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Dealing with the Threat Posed by Iraq

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In response to the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq, the United States, in coordination with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), should take steps to impose a truly effective inspection regime to remove the threat. Should that effort fail, the United States should be prepared, again in conjunction with the UNSC and a coalition of the willing, to intervene militarily to achieve the same goal. Such action will require extensive preparation for a long military occupation of Iraq and construction of a new polity in Iraq that meets minimal norms of international respect for human rights.

I

Assumptions about the Nation and the World. The danger posed by Iraq's possession and production of WMD has been raised repeatedly in recent months by U.S. government spokespersons, including the President himself. Even so, there are those who flatly deny that Iraq possesses WMD and who question the motivations of the United States.¹

The legitimacy of the UNSC's power to authorize the use of force in the face of a threat to international peace and security is universally accepted. Virtually all nations on the globe are signatories of the Charter of the United Nations, which vests such authority in the UNSC. Working through the U.N. presents the United States an opportunity to acquire the support of the international community writ large in contemplating the use of force to strip Iraq of its WMD capacity. Conversely, failing to work through the U.N. would isolate the United States politically and would make it less likely that other states

¹ See, for example, William Rivers Pitt, with Scott Ritter, War on Iraq: What the Bush Team Doesn't Want You to Know (New York: Context Books, 2002).

other than the United Kingdom would commit forces to any effort to deal militarily with Iraq.

The other thirteen member states of the UNSC have interests in Iraq and the region different from our own. Russia is a major trading partner of Iraq, and has frequently been a strong advocate for Iraq all the way back to the Gulf War.² China is always reluctant to authorize intervention in another state, and abstained on the key Gulf War resolution at the UNSC in 1991.³ France consistently stresses the need for joint action and has stated that the only legitimate armed action is that authorized by the UNSC.⁴ It has also been brandishing its veto and threatening to offer an alternative resolution.⁵ Syria, a state sponsor of terrorism currently a member of the UNSC, although a member of the Gulf War coalition that provided troops to fight against Iraq in 1991 despite the sentiment of its population,⁶ has a current ruler with close personal ties to Saddam's sons.⁷ While reaffirming the inherent right of an attacked country to engage in self-defense, U.N. Secretary General Koffi Annan has stated publicly that in his view, a country, which decides to deal with a broader threat to international security, needs first to obtain the approval and support of the UNSC.⁸ All these factors and others complicate the solidification of UNSC support for action against Iraq.

² Kenneth M. Pollack, The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq. (New York: Random House, 2002), 205.

³ Larry H. Addington, The Patterns of War Since the Eighteenth Century, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana: University Press, 1994), 318.

⁴ Michelle Alliot-Marie, Minister of Defense of France, Why America and France Need Each Other, 17 October, 2002, Speech at the National Defense University, Washington, D.C. (<http://www.ambafrance-us.org>), 25 October 2002.

⁵ Elaine Sciolino, "France Is Set to Offer U.N. Its Own Resolution on Iraq". The Washington Post. 27 October 2002 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/27/international/27FRAN.html>) 27 October 2002.

⁶ Raymond Hinnenbusch and Aboushiravan Ehteshami, The Foreign Policy of Middle Eastern States. (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Books, 2002), 159.

⁷ Pollack, 195.

⁸ Pisik, Betsy, and Boyer, Dave "Annan says U.S. must not act alone". The Washington Times 12 October 2002: A1.

Some argue that the United States has the right to act preemptively to counter a sufficient threat to U.S. national security;⁹ however, it must be recognized that this assertion breaks new ground as a principle of state action subsequent to adoption of the U.N. Charter. Furthermore, it does not yet constitute a generally accepted principle of international law.¹⁰ If the United States relies upon this assertion alone, and chooses to go it alone in taking action against Iraq without some measure of support or acquiescence from the UNSC, it risks international isolation on the issue. Additionally, it risks consequent lack of material support from friends, the embarrassment of an eventual negative ruling on the issue by the International Court of Justice (recall the ruling on the mid-1980s U.S. mining of the waters off Nicaragua,¹¹ and the eventuality of seeing a new preemption principle of international law invoked against the United States in future circumstances not yet foreseeable.

