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Basra: Post Saddam Governance

11 March 2003

DEFENCE INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS STAFF

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BASRA: POST SADDAM GOVERNANCE

Introduction

This memorandum is focused upon Basra City and the 'post-Saddam' political and security environment that coalition troops will encounter. Though the memorandum is informed by intelligence reporting much of it is necessarily speculative. It will be updated periodically as new information becomes available. It must be stressed that some of the positions expressed in this paper (particularly on the retention of Ba'ath personnel) may not represent eventual coalition policy (R)

The memorandum is based upon rapid defeat of regular forces IVO Basra City and no use of CBW within Basra City. (C)

The main body of the memorandum is divided into three sections. Section I provides a brief history of the city and it's current administrative structure. Section II examines initial reactions of the civil populace to coalition action in Iraq (the first three days). Section III will cover reaction and possible events in Basra after the presence of coalition forces within the city has been established (R)

Annex A includes a list of prominent (non-military) personalities within Basra City. (R)

Annex B provides information on tribal and religious leadership within Basrah Governorate. (R)

Annex C provides supplementary information to that in Micro Infrastructure Briefing Memorandum on the Al Basrah region. It includes information on Basra's transport and port infrastructure, key C3 nodes, sanitation, water resources, environmental hazards and medical infrastructure. (R)

Comments or queries are welcome and should be addressed to:

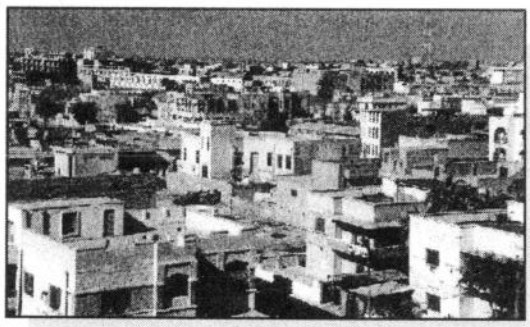
DI GULF 4

1 - Basra: History, Demographics and Civil Administration

Brief History of the City

Basra competes with Mosul for classification as Iraq's second largest city. Its strategic importance stems from its position at the mouth of the Shatt al Arab - one of the Middle East's busiest trade routes. That, combined with its proximity to Iran and Kuwait, has ensured that successive regimes, colonisers and invaders have fought over control of the city. (U)

Founded in AD637 Basra was the focal point of the Arab sea trade. Under the Abbassids Basra became an important cultural centre and was famed for many advances in Arab/Islamic science. Under Turkish control (from 1688) Basra became a villayet (province) of the Ottoman Empire, but much of the Basra area stagnated and rural outlying areas were virtually lawless by the turn of the 20th century. British Forces (6 Indian Division) seized Basra in November 1914 and Basra was initially controlled by a military governor. British military control of the city heralded many new developments and was chiefly responsible for the foundations of Basra's current transport and maritime infrastructure. (U)



Basra: View of The City

Recent years have seen Basra's violent history continue. Indeed Basra today, despite some reconstruction, is heavily damaged from both the Iran-Iraq and Gulf Wars. (U)

Demographics and ethnicity

Definitive demographic information on Basra City is sparse. The population of the city has fluctuated significantly over the last two decades with dramatic falls in the population during the Iran-Iraq War. Current overall population figures are disputed. But we assess the population of Basra City to be somewhere between 1-1.5 millions. Officially the population is 1,435,000. (R)

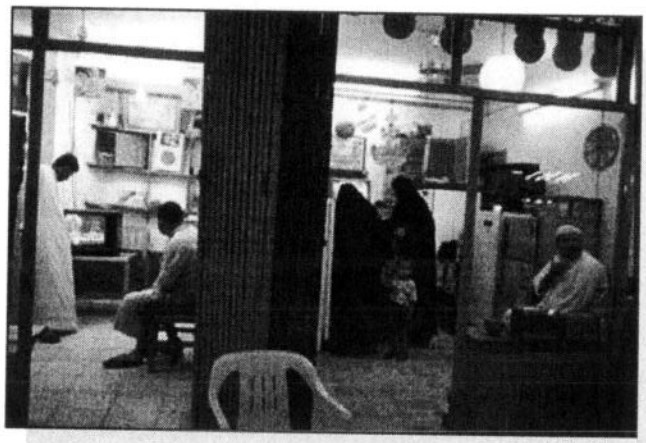
The ethnic and religious composition of the city is also complex. Basra City lies within southern Iraq, in an area that is predominantly (though not solely) Arab Shia. However, Basra has a far more diverse population than the rural areas that surround it. Arab Shia could constitute 50% or more of the city's population. But Basra City will also have considerable numbers of Arab Sunni (possibly 15% or more), Kurds, Christians and a significant amount of second generation migrants and foreign workers from across the Arab world and beyond. (R)

