed Samarra in [the] Salah ad Din Governorate to be a permissive area.<sup>65</sup> Just a few months after the liberation, the people of Samarra had “thoughts of the good life with a promising future.”<sup>66</sup> By the end of May, a brigade from the 4th Infantry Division assigned a Task Force (TF) the responsibility of securing Samarra and the surrounding farmlands. The assigned TF’s area of operation focused on Samarra and the areas along the Tigris River Valley and east to the main highway that connected the capital of Baghdad and the northern city of Mosul. According to Colonel Frederick Rudesheim, the former commander of 3rd BCT, 4th ID, “The first five and a half months of our fight, we were moving all over [and] it was only in the latter half of

<sup>63</sup> *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*, <http://icasualties.org/oif/Details.aspx>.

<sup>64</sup> Page, 104-135, 239. The first Coalition Forces to reach Samarra was Task Force Tripoli. 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, 5th Regimental Combat Team [5 RCT (-)] attacked to clear Samarra on April 14, 2003. On April 19, 2003 the 4th Infantry Division continued to clear Highway 1 to Tikrit, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry, attacked north to link-up with the Marines in Samarra and TF 1-66 and TF 1-22 occupied a tactical assembly area (TAA) south of Samarra. The Division Relief In Place (RIP) with 3rd Infantry Division commenced the same day. The 4th ID conducted combat and stability operations from Bayji to Samarra after their RIP. By May 22, 2003 their mission became to screen the borders of Iran and Iraq and a Brigade was tasked with a mission to secure/maintain presence in Samarra, Tikrit and Bayji.

<sup>65</sup> “USAID: Iraq Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance Fact Sheet No. 26 (FY) 2003,” (May 5, 2003), <http://reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/SKAR-647JHZ?OpenDocument> (accessed August 19, 2006).

<sup>66</sup> Afaf Samarraie, (Assistant Professor, Defense Language Institute), in discussion with the authors, October 27, 2006. Ms. Samarraie is an Assistant Professor with the Field and Training Support Team, which is part of Continuing Education Department at the Defense Language Institute, Monterey, CA. Afaf’s extended family originates from Samarra.

our year in Iraq that we had a fixed AO.”<sup>67</sup> In the same interview he stated, “We did spend a lot of effort getting to know and understand those Iraqis in our AO. Samarra was important, but it wasn’t our focus.”<sup>68</sup>

**a. Gaining Control and Support of the Population.**

**Security Forces.** Security forces in Samarra could be characterized as inadequate based on measurements in recent studies.<sup>69</sup> A 20-per-1000 security force to population ratio in Samarra yields a need for 4,000 security personnel (2,690 using McGrath’s study). The city of Samarra had 200,000 citizens and the average coverage for 2003 by Coalition security forces was 400 Soldiers. By the end of November and December, the number of security forces spiked and actually came close to recommended numbers. Elements from 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division supported operations there prior to being moved to Mosul. They remained in Samarra for a total of six weeks and took part in Operation Ivey Blizzard. The purpose of Operation Ivey Blizzard was to isolate and eliminate Former Regime Elements (FRE) and other anti-Coalition forces.<sup>70</sup> An analysis of 2003 indicates an over-reliance on kill and capture tactics by Coalition Forces, which may have alienated the population.

**Information Gained from the Population.** Gaining support from the population is critical when conducting counterinsurgency operations. Fostering relationships and communication are essential to building trust. Samarra’s population of 200,000 citizens was made up of only nine tribes. Of the nine tribes in Samarra, three of them made up 60 to 70 percent of the population. Building trust with these tribal leaders would garner exponentially increased

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<sup>67</sup> Frederick Rudesheim. Personal recorded interview, November 4, 2005. [Digital recording done by Contemporary Operations Studies Team, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, KS, in possession of Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS], 4.

<sup>68</sup> Rudesheim, November 4, 2005, 6. Colonel Rudesheim’s brigade was responsible for Balad, the towns of Dujail, Duluiyah, and the city of Samarra, as well as, Highway 1 and Logistical Base Anaconda. Samarra was just a small piece in the Brigade’s Area of Operation.

<sup>69</sup> McGrath, “Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations.”

<sup>70</sup> Michael E. Rounds, (Brigadier General, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, July 26, 2006. Brigadier General Rounds was the commander of 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker) that was the first Stryker Brigade to be deployed to Iraq. For a company commander’s perspective see “On the Day That Saddam Hussein Was Captured, Crazy Horse Troop Grew Up”, *Army*, March (2004).

returns on any investment of time and resources. Initially, units had a difficult time building trust and working with the tribes of Samarra because they were moved around continuously. According to Colonel Rudesheim, building trust with the population was difficult.

Engaging the population in cities and towns was something that we did throughout, as we moved and occupied our AO. It was both difficult and frustrating because we remained in AOs there for such a short while. You'd start talking to folks, engaging, and then we'd pull out. Sometimes other units would occupy in our place, but that kind of rapport with the Iraqis didn't happen until we really ended up in our last BCT set.<sup>71</sup>

Eventually, Coalition Forces learned that if members of a certain tribe were involved in any anti-Coalition activity, the tribal leaders would know about it. By the middle of July 2003, the unit began offering \$250 (USD) rewards for usable intelligence and \$100 (USD) rewards for information leading to weapons caches.<sup>72</sup> However, the unit found that paying for information was ineffectual and that tips freely given led to better results.

**Civilian Casualties.** Civilians targeted and killed by insurgent groups during 2003 were limited. Security forces did not track criminal activities, insurgent violence targeted at the population, threats, and intimidation. In November, a spike in casualties can be attributed to civilians caught in a cross fire between insurgents and Coalition Forces. Uniformed insurgents attacked a *Dinar* exchange convoy delivering the new Iraqi *Dinar* to two of Samarra's banks. The incident resulted in 54 enemy fatalities, but following this incident, there was speculation that the Coalition's use of force had been indiscriminant.<sup>73</sup> However, personal accounts from units involved in the incident sited no indiscriminant use of force. Events like these are complicated and demand immediate Information

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<sup>71</sup> Rudesheim, November 4, 2005.

<sup>72</sup> Borzou Daragahi, "U.S. Kills Four in New Iraq Operation," (July 17, 2003), <http://a-1-8.org/Docs/activeunit/index.php>, (accessed on November 19, 2006).

<sup>73</sup> Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt and Daniel Senor at a Coalition Provisional Authority Briefing, December 1, 2003, Baghdad, Iraq at the CPA Headquarters. [http://www.cpa-iraq.org/transcripts/20031202\\_Dec-01\\_BG\\_Kimmitt\\_Briefing.html](http://www.cpa-iraq.org/transcripts/20031202_Dec-01_BG_Kimmitt_Briefing.html) (accessed on October 17 2006).

Operations (IO) actions to trace back the issues and grievances of the population to the root causes – the criminals or insurgents.

2003	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Civilian Casualties	0	674	0	1	0	0	0	9	3

Table 6: Civilian Casualties in Samarra in 2003<sup>75</sup>

Civilian casualty rates for 2003 were much lower when compared to other equally sized Iraqi cities.<sup>76</sup>

### **Building the Population’s Trust in Government Institutions.**

Lack of trust in governmental institutions was a direct result of the inability of the governments - local, provincial, and national - to provide for the citizens of Samarra. Samarra has struggled in recent years to develop a functioning local government and to become self-supporting of its infrastructure needs. The Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) in Kuwait gave an assessment of Samarra in May of 2003. Their assessment found that unfiltered water was being pumped through the city of Samarra and residents cleaned the water by using commercial filters attached to their home faucets. Electricity was intermittent and operating at approximately 75 percent of pre-conflict capacity. Three health care facilities were operating in Samarra, one of which was the public hospital. Medical re-supply was an issue with one of the three facilities, as it had less than a month’s supply of antibiotics and vaccines remaining.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> On May 26, 2003 four wedding celebrants were killed while firing weapons into the air – a common practice in Iraq. While this was a small incident it has been a topic of major conversations with the elders of Samarra for all units since; for the foreseeable near future it will be embedded in the Samarra psyche.

<sup>75</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

<sup>76</sup> Hamit Dardagan, John Slobada, Kay Williams, and Peter Bagnall, *Iraqi Body Count: A Dossier of Civilian Casualties 2003-2005*, July, (2005), [http://reports.iraqbodycount.org/a\\_dossier\\_of\\_civilian\\_casualties\\_2003-2005.pdf](http://reports.iraqbodycount.org/a_dossier_of_civilian_casualties_2003-2005.pdf) (accessed on August 12, 2006).

<sup>77</sup> “USAID: Iraq Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance Fact Sheet No. 32 (FY) 2003,” (May 13, 2003), [http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/updates/may03/iraq\\_fs32\\_051303.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/updates/may03/iraq_fs32_051303.pdf) (accessed on August 19, 2006).



As of late 2003, more than 70 percent of the young men (between ages 18 and 35) in the city were unemployed.<sup>78</sup> The estimated per capita income in 2000 was \$500 (USD) to \$700 (USD). With over a decade of economic sanctions and two major wars, plus a lack of tourist and industry output, Samarra's economic outlook looked bleak. The population of Samarra looked to the fledgling government to remedy their situation. The government, at all levels, had numerous obstacles to overcome in order for the population to trust them to provide for their needs and expectations. Analysis of Samarra at the end of 2003 shows that there may have been an enormous opportunity and pay off if trust could have been built between the Iraqi population and security forces.

**b. Disruption of Opponent's Control over the Population**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** Insurgents' use of propaganda, misinformation, and threats was prevalent in Samarra. Since the beginning of the war, Coalition Forces found it difficult to convince the local population that insurgent propaganda was something that the people of Samarra should not worry about. In July 2003, the Police in Samarra refused to investigate those responsible for a mortar attack that killed a civilian and wounded twenty-four others because they feared holdouts from the former regime would see them as traitors and exact vengeance.<sup>79</sup>

Difficulties in dealing with insurgent propaganda in Samarra may have stemmed from the level of influence that each of the tribes had over the population. The internal power structures that existed in Samarra allowed tribal leaders to influence their tribal members and the amount of information that was given to Coalition Forces. The internal power structures stem from having only a few tribes controlling the political space. Some of the tribes were exploited by the insurgents.<sup>80</sup> Initially, Coalition Forces were unable to tap into the power

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<sup>78</sup> "Samarra," Global Security.Org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/samarra.htm> (accessed on August 19, 2006).

<sup>79</sup> D'Arcy Doran, "Saddam Still Casts Long Shadow Despite Sons' Deaths," (July 28, 2003), <http://a-1-.org/Docs/activeunit/index.php> (accessed on August 19, 2006).

<sup>80</sup> Special Forces officer, e-mail message to authors, August 23, 2006.

structure in Samarra. Units felt that tribalism was not significant, however, learned that tribalism comprised the building blocks of Samarra society.

**c. Direct Action**

**Insurgent Casualties / Detentions Resulting from Coalition Operations.** A number of successful raids were conducted using intelligence provided by Special Forces personnel living in the city. The Special Forces Operational Detachment – Alpha (ODA) team in Samarra was able to gather this intelligence due to the team’s close proximity to the population. The nature and style of Coalition operations in Samarra during 2005 were mounted, mass formations with numerous armored fighting vehicles and dismounted infantry clearing forward. Many classify this as a kinetic approach. Operating in this fashion may result in alienating the population. This approach could make it more difficult to build trust and consequently more difficult to gain intelligence.

2003	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
AIF	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	54 <sup>81</sup>	Unk

Table 7: Anti-Iraqi Forces killed in Samarra in 2003.

**U.S. Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.** By the end of the 2003, units reported having daily enemy contact. Insurgents in Samarra used RPG and small arms fire to ambush Coalition Forces. On occasion, insurgents openly attacked Bradley Fighting Vehicles and Abrams Tanks with RPGs. The largest insurgent attack occurred during the attempted robbery of the *Dinar* exchange convoy on November 30, 2003. Besides this one event, most insurgent attacks in Samarra in 2003 were hit and run. Insurgents may have used these tactics to leverage their information advantage against the Coalition’s force advantage.

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<sup>81</sup> Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt and Daniel Senor at a Coalition Provisional Authority Briefing, December 1, 2003, Baghdad, Iraq at the CPA Headquarters. [http://www.cpa-iraq.org/transcripts/20031202\\_Dec-01\\_BG\\_Kimmitt\\_Briefing.html](http://www.cpa-iraq.org/transcripts/20031202_Dec-01_BG_Kimmitt_Briefing.html). CPA briefing stated that this incident resulted in 54 enemy fatalities, with 22 wounded and 1 detainee.

2003	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Coalition	0	3	0	0	0	0	1 (IED/RPG) 2 (MTR)	2 (IED)	3 (IED)

Table 8: Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces in Samarra in 2003<sup>82</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

Due to the prevailing view in the Department of Defense that a smaller number of technologically enabled soldiers would revolutionize military affairs, the number of Soldiers and Marines employed in Mosul, Ramadi and Samarra during 2003 was below historically utilized levels for post-conflict stability operations. Unfortunately, the unique nature of protecting and controlling the local populations reduced the importance of the coalition's significant technological advantages. The Ba'ath party's inherent local knowledge and experience circumventing UN sanctions helped it survive an imperfectly executed foreign occupation. The fact that the occupation was executed with numbers significantly below requirements needed to fully establish control at the neighborhood level only helped the Ba'ath party members endure the initially disorienting coalition surge into the country. In addition, the fact that Ba'ath party fugitives were members of the organization which enforced a police-state security regime prior to the invasion suggests that if the fugitives survived the first months of the occupation and were not provided an acceptable alternative for the future, they were well prepared to clandestinely intimidate, recruit and organize. In general, the Coalition was psychologically, culturally and linguistically unprepared to enforce security at the local level. This was compounded by the fact that it had to do so with a dearth of personnel, which only provided the former regime and anti-occupation Iraqis more room to maneuver and more room for error during its most vulnerable time.

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<sup>82</sup> Eleven Coalition Soldiers died in Samarra in 2003. Four were killed in Samarra and five near Samarra in the vicinity of Highway one, and three of the total perished in a helicopter crash in the Tigris River on May 9, 2003.

In Ramadi and Samarra, a U.S. forces mindset focused on kinetic combat operations, augmented by an economy-of-force mission profile, resulted in an emphasis on killing insurgents at the expense of establishing strong ties with the population. Furthermore, the frequent rotation of units in and out of these two cities made establishment of local ties with the population, and thus control difficult to accomplish. The emphasis on kinetic operations and the frequent rotation of units in and out of Ramadi and Samarra demonstrates a misunderstanding of the problem presented by insurgents and non-state actors, and an under-resourcing of assets needed to establish control.

In Mosul, a better attempt to build strong ties with the population was demonstrated by the single unit that operated there from late April through December 2003. It focused on the population by working to establish a safe and secure environment. While the numbers used to establish control were not at historic levels, effective population-focused efforts yielded relative stability. Yet, by the end of 2003, even Mosul was suffering from an increase in insurgent growth and violence.

Units that used precise direct fire and did not use indirect fires appeared to have caused less collateral damage and were therefore better able to gain the trust of the local populace. Additionally, direct action synchronized with the appropriate IO message prevented the insurgency from developing negative propaganda directed at counterinsurgency forces.

The analysis of each city suggests that above and beyond the importance of protecting the population and building local institutions, several elements were missing to completely control the governed populace. These elements include linguistic skill employed at the neighborhood level, mature intelligence collectors with cultural expertise, an appropriate number of security forces to immediately establish complete control, and a broadly disseminated understanding that protection and control of the population requires a combination of consensus and coercion.

Understanding that consensus and coercion were required to protect and control the population would have provided leaders with the tools required at the local level to use coercion effectively when consensus was not yet universal. The use of coercion simply means that at the local level, cooperation with the government provides citizens with the benefits that the government provides. Failure to cooperate may lead to the withdrawal of these benefits. The use of this concept within the rule of law and human rights is fundamental to establishing control at the local level. Yet without linguistic skill, culturally savvy intelligence personnel, and an adequate number of troops, the only alternative was to have local security forces protect and control the population. This solution was the chosen course with respect to local police forces, yet it too was difficult. While plans may have existed calling for the comprehensive and completely resourced training of locally employed Iraqi security forces, units tasked with performing this mission were neither culturally nor linguistically prepared to do so. As a result, the training was sub-optimal.<sup>83</sup>

Units in Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra were more successful at gaining information from the population when they maintained continuous presence at the neighborhood level. Continuous contact was achieved through dismounted patrols at the squad and platoon level operating out of bases located in neighborhoods throughout the city. These patrols gained information by making contacts with locals and building their trust. Units that commuted to their sectors from FOBs outside of the city had less contact with the local populace and consequently were less sensitive to the situation at the neighborhood level. These units were also less likely to have strong ties with the local indigenous security forces that operated there as well.