Support in the Middle East for pressing toward a regime change in Iraq is shaky at best. Jordan gets all of its oil from Iraq, and half of that for free. Iraq is also its largest trading partner. Saudi Arabia is fearful of Iraqi revenge for its key role in the Gulf War. The Gulf States have a waning sense of threat from Saddam. Iran has no love of Saddam, particularly in light of the bitter Iran-Iraq War of the '80's, but would probably be content just to see him contained. Mindful of its preservation as a state in the Gulf War, Kuwait

⁹ George W. Bush, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002, (Washington, D.C., The White House, 17 September 2002), 14. (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/pdf>) 25 October 2002.

¹⁰ See, for example, Bruce Ackerman, "What's the Legal Case for Preemption?", The Washington Post, 18 August 2002, B2.

¹¹ International Court of Justice, Case Concerning Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States), 27 June 1986. <<http://www.un.org>> 26 October 2002.

can be counted on to be the most supportive of U.S. policy toward Iraq. Israel, of course, would also support the United States, although it considers Iran the greater threat.¹²

Perceptions of the United States in the region are decidedly mixed. The United States has a special relationship with Israel, the world's largest recipient of U.S. aid (some \$65 billion from 1948 to 1996.)¹³ That special relationship, coupled with negative feelings toward Israel throughout the Arab world, complicates the task of garnering third country support for decisive action against Iraq.

The 17 October 2002 bipartisan votes of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives approving the use of the U.S. armed forces in Iraq¹⁴ signal a broad domestic consensus, for the time being, behind the use of force. That consensus is a fragile one, however, and domestic criticism of an armed intervention in Iraq, a staple of op-ed pages, television talk shows and a number of public demonstrations, could form the kernel of significant domestic opposition, particularly in the case of an lengthy intervention or one involving significant domestic losses.

The U.S. National Interest. The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, promulgated by President Bush in September 2002, includes, as one of its nine sections, the following goal: "Prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends with weapons of mass destruction." The section includes reference to "strengthened nonproliferation efforts to prevent rogue states and terrorists from

¹² Pollack, 190-203.

¹³ Yaakov Bar-Siman-Tov, *The United States and Israel since 1948: A Special Relationship?* Diplomatic History, 22, no. 2 spring 1998, p. 231, cited in Raymond Hinnenbusch and Aboushiravan Ehteshami, The Foreign Policy of Middle Eastern States. (Boulder, Colorado and London: Lynne Rienner Books, 2002), 159.

¹⁴ U.S. Congress, Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002, Public Law 107-243, H.J. Resolution 114, 17 October 2002.

acquiring the materials, technologies and expertise necessary for WMD.”¹⁵ President Bush has also stated publicly that weak states seeking to attain catastrophic power through WMD and missile technology seek to be able to blackmail the United States or to harm us or our friends...and that the United States will oppose them with all its power.¹⁶ Moreover, our national goal of enhancing of our energy security¹⁷ would result from a stable and open Iraq, a country with a significant portion of the world’s petroleum reserves.

The Nature of the Threat from Iraq. At the close of the Gulf War in 1991, the UNSC voted coercive measures, including an inspection regime designed to ensure that the government of Iraq would be divested of weapons of mass destruction and prevented from taking further steps to develop such weaponry.¹⁸

Those economic sanctions did not succeed in forcing compliance with Resolution 687 and its progeny. Indeed, Iraq has consistently sought to retain such weaponry and to continue relevant research and production. In the judgment of the Central Intelligence Agency, Iraq has continued its WMD programs, and, “if left unchecked,” will probably have a nuclear weapon before the end of the decade. With enough weapons-grade fissile material, Iraq could produce a nuclear weapon within a year. Moreover, “since inspections ended in 1998, Iraq has maintained its chemical weapons effort, energized its missile programs and invested more heavily in biological weapons”. According to CIA analysis, Iraq is now producing chemical agents, including mustard, sarin, cyclosarin and

¹⁵ George W. Bush, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002, (Washington, D.C., The White House, 17 September 2002), (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/pdf>) 25 October, 2002.

¹⁶ George W. Bush, 1 June 2002, Commencement Speech at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY, (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06>), 25 October 2002.

