

Presentation – The Case for Action

Intro: Looking at Iraq through the Lens of 9/11

- We are rightfully concerned about the failures – intelligence and policy – that made 9/11 possible.
- In retrospect, we have no difficulty asking: “why didn’t they connect the dots?” (Pre 9/11, there wasn’t a “smoking gun” – let alone one that pointed to Washington and New York.)
- We have more information *now* about what Iraq might do than we had *last year* about al Qaida might do.
- Implication: we have to be willing to “connect the dots” now – can’t wait for the “smoking gun.”

I. Iraq poses a serious and growing threat to the US

- The nature of the regime – a totalitarian regime led by a megalomaniac tyrant.
- This is terrible for the people of Iraq.
- But it has an important foreign policy implication – Iraq under Saddam has demonstrated tremendous geopolitical ambition, as shown by his invasions of Iran and Kuwait.
- Wants to be the new pan-Arab leader (a la Nasser or Saladin).
- Iraq’s continuing pursuit of WMD.
- To evaluate Iraq’s continuing pursuit of WMD, we have to make use of many types of evidence – specific intelligence items are only part of the story.
- Also have to look at history, including history of actual use of CW.
- We have to assess the strength of Iraq’s motivation to acquire WMD.
- In addition, Iraq is very good at denial and deception – as we learned after the Gulf War. We were surprised at how many WMD-related facilities we hadn’t known about.

- We must take this into account in assessing the intelligence evidence that we have available. Experience tells us that what we have found is only a small part of what actually is there.

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- **History**

- Iraq's pursuit of WMD has been continuing, and Iraq has been willing to pay a high price to continue it.
- Had Saddam cooperated with UNSCOM in 1991-2, sanctions would have been lifted very quickly.
- Saddam could have allowed inspectors to do their work at any time during the last decade – and would have been rewarded for it by the end of sanctions, and readmission to the international community.
- Conclusion: Saddam places such a high value on pursuit of WMD that he has been willing to subject his country to sanctions for a decade, just to preserve his programs and some of his facilities.
 - Why? Goes back to the question of geopolitical ambition. With WMD, and especially with nucs, Iraq would be undisputed leader of Arab world.
- Inspections had some effect on Iraq's pursuit of WMD, but we know that the programs continued *even then*. (For example, the 1995 defection of Kamal Hussein, Saddam's son-in-law, alerted us to ongoing activity in the nuclear and biological programs.)
- Given no inspectors since 1998, and given sufficient revenue (from illegal oil sales and illegal surcharges on the legal sales), isn't it reasonable to conclude that Iraq's WMD programs have are continuing, if not accelerating?

Nuclear Program

- After Israelis destroyed the Osirak reactor, Iraq embarked on a new project to get fissile material – but kept it hidden this time. (IAEA, headed by Hans Blix, was completely fooled.)

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- After the Gulf War, we discovered a huge project using electro-magnetic isotope separation (EMIS) technology – a technology we used successfully in the Manhattan project.
- Important to consider that we missed this project entirely – perhaps because it hadn't occurred to us that Iraq would use a technology we considered obsolete, but which was nevertheless effective.
- ~~(S)~~ Now, we have discovered that Iraq is trying to import aluminum tubes, milled to very precise specifications. The precise tolerances suggest that the tubes are to be used in the construction of high speed centrifuges for uranium gas enrichment.
 - (Centrifuges and EMIS are two of the main methods for enriching uranium.)
- As the President stated (UNGA speech, 12 Sep 02), "Should Iraq acquire fissile material, [either by purchase or through its own enrichment program] it would be able to build a nuclear weapon within a year."

Biological

- Another example of successful Iraqi denial and deception – Iraq fooled not only our intelligence, but also UNSCOM.
- Extent of program became clear only in 1995, when Saddam's son-in-law, Hussein Kamal, defected.
- Even after the defection, Iraq continued to understate the extent of its BW program, according to the UNSCOM inspectors.
- UNSCOM estimated that Iraq had actually produced two to four times more agents and munitions than it declared – including the anthrax bacillus and botulinum toxin.
- Since departure of inspectors in 1998, Iraq has done construction work at facilities associated with biological weapons.
 - While Iraq has claimed that this new capability is for civilian purposes, it exceeds civilian requirements. In any case, the claim is hardly persuasive given Saddam's tendency to ignore basic civilian needs.

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- ~~(S)~~ Iraq has also imported mobile BW laboratories. These are not only harder to track and target, but would pose great difficulties for the inspectors as well.
- ~~(S)~~ In 1997, Iraq co-located a refrigerated truck with an L-29 UAV at Talil Airfield. UAVs would be a possible delivery means for biological agents.
- Iraq has experimented with camelpox, which is almost identical genetically to smallpox, but which is safer to handle since it doesn't cause human illness.
 - ~~(S)~~ A Russian smallpox expert visited Iraq in the early 1990s.
 - ~~(S)~~ Russia cannot account for all of its samples of the smallpox virus.

