

INTEGRATED SECURITY SYSTEM: REQUIREMENT FOR A WELL REASONED TRIBAL POLICY

by
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The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of the United States Army, the Department of Defense or the United States government.

Abstract

The goal of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) is to develop a strategic security plan to create the conditions for a “safe and secure environment”. Crucial to success in shaping short-and-long term security initiatives is a greater understanding of Iraq’s predominately tribal culture.

Iraq’s cultural environment represents a challenge not easily overcome by western management techniques alone. Security initiatives in the rural areas must therefore reflect Iraqi cultural and historical traditions.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Glossary	iii
Chapter 1	5
Introduction.....	5
<i>Physical and Moral Centers of Gravity</i>	6
<i>Complex Social Systems</i>	7
<i>Cultural Differences</i>	8
Chapter 2.....	10
Centers of Gravity Analysis.....	10
<i>Coalition Provisional Authority</i>	10
<i>Shi'a</i>	11
<i>Kurds</i>	12
<i>Sunni</i>	14
<i>Tribes</i>	15
Chapter 3.....	19
CPA Strategic Security Plan	19
<i>Tribes</i>	19
<i>Iraqi Civil Defense Corps</i>	21
<i>Facilities Protection Service</i>	22
Chapter 4.....	25
Security Challenges	25
<i>Capital and Countryside</i>	25
Avoiding the Tribal Trap	28
<i>Intelligence</i>	28
<i>Segmentation</i>	29
<i>Tribal Identity</i>	31
Chapter 5.....	32
Tribal Outreach	32
<i>Tribal Office</i>	32
<i>Tribal Liaison Officers</i>	33
Chapter 6.....	35
Conclusion	35
Bibliography	37
Index	39
Appendix.....	41
Figures.....	42

Glossary

Facilities Protection Services: Organization of trained, armed, uniformed entities charged with providing security for ministry and governorate offices, government infrastructure, and fixed sites under the direction and control of governmental ministries and governorate administration.

Iraqi Civil Defense Corps: Established as a temporary institution, subject to a decision by an internationally recognized, representative Iraqi government. It is distinct from the Iraqi police and New Iraqi Army and composed of personnel that will compliment coalition operations to counter organized groups and individuals employing violence against the people of Iraq and their national infrastructure. It is authorized to perform the following task: patrolling urban and rural areas, conducting operations to search for and seize illegal weapons and other contraband; providing fixed site, check point, area, route and convoy security; providing crowd and riot control; disaster response services; search and rescue services; providing support to humanitarian missions and disaster recovery operations including transportation services; conducting joint patrols with Coalition Forces; and participating in other activities designed to build positive relationships between the Iraqi people and Coalition authorities including serving as community liaisons.

Shame and Honor: Cultural construct of whereby individuals seek to avoid humiliation and to acquire *Sharaf*, or honor.

Society: According to Dr. Richard Law of Washington State University, a society is any group of people living together in a group and constituting a single related, interdependent community. This word is frequently taken to include entire national communities; we might, for instance, comment upon some aspect of U.S. society. Society can also be used to refer to smaller groups of people, as when we refer to "rural societies" or "academic society," etc. Society is distinguished from culture in that society generally refers to the community of people while culture generally refers to systems of meaning.

Tribal Culture: According to Dr. Richard Law of Washington State University, culture refers to the cumulative deposits of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, and notions of time acquired by a group of people in the course of generations. The main facets of tribal culture include honor (shame and honor), hospitality, warrior hood and revenge (blood feud). Demonstrating ones courage in battle is the key to understanding what motivates young men to fight. Goal is to avoid humiliation and acquire honor.

Chapter 1

Introduction

One of the four principle objectives or “core foundations” in support of early restoration of full sovereignty to the Iraqi people is security. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) is developing a strategic security plan to create the conditions for a “secure and safe environment”.¹ Additionally, the Combined Joint Task Force – 7 (CJTF-7) has contributed a number of security initiatives in support of the CPA’s strategic vision. The challenge remains to integrate the “more detailed action plans” into a comprehensive security system. This study assesses three CPA security initiatives: the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC); a privatized security services industry; and recruiting local tribes for limited internal security operations.² This study draws on the concepts of centers of gravity and complexity to assess the impact and potential consequences of coalition initiatives. Finally, it highlights cultural difference between the coalition and the Iraqi population and recommends shaping short-term security solutions in the rural areas within a tribal cultural context.

¹ Coalition Provisional Authority: Achieving the Vision to Restore Full Sovereignty to the Iraqi People, Coalition Provisional Authority, Baghdad, Iraq dated 21 July 2003, at <http://10.10.4.10/ocpa>.

² Coalition Provisional Authority, 3 September 2003, “Establishment of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps” and Coalition Provisional Authority, August 2003, “Establishment of the Facilities Protection Service”, draft v.1.

Physical and Moral Centers of Gravity

A center of gravity may be moral or physical. They are dynamic, positive, active agents. Physical centers of gravity tend to be easy to visualize – religious organizations, political parties, militias or military units. They are instruments that can resist an opponent. Moral centers of gravity are intangible, and therefore less easily recognized. Yet it is essential to understand moral centers of gravity for these are likely to be the most important at the strategic level.³

Centers of gravity are not characteristics, capabilities, or locations. They are dynamic and powerful physical or moral agents of action or influence that possess certain attributes and capabilities, and may benefit from a given location. A center of gravity is a system dependent upon its constituent attributes. And no center of gravity exists in isolation from its supporting attributes. Actions taken to influence a center of gravity require a specific lag time to achieve the desired effect. Sever a mutual dependency and you create the condition for system failure and a re-forming of patterns of connections with new properties and attributes emerging in its stead.^{4 5}