¹⁷ George W. Bush, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002, (Washington, D.C., The White House, 17 September 2002), 17, (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/pdf>) 25 October, 2002.

¹⁸ United Nations, Security Council Resolution 687, 3 April 1991. (<http://www.un.org>), 25 October 2002.

VX, and all key aspects of its WMD program, including research and development, production and weaponization are active.¹⁹

The case is strong that WMD possessed and produced by Iraq represent a threat to the United States and its allies. Former National Security Council staffer Kenneth Pollack points out that Saddam Hussein has foregone somewhere between \$130 billion and \$180 billion in oil revenues in order to retain his WMD by refusing to cooperate with UN sanctions. The WMD arsenal is thus more important to Saddam than his people, his economy or his conventional forces. Saddam has made clear that he believes he can use WMD to exact concessions from other states that lack them, and he is apparently convinced that it was his possession of WMD that deterred the United States from marching on Baghdad during the Gulf War.²⁰ That he is willing to use them is demonstrated by Iraqi actions against the Iranians during the Iraq-Iran War and by his use of such weapons within Iraq against the Kurdish minority in the North and against the Marsh Arabs in the South. It should also be remembered that Iraq in fact used Scud missiles against Israel in 1991, albeit none bore WMD warheads.

The end-state sought. To reach an end-state consistent with American national interests, such actions as are taken should result in an Iraq stripped of WMD and of the ability and, if possible, the desire to obtain WMD. The Administration's past stated wishes for a regime change in Iraq enunciated a first step, but did not purport to define what we would like to see in an Iraq of tomorrow, or in ten years from now. The current regime has shown that it values its WMD above all else. The desire of the international community to dismantle that capacity, as enshrined in UNSC Resolution 687, is thus

¹⁹ U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs, October 2002. (<http://www.cia.gov>), 24 October 2002.

²⁰ Pollack, 59.

seemingly incompatible with the continuance in power of the Saddam Hussein regime. The ruthless nature of the current regime is such that there are no contenders for power, and likely successors to Saddam in the event of his untimely demise would likely be close family or associates little different in their world view or ruthlessness from Saddam himself.

Nevertheless, the practical problems to be overcome on the road to regime change in Iraq are formidable. Iraqi exile groups favoring regime change, including the Iraqi National Accord (al-Wifaq) and the Iraqi National Congress (INC), are small, weak and without much credibility,²¹ and post Gulf-War efforts to topple Saddam were a failure. They are in no wise equivalent to the Northern Alliance that we worked with effectively in removing the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.²² In a country described as an “unforgiving police state”²³ with total government control of the media, the demonization of the United States has been a constant staple for the Iraqi people since the Gulf War. The Kurdish minority in the North, while hostile to Saddam, beyond his control and resentful of his past depredations against them, long ago proved itself incapable of projecting its power outside Kurdistan to Baghdad.²⁴ Kurdish militias could nevertheless muster as many as 50,000 troops, no match, by themselves of Saddam’s 430,000.²⁵

The reaction of the Iraqi people to an invasion and occupation is unknown, but Iraqi opinion is probably a mixture of resentment for the perception the United States has brought the country to its current suffering and a belief the United States can deliver it

²¹ Pollack, 63.

²² Pollack, 311.

²³ Adde Dawisha, and Judith S. Yaphe. “Iraq, Another Saddam on the Horizon?” The Middle East in 2015: The Impact of Regional Trends on U.S. Strategic Planning. Ed. Judith S. Yaphe. (Washington: National Defense University Press, 2002). 161.

²⁴ Pollack, 312.

²⁵ Pollack, 311.

from its misery.²⁶ An occupation of Iraq and construction from scratch of a new polity there would be more analogous to the occupation and reconstruction of Japan after the Second World War than to any recent example in the region.