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<sup>83</sup> This is exemplified by units calling for NCOs with drill sergeant experience soon after the collapse of the regime to organize and establish training programs for local Iraqi security force units. Importantly, the Army and Marine Corps units called to execute this in 2003 and 2004 did not previously have the training of foreign militaries as a mission essential task.

## **B. 2004**

### **1. Mosul**

For the people of Mosul, 2004 was a year that began with great promise, yet ended with uncertainty. The year brought a significant reduction in the number of U. S. forces serving there and reduced progress toward better security and economic growth. Due to the approximate one-third reduction of U.S. forces in Mosul, the U.S. Army units who courageously served in Mosul did so as an economy of force mission.

#### **a. Gaining Control and Support of the Population**

**Security Forces.** Until the end of 2004, when the collapse of the Mosul police caused a substantial increase in the number of security forces, the number of international security personnel working in Mosul during 2004 was approximately 2-per-1000 civilians.<sup>84</sup> This low number hindered the Coalition effort to help Iraqis secure the population, train indigenous security forces, and rebuild infrastructure. The reduction in force reflects a judgment that local security forces would be able to defeat internal threats without robust Coalition intervention.

The decision to reduce the number of Coalition Forces in Mosul was made based on the belief that Iraqi security forces would be able to shoulder a larger portion of the burden. Unfortunately, the efforts to build up the ISF failed to produce lasting results. This was largely due to a dearth of skilled and dedicated trainers and advisors to follow up on the initial training program established by the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) for the police and Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC).<sup>85</sup> Due to a lack of combat advisors available within the two battalions remaining in Mosul, units were able to partner and advise local security forces only to a limited extent. While two Special Forces ODAs were located in the city, their ability to influence local security forces was limited after

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<sup>84</sup> "Arrowhead Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, 2004 Unit History," (unit history for 3-2 IN (Stryker), 2004), Appendix A.

<sup>85</sup> The ICDC was originally organized as a local security force with a regional association. As the insurgency developed, the organization was reorganized into the Iraqi National Guard (ING) and further trained to conduct a more robust mission set. In January 2005, the ING was incorporated into the Army.

they ended their training mission in order to focus on reconnaissance and direct action.<sup>86</sup>

**Information Gained from the Population.** Two unit transitions occurred in 2004, thus weakening interpersonal ties at the local level between U.S. forces and the Iraqi security forces. The rotation of units created conditions that made efforts to reduce insurgent activity at the neighborhood level more difficult. In spite of the strenuous efforts of U.S. Soldiers in the field, insurgent growth in Mosul continued during 2004. By cutting the ties between U.S. forces and the Iraqi people and government twice, the Coalition effectively reduced its influence over the populace and increased the opportunity for insurgent groups to build their own ties to the population. February 2004 marked the transition from the 2nd BCT and the 101st Airborne Division to the 3rd Brigade (Stryker), 2nd Infantry Division and Task Force Olympia. The new unit in Mosul replaced four infantry battalions, a FA battalion, an MP battalion, a brigade headquarters and a division headquarters with 2 battalions, a brigade headquarters and a newly established Task Force Headquarters. The smaller force in Mosul was unable to maintain a robust level of interaction with the population or local Iraqi Security Forces (most notably the police of Mosul).<sup>87</sup> Without a dedicated force available to carry on progress made by the Military Police Battalion with the Iraqi police operating in the city, the local police forces ceased to improve as an organization. Poor Iraqi leadership at the police headquarters and increases in insurgent groups operating in the city (arriving from the south and west) weakened the city police's ability to protect the population and sustain itself when confronted with a fight.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Pat Roberson, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, August 10, 2006.

<sup>87</sup> *Initial Impressions Report: Operations in Mosul, Iraq, Stryker Brigade Combat Team 1, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division*, (Fort Leavenworth: Center for Army Lessons Learned, 2004), 34-35.

February to September 2004 was a period during which the two battalion-sized task forces in the city were not able to make further progress and could only try to maintain the status quo.<sup>89</sup> While the size of force present was not ideal to make up for the smaller force size, units executed as many patrols as possible to reinforce Iraqi security forces. In order to accomplish this, most of the patrols were mounted. The new unit was unable to attain the level of local community knowledge previously maintained by platoons and companies operating out of patrol bases throughout the city. Company commanders during this time noted the tremendous requirements placed upon them in their substantially sized area of operations. Not only were they responsible for the tactical employment of their company, they were also dealing with neighborhood leaders, intelligence collection, infrastructure requirements, Iraqi security force coordination, and adjacent unit liaison.<sup>90</sup>

The two battalions operating in Mosul were based primarily out of operating bases on the north and south side of the city. The one exception was an infantry company and battalion headquarters that operated out of an FOB in the middle of town on the east side of the Tigris River.<sup>91</sup> The decision to move from city-wide small unit outposts to the larger operating bases outside the city is widely debated. On one side, the debate argues that the presence of foreign forces within the population is an engine for insurgent recruitment, and that the

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<sup>88</sup> The former Mosul and Provincial police chief, Major General Barhowi, is a controversial figure. While his early efforts to provide security to Mosul and the province were commendable, his ability to operate and effectively counter insurgent encroachment into the city were limited during the lessened U.S. force presence in Mosul in 2004. Following the walkout by Sunni city council members following the assassination of the Governor/Mayor of Mosul in July 2005, insurgent activity continued against both U.S. forces and city police. General Barhowi's tribal ties to major insurgent leaders offer reason to doubt his ability to effectively target those leaders as an independent government security force leader. Following the police collapse in November 2004, MG Barhowi was replaced.

<sup>89</sup> Michael Rounds, (Brigadier General, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, July 26, 2006.

<sup>90</sup> A cross-functional team is a possible solution to this problem. As already used by some units in the Army, the CFT is a small HQ element with command authority lead by a Major that has functional experts in areas such as intelligence, civil affairs, psychological operations, information operations and communications. When employed, the CFT can enhance a battalion's ability to employ functional experts at the neighborhood level in order to better influence the population.

<sup>91</sup> A.J Newtonson, (Major, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, October 23, 2006.



urban military footprint should be reduced as soon as possible. The other side asserts that in order to properly ensure the nascent government survives in the face of an ongoing insurgency; neighborhood-level support to local security forces is required until they are able to survive on their own. The experience of Coalition Forces in Mosul in 2004 demonstrated the need to ensure that local security forces had close support from either their own military force (preferred) or from the Coalition. This will often mean that the supporting force is located in large population centers.

The replacement of the battalion operating in western Mosul with a cavalry squadron (-) in July 2004 did not strengthen ties with the population. The loss of personal rapport in the community set conditions for future instability. Mosul became more unstable when an influx of insurgent fighters from elsewhere in Iraq began to challenge local security forces. By the end of July 2004, the number of companies operating in Mosul was six.<sup>92</sup> When compared to the twenty-two companies during the time of 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, the smaller sized force represented a belief that the city was operating well on its own and required little coalition security assistance. The final transition of 2004 occurred between 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division and 1st Brigade, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. The new brigade was also a Stryker organization and it inherited 3-2 SBCT's organizational and theater property in total. In addition, it inherited the same areas of operation occupied by the previous unit. By the end of 2004, the population of the western half of Mosul had experienced three transfers of authority and a total of four different U.S. units.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Estimated number are based on unit task organization at the time and from interviews with officers who operated in the city. The six companies operating in the city included 3 infantry companies, 1 cavalry troop, a military police company and an assortment of special operations forces operating in the city that the author has collectively counted as a company.

<sup>93</sup> 1-502 IN, 2-502 IN and 1-320 FA operated in Western Mosul in January 2004; 1-5 IN operated in western Mosul from Feb – May 2004, 1-14 CAV operated in Mosul from Jun – Sep 2004; 1-24 IN operated in western Mosul from October to December 2004 (1-24 IN remained in western Mosul throughout its deployment which ended in September 2005). In addition to these transitions, SOF units continued to operate on 3-7 months rotations. In all cases, the benefits in unit alertness and morale due to shorter unit tours do not mitigate the loss in interpersonal relationships and local knowledge that are essential to counterinsurgency.

**Civilian Casualties.** According to the *Iraqi Body Count Database* and 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (SBCT) significant activities collected for 2004, the number of civilian casualties increased to higher levels beginning in March 2004. The increase in civilian casualties remained at higher levels for the rest of the year with the exception of June and November. The drop during these two months coincides with a significant increase in the number attacks focused against city police stations. This likely indicates that insurgent groups first focused on establishing control over the population before directly focusing on the cities security institutions. In addition, the drop during these two months may also indicate an inability of insurgent groups to target both the population and security forces simultaneously. This observation demonstrates insurgent groups using a strategy one and strategy two approach to establish control of the population. Based on their ability to gather information (Approach one) and separate the population from the local government (Approach two), insurgent groups attacked the local government directly (Approach three).<sup>94</sup>

2004	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Civilian Casualties	1	6	23	23	21	5 <sup>95</sup>	16	22	33	20	2 <sup>96</sup>	6

Table 9: Civilian Casualties in Mosul in 2004 <sup>97</sup>

As the city's security forces were increasingly under attack, the civilian population within the city became more vulnerable. Several examples highlight the insurgent's assault on the civilian population in order to influence it to stop

<sup>94</sup> See Diamond Model on pages 9 and 10 for description of approaches one, two and three.

<sup>95</sup> The few civilian casualties identified by Iraqi Body Count in June were the result of collateral damage associated with attacks against city police stations. City security force casualties identified by Iraqi Body Count during this month numbered 62.

<sup>96</sup> The few civilian casualties identified by Iraqi Body Count in November were a result of collateral damage associated with the coordinated uprising against city governance and security facilities. The number of ISF casualties identified by Iraqi Body Count during this month numbered 68.

<sup>97</sup> The Iraq Body Count Database, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

supporting the local government and Coalition. Rockets directed at the city hall killed four people in March. Red Crescent officials were killed by gunfire in April. The brother of the man who provided information leading to the capture of Uday and Qusay was killed by gunfire in June. The governor of Nineveh was killed while driving from Mosul to Baghdad in July. A car bomb killed two people in a catholic church in August. The deputy director of the northern oil company and his driver were assassinated while on the way to work in September. Kidnapping also occurred during this time to spread fear and raise revenue.

### **Building the Population's Trust in Government Institutions.**

With fewer forces, Coalition interaction with the Iraqi police continued at the headquarters level, but resulted in a loss of personal interaction with neighborhood leaders.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, the reduced interaction between Coalition Forces and police weakened the city's first line of defense against insurgent action. By June 2004, teams of military and police advisors were not established and operating in Mosul. Without a dedicated battalion to interact with police forces, the development of the IPS slowed. Since the IPS during the Ba'ath Party era was not the force that maintained security or protected the population within Iraqi cities, the organization was learning an entirely new skill set.<sup>99</sup> The lack of forces available to continue this task in 2004 limited the IPS contribution to maintaining a secure environment in Mosul.

#### **b. Disruption of Opponent's Control over the Population**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** The transition from the 101st Airborne Division to Task Force Olympia generated great anxiety on the part of the local people of Mosul. Instead of maintaining strong ties to the population and cutting the ties between the insurgents and the population, the Coalition damaged its relationship with the population by replacing a known and appreciated

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<sup>98</sup> Pat Roberson, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the author, August 10, 2006.

<sup>99</sup> Jerry Stevenson, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, September 12, 2006. LTC Stevenson was the Commander of 503rd MP Battalion in Mosul. According to LTC Stevenson, "the concept of being proactive was foreign to them (Iraqi police) – under Saddam they had been a purely reactive force and had little, if no responsibility for public safety – that was the mission of the secret security and intelligence organizations."

organization. Furthermore, the transition provided insurgent groups with an opportunity to capitalize on the people's anxiety by working to cut the ties between the people and the coalition in Mosul. In the process of cutting the weak ties between Task Force Olympia and the people of Mosul, insurgent groups were able to strengthen their ties to the population. This occurred through neighborhood level propaganda and coercive action against local government leaders.

**Sources of External Resources.** The process by which the existing insurgent and terrorist groups increased their ties to the local population repeated with the transition from 3-2 SBCT to 1-25 SBCT in October 2004. The displacement of insurgent members from central Iraq in the fall of 2004 further aided local insurgent groups. With this displacement came additional people, weapons and financial resources. While initially located in and around Tal Afar, the newly arrived terrorists soon began assisting and influencing the city of Mosul once they had gained a foothold in Tal Afar.<sup>100</sup> In effect, the newly arrived terrorists were able to develop and grow their auxiliary. Without a robust effort to train and advise local security forces at the local level, the local police force was largely on its own against insurgent elements that knew where the police's families lived. Furthermore, insurgent groups began to increase their influence over the local population. This manifested itself in acts of intimidation and murder oriented toward those with ties to the Coalition or government. Examples from unit reporting include attacks and messages aimed at changing behavior directed against the city's television station manager, local interpreters and local contractors working with the Coalition.<sup>101</sup>

**c. Direct Action**

**Insurgent Casualties / Detentions Resulting from Coalition Operations.** The use of raids and searches continued throughout the spring and summer of 2004. The number of these raids dropped throughout the year due to a lack of sufficient tips from the population. By October 2004, the number of tips

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<sup>100</sup> H.R. McMaster, (Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, July 25, 2006.

<sup>101</sup> "Arrowhead Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, 2004 Unit History,"

coming from the population into the city's JCC was down to approximately 40 per month.<sup>102</sup> The ability to precisely target insurgent leaders and cells depends on relationships developed with the population. HUMINT can only be acquired when informers are confident in those whom they provide the information to, and in their own anonymity.

A company commander who served in 2004 observed that he was so busy with conducting night missions, he was unable to devote as much attention as he wanted to the numerous other civil affair and leader engagement tasks he was also expected to accomplish.<sup>103</sup> In order to accomplish his mission, he and others relied on fire support officers to perform additional intelligence and information operations tasks. This helped the company commander deal with task overload, yet failed to solve the cognitive overload encountered by unit leaders working at the local level. In this company commander's sector, he had thirty-one neighborhood Mukhtars.<sup>104</sup> In addition to his combat duties, he was responsible for meeting with these leaders on a weekly basis. Keeping names and relationships between members of the community straight is necessary in order to properly influence neighborhood leaders. This task is likely impossible when an officer is responsible for such a large number of neighborhoods.

The initial drop in the number of AIF captured in 2004 is a reflection of a new unit in Mosul getting to know the area after the 101st Airborne Division departed at the end of January. Since fewer AIF captured remained a trend after January 2004, this may indicate less intelligence collection and analysis capability available in the smaller force operating in Mosul.

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<sup>102</sup> Bingham Mann, e-mail message to authors, June 20, 2006.

<sup>103</sup> A.J. Newton, (Major, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, October, 23, 2006.

<sup>104</sup> Newton, October, 23, 2006.

2004	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
AIF KIA	Unk	3	6	27	4	Unk	2	10	14	Unk <sup>105</sup>	Unk	Unk
AIF Captured	225	82	108	92	51	Unk	53	40	79	Unk	Unk	Unk

Table 10: AIF Killed and Captured in Mosul in 2004<sup>106</sup>

Detaining fewer insurgent members does not necessarily demonstrate a lessened ability to establish control and protect the population. If fewer insurgents are being captured while attacks are also decreasing, then the trend may show that insurgent groups are in decline. However, if attacks are increasing while detentions are decreasing, it may show that insurgent groups are growing in size and increasing their influence of the population. Since insurgent attacks increased during 2004, culminating in the November uprising against the city's police force, it is apparent that insurgent organization and influence increased during the year. Importantly, capturing insurgent members is not the only way to influence the population, yet the ability to do so in an accurate and timely manner is indicative of being in control.

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<sup>105</sup> Sims, 42, Data collected from this source showed the number of AIF KIAs and captured during the entire period from 10 October to 29 December. AIF KIAs during this period numbered 112, while AIF captured during this time numbered 141.

<sup>106</sup> "Arrowhead Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, 2004 Unit History," 24-687. Data was compiled from the unit's significant activities list taken from daily reporting and included in the unit history.

## U. S. Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.

2004	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
AIF ATKs	62	79	100	131	119	Unk	102	133	158	105	261	194
U.S. KIA	4	0	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	3	4
U.S. WIA	Unk	1	12	65	47	Unk	20	24	44	Unk <sup>107</sup>	Unk	Unk
ISF KIA	8	6	7	18	6	62 <sup>108</sup>	10	16	19	Unk	Unk	Unk
ISF WIA	Unk	14	34	19	7	Unk	32	40	50	Unk	Unk	Unk

Table 11: Attacks and Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces in Mosul in 2004<sup>109</sup>

Analysis of Coalition and Iraqi security force casualties indicates that the majority of Coalition casualties occur due to indirect fire or IEDs, while Iraqi security forces were mostly wounded or killed by direct fire. The differences in the types of casualties suffered suggests the insurgents used IEDs and indirect fire against U.S. forces due to better armor protection during patrols and an inability to otherwise target U.S. forces where they were based. The ISF, on the other hand, were more vulnerable to direct fire due to their closer proximity to the neighborhoods and the population.