Centers of gravity are shaped by the relationship between competitors. Competitors, in turn, develop mutual dependencies. Centers of gravity become and remain “active agents” once two rivals are engaged in a contest

³ Strange, Joe and Richard Iron, “Understanding Centers of Gravity and Critical Vulnerabilities, Part 1: What Clausewitz (Really) Meant by Center of Gravity” at <http://www.maxwell.af.mil/an/awc/awcgate/awc-thry.htm#strategymodels>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Wilhelm, Karen S, “An Examination of the Applicability of Complex Systems Theory to Policy Making”, National War College, Course 5603: The National Security Process, December 14, 1998.

of physical or moral force until the contest is over. Cohesion, unity, and political interests themselves are not centers of gravity. They are instead factors that determine which of the rivals' attributes, on each side, will function as "the" or "a" center of gravity. Moral centers of gravity, the product of cultural influences, function as active agents and influence or control physical centers of power.⁶ A center of gravity is only relevant in relation to an opponent.

Complex Social Systems

The "real world" exhibits significant non-linearity while leaders and diplomats often respond to real world challenges with a linear mindset.⁷ Complex social systems are open to outside influences with ensuing behavior difficult to predict such as the hiring of a local clan by one of the CJTF -7 major subordinate commands (MSC) to provide limited security resulting in a clash of arms between two rival clans.⁸ The seemingly minor act of hiring a local clan for limited security caused a much larger effect. Introduction of coalition forces into the tribal balance of power equation upset existing socio-political patterns and encouraged the emergence of new attributes in the environment. These new attributes responded to changes in the environment. Subsequently, the environment itself changed in response

⁶ Strange, Joe, and Richard Iron, "*Understanding Centers of Gravity and Critical Vulnerabilities, Part I: What Clausewitz Meant by Center of Gravity*", pages 9-10. www.maxwell.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/usmc/cog1.doc

⁷ Wilhelm, Karen S, "*An Examination of the Applicability of Complex Systems Theory to Policy Making*", National War College, Course 5603: The National Security Process, December 14, 1998.

⁸ The local ground commander's response to the news of an inter-tribal flare up that "they were fighting before we got here and they will be fighting when we are gone", neglects the effect of hiring one tribe over another in upsetting the delicate tribal balance in the area.

to changes in the social system. The relationship or connections between parts of a complex system are just as important as the individual parts themselves. There is in fact no meaning without connections. The connections determine context, and context defines the system.⁹

Cultural Differences

Understanding and capitalizing on cultural differences between the coalition and Iraqis is crucial when formulating appropriate short, medium, and long-term solutions. Culture refers to the cumulative deposits of experience, values, knowledge, religious beliefs and notions of time acquired by a group of people in the course of generations. The danger of disregarding culture as a determinant factor in the Iraqi Governing Council's (IGC) ability to sustain CPA and CJTF-7 initiatives is the difference between success and failure of its mission. If CPA and CJTF-7 initiatives run counter to local values and beliefs the GC will be hard pressed to support western paths to sovereignty. Additionally, failure to take cultural differences into account will lead to strictly western technological, organizational, and managerial solutions to what in essence are cultural challenges. The greatest danger may be found when those working in the CPA begin to feel more comfortable dealing with similarly educated Iraqis. Dealing strictly with similarly educated Iraqis can foster and reinforce the mistaken belief that the Iraqi people as a matter of course will accept the coalition's good faith efforts of developing alternative security concepts based on western cultural norms. Finally, differing cultural world-views play a crucial role when considering the impact of expanding

⁹ Robert Jervis identifies four key components of complex systems; results cannot be predicted from separate actions, strategies depend on the strategies of others; behavior changes the environment, and circular effects. Circular effects are the results of actors responding to a new environment their actions have created that often change themselves. "*Complexity, Global Politics, and National Security*", CCRP, June 1997, pages 52-62.

the ICDC, introducing a privatized security services industry or hiring tribal levees for internal security.

Chapter 2

Centers of Gravity Analysis

Coalition Provisional Authority

The Coalition's moral and physical center of gravity is the CPA and Coalition military forces. By virtue of defeating the Iraqi military and removing the Saddam regime the CPA is the legal "sovereign power in Iraq" with the Governing Council (GC) of the interim administration representing the "voice of the Iraqi people". The Ministry of Interior, National Security and Defense, and CJTF-7 are key agents of moral and physical change in terms of establishing a comprehensive security system (*see Figure 1*).

Center of Gravity

CPA is legal sovereign power
In Iraq.

Governing Council (GC) voice
of Iraqi people to the CPA

National Security and Defense
CJTF-7

Critical Capabilities (CC)

Develop integrated strategic
plan that defines roles, functions,
and missions of Iraqi Civil Defense
Corps (ICDC), privatized security
services industry, and tribes.

Articulate and establish policies
for organizations providing security.

Critical Requirements (CR)

Committed support of GC,
urban and rural population.

Excellent understanding of Iraqi
beliefs, values, religion, and
attitudes.

Excellent intelligence on terror
groups, tribal organizations,
kinship ties, personalities,

Critical Vulnerabilities (CV)

Uncoordinated planning effort, resulting
in conflicting security roles, functions,
and missions, i.e., ICDC versus tribal
security roles.

Reemergence/increase in intra-Iraqi
rivalries.

Increase in insurgency, warlordism, and
banditry.

and intentions.

Strategic End state: Roles and accountabilities of organizations providing security clearly defined within a legal framework.

Figure 1 - CPA Center of Gravity Analysis

Shi'a

One of the Coalition's greatest weaknesses is a tendency to classify Iraqi citizens based on strictly cultural, ethnic, and religious differences. The "Shi'a", the "Sunni", the "Kurds" are not so easily classified. A closer look at two Shi'a religious movements reveals that it is family ties that bind religious-political movements and are a source of opposition when they unravel (*see Figure 2*). In this situation, a struggle for leadership of the Shiite Islamic movement is in progress between the al-Hakim and the al-Sadr, two of Iraq's prominent clerical families.¹⁰

Center of Gravity (CG)

Traditional clerical establishment based in Najaf.

Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). Formerly based in Iraq. Al-Hakim family

Moqtada al-Sadr. Radical and populist movement, Al-Sadr family.

Critical Capabilities (CC)

Claims of legitimacy. Weakness of secular organizations.

Network of charities, schools and mosques.

13 of 25 Governing Council (GC) members are Shia.

Critical Requirements (CR)

Establish sectarian and ethnic affiliation as organizing principle of Iraqi politics. Then exploit

Critical Vulnerabilities (CV)

Competition between traditional clerical establishment, SCIRI, and Moqtada al-Sadr (kinship rivalry).

¹⁰ "Iraq's Shiites Under Occupation", International Crisis Group Middle East Briefing, 9 September 2003, page 12.

to increase political power.

Lobby for right to legitimize militias Secular urban/rural Shiites.

to protect leaders and religious sites.

Socially, economically, and politically diverse (commercial class, bureaucratized middle class, large working class and peasants).

Strategic End state: Increased power for locally based Shi'a groups.

Figure 2 - Shi'a Center of Gravity Analysis

Kurds

Iraqi Kurdistan is as complex as Arab Iraq, and its clan system is if anything as intricate. While tribalism has declined in importance as a principle of social organization, the importance of kin-based relationships as a means of social and political organization continues to prevail in both urban and rural areas. The Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) fulfill the political roles formerly the preserve of the tribe (*see Figure 3*). The relationship between the parties and Kurdish tribes, and the population in general is mediated via a complex network of patronage through which clan and tribal leaders are co-opted into each party's sphere of influence. In this way, the parties act in the same way as tribal confederations. In essence the Kurdish national struggle has been one not only between Kurds and non-Kurdish rulers, but also between rural chiefs defending traditional prerogatives and urban intellectuals demanding social change.

By 1994 the two camps confronted each other along geographic, linguistic, and social lines. The areas controlled by the PUK, representatives of the urban elite, included the cities of Erbil, Sulaimaniyah, and south to

Khanaqin in the predominately Sorani-speaking areas east of the Greater Zab River. The KDP ruled along the Turkish border in the Kurmanji-speaking, largely rural area to the north and west of the Greater Zab. Both areas maintain relatively autonomous governments; possess their own institutions and education systems based on their own particular dialect. As late as 1996, inter-tribal fighting, for outright control of the Kurdish enclave and to counter challenges to tribal interests and authority in the power struggle between the PUK and KDP, was routine.¹¹ The power struggle between the two “tribal confederations” seems dormant at present awaiting Coalition decisions for the future of Iraq. Many Kurdish clan leaders, along with most of the population in general, view themselves as Kurdish Iraqis and, with only a weakly articulated nationalistic position, tend to be ambivalent with regards to Kurdish self-determination. For these clan chiefs, independent statehood is seen less important as tribal autonomy, particularly the ability to control trade routes passing through their areas. While statehood by stealth seems more and more a reality, as far as the PUK and KDP are concerned, a federal Iraq that provides the parties with the opportunity to retain control over their respective territories would probably come close to their ideal.

Center of Gravity (CG)

Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP).
Predominantly Kurmanji-speaking.
Controls area north and west
of Greater Zab.

Critical Capabilities (CC)

Claims of legitimacy. Support from and
supportive of Coalition forces and Rural.
initiatives (ICDC).

¹¹ Mackey, Sandra, *“The Reckoning: Iraq and the Legacy of Saddam Hussein”*, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2002, pages 309-312.

<p>Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). Autonomous governments, institutions Predominantly Sorani-speaking. Includes cities of Erbil, Sulaimaniyah, and south to Khanaqin. Controls areas east of Greater Zab River.</p>	<p>and education systems based on own particular dialects.</p> <p>5 of 25 Governing Council (GC) members are Kurds.</p>
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Critical Requirements (CR)

Critical Vulnerabilities (CV)

Continued sponsorship by Coalition.

Competition between tribal confederations
(kinship rivalry).

Tribal autonomy/ability to control
trade routes transiting tribal areas.

Secular urban (PUK)/rural Kurds (KDP).

Access to Governing Council/
central government patronage
system.

Strategic End state: Autonomous Kurdistan.

Figure 3 - Kurd Center of Gravity Analysis

Sunni

The biggest losers in terms of power sharing in the post-Saddam era have been the Sunnis. Their traditional power has been drastically reduced. Only five Sunnis retain a seat in the IGC. Access to the Saddam-regime patronage system by loyal Sunnis is a thing of the past (*see Figure 4*).

When the British arrived in Mesopotamia, Sunnis, the privileged class under Ottoman rule, were such an intricate part of Iraq's administrative structure that removal from the administrative apparatus meant endangering existing economic, political, and social relationships. In 1919, British strategy to preserve stability was quite simply to attract support from traditional leadership without upsetting the status quo in the countryside. As a result, minority Sunnis remained politically dominant, profited from greater social mobility, and acquired a vested interest in the new, emerging Iraqi state. As

for the countryside, the British permitted traditional tribal organization, values, attitudes, and customs to continue.

Center of Gravity (CG)

Elite Sunni families.

Tribes: Al Bu Nasir, Jubbur, Shammar Confederation, Dulaim.

Insurgent groups.

Critical Capabilities (CC)

Socially, economically, and politically diverse (commercial class, bureaucratized middle class, working class, and peasants).

5 of 25 Governing Council (GC) members are Sunnis.

Tribal militias. Insurgent forces.

Critical Requirements (CR)

Access to Governing Council/ central government patronage system.