City Districts

Basra City has eight administrative districts - Al Ashar (also known as Jaza'ir), Old Basra, Al Ribat, Al Tuwaysah, Al Janinah, Al Hayaniyah, Al Mishraq and Sabkhat al Arab. Those districts are subdivided into neighbourhoods - many of these may have multiple or colloquial names and we are unaware of the precise neighbourhoods that comprise each district or the exact boundaries of Basra's districts. Many district boundaries and neighbourhood delineation would appear to be set by the city's extensive canal system. (R)

Basra's most affluent neighbourhoods lie along (and to the south of) the southern bank of the Shatt Al Arab. The Shatt al Arab Corniche is the site of many restaurants as well as Basra's main international hotel (the Basrah Sheraton). (U)

Ashar (comprising the neighbourhood of Al Ashar and neighbourhoods south of the Arrat Al Ashar canal) contains Basra's main souk. It is the marketplace for local produce as well as goods from across Southern Iraq, from Iran and imported goods from the west. (U)



Basra shops

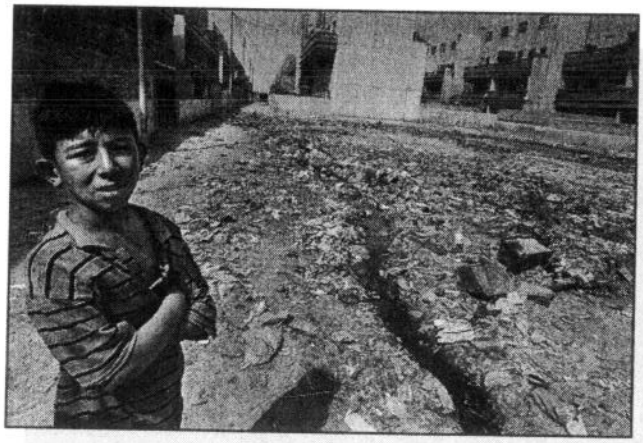
The central district of Old Basra (al Basrah al Qadimah) lies next to Ashar and along the Al Ashar canal. This was once the site of many of Basra's famous residential houses (the latticed Shenashilis) but most of these are now crumbling into disrepair. Many are occupied by the homeless. Sabkhat al Arab lies immediately north of Old Basra. (U)

Al Ribat comprises Al Ribat neighbourhood (next to the Shatt Al Arab) and may include all those areas spanned by the Al Ribat Canal. This would include a large warehousing and industrial plant area, some very large cemeteries (presumably Shia) and Al Jumhuriyah - one of Basra's largest working class residential districts (verging on a slum). (U)

Basra children going to school

Al Hayyaniyah comprises a very large residential district (possibly working class) bounded by Highway 6, Highway 33/4 and the western outskirts of the city. (U)

Much of the north of the city and north west is dominated by Basra' substantial transport infrastructure (port, airport and railway) and is known as Al Marqil. (U)



Basra Raw Sewage and Housing

Civil Administration

Basra's most important administrative institution is the Ba'ath Party. Ba'ath Party organisation within the city mirrors that elsewhere in Iraq. The Party is

hierarchically organised into both geographical sections and sections within local governmental institutions. There are party organisations and representatives for the Al Basrah governorate as a whole, for the city, for each of the City's administrative districts and for some neighbourhoods within those districts. (R)

At the governorate level the Party is led by Yahya Abdullah Al Ubbudi. A Party Branch (Fara) will run the city itself, the official responsible having the Party rank of Udw Fara (Branch leader). Party sections (Shu'ba) will exist for each of the city's administrative districts (led by an official of Udw Shu'ba rank). The lowest level of party organisation within the city will be the division (Firqa), with leaders having the title Udw Firqa. Firqa will be based within neighborhoods but are typically assigned honorific titles (often after party 'martyrs') and are therefore difficult to identify in terms of their relationship to a particular area of the city. Party membership within the city has grown since the mid-90s though we have no specific information on numbers. If we assume national norms then Basra might have 30 - 40,000 members. Most party members will have joined for reasons of professional and social advancement. It can be assumed that most prominent members of Basra's professional classes (e.g. senior port officials, heads of local government departments, University Heads etc.) will be party members. They may however have little role in directing the party or ensuring regime control. Ba'ath ranks below leadership level, in ascending order of seniority are Sadiq (Friend) Rafiq (Comrade) Mu'ayyid (Supporter) Nasir (Partisan) and Nasir Mutaqaddam (Senior Partisan). (S