Marina Ottaway and others have made the point that a quick change to a democratic post-Saddam Iraq is a mirage, and that U.S. goals in that direction must be kept modest and must include a recognition that a long-term commitment is needed for any measure of success. Aims should include stressing the respect for civil rights, the expansion of the political space to include portions of the Iraqi people heretofore excluded, and the building of democratic political, legal and constitutional changes, including the development of democratic political parties, and civil society, and the inclusion of moderate Islamists in all of the above.²⁷

Foreign Policy Objectives in Iraq. If a decision to intervene in Iraq to end the WMD threat is made, with a likely regime change, close consideration of our national values and of subsidiary foreign policy objectives related to the form of the post-Saddam Iraqi polity becomes an imperative. If a regime change occurs, other elements of our national strategy, and of the values inherent in them, will determine the direction our policy should take.

If the Saddam Hussein regime falls, military occupation by the victorious forces will be necessary to secure and destroy the WMD and the capacity for producing more. The form and duration of the occupation should be one that, to the extent possible, ensures that the successor regime is one that respects human rights and permits the growth of democratic institutions. Our national goal to champion aspirations for human

²⁶ Pollack, 382.

²⁷ Marina Ottaway, Thomas Carothers, Amy Hawthorne and Daniel Brumberg, Policy Brief: Democratic Mirage in the Middle East. (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October 2002).

dignity,²⁸ consistent with traditions of U.S. foreign policy throughout the last century, has a central place in any policy towards a post-Saddam polity. It should be recognized that the idea of working toward the democratization of a post-war Iraq is dismissed by a number of commentators as preposterous, as amounting to a bet that the allure of secular, cosmopolitan culture will trump the specter of radical Islamism.²⁹ Such views gloss over the fact that Saddam's Iraq is one of the worst abusers of human rights on the face of the planet. One can reasonably expect that the Iraqi people, suddenly relieved of such oppression, will be open to the United States' demands for respect for human dignity, much as were the defeated peoples of post-war Germany and Japan.

The Means. Power and Influence, Soft Power, Intelligence, Public Diplomacy, Foreign Aid and Economic Influence. Since the end of the Gulf War, the United States has employed virtually every means at its disposal to carry out the mandate of UNSC Resolution 687 to remove the threat of Iraqi WMD. But the use of national power involves, ultimately, a contest of wills, and Saddam Hussein is certainly not lacking in will. The police state he presides over is virtually impervious to U.S. soft power. No sentient person in Iraq would consciously emulate the United States, a nation consistently presented by the Iraqi government as the source of all Iraq's ills. Those who own a short wave radio in Iraq might dare to listen to the Voice of America Arabic language broadcasts, and may thus be open to U.S. public diplomacy efforts, but such individuals are unlikely to discuss the same with anyone, given that the Iraqi regime employs torture systematically and has even decreed the cutting out tongues of those who

²⁸ George W. Bush, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002, (Washington, D.C., The White House, 17 September 2002), 3, (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/pdf>) 25 October, 2002.

²⁹ See, for example, Michelle Goldberg, "Regime Change – and Then What?," Salon.com, 10 October 2002, <http://www.salon.com/politics/feature/2002/10/10/regime/index_np.html> (10 October 2002).

criticize the regime.³⁰ That selfsame police state is highly resistant to penetrations by human intelligence sources, severely limiting the U.S. government's knowledge about events in Iraq, although Iraq's skies are open to aerial and satellite surveillance.

The Iraqi regime has received no American foreign aid since the Gulf War, and given the astronomical sums foregone by the Iraqi regime in order to retain its WMD capacity, it is unlikely that promises of foreign aid would be much of a motivator for Saddam Hussein.

Iraq is a textbook example of the decreasing influence of economic sanctions over time. Voted in 1991 to compel compliance with the UNSC Resolution 687 mandate to strip Iraq of its WMD, these measures have been consistently evaded by the Iraqi regime, and have ironically strengthened Saddam's grip on power in Iraq.³¹

II

The Ways of Using American Power in Iraq. Compellence and Deterrence, Containment, Diplomacy, Sanctions, Intervention.

Iraq has proven impervious to deterrence of its WMD efforts since the lead-up to the Gulf War, and indeed has spared no effort to retain them. Traditional bilateral U.S. diplomacy toward Iraq ended with the breaking of diplomatic relations in the 1990 buildup to the Gulf War. Such diplomacy as is currently directed at Iraq is accomplished through the United Nations, typically by the UN Secretary General carrying out instructions of the UNSC. Containment has but little effect on a state that cares not at all

³⁰ Pollack, 123.