Strategic End state: Retain access to levers of power.

Critical Vulnerabilities (CV)

Secular urban/rural Sunnis.

Availability of funds.

Figure 4 - Sunni Center of Gravity Analysis

Tribes

The Ottomans had gone far to fragment the great tribal confederations and to restrain the dominant sheiks. Ottoman tribal policy built alliances with groups of subjects. Within the Ottoman system, this collection of groups could be a village, a tribe, a city district or economic units such as trades or guilds. A liaison, usually a person exercising moral authority or other form of legitimacy within his own community, represented each group. His role was to voice the complaints or grievances to Ottoman officials or ensure that the group complied with government directives.¹² The British reversed this

¹² Mackey, Sandra. *“The Reckoning: Iraq and the Legacy of Saddam Hussein”*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2002, page 93

policy. British policy chose instead to enforce order by reestablishing the power of tribal leaders through payoffs and arms distributed by the central government. By conferring special rights upon the tribal population and maintaining tribal customs and practices that were incompatible with nation building. No “set of satisfactory mechanisms were institutionalized by which (their) various interests and demands of the country’s elites could either be reconciled with one another or contained within some overall factional framework of accepted political practice”.¹³ The rural communities remained tribal, loyal to their sheiks and suspicious of any authority outside the kinship group. As a result singular communal identities formed the foundation of the political system preventing serious efforts to meld the various inhabitants of Iraq into a viable “nation – state”.

At least three-quarters of the Iraqi population are members of one of the nation’s 150 tribes.¹⁴ Family ties and a strict honor code bind them more than ethnic background, religion, or professional association. Most large tribes have a hierarchical structure, with a leading lineage, a number of commoner clans/lineages, client lineages and subject non-tribal peasantry. Some of these tribes explicitly recognize the heterogeneity of their component parts and are called confederacies. Inter-tribal conflicts and alliances profoundly impact on tribal structure. The degree of complexity and internal stratification of a given tribe depends primarily on two external factors: the availability of resources and the extent of state interference in internal affairs. Private justice is meted out through a network in which

¹³ Ibid., pages 117-118

¹⁴ Gain, Stephen, J “*Stronghold Can Backfire: Iraqi Tribes are Key Source of Loyalty, Rebellion.*” Wall Street Journal, May 23, 2000.

political and/or religious leaders determine the outcome of feuds between clans and conflict between individuals.

Although there is a separation between groups and individuals, individuals have always moved economically, politically, and sometimes socially back and forth across communal lines. A single tribe can claim both Sunnis and Shi'a members. Confessional groups intermarry. Nonetheless, these groups remain a collection of separate identities that have always challenged the integrity of the Iraqi state. However much Sunni and Shi'a, Arab and Kurd, Muslim and Christian have sat in councils of government, they have often placed their interests as individuals within families and communal groups above the interest of the state (*see Figure 5*).

Center of Gravity (CG)

Cultural construct of Shame and Honor.

Three-quarters of Iraq members of one of nation's 150 tribes.

Critical Capabilities (CC)

Bound by family ties, strict honor code. Primary source of power outside Baghdad (alternative system of power/shadow government/economy).

Positioned to negotiate power-sharing agreements.

Tribal militias.

Critical Requirements (CR)

Access to Governing Council/central government patronage system.

Manpower. The stronger the tribe and/or confederation, the greater influence over local government (shadow government).

Critical Vulnerabilities (CV)

Recognition of sheik by the state.

Different allegiances (political, personal, religious, professional).

Inter-tribal/kinship conflicts.

Susceptibility to manipulation based on Shame/Honor Construct

Strategic End state: Increased power for tribal groups/confederations.

Figure 5 - Tribe Center of Gravity Analysis

Chapter 3

CPA Strategic Security Plan

The CPA's strategic security plan seeks to create the conditions for a "secure and safe environment" with the "transfer of security responsibilities to local military and police forces as soon as practicable". Transfer of security responsibilities to Iraqi control is dependent upon the successful development and training of Iraqi security forces comprising the New Iraqi Army (NIA)ICDC, and police force. The introduction of a privatized security services industry and the hiring of tribal militias are intended as complimentary efforts in achieving this vision. Success depends on successfully linking a national security and civilian oversight mechanism to a clearly defined legal framework. The CPA intends to redefine patterns of socio-political associations by introducing western concepts of governance and security. While Coalition initiatives will influence the governance of Iraq, the CPA should not deceive itself into thinking that all initiatives will bear fruit as planned. These concepts will be shaped by the Iraqi people to fit existing cultural norms. An integrated security system must account for Iraqi culture during the restructuring phase or be caught off guard by unintended consequences. The greatest challenge faced by the coalition is not that it will be caught off guard but that no integrated security strategy presently exists.

Tribes

Lacking integration, supporting efforts at odds with the intended objective. While directed to "defeat internal armed attacks" and to "undermine support for paramilitaries", select Coalition forces are actively seeking the support of

tribes for limited security operations. Although intended as a short-term solution to safeguard vital infrastructure, recruitment and payment of select tribal militia encourages paramilitary activities. The lack of tribal subject matter expertise at the maneuver forces level, especially when involved in inter-tribal politics does not bode well for the future. Contracting one sheik to provide security for a stretch of infrastructure has long-term implications. The role of the sheik is to constitute a bridge between the tribe and the outside world, in which other tribes and the state are the most important actors. In this situation, the recognition of a sheik by the state, or in this case, coalition forces, may inadvertently empower his tribe in any future power-sharing negotiation with the IGC.¹⁵

An example of the coalition forces lack of understanding of inter-tribal politics occurred when a maneuver forces commander hired a clan to provide security for a vital stretch of infrastructure. Within days, clashes were reported between local inhabitants in the area. Upon closer investigation it was learned that a rival clan had taken exception to having security patrols conducted on its tribal lands by a rival and too wished to be considered for a security role. The response of a military representative that “they (clans) were fighting before we got here, and they will be fighting after we are gone”, does not address the depth of cultural knowledge, negotiating acumen, and political skill required to ensure long-term success of security initiatives in support of strategic security objectives outside the confines of the capital.