It is also worth noting that the Ba'ath Party within Basra City will include significant amounts of Shia, even at senior levels (for example Yaha Abdullah al Ubbudi is himself a Shia and a member of the highest national body of the Ba'ath Party, the Regional Command). (S

Supplementing the Ba'ath Party and in parallel to it are governorate departments. These cover the full range of local administrative functions including Electricity, Water, Sewerage, Municipality Affairs, Health, Education, Waqf/Religious Affairs and Civil Police. All of these departments are present within Basra City. The upper echelons of most of these (Director level) will be members of the Ba'ath Party. (C)

We have mixed information on the role of the 'Mukhtar' system within Basra. Mukhtars are neighbourhood leaders, hold a quasi-official position and are vetted by the Directorate of General Security (DGS). Some hold positions based on tribal leadership status. Mukhtars may be involved in the local organisation of the OFF programme and the distribution of ration cards. They may also hold personal records on individuals within their neighbourhoods. (S

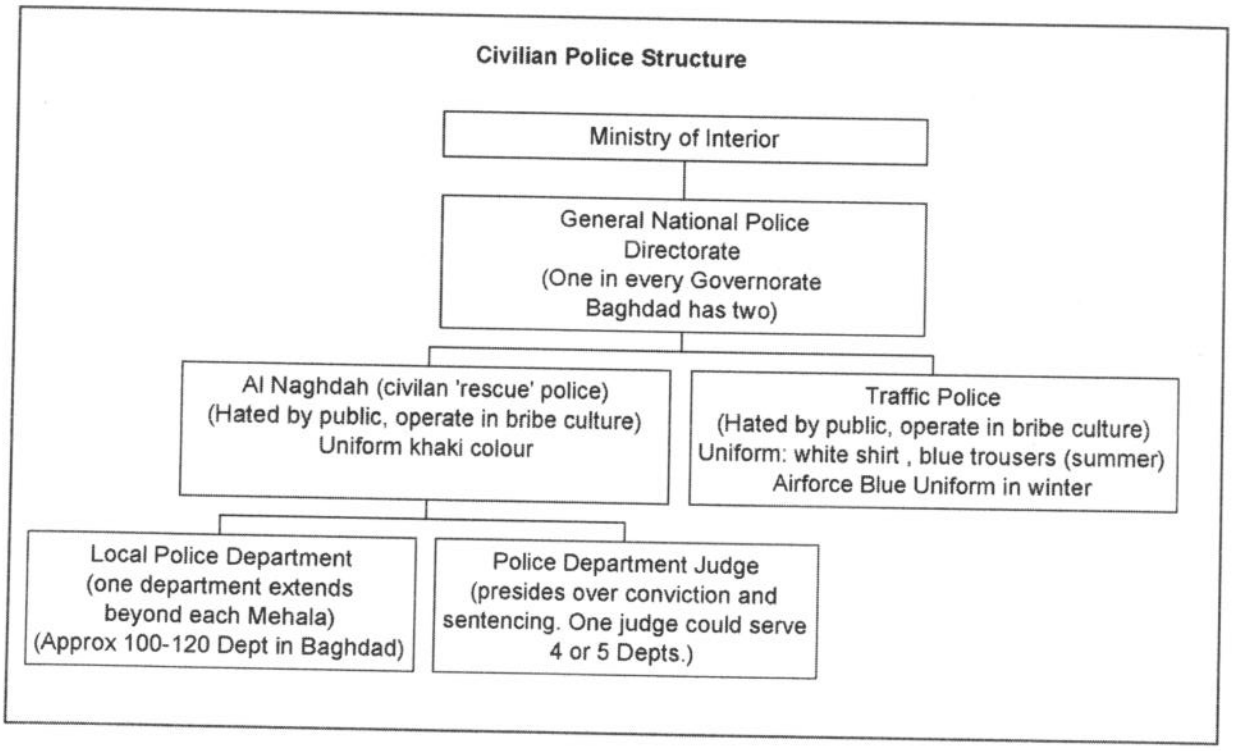
The Oil for Food (OFF) programme and the consequent rationing and food distribution system is the chief method by which most residents of the city receive their food. This system will be adminstered by local officials and Ba'ath Party personnel. Food will be dsitributed to warehouses within the city and then to designated shops within each neghborhood. Ration cards are used to administer the system. This is of course supplemented (for those that can afford it) with a considerable black market as well as some shops that operate outside the OFF system.