Chemical

- Iraq has used chemical weapons in the past, against Iran and against its own citizens (Anfal campaign against the Kurds, in 1988).
- Many chemical agents and munitions remain unaccounted for – for example UNSCOM determined that Iraq overstated its chemical bomb usage in the Iran-Iraq war by at least 6000 warheads. These warheads remain unaccounted for.
- Iraq has been rebuilding and developing facilities associated with its chemical weapons program.
 - For example, Iraq has been expanding its chlorine production capability well beyond its civilian needs, especially considering that Iraq has imported chlorine under Oil-for-Food. Chlorine is a raw material for the production of CW precursors.
- ~~(S)~~ Recent reports indicate that Iraq may have developed “dusty” VX (nerve gas) agent, which could penetrate protective gear.

Missiles above 150 km range

- Iraq has preserved several dozen Scud-type missiles.
- Under the guise of a program to develop (legal) short-range ballistic missiles (range under 150 km), Iraq has been developing longer-range systems.

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- For example, Iraq has developed rocket motor test facilities larger than those needed to test engines for short-range ballistic missiles.
- Iraq's connections with terrorist groups.
 - Iraq has conducted terrorist actions itself, and has cooperated with terrorist groups.
 - Best known action was the assassination attempt against President Bush in 1993.
 - Those who argue that Iraq would in all cases be deterred from engaging in terrorism against the U.S. have to consider that 1) Iraq has already attempted to do so, and 2) Iraq did not suffer any consequences (except for a few pin-prick cruise missile attacks.)
 - Recent death of Abu Nidal in Baghdad reminds us that Iraq harbored that notorious terrorist for years.
 - ~~(S)~~ Iraq has also sheltered Yasin.
 - Yasin was a key figure in the first World Trade Center bombing.

Iraq's Ties to al Qaida

- ~~(S)~~ Presence in Baghdad of Zarqawi, a high level al Qaida planner, is evidence of ties to Bin Laden. Ridiculous to argue that Zarqawi's being in Baghdad doesn't prove anything, on grounds that Iraqi authorities may not have known of his presence.
- ~~(S)~~ Why would Zarqawi pick a police state like Iraq to go to, if he didn't have reason to believe he would be protected there? Many places to go where police surveillance is less thorough than in Baghdad.
- ~~(S)~~ Abu Zubaida recently told his interrogators that, in internal al Qaida deliberations, Zarqawi had advocated closer ties to Iraq. Zarqawi was also a co-founder of Jund al-Islam, a radical Islamist group now operating in northern Iraq (name is now Ansar al-Islam).
- ~~(S)~~ In addition, numerous contacts over past decade between senior Iraqi and al Qaida officials, including there are many intelligence reports showing connections between Iraq and al Qaida, over a decade.
- Faruq Hijazi, a senior Iraqi intelligence official in Saddam's inner circle, is reported to have personally met with UBL several times

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- ~~(S)~~ Cooperation between Iraq and al Qaida in key areas: bombmaking assistance, operational training, facilitation and possibly in the area of chemical and biological weapons.
 - Following a UBL request in the mid-1990s, Iraqi intelligence dispatched its top bombmaker to Khartoum to provide assistance making barometric and letter bombs
- Iraq has expedited the travel of several individuals associated with al Qaida and provided needed travel documentation
- According to detainee Ibn Shaykh al-Libi, al Qaida sent an operative, Abu Abdullah al-Iraqi to Iraq several times between 1997-2000 to seek chemical and biological weapons training and assistance
- The argument that Saddam and bin Laden won't cooperate, because one is secular and the other Islamist, is ridiculous. On that argument, Stalin and Hitler couldn't have cooperated in dividing Poland in 1939.

II. Why we must take preemptive action to deal with this threat

- Why not use some other method to deal with the threat?
 - Three methods that have been used in the past to deal with threats like this are containment, deterrence, and international controls (e.g., Versailles)
- Containment
 - Containment can work against armies, not against terrorists – Can't contain when Iraq could use terrorists to deliver WMD.
 - As for Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, we don't wish to keep sufficient forces in those countries indefinitely.
 - Keeping forces in Saudi Arabia creates increasing political problems.
- Deterrence
 - Possibility of unattributable, and hence, undeterrable WMD attacks.
 - Could we deter Saddam's use of conventional force?
 - Saddam has a history of recklessness – invasions of Iran and Kuwait both came out badly for him, but hasn't shown any sign of moderating his ambition or hostility.

- If Iraq obtained nuclear weapons, it might believe that it could safely engage in conventional aggression, i.e., that its nuclear weapons would deter others from cooperating in a second Desert Storm. Perhaps also that US would be deterred from taking any steps to reverse effects of Iraqi conventional aggression.
- International inspections, sanctions, etc. [update in light of President's speech]
 - Hasn't been successful in the past – best example is Versailles Treaty.
 - History of Iraq's cheating with respect to UNSCOM is well known.
 - Sanctions have been eroding: ample illegal revenue, lots of routes for smuggling material and equipment into Iraq (e.g., through Syria).
 - Iraq has been successful in blaming sanctions (rather than his own decision not to use available funds for food and medicine) for deprivations suffered by Iraqi population – in effect, treating his own people as hostages.