<sup>107</sup> Sims, 42. The data cited from this source was grouped together from 10 October to 29 December 2004. U.S. WIAs from 1-25 SBCT during this period numbered 133. ISF KIAs during this period numbered 146. ISF WIAs during this period numbered 142.

<sup>108</sup> The *Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>. The database showed that for month of June 2004, 61 police deaths resulted from several coordinated insurgent attacks against city police stations. The 3-2 SBCT significant activities report data was used for all other months during this year.

<sup>109</sup> "Arrowhead Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, 2004 Unit History," 24-687. Data was compiled from the unit's significant activities list taken from daily reporting and included in the unit history (significant activities for the months of June were not included in the version of the unit history used by the authors) and the *Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

## **2. Ramadi**

The 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division (1st BCT, 1st ID) remained in Ramadi until September 2004. The mission of the brigade was to ensure the security, stability, and the reconstruction of Ramadi, and to defeat all terrorist and anti-Iraqi activity in Anbar province. The unit was manned and task organized with a combination of Bradley Fighting Vehicles (BFV), M1A1 Abrams tanks, trucks, and infantry; however, it lacked a sufficient number of translators. It established and trained an Iraqi Army Brigade (ING). 1 BCT also assisted with recruiting new Iraqi soldiers and resourced the brigade with equipment.

In March 2004, the 1st Marine Division deployed to Anbar Province, replacing the 82nd Airborne Division. Army units in Iraq typically deployed for twelve months, while Marine units deployed for seven months. In Ramadi, one Marine battalion augmented an Army brigade. During the first half of 2004, 1st BCT's two battalions (1-16th Infantry, 1-34th Armor) were augmented by the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines. When 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines redeployed in August 2004, they were relieved by the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines. In April 2004, with most of the 1st Marine Division's resources focused on Fallujah, one infantry battalion, 1-16 Infantry was left to control the entire city. In July 2004, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division replaced 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

### **a. Gaining Control and Support of the Population**

**Security Forces.** The estimated population of Ramadi in 2004 was approximately 390,000. According to security force ratio guidelines, a population of this size would need a security force of 7,800 police and troops. (5170 using the McGrath study) A heavy brigade augmented with a Marine battalion and all enablers, including indigenous security and police, was well below 7,800 police and troops. In April 2004, one infantry battalion was left in Ramadi, leaving approximately 1000 troops.

Units made extraordinary efforts to train ISF (police and military) to alleviate the security situation in the city with varying degrees of success. Units reported that when accompanied by U.S. forces, ISF could accomplish small scale operations at the platoon and company level; however, they could not



operate independently. At times, ISF check points were left unmanned. ISF leadership was frequently threatened by AIF personnel, causing some to resign or desert. One company reported an AWOL rate of over 70%. In some cases, insurgents who were detained were later discovered through interrogation to be ING or police personnel. Although there were ISF operating in Ramadi, their initial effectiveness was not sufficient to contribute to the security effort in the city.

Insurgents penetrated some ISF units. As a result, Coalition Forces did not give them too great of a responsibility and did not give them information a long period of time in advance of an operation. Units attempted to vet the leadership over time; however, there were no databases available to determine whether somebody was part of the insurgency. Lack of information about an individual was not confirmation that he was or was not an insurgent. The only way ISF leaders could prove themselves to units was through the performance of their duties.<sup>110</sup>

**Information Gained from the Population.** All units were able to gather intelligence from the population to a limited degree. The quality of information varied over time and with location. Most information was gained through mounted and dismounted patrols, route clearances, reconstruction projects, and meetings with local leaders. Each company developed its own system of informants within its sector. The information was often weak, but occasionally an informant's information was actionable. Information garnered from the population typically resulted in raids that were designed to capture or kill insurgents, or to seize caches. Finding caches and individuals from information obtained from the population can raise confidence and verify the quality of the sources providing the information.

Units had better results seizing caches than they did capturing insurgents. Any operation that removed the insurgency's access to weapons, ammunition and explosives was beneficial. However, without knowing the total number of caches that existed, numbers alone did not indicate success. Most information

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<sup>110</sup> Thomas Neemeyer. Personal recorded interview. 2 December 2005. [Digital recording done by Operational Leadership Experiences Project, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, KS, in possession of Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS].

received from informants was time sensitive, making it more difficult to capture personnel who were attempting to stay one step ahead of their pursuers.

**Civilian Casualties.** The number of reported civilian casualties rose significantly in 2004. According to the *Iraq Body Count Database*, there were approximately 65 civilian deaths in Ramadi from January 2004 through December 2004. This may be attributable to the rise in criminal activity and the acts of coercion and intimidation waged by the insurgency. A large number of casualties in June 2004 may indicate the insurgency’s attempt to influence the transfer of authority from the CPA to Iraqi interim government.

2004	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Civilian Casualties	7	0	0	6	0	19	5	1	3	9	4	8

Table 12: Civilian Casualties in Ramadi in 2004<sup>111</sup>

**b. Disruption of Opponent’s Control over the Population**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** The insurgency used several different mediums through which to distribute their message in Ramadi. They used posters, graffiti, CDs, DVDs, and cassette tapes. Typically, unit intelligence sections (S2) tracked these messages to determine the insurgency’s desired effect. PYSOP units produced anti-insurgent messages to counter insurgent propaganda. Some units used radio and television to spread their message. Units that were able to effectively synchronize these messages with operations had more success at countering insurgent propaganda. Countering insurgent propaganda was difficult if units used IO and PSYOP in a reactive mode as opposed to a proactive mode. If units attempted to counter insurgent propaganda reactively, it was often difficult to effectively convince the population that insurgent messages were false. This was often the case because by the time units discovered the propaganda, they did not have the cultural savvy to craft effective messages.

<sup>111</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

### **Building the Population's Trust in Government Institutions.**

According to one company commander, "something critical was missing in our attempts to dry up the insurgent support base."<sup>112</sup> Previous missteps by other units, as well as their own, had already turned the population toward the insurgency by the time they arrived in sector. A company commander who served in Ramadi believed that trust could be built more effectively when units interacted closely with the population:

In my opinion, almost all intelligence comes from line units on the ground. THT elements need to be integrated at that level, because the populace generally only begins to provide information once they develop a sense of trust. If THT teams never have constant contact with individuals, then how can we expect people to provide them information?<sup>113</sup>

Units conducted assessments to determine the true needs of the population, such as clean water, electricity, and sewage treatment, but couldn't always deliver in significant amounts. Units provided support within the scope of their resources. One officer reported, "We would do what we could, rebuild a school, but then we'd go back and people would be like, 'This is great that you rebuilt the school, but we still don't have any clean water. We still don't have this and that.'"<sup>114</sup> Units attempted to do small scale reconstruction projects using CERP funds, but these funds were not always enough to convince the population that Coalition Forces were doing everything within their capabilities. The perception that Coalition Forces were unable to provide adequate security and reconstruction resources enabled the insurgency to foment discontent within the population.

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<sup>112</sup> Daniel Gade, (Captain, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, May 17, 2006.

<sup>113</sup> Nick Ayers, (Captain, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, May 22, 2006. Although THT are trained to develop HUMINT, Soldiers and Marines who interact with citizens at the neighborhood level on a daily basis can often gain the most accurate information.

<sup>114</sup> Thomas Neemeyer. Personal recorded interview. December 2, 2005. [Digital recording done by Operational Leadership Experiences Project, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, KS, in possession of Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS].

**c. Direct Action**

**Insurgent Casualties / Detentions Resulting from Coalition**

**Operations.** Intelligence assessments made of the insurgency during this period may have indicated a misunderstanding of the enemy. According to unit assessments, relative calm throughout the city was an indicator that the insurgency had been broken. The necessity for larger brigade operations toward the end of the unit's rotation may indicate a growth in the insurgency during late 2003 and into early 2004. As the insurgency grew, ACF were able to conduct larger, complex operations against Coalition Forces. Clearly, the insurgent had not been defeated during this period; he was simply readjusting to the situation. Units must reinforce success in order to maintain the initiative and to dominate the political space. Five brigade level operations were conducted from April through August of 2004. As a result of these operations, 71 insurgents were detained and 43 were killed. The necessity of large scale operations may indicate the growth of the insurgency.

**U.S. Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.** The significant rise in U.S. casualties in 2004 may be attributed to the insurgency's growing sophistication and the counterinsurgency's inability to control the population and gain intelligence.

2004	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR <sup>115</sup>	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
KIA	0	0	1(SAF) 1(IED)	11(SAF) 2(IED)	6(MTR)	4(SAF)	2(SAF) 2(MTR) 1(VBIED)	1(IED)	2(SAF) 2(IED)	5(SAF) 3(RPG) 1(IED) 1(SVBIED)	8(SAF) 1(RPG) 2(IED)	2(SAF)
WIA	0	0	0	0	20	19	61	48	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk

Table 13: Attacks and Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces in Ramadi in 2004<sup>116</sup>

<sup>115</sup> This number is the result of a single incident involving an ambush against Coalition Forces on April 6, 2004.

<sup>116</sup> *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*, <http://www.icasualties.org/oif/>. Wounded in Action statistics from September 2004 through December 2004 were unavailable.

By September of 2004, Ramadi rated fifth among Iraqi cities for having the most frequent U.S. military fatalities.<sup>117</sup>

### **3. Samarra**

On March 15, 2004, the 1st Infantry Division (1st ID) (TF Danger) assumed responsibility from the 4th Infantry Division for Multinational Division – North Central, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.<sup>118</sup> An infantry battalion task force was assigned Samarra as its Area of Responsibility (AOR). The Infantry task force had an armor company and a company of infantry from the New York National Guard to complete its organization. The commander's intent for all operations was to use enemy oriented operations to defeat anti-coalition forces, build credibility in transitioning for Iraqi self-governance, and ensure a secure and stable environment for all forces. The commander stressed that all operations should be conducted while treating all Iraqi people with dignity and respect.<sup>119</sup>

#### **a. Gaining Control and Support of the Population.**

**Security Forces.** The number of Coalition Forces assigned responsibility for Samarra did not change from 2003 to 2004. 4,000 is the security force size number associated with the historical guideline, but the actual number averaged less than 1000. Iraqi Security Forces were present in the city of Samarra, but were not much help to Coalition efforts to establish security. Not until ISF forces partnered with advisors in the fall of 2004 were ISF forces able to conduct operations.<sup>120</sup> The task force commander in Samarra stated that the

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<sup>117</sup> The Brookings Institute, "Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq," *Saban Center for Middle East Policy*, September 20, 2004, [www.brookings.edu/iraqindex](http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex).

<sup>118</sup> John Batiste and Paul Daniels, "The Fight for Samarra: Full-Spectrum Operations in Modern Warfare", *Military Review*, May-June (2005), 14.

<sup>119</sup> Task Force 1-26 Infantry History: The Battle of Easter Sunday, 11-12 APRIL 2004, Samarra, Iraq, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM II, (battle summary, TF 1-26 IN, 2004). This 15-page battle summary was provided by the Operational Leadership Experiences (OLE) Project, Combat Studies Institute, 201 Sedgwick (Flint Hall) Rm. 15, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027. Lieutenant Colonel Kirk Allen's interview, taken on August 31, 2006 by CSI, was also used. Lieutenant Colonel Allen was the commander of Task Force 1-26 Infantry stationed in Samarra during 2004.

<sup>120</sup> James Lechner, (Colonel, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, August 13, 2006.

local 202nd Battalion of the Iraqi National Guard disintegrated in April as uprisings broke out in Fallujah, Samarra, and other Sunni Muslim areas. The battalion consisted of 750 soldiers, but under insurgent pressure, its membership decreased to 40 soldiers. By October, Iraqi Security Forces operating in Samarra included the 201st, 202nd, 203rd, and 7th Iraqi Army Battalions as well as, the 36th Special Police Commando Battalion.<sup>121</sup>

**Information Gained from the Population.** Establishing strong ties to the population was difficult for Coalition Forces because the population believed that the previous units had mistreated them. Commanders were reminded of past infractions committed by coalition forces, specifically the wedding party shootings which occurred in 2003. On May 24, 2003, the CPA filed a memorandum to the State Department that discussed a recent meeting in Samarra between Coalition Forces and one of the top Sheiks in Samarra. Sheik Nahid Faraj told the Samarra city council that while no one wanted to admit it, the situation in Samarra was a direct result of excesses of forces over the part year.<sup>122</sup> A report filled from the United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) stated in July 2004 that "at least 10 families a day are leaving Samarra...because of rising tensions between U. S. forces and insurgents."<sup>123</sup> When this report was filed, Coalition Forces left the city at the request of the Samarra City Council. The same OCHA report quoted Sheikh Ahmed Abdul Ghafoor al-Samarraye as saying, "[Samarra] residents are known for their loyalty to former President Saddam Hussein."<sup>124</sup> A statement from 1st Infantry Division explained that the reason why people were leaving Samarra

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<sup>121</sup> John Batiste and Paul Daniels, "The Fight for Samarra: Full-Spectrum Operations in Modern Warfare," *Military Review*, May-June (2005), 8.

<sup>122</sup> Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, New York: The Penguin Press, (2006), 357.

<sup>123</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Iraq: Families leave as tension rises in Samarra," *Integrated Regional Information Network*, July 26, 2004, <http://iys.cidi.org/humanitarian//hsr/iraq/04b/ixl14.html> (accessed on November 20, 2006).

<sup>124</sup> "Iraq: Families leave as tension rises in Samarra," <http://iys.cidi.org/humanitarian//hsr/iraq/04b/ixl14.html>.

was because the insurgents were using threats, intimidation, random attacks on the populace, and indiscriminate mortar fire on civilian homes.<sup>125</sup>

Initially, the only U.S. forces operating from within the city belonged to a Special Forces Operational Detachment – Alpha (SF) (ODA) team with a security platoon provided by the task force. Over the course of 2004, insurgents targeted their safe house numerous times. Eventually the safe house was given back to the city of Samarra and was subsequently blown up by the insurgents. It wasn't until after Operation Baton Rouge<sup>126</sup> in October 2004, when coalition forces regained control of Samarra, that daily continuous patrols focused on gathering intelligence were the norm.<sup>127</sup> After Operation Baton Rouge, two permanent patrol bases were established in the city to help focus Coalition efforts. After the retaking of Samarra, one of the company commanders stated: "It was our constant presence [in Samarra] that has been key to our success."<sup>128</sup>

**Civilian Casualties.** The total number of non-combatants killed in Samarra during 2004 was 160.<sup>129</sup> Of the total number, 129 civilian casualties were reported by the *Iraqi Body Count Database* during the three month period of October, November and December. Two events stand out during this period. During the night of October 1, 2004, 48 civilians were believed to have been

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<sup>125</sup> "Iraq: Families leave as tension rises in Samarra," <http://iys.cidi.org/humanitarian//hsr/iraq/04b/ixl14.html>.

<sup>126</sup> Operation Baton Rouge was a major offensive operation focused on regaining control of Samarra on October 1, 2004. Total forces included approximately 5,000 soldiers comprised of 3,000 Americans and 2,000 Iraqis troops. Samarra had recently been under the control of insurgents and a no-go area for coalition forces. U.S officials estimated that there were anywhere from 500 to 1,000 insurgents entrenched in the city. The major military offensive lasted three days and on October 4, 2004 coalition forces were able to claim victory. That same day the U.S military announced that the operation resulted in about 125 insurgents killed and 88 were being detained. Iraqi security forces were placed in charge of the city to insure its future stability. Operations in Samarra then shifted to civil-military operations designed at repairing parts of the city's infrastructure and improving basic services. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/oif-baton-rouge.htm>.

<sup>127</sup> Cory McCarty, personal recorded interview, May 24, 2006. Digital recording done by Contemporary Operations Studies Team, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, KS, in possession of Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS]. Pg. 1-20. Command Sergeant Major Cory McCarty (CSM) was the division CSM for 1st Infantry Division during the division's deployment from February 2004 to March 2005.

<sup>128</sup> Ben Marlin, (Major, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, June 27, 2006. Major Marlin was a company commander in Samarra and until recently an advisor for a battalion of Iraqi National Police.

<sup>129</sup> *The Iraqi Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

killed by enemy indirect fire. On November 6, 2004, 30 civilians were reportedly killed when a series of car bombs and gunfire hit the town hall and police stations in Samarra. Incidents involving a high number of civilian casualties isolate the population, forcing citizens to side with elements that can protect them.