Civil Policing

We have very limited reporting on the organisation of Iraq's Civil Police. And we have no information specific to Basra. The following represents our knowledge of policing (much of which is based on anecdotal reporting) at the national/governorate level. We would expect this structure to be replicated in Basra. (S

The Ministry of Interior oversees the General National Police Directorate which co-ordinates Iraq's civilian police force in each Governorate. The police are then divided into two distinct branches; the traffic police and the Al Naghdah 'help/rescue police' (see Figure 1). The traffic police are looked upon with disdain and are not considered significant. (S

Bribery (often called Wasta in Iraq) is endemic in the civilian police force, and is generally accepted by the Government. The culture of bribery equally applies to the Al Naghdah and the Traffic police. Al Naghdah undertake the same role as the police department in Western society. They are charged with investigating all crimes ranging from petty theft to rape and murder. They travel in patrol cars and provide 24-hour coverage. They can be contacted by dialling 104. (S



Typically the police will not investigate a crime with payment from the victim. Should they subsequently catch the perpetrator, they will let them go, if they are prepared to pay a bribe. Consequently many people have stopped calling the police because they cannot afford the bribes required. (S

Anecdotal reporting suggests that the police have little regard for citizen's rights. They abuse and insult both victims and perpetrators and enter property at any time, without permission. They typically make an arrest at the accusation of a crime, and it is then up

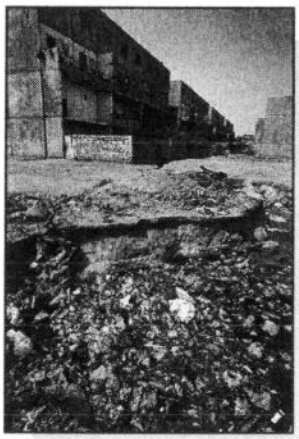
to the suspect to prove their innocence or bribe their way out of trouble. Whilst in custody, the system of bribery continues, whereby payment must be made to the guard in order to receive visits, to use the toilets or have a cigarette. (S

The populace does not perceive the police force to be intimately connected to the regime nor are they typically seen as acting in support of regime security organisation. But they are disliked because of their corrupt working practise. Some anecdotal reporting has suggested that police officers could be targets of popular retribution once regime control has been lost. We have little idea as to how the police will act during a coalition attack or in the aftermath. Limited anecdotal reporting suggest that they are likely to disappear from the streets if the regime begins to collapse. (S

Social Conditions

Large areas of Basra are still suffering from the effects of the Iran-Iraq war - many houses are partially destroyed. Others have fallen into disrepair as a consequence of the general decline in economic conditions within Iraq. Electrical power supply is intermittent, possibly less than 3 or 4 hours of electricity during a 24-hour period. Anecdotal reporting suggests that even these periods are prone to interruption with a short period of supply a power blackout lasting several hours. Privately run generators were used to supplement the power supply. (S

Sanitation within Basra is poor (see Annex D). Open sewage runs through certain areas. But Basra's largest problem is the lack of potable water (see Annex D). Anecdotal reporting suggests that this is the single biggest problem facing Basra's residents. Many spend a considerable portion of their private income on potable water. (S



Basra sewage

Rural and Religious Influences

We have very little information on religious life in Basra. Although the population of southern Iraq as a whole is at least 80% Shia the situation in Basra is more mixed as a result of the pull of the oil industry and the effects of government-inspired resettlement campaigns in bringing in internal migrants from other parts of Iraq. Basra City has no particular religious significance (for either Shia or Sunni). Furthermore, the extent to which the Iraqi Shia, especially urban Shia, will along act denominational lines in the political sphere is unknown. Notwithstanding that, having the support (or at least avoiding the condemnation) of religious leaders will be important for the success of any Coalition-led administration. Although Basra is a predominantly Shiite city the main sources of religious leadership are to be found further afield in Karbala and, especially Najaf, home of Shia Islam's most senior cleric Grand Ayatollah Sistani – where, at present, he is, in effect, a prisoner of the Iraqi authorities. In theory, Sistani could have considerable influence in Basra – for example in encouraging the populace to cooperate or not to cooperate with Coalition forces – although his inclinations appear to lean towards the quietist. Other Iraqi Shia figures might come to the fore post Saddam - A guide to the most likely candidates is at ANNEX C. (S

Though tribal identity is important within the rural areas immediately to the north of Basra City we have little information on its continuing relevance for the urban populace. Some anecdotal evidence suggests that tribal identity continues to be important within the city and there is some evidence that some tribal groups (for example the Sunni Sadun clan) play a prominent role in Ba'ath Party administration. A guide to tribal groups within the Basra Governorate is at ANNEX C. (C)

II - Reactions to Coalition Attack: The First 72 hours

Attitude of the Civil populace to the current regime
Judging overall attitudes of the populace to the regime is fraught with difficulty. But there seems little doubt that the vast majority of Basra's inhabitants are opposed to the regime and would welcome its removal. This is suggested by:

- The level of security force control and repression within Basra and its environs.
- Basra's high proportion of Shia residents (who have been politically marginalised and economically impoverished under the present regime).
- The 1991 Uprising when, with security control within the city disrupted, local residents and nascent insurgents took control of the city.
- The continuing low level attacks on regime personnel within the city and its environs from Iranian backed opposition groups.
- The latent opposition of the Shia religious leadership to the regime and the regime's repression of the Shia clerics.
- Basra's position just to the south of an area of ongoing rural (tribal based) insurgency against the regime and brutal regime repression. (C)

Popular Reaction to coalition attack
We have no definitive information on the likely reaction of the civil populace to a coalition attack. But we have some intelligence on what certain groups within the city might do and we have the well-documented accounts of what occurred in Basra City in 1991. (C)

Lessons of 1991
The 1991 Shaban uprising reportedly began on 28 February in Basra, touched off by retreating Iraqi Army troops disillusioned with Saddam and willing to

combat loyalist forces. The city was filled with retreating units, including several intact RGFC infantry elements, and tens of thousands of individual soldiers fleeing the

destruction of Iraq's Army in Kuwait. According to Iraqi popular history and a large number of anecdotal accounts the initial catalyst for the uprising occurred in Sa'ad Square in central Basra when an Iraqi tank commander fired a number of shells into a mural of Saddam Hussein. When this unprecedented act of rebellion went unpunished by other security forces in the vicinity the intifada began. Organised resistance in Basra had collapsed by 9 March 1991, with severe regime retributions against the local populace in the aftermath. (U)

Hence the uprising in Basra in 1991 began under a particular set of circumstances that might not be replicated. Basra in 1991 was filled with large numbers of disaffected (and defeated) army troops that local security forces would not (or could not) repress. It was

those troops themselves that sparked off a popular uprising. And there was of course no coalition ground presence within the city - essentially the uprising and coalition warfare were discrete events. But though circumstances might be very different there are still several noteworthy characteristics of the uprising: (U)

Total collapse of the security forces and civil administration: Though there was fierce fighting at some security HQs security forces within the city (DGS personnel, Ba'ath militia and civil police) quickly collapsed. Many simply disappeared from public view, others joined the insurgency. Within days (even hours) Basra became an administrative and governmental vacuum. (R)

Lack of political or popular leadership: The insurrection in Basra City, unlike for example that in Najaf, had neither real focus nor nascent leadership. With no real religious leadership within Basra City and with the majority of rural tribal leaders unwilling to lend support to the urban uprising their was no overall co-ordination of actions, no identifiable leadership and no one to curb the worst excesses of the populace. Hence Shia religious leadership in Najaf were able (through the issuing of Fatwas in the central mosques) to exercise some control over the direction of the uprising in the city (including protection of private property). No such control was exercised in Basra. (R)

Popular targeting of regime installations: Despite a lack of leadership the uprising seems to have targeted a number of installations. Ba'ath Party, DGS HQs and prisons were all attacked. They were not occupied by the populace but typically ransacked and burnt to the ground. A particular feature seems to have been the destruction of security files held within these buildings. (C)

Reprisals against regime associated personnel: While reprisals against many low level personnel were averted in Southern cities (such as Najaf) that had some sort of insurgent leadership that does not appear to have been the case in Basra. Much anecdotal reporting and academic accounts identify Basra (along with Karbala) as the site of the worst excesses of the uprising, with summary executions and indiscriminate massacres of security personnel. (C)

General collapse of law and order: Due to the combination of factors above the insurrection in Basra soon descended into general anarchy, with looting a major feature. Farhoud (an Iraqi term for the Baghdad anti-Jewish pogrom of 1941that was accompanied by looting and ransacking) was frequently used to describe the situation in Basra. Academic and anecdotal sources report that wanton destruction of public buildings and even the pillaging of museums occurred in Basra. (C)

Entry of Iranian backed Iraqi groups: It seems apparent that Iranian backed Shia groups (including forces linked to the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, SCIRI) entered the environs of Basra on the second or third day of the uprising. We have only anecdotal accounts of their actions but apart from summary executions of security personnel it appears that they also pursued an Islamic revolutionary agenda - destroying examples of 'unislamic' practice (such as the bar in the Sheraton International Hotel). (C)

Popular Reactions to Coalition Action now
We have no definitive intelligence on the likely action of the civil populace in the initial stages of coalition military action. But we can offer a number of scenarios that might occur. These scenarios are not mutually exclusive and could occur in different sections of the city simultaneously and without overall co-ordination. (C)

