



UNRESTRICTED
WARFARE
SYMPOSIUM

14 - 15 MARCH 2006

MEETING THE UNRESTRICTED
WARFARE THREAT:
INTEGRATING STRATEGY,
ANALYSIS AND TECHNOLOGY

Al Qaeda in Iraq: Demobilizing the Threat

Maj Tim Kraner, US Air Force Naval Postgraduate School – Dec 2005

To Symposium
Agenda

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Overview

- **Target System Analysis in an Insurgency**
 - **Counterinsurgency: Strategy & Analysis**
 - **Trend Analysis & Conclusions**
 - **Recommendations & Food for Thought**
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- **Analytical Frameworks Used:**
 - **Target System Analysis – Social Mobilization Theory**
 - **Counterinsurgency Strategy – Baylis Model**
 - **COIN Employment – Effects Based Operations**

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Al Qaeda in Iraq: Target System Analysis in an Insurgency

- **Relationship within the Overall Insurgency**
 - Numerically, a very small percentage
 - Disproportionate effects
 - A unique counterinsurgency challenge

- **A Social Mobilization Problem**
 - Group-level dynamics based on Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, Frames & Narratives and Action Repertoires

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Al Qaeda in Iraq: Target System Analysis in an Insurgency

- **Political Opportunities**
 - Demographic pressures, political repression
 - Regional economic atrophy, Western globalization
 - Soviet defeat/withdrawal from Afghanistan
 - Post-OIF lack of security
- **Mobilizing Structures**
 - Regional Salafi supporters
 - Advances in information technology
- **Action Repertoires**
 - Guerrilla tactics
 - Suicide bombings, Mass casualty attacks
- **Frames & Narratives**
 - Blanket takfeeri frames
 - Regional governments are corrupt - the West is to blame
 - Those who support the government are also not true Muslims
 - Anti-Democracy & Anti-Shia
 - AQI Goals
 - Deny American goals in Iraq
 - Compel US & Allied forces to leave
 - Expand Jihad within the Middle East

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Counterinsurgency: Strategy and Analysis

- **Traditionally, a Narrow View**

- Focus on military tactics, technology & employment
- Analysis focused on specific case studies
- Few general theories of counterinsurgency

- **AQI's Centers of Gravity**

- The Iraqi Population
 - Ability to Operate Freely within Iraq
- The Supporting Regional Population
 - Flow of Resources (manpower and material)
 - Appeal of the Al Qaeda Narrative

- **Effective Counterinsurgency Effort Requires a Coordinated Multidimensional Strategy**

- Military, Political, Socio-Economic
- Cultural-Ideological, Psychological, International

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Counterinsurgency: Strategy and Analysis

- **National Strategy for Victory in Iraq**

- Military, Political & Economic dimensions
 - Focuses on Iraqi Sunnis (Nationalists)
- Foreign Fighters addressed as terrorists
 - Seen as primarily a military problem

- **Military - Clear, Hold & Develop Strategy**

- Growth of Iraq security forces
- Focus on HUMINT

- **Political – Provide political outlet for grievance**

- Elections & political party-building

- **Economic – Development**

- Large development projects & Micro-loans

- **Necessary, but not sufficient to defeat AQI**

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Counterinsurgency: Strategy and Analysis

- **Countering AQI's mobilization strengths**
- **Cultural-Ideological – “War for the Muslim Mind”**
 - Conflict for the support of moderate Muslims
- **Psychological – The “Mobilizing Trinity”**
 - We're good, they're bad, & we will win
- **International – An Open or a Closed System**
 - AQI's regional and global supporters
 - Closing safe-havens & Border security

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Trend Analysis & Conclusions

- **Iraq Insurgency neither won nor lost**
- **AQI is a fully-mobilized ideologically-grounded enemy - Continues to be able to:**
 - Conduct destabilizing attacks & incite sectarian tension
 - Recruit manpower & gain material resources
 - Find support within Iraqi population
 - Maintain tacit support of neighboring states
 - Effectively promote its narrative
 - Reject the political process
- **Indications of progress**
 - Infighting & alienation from AQI goals and methods
 - Increasingly better HUMINT
 - Cross-cutting political alliances
 - Violence largely contained within 4 provinces

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Recommendations

- **Approach AQI insurgency as unconventional warfare problem with international support base**
- **Strategic Implications:**
 - **AQI immune to military, economic & political strategy**
 - **Need to coordinate cultural, psychological and international strategies into the COIN effort**
 - **Iraqi self-identification**
 - **Human Rights & Rule of Law**
 - **Counter-narrative strategies**
 - **Close coordination with Allies and regional states**

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Food for Thought...

“Peacekeeping is not a soldier’s job, but only a soldier can do it”

Dag Hammarskjöld – Former UN Secretary-General

- **Synchronizing all the Elements of National Power**
 - **Coordinated Planning and Execution**
 - **National-level Planning Staff**
 - **Strategy formulation for the “Long View”**

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Questions

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