2004	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Samarra	5	0	4	5	3	0	3	6	5	60 <sup>130</sup>	42 <sup>131</sup>	27

Table 14: Civilian Casualties in Samarra in 2004<sup>132</sup>

### **Building the Population's Trust in Government Institutions.**

Trust in government institutions increased gradually over the course of 2004. By January of 2005, there were 96 reconstruction projects underway, with \$13.9 million (USD) allocated to them. The Iraqi Interim Government provided an additional \$25 million (USD) for projects in Samarra. Of the 96 total projects, 51, worth \$9 million (USD), were already in progress during 2004, and work was accelerated on two water renovation projects.<sup>133</sup> A large increase in financial support during the last few months of 2004 helped to increase the populace's trust and view of Samarra's government institutions. Since March of 2003, Samarra had not received enough financial support to warrant a positive belief that government would be able to provide for the citizens of Samarra. With close to \$40 million (USD) allocated towards rebuilding Samarra and one-quarter of those funds improving life, at the end of 2004 there was hope. Trust may come with this hope.

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<sup>130</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>. On the night of October 1, 2004 and the morning of October 2, 2004, Anti-Iraqi Forces used mortars that impacted in the city of Samarra; coalition forces used air strikes and counter-battery fire to target the enemy weapon systems. Associated Press, Reuters, and two independent press reports on October 4, 2004 led IBC to determine that forty-eight civilians were killed.

<sup>131</sup> On October 6, 2004 car bombs and gunfire were reported. Of the 42 total fatalities for the month of October, thirty were attributed to this one event.

<sup>132</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

<sup>133</sup> U.S. Department of State press release on November 12, 2004, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2004/38162.htm> (accessed November 5, 2006).



## **b. Disruption of Opponent's Control over the Population**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** In Samarra, insurgent propaganda was used effectively. The insurgents used primarily rumor and word of mouth to intimidate the population. Insurgent propaganda was targeted specifically at Iraqi Security Forces and the population in general. Iraqi Security Forces were not able to function because of fear and intimidation. Most of the ISF units in Samarra managed to have more than twenty percent of its unit report for duty. In September, police advisors were attached to the local police force and from this time forward, propaganda had less of an impact on the ISF.<sup>134</sup>

According to an infantry commander serving in Samarra, his unit discovered few propaganda products, but believed insurgents were able to control segments of the population through fear and intimidation. A report filed by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in July 2004 stated that many families fled the city because of fear. After Operation Baton Rouge in October of 2004, specific operations targeting the insurgent network reduced the effects of propaganda.<sup>135</sup> Major General John R. S. Batiste stated that his units spread themes and messages focused on changing the attitudes and giving Iraqis alternatives to the insurgency. They applied “spheres of influence” that focused resources and personnel at all levels – Division, Brigade, Battalion, Company, and Platoon – at certain groups of leaders and

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<sup>134</sup> Christopher Dutton, (International Police Liaison Officer), e-mail message to authors, November 16, 2006. Chris Dutton has been in Samarra since August 2004. He was first assigned to the Thar Thar Police Station which was located in Al Qalah, a suburb of Samarra. He stated that Samarra was ruled by AIF in August 2004 and believed nobody could go into the city. In October 2004 to January 2005 he worked as an advisor with to the first company of the first battalion of the first brigade of MOI Police Commandos. After January 2005 he was assigned to a new MOI Public Order Battalion as they came to Samarra to help with the elections and was then embedded into a military SPTT team. From June 2005 until recently he was assigned as the Team Leader for the International Police Liaison Officers (IPLO) working for the Samarra Police Department. For more information see the U.S. Department of State's *Fact Sheet – Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)* in the Iraq Criminal Justice Program, May 18, 2005. <http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/fs/47759.htm>

<sup>135</sup> James Lechner, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, August 13, 2006. Lieutenant Colonel Lechner was the Senior Advisor to the 7th Iraqi Army Battalion during September to November 2004 while in Samarra. He is currently the Deputy Commanding Officer for the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division that is serving in Ramadi, Iraq.

people from the Provisional to the neighborhood levels.<sup>136</sup> Commanders at all levels met with government, tribal and religious power brokers and professionals who influenced the Iraqi people and understood the challenges in their areas of operation.<sup>137</sup>

An examination of 2004 shows that for a period of eight months, propaganda was the weapon of choice for the insurgent. However, once Coalition Forces partnered with Iraqi Security Forces returned to the city and focused their operations on providing security for the population, propaganda became less effective.

**Sources of External Resources.** When the 1st Infantry Division arrived in Iraq, the Division believed that external support for groups working for anti-U.S. involvement and actions in Iraq would come in the form of external monetary support. The Division believed that external support going to groups such as Religious Fundamentalist Cells, Foreign Fighters and Iranian Insurgents would be the Division's most dangerous enemy course of action.<sup>138</sup> External support to the insurgents was not the most pressing issue for Samarra during 2004. The insurgent network in Samarra had four months during 2004 to develop resources internally and from external sources. After Coalition Forces left Samarra in July, there were no forces in the city focused on stopping the insurgents and identifying external support, until they returned in October. During the period of no security forces the insurgents had unlimited room to maneuver and plan for future operations.

**c. Direct Action.**

**Insurgent Casualties / Detentions Resulting from Coalition operations.** Unit operations in Samarra after the Transition of Authority on February 12, 2004 consisted of patrols originating from outside the city. The unit had three companies that rotated between force protection of the Forward

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<sup>136</sup> Patrecia Slayden Hollis, "Task Force Danger in OIF II: Preparing a Secure Environment for the Iraqi National Elections", *Field Artillery*, July-August (2005), 6.

<sup>137</sup> Hollis, 6.

<sup>138</sup> "1st Infantry Division's Soldier's Handbook to Iraq - 2004," [http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2003/1id\\_iraq\\_soldier-handbook.pdf](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2003/1id_iraq_soldier-handbook.pdf) (accessed on November 20, 2006).

Operating Base and patrols into Samarra. Operations continued in this manner until June 1, 2004, when, based on agreements on Iraqi Sovereignty, units agreed to withdrawal at the request of the city council. The unit conducted four missions into Samarra, but believed that Samarra grew into a safe haven for terrorists.<sup>139</sup> Most of this was due to in the inability for local security forces to protect Samarra. In September, Coalition Forces returned to Samarra and began to re-engage the population and conduct small unit missions. After Operation Baton Rouge, which involved five U.S. battalions and six Iraqi Battalions, insurgent casualties increased to an average of 45 per month.<sup>140</sup>

**U.S. Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.** In 2004, insurgents in Samarra primarily used Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), followed by small arms fire, rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), and mortars. There was a tendency to use IEDs near the main highway east of Samarra, which heads north toward Mosul. Small arms attacks generally occurred within the city. During one attack, insurgents used four car bombs. Insurgents also attacked police stations in the neighboring towns of Haditha and Haqlaniya on the same day. The trend illustrates the insurgents' propensity to employ 'hit and run' tactics and roadside bombs because of lower risks, compared to coordinated attacks.

Twenty-three soldiers lost their life in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in Samarra during 2004. A very low percentage of attacks against Coalition units resulted in casualties, with most attacks being poorly coordinated and executed.<sup>141</sup> In April 2004, attacks against Coalition forces in Samarra increased from five to fifteen per week.<sup>142</sup> On April 11, 2004, insurgents conducted a complex attack against Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces. During the next

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<sup>139</sup> Interview with an Army Officer, July 15, 2006.

<sup>140</sup> Batiste and Daniels, 21.

<sup>141</sup> William A. Adler, (Major, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, June, 9, 2006. Major Adler served in Samarra as an Advisor to the 7th Battalion, 3rd Brigade, of the Iraqi Army. His mission, initially, was to conduct leader and soldier training with the Iraqi Battalion and then deploy to conduct combat operation with U.S. forces.

<sup>142</sup> Batiste and Daniels, 2.

couple of months, insurgents attacked with RPGs, small arms, and IEDs.<sup>143</sup> Both Coalition and Iraqi units responded to insurgent attacks immediately. The units' response was to cordon off the area and begin questioning of locals in the area to determine who was responsible for the incident. The Samarra police force was often the main focus of insurgent attacks. On several occasions in November 2004, concurrent with Operation Al Fajr in Fallujah, a number of insurgents returned to the city to target the police force, killing fifteen police personnel in one raid.<sup>144</sup>

2004	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
U.S.	0	0	2*	1(SAF) 2(IED) 1*	1(IED)	0	5(IED) 5(MTR) 1(RPG)	4(IED)	0	1(SAF)	0	0
ISF	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	Unk	1	Unk	Unk	Unk	15	5

Table 15: Attacks and Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces in Samarra in 2004<sup>145</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

Despite extraordinary efforts in 2004, units operating in the cities of Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra had difficulty maintaining close ties with the local population. Frequent unit transitions in the cities prevented Coalition Forces from gaining intimate knowledge of the population. In addition, a reduction in security forces prevented the Coalition from achieving a high density of interaction with the local populace. With fewer troops available, units were forced to economize available forces and conduct more mounted presence patrols than dismounted patrols. This approach degraded units' ability to maintain control and support of the population and therefore, lessened their ability to gain intelligence.

Units conducted assessments to determine the true needs of the population, such as clean water, electricity, and sewage treatment, but couldn't

<sup>143</sup> Ben Marlin, (Major, U.S. Army), e-mail to authors, June 27, 2006. Major Marlin was a company commander that served in Samarra and is now on a SPTT team working with a Battalion of Iraqi National Police in Baghdad, Iraq.

<sup>144</sup> Batiste and Daniels, 7.

<sup>145</sup> *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*, <http://www.icasualties.org/oif/>.

always deliver in sufficient amounts. Units provided support within the scope of their resources. Units attempted to do small scale reconstruction projects using their CERP funds, but these efforts were not enough to satisfy the expectations of the population, and therefore Coalition Forces had difficulty gaining their trust. In many cases, insurgents successfully used sabotage and propaganda to discredit reconstruction and security efforts. These tactics made it easier for the insurgency to foment discontent amongst the population.

In order to increase security within the cities, units trained and equipped indigenous security forces. Large portions of these forces were ineffective. Those ISF units that could operate required close supervision and could only perform small-scale operations. Many ISF units had become infiltrated and had to be disbanded or relieved. In the fall, some ISF units were replaced with Special Police or Iraqi Army units - national-level assets that were not as susceptible to infiltration and intimidation. These units were effective at dealing with local threats in the short term, but not in the long term. As a national asset, these units were frequently redeployed to other regions across the country, as they were needed. Therefore, they did not effectively solve the problem of inadequate security forces at the neighborhood level.

Coalition Forces in two of the three cities increased their execution of large-scale operations to counter insurgent forces. These operations consisted of large numbers of military and police forces in an attempt to overwhelm subversive elements in the cities. These operations were successful in capturing caches and a large number of suspected insurgents, but did little to defeat the insurgency. By September 2004, Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra were classified as the fourth, fifth, and sixth cities respectively, in which U.S. forces sustained the highest number of fatalities.<sup>146</sup> Despite extraordinary efforts by the counterinsurgency, insurgent attacks grew in their scope and sophistication. The rise in insurgent attacks suggests insufficient forces to deal with the problem. Furthermore, due to the reduction of forces in Mosul and Samarra and the

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<sup>146</sup> "Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq," [www.brookings.edu/iraqindex](http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex).

frequent transition of forces in Mosul and Ramadi, units were unable to maintain close working relationships with local Iraqi security forces.

**C. 2005**

**1. Mosul**

Mosul began 2005 as a city under siege by insurgent groups. This was largely because the city's security forces were not able to handle insurgent threats when supported by a Coalition force one-third the size of the previous unit. After the collapse of the police in November 2004, the coalition and the Iraqi government surged security forces into the city. The possibility that the city would fail to hold elections in January 2005 was a strong motivator to raise the Coalition's priority of support to Mosul. After an intense six month urban counterinsurgency campaign conducted by a reinforced brigade of U.S. Army soldiers, Iraqi soldiers and Iraqi Special Police Commandos, Mosul ended the year as a city once again in the process of rebuilding itself.

**a. Gaining Control and Support of the Population.**

**Security Forces.** In 2005, Mosul witnessed a change from an economy of force mission to a national priority, requiring additional assets in order to establish security and accomplish elections in January and December. As a city under siege, the surge of security forces in the city focused largely on the conduct of offensive small unit operations. Aided by effective intelligence operations gained by the population, the units operating in Mosul in 2005 were able to accurately target the most violent insurgent groups operating in northern Iraq. With a more robust force presence, the coalition was increasingly able to convince the local populace that it, along with national Iraqi security forces, were the strongest force in Mosul and worthy of increased support. The number of security forces increased greatly prior to the end of January 2005 elections. In early November 2004, there were six U.S. military companies operating in Mosul. By January 2005, there were approximately twenty companies of U.S. military

and fifteen companies of Iraqi security forces.<sup>147</sup> The total external security force during the January elections timeframe represents a ratio of approximately 5-per-1000 of the population.<sup>148</sup> This ratio was still well below previously established norms for post-conflict security environments, and was likely the reason Coalition Forces were unable to more quickly regain dominate the battle space.

**Information Gained from the Population.** The period from January to May 2005 marked the ongoing battle between hardened Salafist insurgent groups and Coalition Forces. With an increased intelligence collection and analysis capability, U.S. Army units operating in Mosul would have been more capable of dismantling the insurgent organization. In the absence of additional intelligence personnel attached to units operating at the neighborhood level, battalions augmented their own intelligence sections with Soldiers who were not previously trained as intelligence specialists.<sup>149</sup> The infantry battalion intelligence structure had not changed in over seventeen years. The reliance on higher level intelligence kept the battalion intelligence section without any real analysis capability. The environment faced by the infantry battalions in Mosul required significant changes that commanders were forced to develop from within.

The greater density of forces in Mosul allowed for greater collection of information from the population. The reorganization of battalion intelligence sections allowed for this information to be analyzed at a level with intimate knowledge of the battle space. According to Lieutenant Colonel Erik Kurilla, the battalion intelligence section requires an operations section, a planning section

<sup>147</sup> U.S. companies serving in Mosul in January included 9 infantry companies from 1st Brigade (SBCT), 25th Infantry Division, 4 airborne infantry companies, 3 light infantry companies, 2 mechanized infantry companies, an armor company and special operations forces of approximately company size. The national Iraqi force effectively operating in Mosul during this time consisted of 1 Iraqi Army Brigade and 1 Special Police Commando Brigade.

<sup>148</sup> "External Security force" includes U.S. forces and Iraqi Army and National Police elements. This number does not include the remaining police force, the majority of which deserted in mid-November 2004. Many Iraqi police were on duty during the January elections, but the organization was still being rebuilt. During this time a common U.S. Army tactic was to employ platoons from neighborhood police stations. This is a useful approach to gain local control of an urban area, but was also necessary for the rebuilding of local Iraqi police forces.

<sup>149</sup> Erik Kurilla, "Intelligence Reorganization in COIN," (Power Point briefing outlining Battalion S2 reorganization, 2005).

and a detainee operations section.<sup>150</sup> The additional sections provide analytical capability and target exploitation. These two sections were sorely missing previously.

**Civilian Casualties.** The increase in U.S. and Iraqi security forces in Mosul in 2005 helped the local government and Coalition Forces gradually regain local control. This resulted in a gradual decrease in civilian casualties. As the Coalition and Iraqi security forces achieved greater situational awareness within the city, they were more efficient at protecting the population from insurgent violence. By the summer of 2005, civilian casualties had decreased due to the effective disrupting of the most dangerous insurgent organization operating in and around Mosul. Interestingly, the ability of insurgent groups to continue to conduct a high number of attacks while also targeting civilians in the city, likely indicates an increase in organization and capability from the previous year.

2005	JAN	FEB	MAR <sup>151</sup>	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Civilian Casualties	10	14	70	11	29	10	10	20	11	Unk	Unk	Unk

Table 16: Civilian Casualties in Mosul in 2005<sup>152</sup>

**Building the Population’s Trust in Government Institutions.**

The increase in the number of security forces and their presence in Mosul neighborhoods improved the local perception of government and coalition control. The population responded to this by significantly increasing the number of tips called into the city’s Joint Coordination Center (JCC). From a November 2004 low of 40 tips per month, the number increased to 400 tips per month by

<sup>150</sup> Erik Kurilla, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, November 12, 2006.

<sup>151</sup> Shi’a funeral car bombed on March 10, 2005 that resulted in 50 civilian deaths.

<sup>152</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.



June 2005.<sup>153</sup> This shows an increase in awareness and willingness to transmit information to the city's security institutions.