Spontaneous Civil Uprising. In a vacuum a similar situation to 1991 could arise. But we judge that a widespread uprising inside the city either before or during coalition engagement with Iraqi forces in Basrah governorate is unlikely. Fears of the continuing ability of the regime to attack the civil populace (including with CBW), recollections of 1991 and knowledge that coalition ground forces were intending to enter the city or had already done so are likely to lead to an extremely cautious reaction by the majority of the civil populace. Many will seek to safeguard their own property and will wait to see events unfold. (C)

Reprisals. Even without a general uprising we can expect individual or localised reprisals against Ba'ath Party and Security Force personnel. These are liable to escalate without coalition presence. Assessing the level of popular support for such activities is difficult. In 1991 during the uprising in Southern Iraq many Ba'ath members and security personnel were killed by local inhabitants and insurgents (often in cold blood). But other reporting suggests that many Iraqis recognise that many party members and low level security personnel have little real identification with the regime. As a result only high ranking regime personnel and those associated with particularly repressive behaviour would be targeted populace. (C)

'Resistance' Activity. Shia opposition groups are present within Basra city. Both SCIRI (the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq) and the Dawa Party would appear to have well-established urban support networks. These have allowed both groups to operate within the city and have over the years committed numerous acts of sabotage and assassination within Basra City. Equally we assume that urban support structures for the rural based Shia opposition (largely based upon tribal groups) may well exist. The Iraqi Communist Party might also retain an underground presence We have little idea of the size or capability of such groups but many resistance networks might try to seize control of local neighbourhoods within the Southern cities (including Basra) once the regime had collapsed. The events of 1991 suggest that an initial target of such groups would be to attack and seize control of local security HQs and prisons. They might then seek to free colleagues imprisoned by the security forces. Other targets might be important administrative centres or infrastructure within the city (e.g water or power distribution centres or food warehouses). Many of these groups have access to considerable weaponry including small arms and RPGs. (S

Coalition interaction with such groups could be difficult because:

- Some of these groups may pursue an agenda inimical to coalition interests. They might wish to maintain control of their local neighbourhoods post-Saddam and might resent coalition presence. In addition we should expect that semi-criminal organisations, smugglers and opportunists looking to exploit the situation would supplement resistance groups pursuing an 'anti-Saddam' agenda. Many may pose as

long term anti-regime elements (that will also be true of most of the prison population within the city). Identifying genuine oppositionists from criminal elements will be difficult without access to regime security records (which will be held in DGS and Ba'ath Party HQs). (C)

- The continued activity of armed groups will set a dangerous precedent for Basra's future political landscape. We must expect political groupings with a religious (shia) agenda and Iranian backing to emerge very quickly within Basra (and across Southern Iraq). But it would highly destabilising for such groups to base their political influence on their control of armed elements. The armed wings of groups such as SCIRI, Dawa and the Communist Party (and others) will need to be disarmed or disbanded. (C)

Collapse of Law and Order: We have little information on the organisation or intentions of the civil police force within Basra City. But we expect that, at least initially, many may disappear from view. Anecdotal evidence from elsewhere in Iraq suggests that many within the civil populace are fearful of a generalised breakdown of law and order following coalition attack. As a result many residents are arming themselves. It is noteworthy that such activity, combined with the distribution of arms by the regime to elements of the populace (for example Ba'ath members), will result in an urban populace that has considerable access to weaponry. Gun ownership is any case very widespread within Southern Iraq. We have no information on cultural views on gun ownership within Basra City, but within rural Southern Iraq such practices are accepted as part of local tradition. Disarming the populace (who in the countryside have access to automatic weapons and even mortars and RPGs) might be interpreted as running contrary to cultural norms and could be resisted by the civil populace. (S

Resistance from 'Regime Loyalists'. In 1991 there was considerable fighting between insurgent groups and regime security organisations. Many security force personnel were trapped in their HQ buildings and had little choice but to resist. We have no intelligence on regime planning to mount an urban defence of Basra City against coalition forces with the security forces currently in place within the city. But individual or localised resistance could occur and regime security forces might combat the local populace in the event of an uprising or insurgent attack. We assess the regime to have the following forces at its disposal:

- Directorate of General Security: DGS is the principal internal security force within Iraq. Typically DGS forces in Basra will have access to small arms. In addition each Governorate has DGS emergency forces which it can deploy. These might be used within Basra City and would be have access to However these forces would typically be trained only in an internal security role and the regime would initially employ them in order to counter any uprising by the civil populace. We have no information on the loyalty or morale of DGS personnel with the city. But reporting from other areas of Southern Iraq shows that loyalty of DGS officers is assessed (even by their commanding officers) to be low. In addition most DGS officers are locally recruited - hence in the Basra area many will themselves be Arab Shia and might have little real affinity with the regime. Within other areas of Iraq many regime security officials expect DGS cohesion to collapse when coalition action begins and for personnel to flee. We assess that with overall regime cohesion lost DGS forces within Basra City

will offer little resistance to coalition forces. However, there is the possibility that, in the context of an urban uprising or generalised breakdown in law and order, DGS members may defend themselves or their HQs from insurgents or the civil populace. (S