³¹ Pollack, 112.

about its relations with the United States, and whose neighbors dare not ignore it or provoke it needlessly. U.S. covert action was authorized in 1991 to topple a Saddam Hussein reeling from defeat in the Gulf War. The attempt, culminating in a limited uprising of Iraqis, failed.³²

A new effort at sanctions. The last step short of war that would have a possibility of achieving the goal of removing Iraq's WMD capacity would be the imposition of a truly effective weapons inspection regime in a last-ditch effort to shore up efforts at containment that the post-Gulf War UN resolutions failed to achieve. These inspection efforts would have to be backed up by a tough new sanctions regime. For the time being we should concentrate our diplomatic efforts in this direction at the UNSC, particularly among the permanent members (who wield a veto). An effective economic sanctions regime should comprise a number of elements, including the imposition of vigorous sanctions on those who help Iraq evade its own sanctions and incentives and compensation for Iraq's neighbors who suffer losses due to the Iraqi sanctions. All oil flow from Iraq needs to be brought under U.N. monitoring, and the means of the monitoring needs vast improvement.³³

It is possible that Iraq will finally submit to an effective inspection regime that will assure the international community that it has indeed renounced WMD research and destroyed its existing stocks of such weaponry. Experience suggests that the Saddam Hussein regime will not submit to effective inspections, and that it will pursue some species of the same dilatory tactics it has employed ever since Resolution 687 was voted.

³² Pollack, 177.

³³ Pollack, 222-224.

Assuming such to be the case, the eventuality of an armed intervention in Iraq merits close examination.

Of the typical list of instruments of U.S. national power, only one, intervention, has been of proven effect in Iraq, notably in forcing it to withdraw from Kuwait as a result of the Gulf War. For this reason, we turn to a consideration of a strategy of intervention in Iraq.

Risks inherent in intervention. As Clausewitz observed, the outcome of war is never certain.³⁴ The fears that attended the buildup to the Gulf War, including the potential use by Iraq of the very WMD that we would seek to remove as a threat to the world, apply equally today. The Iraqi armed forces, today numbering about 430,000 troops, about 30 to 40 percent of what it was at the time of the Gulf War,³⁵ would probably enjoy good unit cohesion.³⁶ During the Gulf War, the Iraqi Army proved itself fairly good at meeting logistical challenges.³⁷ Subordinate officers, however, often lacked the ability to take tactical initiative, and in the end, the Iraqi Army lost the Gulf War.

There is a real risk that Iraqi forces will employ biological or chemical weapons, much as they did in the Iran-Iraq War. The employment of such weapons against Israel, Saudi Arabia or Kuwait is also a danger. These grim possibilities argue for speed, and for physical and psychological countermeasures. U.S. forces are equipped to protect themselves from a chemical and biological threat.

³⁴ Carl von Clausewitz. *On War*. Edited and Translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976). 101.

³⁵ Pollack, 163-4.

³⁶ Pollack, Kenneth M. *Arabs at War*. University of Nebraska Press, 2002. 554.

³⁷ Pollack, Kenneth M. *Arabs at War*, 566.

A battle for the city of Baghdad would involve great risk to the forces engaging in it. A city presents multiple ambush opportunities for defenders. Few defended cities have been overwhelmed by an opposing force in the twentieth century. The goal should be to break the will of the defenders and to compel the city to surrender if at all possible.

While a war, once begun, is never wholly controllable, the Iraqi forces, even with chemical or biological weaponry, are simply no match for an appropriately massive onslaught of American forces.

American power and resources. While the United States has by far the most powerful military instrument in the world today, its forces are committed in many places, not the least of them Afghanistan. Here, the search for the remnants of al-Qaeda and the rebuilding of the Afghan state in an effort to preclude it from again becoming a safehaven for terrorism, continue. Repeated call-ups of reserve forces, and the reliance upon reserve elements as part of the total force, have caused severe difficulties in retention in the reserve forces. A new major war effort would severely strain the current force structure and impose extended periods of deployment on both regular and reserve forces. In short, while formidable, American military power is not boundless.