¹⁵ Bruinessen, Martin van, *Kurds, states, and tribes*”, Utrecht University, <http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Kurds.%20states>, August 16, 2003, page 7

Iraqi Civil Defense Corps

The Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) is a CJTF-7 initiative to support the CPA core function of establishing a safe and secure environment in Iraq.¹⁶ The Corps is intended to assist coalition forces in stabilizing Iraq. The battalions will be recruited and trained to operate predominantly in their home areas. Once trained, these battalions are expected to act as a force multiplier, and to reduce the footprint of coalition forces in the area. Upon completion of individual training, ICDC soldiers will initially augment coalition forces. ICDC units are formed at the discretion of coalition commanders and in time are expected to execute independent rifle team, squad, platoon and company level security missions. Battalion level operations are not anticipated in the first year. The long-term goal is to establish 18 ICDC rifle battalion equivalents. CJTF-7 intends for subordinate units to include ICDC elements in coalition led security operations as soon as recruits have completed individual training. The near term goal is for ICDC units to conduct independent security operations up to platoon level. The short-term (six months) goal is for ICDC units to conduct independent security operations up to company level under Coalition control. An ICDC battalion (approximately 600 strong) may be assigned to each of the 18 governorates, or integrated into existing police or border enforcement agencies. Implementation will have to wait until the new Iraqi government determines the future disposition of the ICDC. By far the most work is still required in establishing jurisdiction and statutory control.

¹⁶ Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 28: Establishment of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, CPA/ORD/3 September 28, 2003

CPA and CJTF-7 are similarly challenged when it comes to defining the long-term role, function and mission of the ICDC. Although defined as a “security and emergency services agency” and “composed of Iraqis who will compliment operations conducted by coalition military forces”, as of yet no clear blueprint to integrate this organization into a comprehensive Iraqi security system exists. If the decision is made not to incorporate the ICDC into existing police or border enforcement agencies a new danger may emerge. In a country beset by regional rivalries and antagonism between powerful families of conflicting kinship, political, religious, and professional allegiances, remnants of this organization could form the basis of tribal militias after demobilization by coalition forces. Future loyalty of ICDC units to an Iraqi government after the departure of coalition forces is an unknown. Competition between urban and rural elites, as well as tribal rivalries are never far from the surface. Individuals will apply available tools within the parameters of their practical and intellectual traditions. The ICDC may well provide a ready resource of well-trained personnel for rivals ready to challenge the state or settle political scores after demobilization by the new Iraqi government.

Facilities Protection Service

Identifying the need to “preserve the institutions and facilities of the government ministries of Iraq”, and recognizing the requirement for “a body of trained and appropriately equipped personnel... to protect (the) governmental installations in Iraq”, the CPA published order 27 establishing the Facilities Protection Service (FPS).¹⁷ The FPS concept, consisting of

¹⁷ Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 27: Establishment of the Facilities Protection Service, CPA/ORD/7 September 28, 2003

“employees of private security firms”, encourages the transition from government security to private security services providers for “ministry or governorate through contracts provided such private security firms and employees are licensed and authorized by the Ministry of Interior....”. The introduction of a western style commercial security industry, while in keeping with the CPA’s goal of transforming the economy from a highly protected and controlled command economy to a free market system, may well create new security challenges in the long term. Iraq’s cultural environment represents a challenge not easily overcome by administrative and management techniques alone. An appropriate regulatory apparatus must reflect cultural, historical, and socio-economic conditions. Appropriate legislation, education, and certification must precede the establishment of a security services industry based on western organizational concepts and western ethical business practices. Individuals may attempt to exploit the industry for political purposes, especially those from elite families that historically have used the military as a means to political power. An under supervised security services industry could lead to the emergence of alternative centers of power based on well-trained and “legal” para-military capabilities.¹⁸

The immediate challenge remains to integrate the “more detailed action plans” into a comprehensive strategic security system. This comprehensive strategic security system will be an amalgamation of both western and Iraqi cultural influences since the coalition will to seek to introduce western values along with managerial techniques. The Iraqi values system will limit policy options in the short term. Each one of the separate action plans must

¹⁸ McCallister, William, S “*Iraqi Security Services Industry*”, August 29, 2003

therefore be viewed as a mutually dependent system with its own moral and physical centers of gravity and judged by its potential to influence the greater Iraqi social system.

Chapter 4

Security Challenges

Capital and Countryside

The capital of any state has long been recognized as the center of not only the administration of the state but also of a nation's social, professional, and political activity. The CPA's preoccupation with the center must not neglect the important question of who controls the landscape beyond the confines of the capital. The question of how much influence the central government will exert has yet to be determined. One thing is certain; government at the local level will continue to operate at its own rhythm. What occurs in the periphery has as much influence on the center as acts of the central government has on the periphery. Thus the study of the center has to be complemented by the study of rural history. The rural elites will no doubt continue to administer justice, mediate quarrels, maintain public order, administer relief, guide public opinion, control markets and smuggling, and access to the patronage system. Unity should never be mistaken for uniformity.

The CPA's guidance that no tribe will be paid or tribal leader dealt with exclusively is a consequence of politics and the role of fundamental cultural orientations in defining them. Since the CPA is unable to accommodate the degree of equality required in a tribal – coalition relationship, accommodations with select tribal communities may be practiced as a temporary tactic, albeit within well-defined parameters, but cannot legitimately be raised to the level of strategy without violating western political norms. This course of action has one key drawback. By neglecting

the tribal leadership in the rural area, the Coalition will be unable to project power into the countryside and exploit as a base for its own attempts to exert influence and pressure. By abandoning the tribal leadership, the coalition will not only lose access, but jeopardize its own security as well. Overt patronage and access to power strengthens political cohesion in this part of the world. But this is not the western way. While a punitive expedition may be appealing both militarily and politically in the short term, regular maintenance of subsidies is less so.