Coalition forces operating on the city streets created situations that often angered or injured Iraqi citizens. One of the larger groups of people who had to constantly deal with coalition convoys and patrols were the city's taxi drivers. This group in Mosul had organized themselves into a political organization. By meeting with and listening to the problems this organization had to deal with on a daily basis, Coalition Forces in Mosul helped influence the population in a positive way. By understanding the importance of political organizations, like the taxi driver association, Coalition forces in Mosul were able to build stronger ties to the population and to redress grievances of an organization that dealt with Coalition Force vehicle traffic most often.<sup>154</sup>

From January through June, 1-25 SBCT spent \$20.1 Million (USD) on infrastructure improvements. Nineteen police stations and twenty-four military outposts were funded to improve the local Iraqi security force capability.<sup>155</sup> This effort helped to reinforce the local security force and was a short term improvement that contributed to perceptions of control. Previous construction efforts in 2003 and 2004 demonstrated that once complete, constant vigilance was required to ensure the security infrastructure was well maintained and properly protected.

#### **b. Disruption of Opponents Control over the Population**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** Insurgents used propaganda extensively during the early months of 2005. Following the collapse of Mosul's police force, insurgents' intimidation of the population continued to manifest itself in the form of graffiti, flyers, and digital media. As observed by a battalion operations officer serving in Mosul in 2005, insurgent propaganda was effective in the early months of 2005, and became less effective as combined operations of U.S. and Iraqi

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<sup>153</sup> D.A. Sims, "A Year in Northern Iraq: One Perspective on Irregular Warfare 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, (Stryker Brigade Combat Team)" (Power Point briefing, Joint Urban Warrior, Small Wars Conference, Potomac, MD, 2006), 52.

<sup>154</sup> Omar Jones, (Major, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, August 3, 2006.

<sup>155</sup> Sims, 57.

security forces succeeded in dismantling several terrorist cells operating in the city.<sup>156</sup> These operations succeeded because Coalition Forces were able to acquire accurate intelligence from the neighborhoods. Coalition Forces worked closely with ISF to gain intelligence from the population. Coalition Forces, in partnership with the local government, began an IO campaign to discredit the insurgents operating in Mosul. An Iraqi initiative that helped to counter insurgent propaganda, “Mosul’s Most Wanted”, became a popular local television program. This television program deglamorized insurgent activity and featured former insurgents who discussed their guilt and shame for their participation in activities against the people.<sup>157</sup>

**Sources of External Resources.** Combined Iraqi and U.S. operations in Tal Afar were an important component of Mosul’s improved security environment. By controlling Tal Afar, a major source of external support and sanctuary was denied to insurgent and terror cells operating in and near Mosul. Insurgent groups were no longer able to operate their own schools and training centers in Tal Afar.<sup>158</sup> An additional measure used to disrupt external resources from entering Mosul was the construction of an earthen berm surrounding the city. Initially manned by Coalition Forces, the checkpoints into the city were later taken over by Iraqi security forces.<sup>159</sup> Coalition Forces serving in Mosul made varying assessments of the berm’s effectiveness. Many agreed, however, that when checkpoints and the perimeter were actively and aggressively surveilled, insurgents were less capable of infiltrating resources into the city.

**c. Direct Action**

**Insurgent Casualties/Detentions resulting from Coalition Operations.** The Coalition’s use of small unit combat patrols and surveillance of suspected enemy locations characterized operations in 2005. A greater density of forces allowed for deeper penetration into the neighborhoods by the Coalition.

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<sup>156</sup> Jones, August 3, 2006.

<sup>157</sup> Bingham Mann, (Captain, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, June 20, 2006.

<sup>158</sup> H.R. McMaster, (Colonel, U. S. Army), in discussion with the authors, July 25, 2006.

<sup>159</sup> “1st Brigade (SBCT), 25th Infantry Division, 2005 Unit History,” (unit history for 1st SBCT, 25th ID, Fort Lewis Washington, November 10, 2005), Appendix G-1.

From an initial force posture of six companies in November 2004, to an election force posture that included twenty companies plus a Police Commando Brigade (approximately 1000 commandos) and an Iraqi Army brigade, the force assembled in Mosul was able to take the initiative in a way that had not been accomplished since the 2nd BCT (+) of the 101st Airborne Division departed in February 2004. Coalition units in Mosul dealt with both insurgent activity and political challenges that required action. According to an infantry battalion commander, “We executed ‘continuous targeting’ with detailed weekly target meetings to review target sets across a range of lines of operation. In many ways we applied elements of the operational art to the tactical fight. This demonstrated the on going ‘blurring’ of the tactical to operational levels of war at echelons previously considered purely tactical ones.”<sup>160</sup>

An increase in combat between Coalition Forces and insurgents during this period can be attributed to the struggle for control at the neighborhood level. When Coalition Forces in 2004 were unable to dominate the city through a high density of patrols through the neighborhoods and the city’s police forces were not able to make up the difference, the insurgency was able to fill the void left behind. In early 2005, Coalition Forces had to regain lost ground occupied by the insurgency. The result was a day to day street fight between insurgent cells and soldiers operating in small units of mainly squads and platoons.<sup>161</sup> Nighttime targeted raids and daytime combat patrols allowed U.S. battalion commanders to regain control of the streets of Mosul at the neighborhood level. According to a company commander who operated in western Mosul in early 2005, squad and

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<sup>160</sup> Todd McCaffrey, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, August 10, 2006.

<sup>161</sup> During this time the Mosul city police were still being reconstituted and did not initially play a prominent role.

platoon urban surveillance and patrolling were the key to eliminating drive by shootings and overt insurgent intimidation in his area of operation.<sup>162</sup>

Table 17 depicts the number of enemy and suspected enemy killed or captured by Coalition operations. The re-energizing of joint-interagency cooperation improved intelligence collection and exploitation of emerging targets. The result was more effective Coalition targeting in the neighborhoods of Mosul.<sup>163</sup> The number of suspected insurgents captured between February 2004 and September 2004 averaged approximately 75 per month. By February 2005 through September 2005, forces captured approximately 386 suspected insurgents per month. Data showing the number of detained insurgents that were released was unavailable. If the release rate was high, this may indicate units' inability to target effectively. High detain and release rates risk damaging relationships with the local population. If the release rate was low, this may indicate that units were able to collect better intelligence, allowing them to target insurgents precisely. The collection of evidence by counterinsurgent forces could also be a factor in release rates. Suspected insurgents are often tried in the Iraqi Judicial system and must be proven guilty through sufficient evidence.

2005	JAN	1 FEB - 20 MAR	21 MAR - 31 MAY	1 JUN - 15 SEP
AIF KIA	99	87	126	74
AIF WIA	25	45	30	28
AIF Captured	455	851	977	1070

Table 17: AIF Killed and Captured in Mosul in 2005<sup>164</sup>

<sup>162</sup> Ken Burgess, (Major, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, October 12, 2006. The tactics used by this and other companies in Mosul during the early months of 2005 utilized squads in upper floors and rooftops to over-watch street patrols. These small unit tactics were employed based on pattern analysis of insurgent actions. Effective urban surveillance in addition to other combat patrolling and intelligence gathering methods helped to regain tactical neighborhood dominance.

<sup>163</sup> Sims, 20-29.

<sup>164</sup> Sims, 44-50.

**Coalition Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.** Table 18 shows the amount of AIF activity and its effectiveness inflicting casualties on U.S. and Iraqi security forces. Iraqi Security Forces received high casualty rates. Despite these casualty rates, Iraqi Security forces had less desertion than 2004 and improved in their performance with the assistance of Military Transition Teams (MTTs). National Iraqi security forces overcame their minimal impact in 2004, to make the largest Iraqi impact on security in Mosul in 2005. The operations conducted by the 6th Iraqi Army brigade, 1st Division and the Police commando “Wolf” brigade were significant to regaining control of Mosul. The example provided by these two units was a positive one for the regionally recruited 2nd Iraqi Army Division and Mosul police force to follow.

2005	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	1 JUN – 15 SEP
AIF ATKs	486	420	307	294	244	416(JUN-JUL)
U.S. KIA	2	5	2	1	3	2
U.S. WIA	102	Unk	103(Feb-Mar)	Unk	161 (Apr-May)	125
ISF KIA	38	Unk	24(Feb-Mar)	Unk	43 (Apr- May)	83
ISF WIA	39	Unk	57(Feb-Mar)	Unk	164 (Apr-May)	131

Table 18: Attacks and Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces in Mosul in 2005<sup>165</sup>

The 2nd IA Division performed poorly during the November 2004 uprising and was gradually reconstituted during 2005. A U.S. Army Major serving as an advisor in Mosul in 2005 attributed its poor performance to inadequate leadership and a lack of advisors initially below the Division level.<sup>166</sup> While they were less capable than the 6th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Infantry Division, and the Special Police Commando “Wolf” Brigade, the battalions of 2nd IA developed into better units as the year progressed.

<sup>165</sup> Sims, 44-50 and *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*, <http://www.icasualties.org/oif/>.

<sup>166</sup> Tommy Stoner, (Major, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, September 22, 2006. MAJ Stoner has Infantry and Special Forces combat experience. He served in Mosul for a year as an operations advisor to the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division.

A key challenge faced by advisors to Iraqi security force units was communicating to Coalition partner units that local security forces must take the lead on maintaining security. Leaders of partner units must employ squads and platoons in missions with local security forces. This may entail higher risk in terms of force protection, and less control over all elements conducting the combined combat patrol. Overcoming cultural barriers required constant work. MTT members praised the warrior spirit of Coalition Forces in Mosul, yet also wished units would do more to take the extra risk required to partner and operate with Iraqi security forces at the local level.

## **2. Ramadi**

Marine and Army units in Ramadi continued to rotate on overlapping schedules. The 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division (2-2 ID) arrived in July 2004, while the 1st Marine Division was still in charge of Anbar Province. 1st Marine Division was replaced by 2nd Marine Division in February 2005. Working first with the Marines from 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines and later with their replacements, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, and then the 3rd Battalion 7th Marines, the 2-2 ID's three battalions (the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry; 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry; and 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry) conducted counterinsurgency operations until July 2005, when they were relieved by the 2nd Brigade, 28th Infantry Division, Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

### **a. Gaining Control and Support of the Population**

**Security Forces.** In May of 2005, there were approximately 3,400 ISF working in Ramadi. This force, in addition to the U.S. Brigade, totaled approximately 8,400. The force ratio in Ramadi exceeded recommended ratios and was the highest that it had been since March of 2003; however, due to ISF training and leave schedules, approximately one-third of ISF were available for operations at any given time. Many ISF units, while guided by partner units, could perform basic missions, but could not operate independently. Local indigenous forces must eventually comprise the majority of security forces at the local level, but until they fully mature, they must be given the chance to train and gain experience. A security vacuum cannot exist while this process takes place.

Coalition force strength in the city did not change. Units trained indigenous forces while simultaneously trying to maintain security. This may have provided an extreme burden on Coalition Forces.

**Information Gained from the Population.** Units attempted to gain information and support from the population during meetings with local leadership. They often discussed ECP operations, detainee status, and the execution of focused raids versus large scale cordon and search operations. While these topics are important, it appears as if negotiations made with local leaders focused on how to ease up on security measures and less on what local leaders could do to stem violence.<sup>167</sup>

**Civilian Casualties.** There were 67 Iraqis killed through July 2005. This number of civilian casualties showed an increase by 43 deaths during the same period in 2004. This number is high, considering the rise in the number of security forces in the city. This may be attributed to the insurgency’s attempt to intimidate the population from supporting security while ISF were still in the developmental stages. It also served to discredit the fledgling ISF units. If these units could be perceived by the population as a failure, the insurgency could gain tighter control over the population.

2005	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL
Ramadi	20	5	4	0	13	14	9

Table 19: Civilian Casualties in Ramadi in 2005<sup>168</sup>

**Building the Population’s Trust in Government Institutions.** Dependable electricity continued to be an issue throughout 2005. Coalition Forces used the installation of new transformers in neighborhoods to reward those that cooperated with counterinsurgent efforts. Additionally, Coalition Forces delivered \$500,000 worth of medical supplies to the Women’s and Children’s Hospital, built new bridges, and cleaned parts of the city by employing

<sup>167</sup> Johnny Cook, (Major, U.S. Army, Retired), in discussion with the authors, October 21, 2006.

<sup>168</sup> *The Iraq Body Count Database*, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

citizens. These efforts helped in the short term to develop trust, but were not large enough in scale to impact large segments of the population.

**b. Disruption of Opponent's Control of the Population**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** Flyers and Mosque broadcasts had a significant impact on the population, seemingly paralyzing the populace in their homes. In one example, a unit detained the wife of a suspected insurgent. This sparked calls from local citizens to protest female detention. An SOF unit operating in the city did not communicate with local Coalition Forces with regard to the detention of a female. This caused confusion over the circumstances relating to the incident. The local headquarters unintentionally responded to the local population with false information. This miscommunication risked damaging the Coalition's reputation and made it difficult gain the local population's trust. The insurgency was able to use this incident as a basis for increased propaganda in the city. Regardless of accuracy, announcements of successful operations increased the strength of warnings to stay home or evacuate for pending attacks.

**c. Direct Action**

**Insurgent Casualties / Detentions Resulting from Coalition Operations.** In order to gain intelligence, some units periodically rounded up individuals and brought them back to the detention facility to get whatever information they could out of them. Some of them had to be released because they couldn't necessarily prove they had done anything wrong. These catch and release operations risked turning innocent or neutral civilians against the counterinsurgent.<sup>169</sup>

**U.S. Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.** By May 2005, small arms attacks averaged three per day; IED attacks averaged six per day; and indirect fire attacks averaged one per day city-wide. SAF attacks increased significantly. Insurgents mainly focused their attacks on targets of opportunity, such as static observation posts (OPs) and entry control points (ECPs). There was also a large

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<sup>169</sup> James Raymer, Interview by Operational Leadership Experiences Project team with Combat Studies Institute, digital recording, February 24, 2006. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.



concentration of IEDs near the Government Center. Attacks on ECPs and ISF soldiers appeared to be the target of choice for high profile attacks. These attacks appeared to be aimed at intimidating ISF and reducing their legitimacy.

2005	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL
Ramadi	1(SAF) 3(VBIED) 1(IED) 1(RPG)	3(SAF) 2(IED)	1(SAF) 2(VBIED) 4(IED)	3(SAF) 2(IED) 3(MTR)	1(SAF) 1(MTR) 1(RKT)	5(SAF) 3(VBIED) 8(IED) 2(GRD)	0

Table 20: Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces in Ramadi in 2005<sup>170</sup>

### 3. Samarra

In 2005, Coalition Forces made their third attempt in three years to hand over control to the local government and its security forces. When the new task force assumed control over Samarra, there were zero local police.<sup>171</sup> Insurgents had overrun all the city's police stations. Those officers who had survived had not returned to work.

Two very important factors brought about a period of local stability and security. The first was the construction of a berm in August of 2005, which encircled the city. This berm was a security perimeter. It was manned with observation posts and entry control points, reducing the amount of resources needed to wage an insurgency. The second was the introduction of two battalions of Special Police Commandos from the MOI in Baghdad. As a result of the increase in security forces, incidents decreased from twelve per day to an average of less than two.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>170</sup> *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*, <http://www.icasualties.org/oif/>.

<sup>171</sup> Ann Scott Tyson, "U.S. Seeks to Escape Brutal Cycle In Iraqi City," *The Washington Post*, December 26, 2005, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/25/AR2005122500798\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/25/AR2005122500798_pf.html) (accessed on November 7, 2006).

<sup>172</sup> Tyson, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/25/AR2005122500798\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/12/25/AR2005122500798_pf.html).

**a. Gaining Control and Support of the Population**

**Security Forces.** In February 2005, a Battalion task force from the 3rd Infantry Division assumed responsibility for Samarra. It remained in Samarra for eleven months until it completed a RIP/TOA with a battalion task force from the 101st Airborne Division. In 2005, Coalition Forces maintained an average of three company teams in the city; two companies were at Patrol Base Uvanni and a company minus at Patrol Base Olsen.<sup>173</sup> The unit maintained approximately two-thirds of their units actively conducting missions within the city. Using the 20-per-1000 security force to population ratio, Samarra would need 4,000 security personnel (2,690 using McGrath's study). The average security force ratio for 2005, including Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces, was approximately 7-per-1000.<sup>174</sup> The security situation in 2005 was largely unchanged from 2004, except for when Special Police Commando units operated in Samarra.

**Information Gained from the Population.** Company commanders who operated in Samarra during 2005 believed that information gathering in Samarra was hampered by tribal leaders who marginalized those who provided information to security forces. Tribalism is rooted deeply in Iraqi society and adds a dimension to the insurgency that outsiders find difficult to understand. Some tribes support the insurgency, while others back the government. In many cases, tribes are divided in the loyalties.<sup>175</sup> Fear of reprisals also impeded information gathering for security forces. A platoon leader

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<sup>173</sup> Ryan Wylie, (Captain, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, August 18, 2006. Captain Wylie was one of the Infantry Company Commanders that served in Samarra in 2005.