Building a coalition of the willing. One of the great strengths of the American position in the Gulf War was that our actions were taken as part of a broad-based coalition that included several of Iraq's neighbors among other Islamic countries, rather than as American actions alone. Moreover, those actions were taken with the international imprimatur of the UNSC. No effort should be spared to replay this scenario to the extent possible not only for the sake of legitimacy in the eyes of international law but also for the extra resources that coalition partners will bring to bear in the fight. The

United Kingdom has been steadfast with the United States in attempting to enforce UNSC sanctions on Iraq since the end of the Gulf War. The effort to expand that coalition will entail considerable diplomacy and time.

American plans and priorities. We should recall Clausewitz' injunction to bear constantly in mind the political objective of a war about to be undertaken³⁸. In this case, the political aim is the elimination of the WMD threat posed by Iraq, even if it required a conquest of Iraq, a removal of its leadership and a period of occupation. In planning for an offensive against Iraq, we should be guided, but not constrained, by the lessons of the Gulf War. Then, as now, Iraq's commander-in-chief, Saddam Hussein, is well-protected, secretive and elusive. Then, as now, the core of Saddam's Army, the Republican Guard, is a credible fighting force, but no match for massed American forces.

Aim for the leadership. The center of gravity, the core of what keeps the Iraqi state the threat that it is, its leadership, specifically Saddam Hussein and his inner circle. Once hostilities have commenced, the priority should be the elimination of that leadership, without which the army will be directionless. As a preparatory step, all Iraqi air defenses that pose a significant threat to U.S./coalition forces should be destroyed. Once command of the air is achieved, simultaneous air attacks, by a combination of bombers, attack aircraft and cruise missiles, should be directed at every single known presidential palace, command bunker, and missile site. Secondary targets should be every known or possible facility for the production or storage of WMD.

Close coordination with the intelligence community would enlist the aid of real-time satellite imagery in the difficult search for mobile chemical or biological weapons

³⁸ Clausewitz, 80.

facilities. The fact that they are being targeted would doubtless have the immediate effect of reducing their mobility.

The Ground War. A successful attack on the Iraqi leadership could conceivably induce a surrender of the armed forces and make a ground war unnecessary. However, we cannot presume that this initial phase will be successful, and we must have at the ready the wherewithal to undertake a ground campaign that will destroy the Iraqi Army as a fighting force. To mass maximal strength against the current Iraqi armed forces of some 430,000 will require a significant commitment of armed force, but not so much as was needed against the far stronger Iraqi force during the Gulf War. It has been estimated that four to six divisions of American ground troops (Army and Marine Corps), plus a few armored cavalry regiments, would have little difficulty overrunning the Iraqi armed forces and conquering the country.³⁹

The ground campaign should be directed in the first instance against the Iraqi forces' command and control nodes. Iraqi forces are by and large no takers of initiative, and cut off from their command, would be fall less effective, perhaps totally ineffectual as fighting forces.

Anticipating Iraqi Strategies. An American-led attack on Iraq would be correctly perceived by its leadership as a battle for survival for the current Iraqi regime. Indeed, it will be able to claim a measure of success if it simply survives. The Iraqis, and Saddam Hussein in particular, are aware of the American sensitivity to troop losses, and would likely seek to inflict maximal casualties on American troops at the earliest opportunity in an effort to break American resolve.

³⁹ Pollack, Kenneth M, The Threatening Storm: the Case for Invading Iraq. (New York: Random House, 2002), 339.

The Iraqis are doubtless also aware of U.S. reservations about engaging in a protracted battle for Baghdad, and with therefore probably do all in their power to draw the United States into just such a battle. The defender's advantage and the sense of protecting the capital from foreign invasion could serve to stir the army and population of Iraq into that primordial state of hatred of the enemy that often proves the key element in waging war.

Saddam Hussein is likely, in the event that he is convinced he cannot avoid being killed or captured, to order the use of such WMD as Iraq possesses. He is likely also to have given such order in the event the forces having military control over WMD were cut off from communicating with Saddam.