● **Ba'ath Party Militia:** Most members of the Ba'ath Party will be expected to play a role in defence of the city. They will have access to small arms and limited training. Small arms are typically kept at Ba'ath Party HQs and members may keep small arms in their own property. We have no definitive intelligence on the numbers of Party Militia within Basra City. Intelligence indicates that most Party members within the Basra area have little ideological affinity with the regime but see Party membership as a method of social and professional advancement. Reporting from other cities in Iraq indicates that many Party members, even in Arab Sunni cities, had no intention of offering any form of military resistance to coalition forces. We judge that the threat to coalition forces from armed Ba'ath members is therefore low. (S

● **Saddam Fedayyeen:** These forces may be employed in an internal security role within the city. They have a well-deserved reputation for brutality and fierce loyalty to the regime. Controlled by the Basra Governor there may be 3-4000 within the Basra Governorate as a whole. Typically Saddam Fedayeen will have access to a range of small arms but rarely use armoured vehicles or heavy weaponry. We assess that they would be the most likely internal security force to repress the civil populace and possible oppose coalition forces within the city. They would also be priority targets for resistance groups and reprisals by the civil populace. (S

● **Mujahideen e Khalq (MeK)**: The main MeK facility in the area is Abu Hayyah Military Camp (aka Camp Habib) on the Shatt al-Arab. This complex is 40km north of Basra itself and 27km from the Iranian frontier. It was subject to attack by pro-Iranian forces in 2001 and 2002 - most famously in April 2001 when a reported ten Iranian SCUD missiles were fired at it as part of the Iranian missile strike against MeK facilities of that month. In 2002 there were two or three combined arms "company-teams" each of 15 to 18 armoured vehicles at the camp. But as of September 2002 40 armoured vehicles had left, possibly as part of a wider redistribution of MeK assets from southern Iraq to facilities in central and northern Iraq. Equipment listed is currently one truck mounted crane and six trucks. We have no intelligence to indicate whether personnel at Camp Habib amounts to more than a caretaker presence. (S

On the basis of previous deployments of the MeK it also possible that small numbers are in Basra itself performing internal security duties. Given that the fighting strength of the MeK as a whole is estimated at 4,000-6,000 – and these mostly concentrated further north than the proposed UK AOR - the numbers in Basra and its environs are unlikely to exceed a few hundred. (S ,

If there is a MeK presence in the Basra area we judge that MeK personnel will fight if directly threatened by Coalition operations. But if they are left alone the intelligence is contradictory as to whether they would fight with the Iraqi army (probably, in this case, the local 6th Armoured Division), remain neutral in barracks, or attempt to flee. MeK

teams may try to infiltrate east from the Basra area into Iran, possibly blending in with refugees. There is a risk that Iran will send Badr Corps or Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps teams (some may already be there) into the Basra area to collect intelligence on, or eliminate, MeK personnel – especially if Tehran considers that the Coalition has not taken appropriate action against the MeK. If it turns out that the MeK have, in fact, already left the area it may be worthwhile to communicate this to the Iranians. (S

III - Basra: Reactions to Coalition (UK) Control

We have no specific intelligence on the instinctive reaction of Basra's civil populace to UK presence. Much will depend upon the circumstances in which control is established (e.g. destruction of civil infrastructure and civil casualties) and how Basra is subsequently administered. We assess the following factors will initially be important in determining reactions: (C)

- Establishment of Law and Order:

Much reporting from across Iraq suggests widespread fear amongst the civil populace of a general breakdown in law and order and intercommunal violence post Saddam. Establishment of law and order and defence of public and private property will be important. However, in the absence of a civil police force and other security forces this will prove difficult - especially given the complicating factors of access to arms, nascent resistance organisations, reprisals against regime personnel and the remnants of regime security forces. We assess that UK forces will be required in the city to provide security. (C

- Capture of key regime records/civil administrative records:

Securing regime records within Basra and local administrative records will be crucial. Possession of such records will aid in vetting/assessment of regime security personnel and Ba'ath members. Judicial, DGS and prison records will be important in assessing who, amongst the Basra prison population, are oppositionists and who have committed genuine criminal offences. Land ownership records (both urban and rural) will also prove vital. These records are liable to be kept in governorate buildings, DGS and police HQs and Ba'ath offices. (C

- Continuity and improvement in public services:

Water supply may be the critical issue. Disruption in the supply of water from elsewhere in Iraq (by water truck) and disruption in the private trade in potable water will exacerbate the current shortage. Supply of water to Basra residents, combined with an immediate effort to improve Basra's water supply infrastructure, will have a beneficial effect on popular sentiment towards UK forces. Retention of personnel important to the water distribution system may be critical. (C)

Efforts to improve the electrical and sanitation systems might be the next priority. (R)

- Continuity of OFF Programme:

We will need to preserve the OFF programme in order to ensure the continued distribution of food. This will entail preservation of some personnel currently administering the system in Basra (including Ba'ath members).