<sup>174</sup> Patrick Walsh, (Major, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, July 24, 2006. Major Walsh was the operations officer for the Task Force that served in Samarra. The most notable difference in Samarra in 2005 verses the previous two years is that large percentages of Coalition Forces lived in patrol bases in the city. The highest force ratio for Samarra occurred during the month of April 2005. Coalition Forces in Samarra in 2005 consisted of 9 Infantry Platoons, 2 Engineer Platoons, 2 Armor Platoons, 1 Mortar Platoon, with 3 additional Armor Platoons operating outside the city. In April 2005, the 3 Armor Platoons operating outside the city went back to their parent unit. Iraqi Security Forces in Samarra in 2005 consisted of an Iraqi Army Battalion operating outside the city of Samarra and in the city, a Special Police Commando and a Public Order Battalion.

<sup>175</sup> Antonio Castaneda, "Iraqis Cooperate After Insurgents Slay Tribal Chief", *The Washington Times*, December 5, 2005, <http://www.washtimes.com/world/20051204-112759-3808r.htm> (accessed on November 7, 2006).

who served twelve months in Samarra in 2005 was often asked by the populace, “Why should we tell you anything when you cannot keep the insurgents in jail or execute them?”<sup>176</sup> Despite these problems with gathering information from the population, units depended on information gained from tips to plan and conduct operations.

**Civilian Casualties.** There were 86 civilian casualties in Samarra during 2005.<sup>177</sup> The largest event occurred when insurgent indirect fire hit homes on two separate occasions in September, killing eleven people. Roadside bombs, landmines, and car bombs accounted for 31 civilian deaths; mortars killed 26; and the remaining civilian casualties were caused by small arms fire. An Analysis of Samarra during 2005 shows that Samarra began the year with a high number of civilian casualties and violence, but with the addition of Iraqi Security Forces partnered with Coalition forces focused at providing security, the numbers of civilians killed drooped sharply. The spike in violence during August, September, and October can be attributed to the insurgents’ failed attempt to regain control of Samarra.

Samarra	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Civilians	24	8	1	3	2	3	1	14	11	9	2	8
Casualties												

Table 21: Civilian Casualties in Samarra in 2005<sup>178</sup>

**Building the Population’s Trust in Government Institutions.**

From 2003 through 2005, the local government was tumultuous because of frequent personnel turnover. In 2005, the local government and public administration in Samarra was comprised of a 36-member city council, a Mayor,

<sup>176</sup> Ron Hudak, (Captain, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, August 17, 2006. CPT Hudak served as a platoon leader on Patrol Base Uvanni, Samarra, Iraq, from January 2005 to January 2006.

<sup>177</sup> The Iraq Body Count Database, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

<sup>178</sup> The Iraq Body Count Database, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/database/bodycount.php>.

and a Deputy Mayor.<sup>179</sup> The chairman of the city council, Sheik Taha Husayn al Abassi, was assassinated in August of 2005. The mayor, who was wounded by a car bomb in 2004, still had not returned to work, and the deputy who had taken over mayoral responsibilities went into hiding following the chairman's assassination. Samarra had numerous problems establishing a functioning local government and in the eyes of the people, they were ineffective. Samarra's difficulties in maintaining a functioning local government was one of the causes for its difficulties in providing services.

When assessed in 2005, basic services in Samarra were inadequate. Sewage in Samarra flowed into either private cesspools or ran untreated through ad hoc piping into the Tigris River. The sewage treatment plant did not function. Most of the city had access to treated water, but water distribution was inadequate. Trash pickup was non-existent in the city. The city's landfill was at full capacity. Outlying areas had no trash disposal system and had to burn their trash in wadis. Electricity, academics, and medical sectors were problematic, but functioning. The inability of the local government to provide basic services reduced its ability to gain the trust of the local populace.

Samarra was fortunate to have a hydro-electrical power plant and be on the national electrical power grid. This resulted in a city average of sixteen hours of electricity per day, which was uncommon in other cities. Fuel (Benzene) was the only other assessed resource that was above average, with a wait time of less than 30 minutes in the nine city gas stations. In Samarra, a total of twenty-six CERP projects, valuing \$2.2 million (USD), were underway in 2005. Eleven were completed by mid-June, and another fourteen were in progress.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Wylie, August 15, 2006. The city council set policy and plans for future development. The city council was the primary link between local contractors and developmental monies. A chief reason for a lack in local governmental successes was due to corruption. Most Coalition officers believed all council members and tribal leaders were corrupt and that contracting money directly fueled the insurgency. The AIF in Samarra used intimidation and bribes to control who received reconstruction contracts. If an Iraqi contractor, usually from Tikrit, received a contract, insurgents used violence against him. Iraqi contractors felt that unless they paid off the AIF, they wouldn't be able to work in Samarra.

<sup>180</sup> "MNF-I Year in Review," June 18, 2005, [http://www.defendamerica.mil/downloads/MNFI-Year-in-Review\\_2005-Fact-Sheets.pdf](http://www.defendamerica.mil/downloads/MNFI-Year-in-Review_2005-Fact-Sheets.pdf) (accessed on November 20, 2006).

Unemployment declined over the course of 2005, primarily due to the large amount of funds granted to Samarra from the national level.

**b. Disruption of Opponent's Control over the Population**

**Insurgent Propaganda.** Insurgent propaganda sufficiently intimidated the population and hindered Coalition attempts to pacify neighborhoods and develop contacts. The insurgents in Samarra used intimidation and violence to prevent the population from giving information to local security forces. On several occasions insurgents blew up the homes of informants and murdered prominent tribal and government leaders. They even murdered two doctors for working with security forces.<sup>181</sup> Insurgents used *fatwas* as a means of propaganda. One notable *fatwa* directed the local population to target the Iraqi Army and its advisors first and Coalition Forces second.<sup>182</sup> Units noticed a considerable increase in actions targeted against Coalition advisors and Iraqi security forces from these *fatwa*. Propaganda targeted the 7th Iraqi Battalion that was working outside of Samarra by accusing them of mistreating civilians. The propaganda specifically singled out Shiite soldiers, because the unit was known as a Shiite battalion working near a Sunni city. An additional *fatwa* offered a bounty of \$25,000 (USD) for the head of a U.S. advisor working with the Iraqi Army.<sup>183</sup> The local Iraqi government countered these propaganda efforts by refuting the propaganda and conducting increased dismounted patrols. These efforts were an attempt to trace the root of the problems touted by insurgent propaganda back to the insurgents themselves.

**Sources of External Resources.** Large weapons caches were not found by security forces in the city of Samarra in 2005. Unlike the caches that were found post-Operation Baton Rouge, insurgents used transfer points to bring its bomb-making material into the city. Forces found small caches of one or two artillery rounds during this period, but rarely anything more. The insurgency

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<sup>181</sup> Ryan Wiley, (Captain, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, August 18, 2006.

<sup>182</sup> Peter Mucciarone, (Major, U.S. Army), e-mail message to authors, July 28, 2006. Major Mucciarone served on a MiTT in Samarra and is a Civil Affairs officer in the United States Army Reserves. The *fatwa* was found a month prior to the first election.

<sup>183</sup> Mucciarone, July 28, 2006.

in Samarra was more transient in nature. It was no longer anchored to the city, but used the surrounding area and even the larger cities of Tikrit and Baghdad as a base of operations. After large coalition operations or the threat of large operations, the enemy fighters would leave the city. Most insurgents planned, prepared, and lived on tribal farms outside of the city. This was the main justification for building the berm that encircled Samarra.

**c. Direct Action**

**Insurgent Casualties / detentions resulting from Coalition Operations.** Coalition forces forwarded thirty percent of enemy detainees to higher U.S. and Iraqi Detention Facilities. A company commander who served in Samarra in 2005 stated that, of the percentage of detainees that units released, fifty percent were of no value and twenty-five percent were of slight value. The remainder was believed to be guilty, but there was not enough evidence to justify further detention. Capturing and then releasing large numbers of suspected insurgents may indicate difficulty in gathering accurate intelligence. Detaining innocent civilians may damage relationships built with the population.

Operation City Market was one of the first large-scale operations in 2005, which was largely led by MOI soldiers. The operation took place from March 3 to 13 and used MOI Commandos and the Public Order Battalion. The anti-insurgent operation began March 4 in Samarra, with more than 1,500 Iraqi Security Forces personnel executing missions. It was MOI's largest anti-insurgent operation, completely led and executed by Iraqi leaders and troops.<sup>184</sup> The hope of the operation was to crush the insurgency. It failed in this respect, but it did show that the Iraqi security forces possess the ability to conduct operations on a large scale. Their continued efforts, as with the Coalition efforts, should be to decentralize, operate at squad and platoon levels, and focus on providing security; these will be the true measure of success.

**U.S. Casualties / Insurgent Attacks.** Insurgents used IEDs as their primary weapon in 2005. IEDs were responsible for all Coalition fatalities in

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<sup>184</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Iraq Weekly Status Report," March 16, 2005, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/63747.pdf> (accessed August 21, 2006).

2005 except one. Unlike 2003, when the enemy used a variety of attacks with success, a higher use of IEDs by the insurgents indicated their propensity to use stand off weapons against Coalition Forces. To a lesser degree, other stand off weapons were used by the insurgent, such as mortars and rockets. Most of the patrol bases in Samarra were regularly attacked with mortar fire in 2005.

Coalition Forces did, however, receive complex attacks on their positions, but these were not the norm. In one example, insurgents initiated their attack with indirect fire to distract security. They then followed with a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) to breach the outer walls and used small arms fire to suppress security bunkers located on roof tops. The lack of success for the insurgent, in this instance, was due to a tip received by Coalition Forces to be prepared for such an attack.

2005	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
US	0	1	0	0	2(IED) 1(SMF)	0	2(IED)	7(IED)	0	0	0	0
ISF	6	13	1	0	6	2	3	6	0	0	1	5

Table 22: Attacks and Casualties incurred on Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces in Samarra in 2005<sup>185</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

In Iraq, 2005 was seen as a year wrought with challenges and successes. Iraq completed three successful nationwide elections, voted for a transitional government, drafted the most progressive, democratic constitution in the Arab world, approved that constitution, and elected a new government. With each successive election there was a larger turnout and broader participation than the one before.<sup>186</sup> However, during 2005, Iraqis saw one of the most violent periods since the beginning of the war, with numerous suicide bombers hitting targets across Iraq and the security situation worsening in certain areas.

<sup>185</sup> *Iraq Coalition Casualty Count*, <http://www.icasualties.org/oif/>.

<sup>186</sup> The White House, "Fact Sheet: Progress and the Work Ahead in Iraq", January 10, 2006, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/01/20060110.html> (accessed November 10, 2006).

Growth of the ISF in all three cities was seen by the authors as the most promising factor in overcoming security challenges. While less severe, ISF desertion and AWOL rates remained a problem. The introduction of more military advisors serving with Iraqi battalions and companies, however, led to marked improvements in the quality and performance of many ISF units.

The withdrawal of Coalition Forces away from the cities, whether for support to other operations around Iraq or based on assessments that the insurgency in a particular city was defeated, left a void that local indigenous forces were unable to fill. Insurgents took the opportunity to fill this void. As a result, the Coalition established greater presence to regain ground lost in the cities. The increase of security forces in the cities during 2005 helped fill shortcomings in the total numbers of forces required to provide security to the population. An improved security helped build trust between security forces and the local population, resulting in more information provided by populace to security forces.

Tips on insurgent activity received from the population increased during 2005. A significant factor enabling progress against the insurgency in Samarra and Mosul was the dramatic increase in intelligence tips received from the population, which may be indicative of increasing rejection of the insurgents.<sup>187</sup> An increase in the willingness of the population to provide information about insurgent operations was partially a result of security forces' ability to protect the population and meet its expectations. Trust was increased through honesty with the population and the restoration of basic services. When units and the local government were able to live up to the expectations of the population, local citizens gave information about subversive elements operating to prevent progress and were generally more cooperative with Coalition efforts; when units were unable to meet the expectations of the population, regardless of how unreasonable their expectations may have seemed, units could not depend on

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<sup>187</sup> Report to Congress, "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq", October 2005. <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Oct2005/d20051013iraq.pdf> . In March 2005, the number of tips received from the population was 483 and by August 2005 the number was 3,341.



their support. Without support of the population, the ability to gain intelligence was extremely difficult.

Various tactics were used to disrupt the insurgency's ability to control the population. In Mosul and Samarra, berms were built around the perimeter of the cities. This tactic may have hindered the insurgency's ability to bring resources into the cities. The extensive use of IO, such as television programs in Mosul, became very effective at discrediting the insurgency and became popular among citizens in the city.

Coalition Forces detained a large number of suspected insurgents in 2005. Data was unavailable regarding the numbers of suspected insurgents that were released due to insufficient evidence. If the release rate was high, this may indicate units' inability to target effectively. High detain and release rates risk damaging relationships with the local population. If the release rate was low, this may indicate that units were able to collect better intelligence, allowing Coalition forces to target insurgents precisely. The quality of evidence collected by counterinsurgent forces could also be a factor in high or low release rates. Suspected insurgents are often tried in the Iraqi judicial system and must be proven guilty through sufficient evidence.

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### **III. ACHIEVING CONTROL**

#### **A. APPROACHES THAT ACHIEVED CONTROL**

Units conducting operations that achieved control in a city or town were successful at building strong ties with the population. These units were able to observe what was occurring at the neighborhood level and were able to influence what they saw. The ability to do so is reflective of the units' ability to influence the population's perceptions and expectations. Based on case studies of Mosul, Ramadi and Samarra from 2003 to 2005, the following approaches helped units establish control and protection of the population.

##### **1. Population Focus**

Due to the nature of insurgency, the counterinsurgency's efforts to gain intelligence must focus on the population. Because the insurgent initially lacks sufficient force to challenge the counterinsurgent directly, he must remain underground, hidden among the population. Therefore, the insurgent maintains an informational advantage over the counterinsurgent. The population holds the solution to this information dilemma. By focusing on controlling the population through building ties, the counterinsurgency can gain the information it needs to defeat the insurgency. Focusing on the needs of the population at the outset of any military operation will prevent any potential insurgency from having the political space to maneuver. This approach to counterinsurgency may, in fact, serve as a preventive medicine of sorts.

Active, aggressive patrols focused on interaction with the populace are the most effective means of controlling the population. Dismounted patrolling is more effective than mounted patrols, because dismounted patrols allow more interaction with the population at the neighborhood level.<sup>188</sup> Not only do these patrols enable the counterinsurgent to gain information about the enemy, but they also help the counterinsurgent ascertain the needs of the locals. This kind

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<sup>188</sup> David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency," *Military Review*, May-June (2006): 103-9. Kilcullen's Article #10 – Be There and his residential approach is in line with patrols focused on the population at the neighborhood level.

of information can lead to reconstruction projects that can build the population's trust in government institutions.

Although mounted patrolling provides less situational awareness than dismounted patrols, most units were forced to conduct mounted patrols due to the size of their sectors. These units would have been unable to cover their entire sector without the use of mounted patrols. When units maintained constant interaction, engagement and contact with the local populace, they were able to gain information more effectively.

Although urban patrols must be prepared to use lethal force at all times, the patrol's focus must be on interacting with the population in order to build strong ties. The patrols must be deliberate, with a focus on gaining intelligence. Gathering specific information is the main purpose of these patrols. Each patrol should be assigned specific information requirements that are nested with the patrol's overall task and purpose. Every patrol should contribute to influencing the population to support the government and not insurgent groups. Patrols that simply perform movement to contact operations or presence patrols are less likely to gain useful information. These operations tend to be more reactive in nature. Also, these patrols should be enabled with all available resources, such as civil affairs teams, HUMINT teams, psychological operations teams and interpreters. Information gained through patrols must be collected by the company and battalion headquarters so that it can be synthesized with existing intelligence. Patrols may gather information that appears to be useless at the time, but when fused with other sources, may be critical. Therefore, patrol debriefs are mandatory for every patrol that occurs.

## **2. Gain Immediate Dominance - "The Neighborhood is the Front"**

Immediate dominance upon arrival into the area of operations achieves the psychological affect required to demonstrate competence and power. Dominance is established through aggressive patrolling and close interaction with the populace. This approach depends upon skilled tactical unit operations at the squad and platoon level. Units best trained to operate in an urban environment in this way are light infantry and SOF. These units must be

immersed and dispersed among the population in order to establish dominance. Initially, control is not about hearts and minds. It is about observing and understanding what transpires on the neighborhood level and then being able to influence what is seen. Units operating in and around foreign neighborhoods will ideally be able to gain knowledge and detailed understanding through long-term assignment to a certain area. While seeking to gather intelligence, units should utilize all traditional and non-traditional assets available to fully understand the local situation.<sup>189</sup> The principles of Army Combatives serve as a useful illustration of this concept.