An Approach to the Iraqi People. As Fuller and Lesser observe, the period of European domination and colonization of the Middle East was perceived as a time of cultural humiliation and distortion.⁴⁰ The bad taste left by that period leaves the attitude of the Iraqi people in the face of a foreign invasion in doubt, and argues for a detailed public and psychological approach to the Iraqi civil populace to ensure against the spawning of massive Iraqi civil resistance.

Employ Iraqi allies. No country welcomes an invader. By way of contrast, most countries welcome a liberator, particularly a domestic one. The advantages of teaming up with one, or preferably several, domestic Iraqi opposition groups willing and able to contribute at least some token units to participate in the armed action against the current regime, are clear. While it would not be necessary or useful under the circumstances to emulate General Eisenhower's decision to allow a Free French unit to be the first to enter

⁴⁰ Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser. A Sense of Siege: The Geopolitics of Islam and the West. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 36.

Paris during the fight for its liberation in 1944, the integration of Free French Forces alongside other allies helped assure that the Liberation was immediately perceived as such by the French population.

Psychological Operations. The Iraqi armed forces and the population of Baghdad should be the targets of a message from U.S./coalition/Iraqi resistance forces to the effect that the aim is not to harm the people. Rather, it is to remove a dangerous and ruthless dictator from the backs of the Iraqi people and that resistance will help no one but Saddam and his immediate entourage. The civilian populace could be warned away from presidential sites on short notice. Additionally, the intent to capture and try Saddam Hussein and anyone who aids him in the use of banned chemical or biological weapons should be expressed loud and clear. These messages, along with instructions on how to surrender, could be dropped by airborne leaflets and broadcast by radio, and perhaps by a television campaign.

The occupation of Iraq. The next steps after a military victory in Iraq center around what to do with respect to its internal politics. The long trauma of the population under Saddam Hussein, its inexperience with free politics or democratic institutions and the impossibility of simply walking away from a conquered Iraq given the unsavoriness of its current small political class, require a post-war occupation of Iraq until a successor regime with reasonable prospects of stability is ready to take the reins of power. Expertise in civil affairs administration will be required to do this, expertise which exists in a small way in the U.S. armed forces, but almost exclusively in the reserve components. This is another area in which allied assistance could prove crucial.

The occupation of Iraq could be used as a time to refute the allegation that the United States is indifferent to the promotion of human rights and democracy in the Middle East. This could provide an opportunity to prove that what we say in our National Security Strategy about such matters is true. If democracy indeed arises from universal human aspirations, as our Nation Security Strategy avers in its opening paragraph,⁴¹ we should promote such values in Iraq, without preconditions as to the details of future democratic institutions there.

Conclusion. The threat presented by Iraqi WMD to American interests in the region is real. Dealing with the threat is problematic at several strategic levels. Going it alone in waging war on Iraq risks robbing our action of legitimacy in the eyes of the world. In particular, the doctrine of preemption, on which the United States might act unilaterally against Iraq, is on shaky ground in international law, and could have unforeseeable negative consequences for the United States in the future. Key members of the UNSC, which could grant unquestionable international legitimacy to military action against Iraq are reluctant, for a variety of reasons, to give the same free hand provided prior to the Gulf War.

The United States should therefore not go it alone. Success and legitimacy in the case of the Gulf War were the result of patient coalition building, which coincidentally resulted in a broad sharing of the costs of that war. The United States should work in the context of the UNSC to obtain an effective and enforceable inspection regime. Should this not work, and it well may not, the United States should then press for military action to strip Iraq once and for all of its WMD.

⁴¹ George W. Bush, The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2002, (Washington, D.C., The White House, 17 September 2002), (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/pdf>) 25 October, 2002.

In undertaking military action against Iraq, maximal force should be directed against Saddam and his closest associates as the center of gravity that has resulted in the continued Iraqi WMD program, as well as against the program itself. The goal should be the surrender of the Iraqi state. The United States and its allies should be prepared to deal with a WMD attack from Iraq in the event of war.

Subsequent to a war, a military occupation would be necessary. The United States must be ready to bear the burden of a long occupation that will have as its aim not only the dismantlement of the Iraqi WMD program and the political class that supported it, but also the construction of genuine and durable democratic institutions in Iraq.

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