Standard tribal strategy, in terms of negotiating with the central government, is to use or threaten the use of force to win concessions. This means that to the extent that the central government is able and willing to meet tribal needs, the threat of violence may be averted, or at least restricted in scale. The measures necessary to carry out such successful management on the government side are often at odds with modern western cultural and political norms, and as a result difficult to sustain. If the many attacks against existing power and oil infrastructure are reevaluated in tribal terms, these actions may be attributable to tribal groups demanding their share of the profits or imposing a “security tax”. Profit sharing or imposition of a security tax is defined as payment for providing infrastructure security or extortion by deliberate acts of sabotage or theft of property the CPA values.

Fighting tribal groupings on their own terrain is difficult. Size, capabilities, actionable intelligence, and cultural understanding limit coalition forces, especially when confronting a multi-faceted threat to stability. Internal power struggles, a limited insurgency, skirmishes with foreign Islamic extremists, and homegrown banditry continue to challenge coalition forces and the CPA. It is extremely difficult to protect a long perimeter in the face

of a mobile foe. Realistically, one must ask whether there are ways of managing the tribal leadership other than through exclusion. Are there tribal needs that the government can use as a source of leverage? Can the CPA opt for a mixture of warfare, diplomatic maneuvering and economic suasion? What approaches can be employed to draw tribal societies into an emerging security system? Can the coalition profit, by employing economic, diplomatic, and military means to embrace select tribal leadership to reduce tensions, assist in defeating threats in key geographic areas and or provide limited security for key infrastructure? Iraqi history has shown that there is a dialectical relationship between the authority of the state and the power of the tribal elites. That is, when the state was powerful, it would tend toward direct rule by circumventing, or even eliminating, the tribal elites. When the state was vulnerable to external aggression and internal strife, the state, through the power of the tribal elites, and in spite of the future threat that they could pose to its own authority, would rule indirectly through them. Iraq's history provides no democratic blueprint to build upon. It will have to discover for itself some balance between the cosmopolitan urban elite and the inward looking culture of the countryside. The future Iraq will be the product of an on-going process of state and national definition. The first is a product of politics, the second of culture. In the short term, if engaging tribal groupings is required to enhance internal security, developing an appropriate tribal policy as part of a greater security system is crucial. Using tribes for internal security must be based on a thorough understanding of tribal affairs. This is especially important since the majority of ICDC personnel are locally recruited and a privatized security services industry will probably find its most ardent supporters in the countryside.

Avoiding the Tribal Trap

Coalition forces will be challenged in collecting tribal intelligence without the cooperation of at least some persons who hold a form of traditional authority. Coalition attempts to by-pass traditional authorities and deal with the local population directly will fail. “Reliable” sheik may assist us in arresting looters, smugglers, terrorists, former regime loyalists, who in many cases also happen to be tribal rivals. By assisting the coalition, the “friendly” sheik will advance his tribe’s interests while harming those of his rival. Many of the tribes will have sheiks that are willing to cooperate with the coalition and the IGC but there will always be one or more rivals, usually close relatives that are “rebellious”. This “rebellion” will more often than not be provoked by disagreement within a leading family of the tribe (or a conflict with a neighboring tribe) rather than by disaffection with the coalition or IGC. This apparent split between tribes or their leading families into pro-and anti-government factions may not always reflect a serious conflict dividing the family, however. In some cases it will be the consequence of a deliberate decision not to put all of one’s eggs into one basket – a time honored strategy of elite families everywhere.¹⁹ Loyalties will follow prevailing winds of power and interest. Almost invariably we will be drawn into the power politics of tribal society with its perpetual conflicts and rivalries without a clear appreciation of the rules and rituals.

Intelligence

In order to avoid the tribal trap an intimate understanding of the indigenous population within an operational area is essential. Success of incorporating

¹⁹ Bruinessen, Martin van, *Kurds, states, and tribes*”, Utrecht University, <http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Kurds.%20states>, August 16, 2003, page 9

tribal groupings into a comprehensive security system depends on understanding beforehand the intricacies of tribal diplomacy. Prior to approaching a given tribe, coalition forces must complete a detailed tribal study. After making contact with a select tribe, detachments continue to add to this background knowledge by a thorough and continuous assessment of the area, personalities, kinship ties, and individual leader and tribal ambitions. Thus armed with intelligence acquired before and after contact, detachments are better able to integrate tribal groupings in an operational area into a coordinated and effective force capable of supporting theater politico-military objectives.

An initial analysis of tribal politics should draw a clear distinction between a tribe's strategy vis-à-vis the central government and a tribe's internal social dynamic. Once the differences are identified and understood, coalition forces can link internal tribal societal dynamics and its political and martial expression, to exploit internal factors shaping tribal strategy. Three crucial components of a tribe's internal dynamics are the segmentary nature of tribes, aspects of tribal identity, and a tribe's moral center of gravity.

Segmentation

One of the most important features of Iraqi tribes is their segmentary nature. Segmentation refers to the hierarchical nature of tribal kinship structures, and describes the way in which the various sub-components of a tribe coalesce to form higher-level entities when opposed to other entities of the same order. This principle applies throughout the tribe, from lowest level in kinship structure, the extended family, to the highest level, the confederation.