A fighter uses the parts of his body to create a natural mechanical advantage over the parts of the enemy's body. By using leverage, a fighter can have a greater effect on a much larger enemy. In this analogy, situational awareness gives a fighter the ability to capitalize on advantages as they present themselves. According to the U.S. Army Combatives Manual, 3-25.150, "Things are often going on around the fighters that could have a direct impact on the outcome of the fight such as opportunity weapons or other personnel joining the fight."<sup>190</sup> Similarly, the counterinsurgent that becomes focused on direct action against the insurgent loses the ability to recognize levers that may be available. This principle is reinforced by misdirecting the enemy's strengths and using superior technique and strategy to overcome one's own weakness.<sup>191</sup> In counterinsurgency, one's ability to extract information from the population, to come to know what they know, allows the contestant to overcome its initial disadvantage. Each technique has a window of effectiveness based upon the amount of space between the two combatants. The combatant must control the distance between himself and the enemy in order to dominate the fight.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Non-traditional intelligence collection can include international police trainers and advisors who are working at the cities joint coordination center (JCC), the JCC itself and ISF intelligence reporting. This will provide a different perspective and help prevent the unit from developing a view that is too narrow.

<sup>190</sup> Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-25.150 Combatives (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002), 1-1.

<sup>191</sup> FM 3-25.150, 1-1.

<sup>192</sup> FM 3-25.150, 1-2.

The use of multiple combat outposts distributed throughout a unit's sector is an effective way to achieve dominance at the neighborhood level. Multiple outposts support local police and government security forces. These outposts should be manned with both coalition and indigenous security forces. Joint operations assist in training indigenous forces while maintaining a security presence at the neighborhood level. These outposts also complement patrols that operate in their vicinity. Effective small unit operations in Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra demonstrated that surveillance and over-watch from concealed positions in the neighborhood effectively countered insurgent attacks.

### **3. Establishing Framework for Local Political Expression**

The immediate months following the invasion were a time in which the Iraqi population expected their lives to improve.<sup>193</sup> Also known as the “golden hour”, this time period refers to the timeframe in which a benevolent occupation force has the opportunity to positively affect the population of a given territory. This is a crucial concept in the immediate aftermath of an invasion. While many prefer to use the term “army of liberation”, it is important to understand that the locals will view a foreign “army of liberation” as an occupying army within a few months. Attempting to gloss over this fact is not consistent with a population focused approach. If the occupation force understands that a foreign presence is uncomfortable and humiliating to most people, it will recognize the need to immediately build strong ties with the population in order to rebuild and strengthen institutions. Work at the neighborhood level is required to build interpersonal relationships essential to overcoming natural biases against the occupying force.

Understanding the previous political system and climate of local government is necessary to properly establish and maintain control of a given area. Failing this, the liberators will lack the knowledge required to administer the area effectively. In the case of Iraq, this failure led to a build-up of grievances within the local population and a growth in armed opposition groups. Thus by

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<sup>193</sup> The expectation for a better life was at least partially based on U.S. leaflets dropped over population centers that told Iraqis not to fight on behalf of their dictator and that the coalition was bringing them freedom and a better life.

limiting grievances, the liberating force can limit the growth of armed resistance. Beyond simply using the minimum force required with maximum precision, control of the population is achieved through the effective establishment of a framework for local political expression.

If the area being administered consists of multiple religious or ethnic groups who were previously held together through the coercion of a dictator, it is reasonable to expect that the same area will require a similar approach in the short term. Thus, the framework for local political expression should build upon the local situation and seek minor improvements in individual freedom. The government's monopoly on the use of violence must be maintained, and since the transition from coercion to consensus is a gradual one, the political framework established should not be totally foreign.

#### **4. Trust, Confidence, and Governance at the Neighborhood Level**

The population's trust in government is critical to counterinsurgency operations. Trust in government reflects the population's assessment of the government's ability to provide security and basic services. The population determines its level of trust based on its assessment of the government's reputation, performance, and appearance. Initially, the population will likely trust the government and its efforts. However, if the government fails to meet the population's expectations, it will lose the population's trust.

Units build trust with the population through consistency and delivery on promises. The ability of the counterinsurgency to protect the population is paramount; therefore, security at the neighborhood level provides the foundation for the counterinsurgent's ability to build trust. In Iraq, when locals believed that they would not become victims of reprisals, they became more comfortable giving information about the insurgency. Information collection became difficult in instances where units could not provide security.

#### **5. Establish Joint Coordination Centers**

Joint Coordination Centers (JCC) established and supported by both coalition and host nation leadership have been successful during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The purpose of building and maintaining JCCs in an area of operation

is to combine joint, interagency, and Coalition Forces with local security forces in order to bring together all available resources to “fight crime, terrorism, and protect the population.”<sup>194</sup> By definition, JCCs enhance coordination, management and synchronization of available resources. The centers in each of the districts in Iraq have been able to combine the Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police, Facility Protection Services, Iraqi Fire Departments and hospitals with an operational relationship with coalition forces. JCCs allow for an increased ability to protect the population, a must in COIN operations. JCCs combine leadership and Command and Control (C2) of police and military to ensure support for local security forces when needed. They are able to combine city and provincial governmental services to capitalize on issues at the local level. The JCC gives city mayors a voice in security matters and enables police chiefs and other security officials to respond to city mayor directives.<sup>195</sup> Nineveh Governor Osama Kashmoula, when commenting on the first JCC opened in Mosul, stated, “This state-of-the-art facility will change how we communicate and handle security problems [and] this is the first time in the history of Iraq that we have had a facility where all of the security forces are in one building working together to provide security.”<sup>196</sup>

JCCs help to ensure that a single political and military approach in COIN is maintained. Components of JCCs in Iraq are akin to most military operations centers - radio communication equipment, maps, computers, and telephones. As with most operations centers, JCCs must have operations and intelligence

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<sup>194</sup> CENTCOM, “Iraqi Security Forces Open the First JCC in Northern Iraq (Joint Coordination Center)”, June 26, 2004, [http://www.centcom.mil/CentcomNews/Stories/06\\_04/12.htm](http://www.centcom.mil/CentcomNews/Stories/06_04/12.htm) (accessed on October 26, 2006).

<sup>195</sup> Steven M. Miska, “Growing the Iraqi Security Forces”, *Military Review*, July-August (2005). The author states that the JCC is part of city government, but because the Iraqi *kada* (county) system that stovepipes funding from Baghdad to provincial ministries, city governments have little control over purse strings. Lacking fiscal authority, city mayors must petition county ministries to provide resources for city security and economic progress.

<sup>196</sup> CENTCOM, “Iraqi Security Forces Open the First JCC in Northern Iraq (Joint Coordination Center)”, June 26, 2004, [http://www.centcom.mil/CentcomNews/Stories/06\\_04/12.htm](http://www.centcom.mil/CentcomNews/Stories/06_04/12.htm) (accessed on October 26, 2006).



functions. JCCs are one of the best places to fuse the intelligence from Joint patrols of Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces along with local police. The JCCs are networked together across the AOs, *but their focus must be local*. They must be located in the city they serve and not on adjacent military bases.

## **6. Eliminate Sources of External Support to Insurgent**

The elimination of external sources of insurgent support and safe havens must be initiated once ties and trust have been instituted with the local population. The elimination of insurgent support is necessary prior to direct action on the insurgent and his network. Determining the insurgent infrastructure allows the counterinsurgent to visualize the overall state of the network he must disassemble. A simple yet effective technique implemented in Mosul and Samarra was the creation of barriers to partition off the insurgent support base in each city. Operation Petersburg in Mosul and Operation Great Wall in Samarra were two operations to construct walls and berms with security checkpoints and entry control points. This reduced the number of possible ways insurgents could bring resources into the two cities. In Mosul, the wall cut off more than 70 desert trails into the city used by insurgents and foreign fighters. The wall reduced attacks to the lowest levels in a year [2005].<sup>197</sup> The local governor, Governor Yusef Kasmallah, was able to clarify in simple, but clear terms, "Before, we were a house without a fence."<sup>198</sup> During the same time period the city of Tal Afar was fenced off with a combination of a berm and trench to reduce entry into the city. Locally, this helped the Coalition Forces disrupt the insurgent infrastructure in Tal Afar, and thus helped to limit external support entering Mosul. The insurgents had been transporting weapons and different forms of capital from Syria to Mosul via Tal Afar. Colonel McMaster believes that arrests in Tal Afar and at the Syrian border crossing of Rabiya, as well as the seizure of money, drugs and equipment used to manufacture false Iraqi IDs and passports, had significantly disrupted the insurgency's ability to operate.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> CNN transcripts, July 25, 2005, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0507/25/ywt.01.html> (accessed on November 10, 2006).

<sup>198</sup> CNN transcripts, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0507/25/ywt.01.html>.

<sup>199</sup> H. R. McMaster, (Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, July 25, 2006.

## 7. Intelligence Reorganization and the Post-Conflict Security Environment

Experts in counterinsurgency warfare assert that human intelligence gathering is paramount to effectively countering insurgent activity.<sup>200</sup> Thus, following the collapse of Iraq's regime and its armed forces, the human nature of post-conflict reconstruction required an emphasis on intelligence gathered at the human level. In order to achieve this, some units adapted their intelligence sections to better address the problems they faced in their area of operations. Once assigned a constant AO, battalions were able to determine the threat situation in their AO better than their higher headquarters. Due to the insecure nature of the three cities, military units that were trained at operating in contact with the enemy were able to effectively operate and interact with the populace outside of military FOBs. Due to this fact, maneuver battalions and SOF (mostly U.S. Army Special Forces) are their own best sources for information about the local threat. Based on the high volume of daily patrol reporting, battalions who best understood their areas of operation were those who internally reorganized to more robustly resource their own intelligence sections.<sup>201</sup>

The attachment of tactical HUMINT teams down to battalion level was beneficial to battalion intelligence reorganization. Unfortunately, these teams were less able to develop an "on the ground" awareness of the area of operations than patrols that operated in zone daily. Several company commanders cited inaccurate intelligence that negatively impacted unit relations with the local community.<sup>202</sup> The inaccurate intelligence was attributed to poor situational awareness within the AO as a result of less operational time outside the Forward Operating Base. Furthermore, THTs require psychological maturity to deal with older possible contacts whose motives and truthfulness are unclear. Therefore,

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<sup>200</sup> This tenet is cited by counter-insurgency experts such as David Galula in *Counterinsurgency Warfare*, David Kilcullen in *Twenty-Eight Articles*, and Kalev Sepp in *Counterinsurgency Best Practices*.

<sup>201</sup> Todd McCaffrey, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with authors, May 17, 2006, and Lieutenant Colonel Erik Kurilla's "Intelligence Reorganization in COIN".

<sup>202</sup> Based on interviews with company commanders and field grade officers from the 82nd Airborne Division and the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Soldiers assigned to perform this duty need to be mature and experienced individuals. One possible solution cited by combat leaders is to select and train NCOs from the combat arms to perform this duty. Their previous experience and maturity would significantly augment the current available capability. Examples from the Australian and British Armies demonstrate that this technique is a viable one. These two Armies select soldiers who have already served in other units. This provides their intelligence community with more mature and tactically skilled soldiers to work as human intelligence collectors.

The highly distributed and dynamic nature of the counterinsurgency environment requires decentralized intelligence gathering in every area of operation. Furthermore, the constantly changing insurgent networks inherent to the local environment require close and frequent interaction with the population. The ability to influence key insurgent members without always having to resort to the kill or capture option requires decentralized intelligence and operational fusion at the city level. This was achieved in situations where all intelligence collecting assets shared their information in frequent collaborative meetings.<sup>203</sup>

Personality differences often get in the way of intelligence fusion between unlike organizations and are frequently cited as an impediment to cooperation. This must be overcome in order to effectively deal with the networked, acephalous terror/insurgent organizations currently challenging U.S. interests. In addition to being a more effective use of assets, close collaboration will help de-conflict sources from one organization to another. Multi-service/agency source de-confliction meetings should occur in every region where HUMINT is collected. A Source Management Database must be multi-service and multi-agency in order to be effective and efficient. It is crucial to all successful intelligence operations that contribute to local control, because it prevents source fratricide and deception by threat counter-intelligence efforts. Furthermore, source de-

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<sup>203</sup> Todd McCaffery, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, May 17, 2006. See also Michael Gibler, personal recorded interview. June 8, 2006. [Digital recording done by Operational Leadership Experiences Project, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, KS, in possession of Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS].

confliction ensures more accurate situational awareness at the local level and ensures greater efficiency.

The disparate missions of the organizations involved in HUMINT fusion have a significant impact on its efficiency. While the U.S. Army battalion or brigade operating in a city may be supporting the local government in order to control and support the population, other organizations and agencies in the city may have narrower mission statements that, without close communication and coordination, could adversely effect the larger mission. These two mission statements may not seamlessly integrate into effective collective action. Furthermore, while one organization's commitment to the problem of Iraq ensures individual and unit participation of a year, other organizations limit individual and/or unit participation to three to seven months. This national inconsistency across the organizations working together in Iraq is not demonstrative of best practices.

As a result of this inconsistency, individuals and units are constantly training new people and/or getting to know new personalities involved in the mission. This frequent rotation of personnel and organizations make effective problem solving within a foreign cultural context nearly impossible. As an example at the individual level, an intelligence analyst needs several months to gain situational awareness of an area. If the analyst departs in the next four months, the new analyst must go through the same process. Multiplying this process over several years shows how organizations are likely operating below their potential. Furthermore, the bureaucratic pressure created by budget competition means that organizations are more likely to seek credit for discrete success than agree to compromise in ways that help ameliorate long term problems. These problems also affected human intelligence collection in Korea and Vietnam. A failure to develop workable solutions may result in similar outcomes that characterized these previous campaigns. Based on insights

gleaned from Israeli intelligence activities, the United States must “get serious ... or suffer the strategic consequences.”<sup>204</sup>

## **8. Immediately Build or Enable Local Security Forces**

Successful control at the local level is best achieved in cooperation with local security forces. In Mosul, two battalions of the U.S. Army were committed to working immediately with the local police and civil defense corps. This effort was instrumental in the development of relative security in Mosul in 2003.<sup>205</sup> Yet due to the significant troop reduction in Mosul in 2004, the ability to partner with and advise the local security forces was also greatly reduced. Iraqi police performance degraded throughout the year. In November 2004, the local government lost the trust and confidence of the population when the police and most local Army units deserted in the face of insurgent attacks. If the local police and army units had had dedicated unit advisors with them, the local response to the surge in insurgent violence would likely have been different.<sup>206</sup> In Ramadi, an infantry battalion was committed to the training and advising of the city police. Yet, in spite of this effort, the police failed to effectively resist insurgent activity when operating independent of coalition forces.<sup>207</sup> This result is consistent with the experiences in the other two cities. When closely backed by coalition forces, Iraqi police were able to perform security tasks in city neighborhoods. The police force’s inability to take on insurgent action when backup was not available suggests that police forces were not capable of independently defeating insurgent organizations in Iraq. This is due to the vulnerability inherent to police forces that operate in the city. Within the local

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<sup>204</sup> Richard H. Shultz Jr. and Roy Godson, “Intelligence Dominance: A better way forward in Iraq”, *The Weekly Standard*, July 31, 2006, <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/faculty/shultz/pdf/IntelligenceDominance.pdf>

<sup>205</sup> According to Brigadier General Joe Anderson, 2nd BCT (+) would not have been able to succeed in Mosul had they not had the 503rd military police battalion attached. This MP battalion partnered with the local police in order to create a neighborhood police capability able to protect the population and be proactive.

<sup>206</sup> This assessment is a result of interviews with officers serving in Mosul and the authors’ judgment based on the reporting and coordination routinely performed by advisors operating with local security forces.

<sup>207</sup> Thomas Neemeyer, personal recorded interview, December 2, 2005. [Digital recording done by Operational Leadership Experiences Project, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, KS, in possession of Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS].

social context, they are known to the community and are constantly exposed. This exposes their families and makes direct action against hidden insurgent groups dangerous. Local police can therefore only effectively operate in a lethal insurgency when they have backup at the local level by army or national police forces. This backup is necessary for years, not months. National forces that come for a short while to perform a few raids will not provide the long term assistance needed to establish full government control.

