

JIC Assessment, 16 April 2003

IRAQ: THE INITIAL LANDSCAPE POST-SADDAM

Key Judgements

- I. Resistance to the coalition by pro-Saddam forces will increasingly be limited to sporadic and small-scale attacks. Few foreign volunteers will stay to fight.
- II. Iraqi jubilation at Saddam's fall will dissipate quickly. In the short term, for many Iraqis the details of the post-Saddam political process will be less important than a restoration of public order and the start of reconstruction.
- III. The Iraqi population will blame the coalition if progress is slow. Resentment could lead to violence. But at present there is no Iraqi social or political structure which could co-ordinate widespread opposition.
- IV. [...]
- V. The threat from Al Qaida associates in northern Iraq has been significantly reduced by coalition operations.
- VI. We have a limited ability to predict which tribal Shaikhs and religious figures will be influential. Some will be important in the resolution of the short term security problems but will resist giving up power seized in the early post-Saddam period.
- VII. There is a significant risk that Iraqi groups competing for influence and power will resort to violence against one another.