In *Figure 6* groups H and I would act together as group D, if confronted by group E. Similarly, in the case of dispute with C, both D and E would engage in collective action as B. Segmentation means that groups which may be potentially hostile toward one another, or even involved in open conflict, are able to come together when confronted by an external threat which endangers them both. By implication, segmentation is also a means through which tribal militias may be rapidly mobilized to confront a common enemy. Historical alliances and enmities exist between all Iraqi tribes, some more enduring than others and resurface from time-to-time in violent inter-and intra-tribal conflict. As one of the organizing principles for these inter-and intra-tribal disputes, segmentation entails an important military function. In case of a tribe holding a neutral attitude, the principle may be potentially exploited to generate support for coalition security objectives.

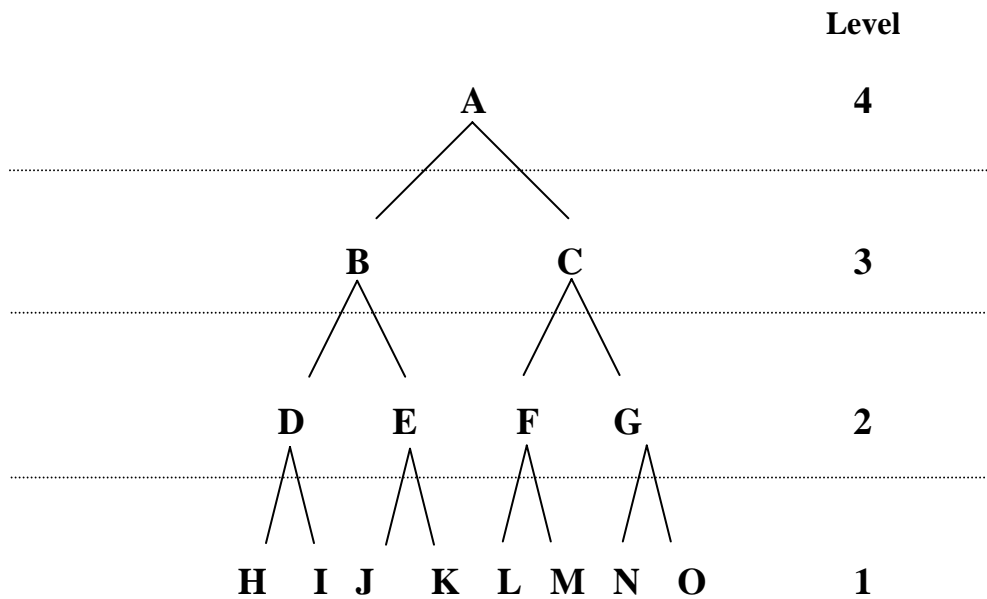


Figure 6 - Tribal Segmentation

Tribal Identity

The fundamental aspect of tribal identity is extended kinship. It must be noted that tribes are more than just kin-based groupings. An individual's stated attachment to a particular genealogical heritage is, at the tribal level, partly a political act, since tribal genealogies, if they "exist" at all are usually based on fictive kinship ties. In claiming a particular ancestry, people necessarily align themselves with a given political charter and strategy, which cannot be glossed over simply as kinship. Tribes exist in a perpetual state of flux, as associations and alliances shift and personnel move across permeable boundaries. In this sense, tribal identity is not a given; it also incorporates an invented quality that provides a context for political and social action. The Saddam regimes exploitation of its own "tribal" identity represents one of the most obvious manifestations of this phenomenon. The genealogical heritage principle may be exploited by creating a distinctly coalition "tribal" identify tracing a lineage to the patriarch Abraham, spiritual progenitor of Islam and Christianity.

Chapter 5

Tribal Outreach

Tribal Office

The value added of establishing an office to research, analyze and assess the political aspects of tribal policy is clear. The office would comprise specially recruited military and civilian personnel with the desire to understand and exploit internal tribal dynamics shaping tribal strategy. The group would draw insights from a variety of disciplines such as the study of genealogy (both fictive and real), tribal myths, reconciliation rituals, Iraqi literature and folklore to establish cultural informational parity with the tribes to gain insight into the internal dynamics of tribal politics. Know yourself and your target audience is surely applicable in this case.

Tribe based warfare is more political than military in nature. It is certainly military in the tactical sense, but more so political since tribal warfare generally stems from a local power struggle. Tribes fighting for local political gains may assist the coalition to achieve its military objectives. Tribal leaders with a common enemy may dissipate their efforts by fighting each other. The politically astute leader will withhold his support until he extracts promises of political significance from his sponsor or vice versa. Armed with knowledge that a tribal office would provide, coalition commanders and the CPA will be able to not only develop local security strategies, but also political initiatives, by exploiting insights into the internal dynamics shaping tribal choices.

Tribal Liaison Officers

Tribal liaison officers in the countryside augment the capabilities of the tribal office and support the local commander. Proper employment of tribal liaison officers develops a predictive analysis capability, supports the local commander's security operations by engaging the civil population located in an area of operation and supports the intelligence collection and analysis process. It enhances the CPA and Coalition Commander's development of situational awareness and understanding and supports the application of effective security measures in the execution of assigned civil and military initiatives.

Tribal liaison officers must think in terms of a "protracted popular struggle" when deployed in their respective area. A successful protracted popular struggle depends on establishing contact with the local population. Success is defined by the insurgents' ability to successfully organize and effectively implement planned programs. The tribal liaison officer serves in a similar capacity as the insurgent, except in this case he represents the CPA in the rebuilding effort.

Engaging the tribe is not just simply a business arrangement but a relationship. This relationship is based on a concept of "brothering" between coalition forces and tribal groupings. The development of a mutually beneficial relationship with corresponding obligations requires nurturing. To be effective, one must become a subject matter expert in all things pertaining to the tribe. This means that liaison officers must get to know the families,

friends and enemies. He must understand the rituals, myths, legends, lineage, and family politics of the tribes in his area.