The training and equipping of a national army that the United States wants to maintain as an ally should receive the best our country has to offer. In the case of Iraq's army and police forces, the effort was initially out-sourced to civilian corporations. This decision reflects an assumption that the security environment in Iraq would be permissive, and that the civilian outsourcing of foreign military training used in Bosnia and Kosovo would also work in Iraq. This assumption proved incorrect. Some equipment supplied to the new Iraqi Army by these civilian companies was substandard. In addition, the training provided to Iraqi police was based on western police techniques used in stable western cities. It was not until these deficiencies were corrected in the summer of 2004, that the national effort to train and equip Iraqi Security forces began to achieve effective results. Providing advisory teams to host nation military and police units was an initiative that satisfied the requirement previously executed by Army and Marine battalions as an additional duty. While this was a positive and necessary step, effective teams arrived many months after they were needed.<sup>208</sup>

Due to Iraq's security situation, the ability to advise local security forces with deployable teams capable of living and fighting with their assigned unit is a required capability for effective development of local security forces.

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<sup>208</sup> Several battalions of the new Iraqi army refused to deploy to Falluja in April 2004. This indicated that the effort to train and equip the new Iraqi army was not going well. The subsequent reorganization of the effort to train and equip ISF led to the creation of the Multi-national Security Transition Command- Iraq. Improvement in training and equipping was achieved by the fall. The effort to provide fully trained and manned advisory teams did materialize until the summer of 2005. This is partially due to organizational inertia in DoD. The mission to train and advise foreign armies was previously the job of U.S. Army Special Forces. When U.S. Army SF did not receive the mission to do this in Iraq in 2003 and 2004, the U.S. Army and U.S. Marines had to generate this capability from scratch.

Furthermore, partnerships between U.S. and Iraqi units need to become true partnerships. In spite of maneuver battalions' desire for unilateral action, the nature of counter-insurgency requires an approach that is by, with, and through the local population. This is achieved through constant partnership at the neighborhood police station level. It is at this level that the insurgency intimidates the local government, and therefore is where day and night soldier interaction with local security forces must occur.<sup>209</sup> Independent Coalition action in Iraq fails to enable local security forces. Indigenous security forces know the population and the language better than any American Soldier or Marine. Thus, all Coalition activity should be focused on enabling the host nation to solve its own security problems.

## **B. APPROACHES THAT FAILED TO ACHIEVE CONTROL**

The failure to achieve control of a town or city can be described as a failure to see what is happening at the neighborhood level and thus the inability to completely influence the people in the neighborhood. Approaches that fail to achieve control are those that do not build strong ties with the population. The inability to build strong ties indicates a failure to take actions that influence the population's perceptions and expectations. Based on case studies of Mosul, Ramadi and Samarra from 2003 to 2005, the following approaches prevented units from establishing control over and protection of the population.

### **1. Inconsistent and Excessive Application of Force**

COIN operations are best implemented within the framework of a centralized strategic plan with decentralized execution at the tactical level. The campaign plan must call for control mechanisms within security forces to allow for decentralized execution. Control mechanisms call for consistency in application of force and military power in the post-invasion timeframe to establish trust from the population. De-centralized execution, by default, allows for some inconsistencies, but it is in a controlled state. Inconsistencies and excessiveness

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<sup>209</sup> Pat Roberson, (Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army), in discussion with the authors, August 10, 2006. See also: Adrian Bogart III, "The 9 Principles of Combined Arms Actions in a Counterinsurgency Environment", *Military Review*, March-April (2006).

include harsh rules of Engagement (ROE) that are not focused on protecting the population, but rather are established to protect the force. Other examples of excessiveness include fire support in an urban environment for the sole purpose of a 'show of force', or terrain denial missions. Use of Fire Support and use of Artillery around civilian populations in a COIN environment is counter-productive; it is difficult to build trust and confidence when shells and bombs are exploding in city streets and the average civilian has no idea who fired them. The best course of action is to send a man, not a bullet. Fire support should be held in reserve and replaced by Soldiers, because they are less likely to cause collateral damage. A human is more discriminating and can provide immediate assessment and response at the target area. Holding Fire Support and Artillery in reserve is a complete shift in thought from High Intensity Operations. In COIN, "destruction is applied only to the extent necessary to achieve control and, thus, by its nature, must be discriminating."<sup>210</sup>

In order for the centralized plan to be consistent within each city, the area of operations must have a comprehensive city specific plan that is established with the population in mind. The decentralized execution allows for adjustments at the local level. The plans must not be based on the unit that is responsible for providing a safe and secure environment, but must meet the individual nuances of the local environment. Any refinement to the plan must come from the local level. This methodology must be in place from the beginning.

Implementing a national policy that doesn't fit into the natural order of the local environment will not work. One of the earliest examples of this failure is when the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) dissolved the Iraqi Army – it created massive unemployment and disassembled one element of national unity that worked. A better course of action may have been to mandate that every military age male join the military. By controlling this national resource, CPA and

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<sup>210</sup> Harold K. Johnson, *Parameters*, Spring (1998), 93-109. The *Parameters* article was adapted from Lewis Sorley's *Honorable Warrior: General Harold K. Johnson and the Ethics of Command*. As former Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, General Johnson also wrote: "I maintain that control is the object beyond the battle and object beyond the war."



the Iraqi Transitional Government would have had an increased ability to prevent insurgency and to rebuild the country.<sup>211</sup>

## **2. Main Effort Focused on Killing and Capturing Insurgents**

Units in Iraq focused more on killing and capturing insurgents, and less on developing indigenous security forces and government institutions. While units typically desire to use overwhelming fire power to achieve tactical outcomes, any collateral damage inflicted on the population can push it towards the side of the insurgency. Therefore, it is critical to use the minimum force required to achieve the desired outcome. If the operation has the potential to create more insurgents than will be eliminated, then the counterinsurgent should reconsider conducting the operation.

Social capital is generally referred to as the set of trust, institutions, social norms, social networks, and organizations that shape the interactions of actors within a society and are an asset for the individual and collective production of well-being.<sup>212</sup> The relationships between individuals are more important than the individuals themselves. Social network analysis, therefore, can identify who an individual is. In COIN, a hidden insurgent is found by gaining an understanding of his network, or the system of relationships through which he is associated. By focusing on gaining social capital, the counterinsurgent can shrink the political space in which the insurgent exists. Without enough political space to operate, the insurgent and his network are illuminated and can then be targeted. If the counterinsurgent focuses too heavily on targeting individuals, he may never be able to understand the network well enough to dismantle it.

## **3. Intelligence Gathering Through Detain and Release Tactics**

Large-scale detain and release tactics designed to gain intelligence isolated the population and made it more difficult for units to earn the population's trust. When attempting to gain trust through meeting the population's expectations, perception is reality. The population often perceived detain and release tactics as being indiscriminate. These tactics contributed to enemy

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<sup>211</sup> Anna Simmons, "Military Advisor" (lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, Fall 2006).

<sup>212</sup> Fabio Sabatini, "Social Capital Gateway," <http://www.socialcapitalgateway.org/>

propaganda and possibly bolstered the insurgency's recruitment efforts. Large-scale detain and release tactics alienated large numbers of the population and demonstrated an inability to target effectively.

Questioning people, however, is not mass detention. There are examples in which large numbers of civilians were held at the scene for the purpose of questioning after an IED detonated or other attacks had been committed. These tactics are not random acts and display characteristics governed by probable cause and the rules of evidence. When the counterinsurgent is living and operating among the population, the ability to question and observe suspicious people is increased. This helps to influence members of the insurgent community and causes them to start looking over their shoulder. In this way, fewer indiscriminant detentions occur and fewer propaganda opportunities are available for the insurgent.

#### **4. Soldier and Marine Basing out of FOBs – “Commuting to War”**

The following quote from a military officer in Samarra is emblematic of the wrong mentality required to establish control of the population at the local level: “I enjoy my 120mm proof bunker down at the FOB and the great standoff our FOB has to offer.”<sup>213</sup> The safety and comfort of the FOB in no way contributes to a unit's ability to influence the populace in the dynamic and distributed counterinsurgency environment. Instead, units that effectively established control of the population distributed subordinate units into the neighborhoods where the populace lived and worked. In Mosul, control of the city was achieved when platoons and companies operated out of combat outposts within population centers. In Samarra, a Special Forces A-team was the only unit operating in the city during 2003 and most of 2004. Maneuver units responsible for Samarra in 2003 were approximately 30 km from the city, while during the first half of 2004, units were still separated from the city by approximately 10 km. Due to its location in the city, the ODA was able to gather the most accurate and detailed HUMINT of the local situation. In Ramadi during 2003, units operated mainly from two FOBs in north central and North West Ramadi. By the beginning of

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<sup>213</sup> Anonymous military officer serving in Samarra during 2003.

2004, coalition units in Ramadi occupied combat outposts along the main supply route through the city. While security of the MSR was the main catalyst for this move, the result was beneficial to local security of the population. In all three cities, units that operated with squads in mutual support or with platoons in mutual support, often employed from neighborhood police stations, were best able to bring security to neighborhoods. In doing so, they were also able to reduce the IED threat faced when “commuting to war” from an FOB.<sup>214</sup>

The higher percentage of casualties caused by IEDs and indirect fire resulted from insurgent preferences that avoided direct fire confrontation with coalition combat units. This is a manifestation of the inherent advantages extant in the counterinsurgency environment. With the firepower advantage firmly in the hands of Coalition Forces, the insurgent will seek to attack using methods that maximize his information advantage.<sup>215</sup> Thus, the local knowledge gained by the insurgent’s auxiliary members in the neighborhood allows insurgents to accurately target the Coalition, ISF and Iraqi Government officials. In order to counter this existing condition, units employed squads and platoons in the contested area in order to improve upon their information disadvantage. In doing this, they were also able to counter insurgent propaganda that challenged the Coalition’s willingness to confront insurgent groups in the neighborhood. Once established in city neighborhoods, insurgent groups were forced to take action against the Coalition encroachment into their area. This was beneficial to Coalition forces and often resulted in successful engagements between insurgent groups and Coalition and local security forces. The willingness to establish small unit combat outposts in support of local security forces was a characteristic of units that effectively partnered and supported local Iraqi government.

From the perspective of the Iraqi civilian living in the neighborhood, a unit operating from an FOB outside of town moves in and out of his area a few times every week. The Iraqi citizen living in a city neighborhood may have a pure

<sup>214</sup> This approach requires considerable cultural understanding and linguistic support. Until soldiers working with the indigenous forces are linguistically capable, interpreters are essential to Iraqi and Coalition cooperation.

<sup>215</sup> McCormick, “Seminar in Guerrilla Warfare.”

preference in favor of the new government of Iraq. Yet, due to the transient nature of Coalition Forces and the institutionally weak Iraqi police, insurgent groups in the area are able to influence the citizen to resist his pure preference and not support the local government efforts to identify local insurgents and their active supporters. In order to establish security at the neighborhood level, the counterinsurgent must reside in the area. Once a constant presence in the neighborhoods is established, the counterinsurgent can begin to influence the local population and determine who is opposed to the government.

An analogy comparing the battlefield environment of high intensity conflict with that of the counterinsurgency battlefield is useful in focusing leader and unit activities. In high intensity conflict where maneuver units operate at the front and support units bring forward material to the Brigade Support Area (BSA), combat leaders and units are expected to operate and live at the front. Only on specific re-supply and administrative missions are leaders and units authorized to return to the BSA. In a counterinsurgency environment, the neighborhood is the front and the Forward Operating Base (FOB) is the BSA. Units must have the tactical, logistical and cultural skill to operate in platoon and company combat outposts in order to effectively establish local control of the population unilaterally, or in support of local government and security forces. This focus at the neighborhood level helps to achieve control, because units that operate in the area where they live are able to establish better situational awareness and interpersonal ties with the community in which they operate. The extent to which units are able to successfully attain complete situational awareness and strong interpersonal ties to key community leaders at the local level is dependant upon three factors addressed earlier in this analysis. These three factors include a unit's cultural and linguistic expertise, as well as the unit's ability to help achieve consensus and apply coercive incentives to influence the population.

With respect to operating close to the population in urban terrain, the suicide bomber is a major threat that warrants special attention. Coalition and Iraqi security force bases and outposts are now well protected against these attacks. Inevitably, suicide bombers can easily attack soft targets and civilian

gathering places that lack the concrete barriers and security inherent to government or military places. Since local security forces and the Coalition cannot physically protect every government location and civilian gathering place, the requirement to establish and achieve intelligence dominance at the neighborhood level becomes more greatly apparent. In spite of this threat, units that effectively established control of the population at the neighborhood level did so from within the city.

#### **5. Reducing Support to Local Security Forces before they are Capable of Controlling and Protecting the Population Independently**

The post-conflict security environment in the three cities was handled differently by each respective unit. In Mosul, a large population center was identified as being important enough to warrant a reinforced brigade to stabilize it. Once in the city, the division headquarters and reinforced brigade were able to establish control over the city through an approach that worked closely with the local population and utilized precise application of the minimum force required. Due to the successful progress made during 2003, the city's complement of Coalition forces was reduced by one-third for 2004. By January of 2005, the city required an increase in Coalition and Iraqi security forces that exceeded the numbers operating there in 2003. This example highlights the need to avoid declaring victory too soon. In short, the initial victory was attained with the defeat of Saddam's Armed Forces. The transition to Iraqi sovereignty and control of its own territory is a process that takes time and is event driven.

In Ramadi and Samarra, the unit headquarters responsible for each city had additional priorities that focused the unit's attention away from these two cities. The unit responsible for Ramadi was focused on the vast stretches of western Anbar Province and the Syrian border. In Samarra, the unit responsible was focused on other cities deemed more important, as well as on the capture of national high value targets. These conflicting priorities forced each headquarters to assign sub-ordinate units that it could spare with economy of force missions to administer these two cities as effectively as possible. The negative results of this approach became apparent in the spring of 2004. The inability to successfully

achieve control in these cities was not a failure of the units that operated there. While they may have lacked a complete understanding of the how to control and protect the population within an urban setting, success was not likely even if they had possessed this understanding. It is necessary that the implementing force is equipped with adequate cultural and linguistic knowledge in order to adequately comprehend the task. Furthermore, units lacked adequate force to develop the interpersonal ties at the neighborhood level and partner with local security forces. Because of this, units were not able to reach enough of the local security force or population to make a difference.

The uncertainty inherent in post-conflict environments requires that additional force be on-hand to deal with unforeseen threats. The need for economy of force missions in Ramadi and Samarra demonstrates that they had inadequate forces to effectively administer population centers and partner with their respective local security forces. The force ratio in Mosul during 2003 was approximately 6-per-1000. In Ramadi during 2003, it was approximately 2-per-1000. In Samarra this same year it was approximately 2-per-1000, if one includes the battalion that was responsible for Samarra.<sup>216</sup> These ratios are significantly less than those utilized in other post-conflict environments. While Bosnia and Kosovo were supported with troop densities of over 20-per-1000, Iraq was supported with troop densities exemplified by these three cities.

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<sup>216</sup> The unit responsible for Samarra was located 30 kilometers outside the city. The only Coalition unit that lived in the city during 2003 was an SF ODA team.

### **C. CONCLUSION**

*“Control is the object beyond the battle and object beyond the war.”*

*- General Harold K. Johnson, Chief of Staff of the Army (1964-1968)*

This study concludes that counterinsurgency operations during OIF1, OIF2, and OIF3 did not persistently apply the locally appropriate approach to successfully control and protect the population. Based on case studies of Mosul, Ramadi, and Samarra from 2003 through 2005, the authors have identified successful and unsuccessful approaches used to gain control of and protect the population.

Units that conducted operations that focused on the population, gained immediate dominance at the neighborhood level, enabled a framework for local political expression, built trust and confidence in government at the neighborhood level, established Joint Coordination Centers, eliminated external support to insurgents, reorganized their intelligence gathering and fusion apparatus, and immediately built or enabled local security forces, generally had more success in controlling and protecting the population.

Units that inconsistently and excessively applied force, focused operations on killing and capturing insurgents, reduced support to local security forces before they were capable of controlling and protecting the population independently, attempted to gain intelligence through detain and release tactics, and conducted operations from consolidated Forward Operating Bases located outside of the city, generally had more difficulty in controlling and protecting the population.

Protection and control of the population within the rule of law is paramount to counterinsurgency operations. It is through this approach that the counterinsurgent can gain the information it needs to defeat the insurgency. By doing so, the people will be protected and willing to aid the government with the information needed to identify and influence insurgent groups.

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Rangel, Frank, Lieutenant Colonel, USA, October 26, 2005.

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Benesi, William, Staff Sergeant, USA, August 11, 2006.

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Chiu, Kwok, Captain, USA, August 23, 2006.

Cloutier, Marc, Major, USA, August 12, 2006.

Ferrara, Marcus, Captain, USA, June 4, 2006.

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Gervais, Pierre, Lieutenant Colonel, April 22, 2006.

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Kirk, Howard, Major, USA, September 24, 2006.

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