- Retention/dismissal of Ba'ath/regime figures

Retention of personnel involved in repressive regime activity or in organisations linked with such activity will increase instability within the city. Such organisations and individuals will be a target for reprisals for the civil populace and nascent resistance groups. Emerging political parties will almost certainly oppose the continuance of such organisations. Association of UK/coalition forces with such organisations will be counterproductive. We assess that Directorate of General Security (DGS), DGI (Directorate of General Intelligence), SSO (Special Security Organisation) elements and Ba'ath Party militia should be disbanded. Ba'ath Party leadership (Udw Firqa/Fara) might also need to be detained. MeK presence (if any) in Basra city must be removed - the potential for clashes with local Shia resistance groups and Iranian proxies is considerable. (S

There will be clear tensions between retaining personnel in former administrative structures and winning the support of the civil populace who wish to see emphatic 'regime change'. Retention of such personnel might also undermine aspects of the information campaign. But within Basra city there seems to no organisation with a better understanding of tribal relationships, the civil populace, internal security matters and provision of public services than the Ba'ath Party. And many party members will not have been involved in repressive activity. We assess that Ba'ath party members will have to be utilised by any military administration, at least in the early phases of control. But this policy will create tensions with the current Iraqi 'opposition' within Basra.
(S

- Managing 'Basran' politics

We must expect that politics within Basra will emerge within the first several months of military governance. We have little idea as to the form that such politics may take. And we should remember that Basra's residents have had no opportunity to articulate political ideas or organise themselves collectively for over twenty years. The current Iraqi exile opposition gives few clues to the future trends of Iraqi politics (embracing as it does all shades of political and religious opinion). But we must assume that groups currently operating in the AOR and Basra City will wish to have a political role. These groups include SCIRI/Badr Corps, the Islamic Dawa Party, tribal based groupings and possibly the Communist Party. Both Dawa and SCIRI will also wish to be represented at national level. Whilst the specific polices of these groups are hard to determine we can assume that they will wish to see a significant increase in Shia representation within national and local structures. We should also expect that both groups will wish to see a rapid transition towards a civilian Iraqi administration - SCIRI, in particular, have already voiced concerns about, and mooted opposition to, lengthy US/coalition military governance. SCIRI, Dawa and other Shia groups may also wish to see an increase in the religious (Islamic Shia) content of public life and may continue to look to sections of the Iranian regime for funding and guidance. We must expect such groups to exert some influence in Basra, most particularly because they will have pre-existent funding, support structures and political organisation. It is difficult to assess how popular such groups will be - we assess that within Southern Iraq, support for SCIRI and Dawa is patchy (at best) and alternative form of Shia politics will emerge. What is important is that their future ability to influence politics in the AOR and Basra is not determined by their continued access to weaponry or their control of armed factions. Hence for SCIRI to involve

themselves in Basran politics we might require the initial disbandment of their armed faction (Badr Corps). Indeed disbandment of all armed political wings (though not tribal groups) would seem a pre-requisite for the involvement of Iraqi groups in nascent political/local administration. (S

Some of these groups and possibly the constituencies they seek to represent (e.g. poor urban Shia) may feel disenfranchised by the process of transition itself. Retention of large numbers of ex-regime personnel, combined with the continuity of former regime structures, may lead to resentment against UK/coalition personnel. Political groups may emerge pressuring for a more rapid or radical transformation within the system or demand the ejection of coalition presence. We will be able to do little about the emergence of such groups but we will be faced with a decision as to how to deal with the emergence of political forces within the city that might be opposed to coalition objectives. We may have to develop an internal 'security service' capability in order to monitor such developments. (S

Whilst these issues may shape the attitude of the local populace toward UK presence many other factors (possibly outside of UK influence) will be highly important. The development of national political structures in Baghdad (or their absence) and the influence of regional media within Basra (we must assume satellite ownership and use will increase dramatically) will be vital. Regional powers, the Shia leadership in Najaf and Karbala and other regional events (e.g. Israel/Palestine) will quickly become important in Basran politics. (C)