The objective of the tribal liaison officer is to co-opt the local population by establishing a relationship with the tribal leadership through daily contact and exchange of information. Developing an appropriate relationship requires patience and commitment and is best described as an on-going conversation. Patronage is an important part of this relationship and once entered into requires the utmost care in maintaining it. Negotiating with tribes is not simply a matter of drawing up a contract, or codifying the procedures. It is an investment in the man and his kinship group.

If successful, the tribal liaison officer will establish the civil population, and its political and social structures as listening posts (LP) and observation posts (OP) deep inside “contested” territory. This creates depth in time and space for appropriate reaction to physical (foreign military operatives, former regime loyalists) and informational (hostile propaganda, rumors) threats. Additionally, it shapes the environment so that CPA and coalition initiatives are at least given a fair hearing by the rural leadership and provides an opportunity for the rural population to participate in the decisions determining the future of Iraq.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Chief among those policies to be settled upon by the political and military leadership is whether a tribal policy is required. In the final analysis, a rational tribal policy is needed for the following reason: tribal politics remains the basis for all social and political discussion in Iraq and must by default be considered in any future political solution. A well reasoned tribal policy is the key component in integrating the “more detailed action plans” since long-term security solutions must be made to operate within a tribal cultural context.

The crucial question remains how to exploit the position of tribes without compromising the values we are attempting to inculcate into in a post-Saddam era Iraq? Will coalition efforts impart a new set of Iraqi national values or reinforce parochial values. In time tribal organizations may acquire a new function in a multi – party democracy. Since it is imperative for the competing political parties to have strong grass roots representation, party candidates may be either tribal elders themselves or individuals put forward by tribal elders as their representatives. Affiliation with a political party will prove highly profitable for the tribes for a number of reasons. When their party is in power, it provides the possibility to reward its loyal supporters in various ways, most conspicuously in the form of infra-structural investments and government contracts. Elected deputies, even for opposition parties, remain the best advocates for local interests. In fact, a large share of

deputies' time is spent in receiving people from their constituencies who request various services. The political parties themselves may therefore find many tribal elders quite eager to join them, irrespective of their political programs. Rival tribes may join different parties. Competition between the political parties thus will be a reflection of tribal conflicts and rivalries. Elections become the occasion for the redistribution of important resources (in the form of government patronage) at the provincial and local levels. The electoral process thus will come to shape important aspects of the mode of operations of tribes. Through their insertion into the political process, tribal leaders will gain control of additional resources that will consolidate or strengthen their positions within their own tribal environment. Electoral politics may reinvigorate tribal society, and prove to be highly compatible with formal modern politics.²⁰

²⁰ Ibid., page 18

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Index

- A**
Al Sadr, 11
Al-Hakim, 11
- B**
British, 13, 14, 15
- C**
Center of Gravity, 6, 10
CJTF -7, 8, 10, 20, 21
CJTF-7, 7. *See* Combined Joint Task Force -7
Coalition, 32
Coalition Provisional Authority, 5
Combined Joint Task Force, 5
CPA, 8, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 31, 32.
See Coalition Provisional Authority
- F**
Facilities Protection Service, 21
FPS. *See* Facilities Protection Service
- H**
Honor Code, 15
- I**
ICDC, 8, 18. *See* Iraqi Civil Defense Corps. *See* Iraqi Civil Defense Corps
See Iraqi Civil Defense Corps
ICG, 19
IGC, 13. *See* Iraqi Governing Council
Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, 5, 20
Iraqi Governing Council, 8
Iraqi Kurdistan, 12
- K**
KDP. *See* Kurdish Democratic Party
- Kurdish Democratic Party, 12
Kurds, 11
- M**
Major Subordinate Command, 7
Ministry of Interior, 10, 22
MSC. *See* Major Subordinate Command
- N**
National Security and Defense, 10
New Iraqi Army, 18
NIA. *See* New Iraqi Army
- O**
Ottoman, 14, 15
- P**
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, 12
Privatized Security Services Industry, 9, 18
PUK. *See* Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
- S**
Segmentation, 28
Sheik, 19, 27
Sheiks, 15
Shi'a, 11, 16
Sovereignty, 5
Strategic Security Plan, 5, 18
Sunni, 11
Sunnis, 13, 16
- T**
Tribal, 15
Tribal culture, 5
Tribal Policy, 31
Tribes, 15

Appendix

Annotated below is a generic template identifying the phases of engaging tribal communities.

Phase I - Define an area of responsibility. A tribe may not reflect a cohesive grouping inhabiting a “traditional territory”; it may be dispersed in various parts of the country, with many of its member’s residing in larger metropolitan areas. Many of its members may work in diverse occupations. “Sheikhs” are sometimes urban professionals or businessmen.

Phase II - Establish a working relationship between various families and clans. A working relationship may be based on an economic association under the guise of a “tribute system”. This system is a structure of fictive kinship in which sheiks accept a position of ritual subordination. The relationship is expressed through periodic missions in whom the “tributary” or his envoys perform required rituals, such as providing information, intelligence and evidence of government support in return for patronage and gifts (infrastructure repairs, security contracts). The “tributary” in return believes since he helps the Coalition, he is entitled to patronage derived from tribute presentation. Such a system could work well only as long as both parties agree to see what they chose to see in it and not to put their opposing interpretations to the test.

Phase III - Establish a security, intelligence collection and communication system.

Phase IV - Civilian Support.

Figures

<i>Figure 1 - CPA Center of Gravity Analysis.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Figure 2 - Shi'a Center of Gravity Analysis</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Figure 3 - Kurd Center of Gravity Analysis</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Figure 4 - Sunni Center of Gravity Analysis</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Figure 5 - Tribe Center of Gravity Analysis.....</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Figure 6 - Tribal Segmentation</i>	<i>30</i>