III. How we will deal with the practical challenges such action poses.

- Getting support: Congressional
 - Administration will seek Congressional authorization, although, technically, a good case can be made that it doesn't need it.
 - Iraq has violated UNSCR 687 on disarmament, adherence to which is required by the ceasefire agreement following the Gulf War.
- UN support:
 - Must make the point that UN's credibility is on the line. Iraq has flouted will of UN Security Council for more than a decade.
 - We will see what effect President's speech will have in this regard.
- Aftermath:
 - Iraqi opposition: continuing to work with them.
 - We are trying to get the opposition to coalesce, and to allow any natural leaders to rise to the top.

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- High-level contacts with opposition, such as the meeting on August 9th between Under Secretaries Feith and Grossman and six major opposition leaders.
- A set of workshops (State's "Future of Iraq" Project),
- If successful, we will have done some of the "Bonn process" work by the time the current regime falls.
- We have emphasized to the various opposition groups that territorial integrity of Iraq must be maintained, and they have agreed.
- We are working on plans for a "transitional civil authority" to take over immediately after fall of current regime.
- Many issues remain to be resolved.
- WMD: planning on how to rid country of WMD; deal with scientists and technicians. [two studies: NDU, J-3]
 - Need to pay particular attention to the scientists and technicians – develop plans to keep them gainfully employed, while making sure they don't leave the country and offer their services to the highest bidder.
- Oil impact
 - We must be prepared for an immediate price spike. However, much will depend on how quickly events unfold.
 - Eventual effect as Iraq increases its production would be to reduce world oil prices.
- Impact on regional stability.
 - We have to anticipate some turmoil, but Arab regimes tend to be good at handling the "street."
 - Key factor is pace at which the operation proceeds. E.g., in Afghanistan, where things quieted down quickly once we started to make real progress on the ground.

IV. Answering Objections.

- Why Iraq rather than North Korea or Iran?

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- [As President Lincoln said, "One war at a time."]
- North Korea *already* possesses nuclear weapons – we still have the opportunity to stop Iraq from crossing the nuclear threshold.
 - North Korea has large numbers of artillery tubes within range of Seoul.
 - While North Korea poses a serious threat to its neighbor, we judge the Iraqi threat to be more immediate [due to North Korea's dire economic condition.]
- In Iran, there is the prospect of internal change, since large parts of the populace are being more and more disillusioned with the regime.
 - We should let that dynamic play itself out.
 - Iran is much bigger than Iraq, and social base of the regime is larger. Given its more open and participatory political system, it would be much harder for the U.S. to portray a military operation as a "liberation" than in the case of Iraq. We would have to expect more resistance from the Iranian armed forces and population at large than from the Iraqis.]
- What kind of precedent are we setting?
 - [NOTE: Unclear to what extent we wish to distinguish Iraqi case from other possible cases. If we portray Iraq as unique, we strength the case against Iraq, but weaken the rationale for further actions against, e.g., Iran or North Korea.]
 - We are not claiming the right to intervene in any regime we don't like – Iraq poses a major threat to U.S. and its allies.
 - We can demonstrate by reference to its record, its pursuit of WMD, its ties to terrorism. It is also a particularly vicious regime with respect to treatment of its own population.
 - [Iraq has repeated violating UN Security Council resolutions, and has been condemned for these violations by the UNSC many times.]
- Effect on the Middle East peace negotiations.
 - Madrid and Oslo took place in the aftermath of the Gulf War, once it was clear that U.S. influence in the region was preeminent, and that radicalism – as represented by Saddam – had hit a roadblock.

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- Saddam is now busy stoking the fires of Palestinian terrorism (e.g., payments to families of suicide bombers) precisely in order to divert our attention from Iraq.
- Regime change in Iraq will remove this incitement to terrorism and will help convince Palestinians that there is no alternative to peace.
- Effect on the War on Terrorism?
 - Currently, war on terrorism doesn't involve a lot of U.S. troops – hence, no need to draw down because of an Iraq operation.
 - No reason to believe that other countries will refuse cooperation in WOT, even if they disapprove of our action in Iraq.
 - Regime change will remove a source of support for international terrorism, and will serve as an object lesson to other state supporters of terrorism.
 - After Afghanistan, many states that had supported terrorism started to indicate willingness to cooperate with us. The salutary effect of our victory of Afghanistan has begun to wear off, however. Success in Iraq will reinvigorate it.
- Don't we need a link to 9/11?
 - No: This isn't about revenge or retaliation, but about self-defense.
 - A link to 9/11 would just emphasize what we already know – that the current Iraqi regime is extremely hostile to us and is willing to cooperate with international terrorism.

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