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## CJTF-7 Red Cell

A Red Cell Special Memorandum

10 January 2004

### Post-Saddam FRE Opportunities and Vulnerabilities

*The insurgency has its own momentum, independent of Saddam, led by a dispersed group of former Ba'athists, State security and Fedayeen. It has evolved considerably since April 2003, expanding and consolidating. A post-capture period of incisive Coalition operations has been unable to exterminate them and, in view of the bullish Coalition media statements, they perceive themselves as having the upper hand. Insurgency cells and a broad network survive; weapons caches are safe, and sources of funding remain available. The flow of foreign fighters across Iraq's borders has slowed, but has not stopped. Arab TV coverage of US operations is making direct comparisons with Israeli actions in Gaza and the West Bank, and Coalition tactics have convinced numbers of non-Saddamist Iraqi nationalists to join the resistance. They maintain freedom of action and are confident enough to expand southward. The next six-months will be a period of continued organization and expansion by the FRE, tied to maintaining instability and increasing support throughout Iraq.*

#### Opportunities

##### **Prevent the establishment of governance - local thru national**

Former Ba'athist party members in Sunni communities are reticent to support the Coalition and CPA because of FRE pressure and distrust of the Coalition/CPA. Acts of intimidation and violence, especially in rural areas, cause local governmental and tribal leaders to distance themselves from cooperating with Coalition forces. In the Sunni heartland, local Ba'ath Party posting of lists marking "collaborators" for death exemplifies these actions. Inability to protect these individuals acts as a sustained deterrent to Iraq cooperation.

At the national level, anti-Saddam Ba'athists have been slow in forming parties to participate in future political processes, partially due to the same pressures. Sectarian factors, as embodied by the IGC, can be used by the FRE to further alienate the people from participating in the political process. The specter of Iraq being partitioned, as exemplified by recent reporting of US support for Kurdish autonomy, disconnects the population from reconciliation. Sunnis in particular, cannot see a future for themselves in a federation that cedes all wealth to the Kurdish and Shi'a communities. Subsequent distrust and inter-ethnic friction set the conditions for increased sectarian violence with the potential to further degrade the security situation and justify militias in northern and southern Iraq.

##### **Prevent effective security forces**

1.4a, 1.4g

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Meanwhile the Coalition forces' Transition of Authority provides numerous opportunities to exploit these weaknesses. As military units rotate, seams and knowledge gaps can allow the FRE an advantage as new units work to establish control of their operational areas. During this period, the FRE will execute more complex operations against the Coalition, economic infrastructure and Iraqi security forces. The FRE will seek to keep security forces in garrison, degrade international support, and generate military responses resulting in collateral damage against the population. All of these actions can result in distancing the population from the Coalition and security forces.

##### **Generate popular and political support through disinformation**

1.4a, 1.4g

##### **Learning to love extremists**

1.4a, 1.4g

##### **A strategic pause**

1.4a, 1.4g

##### **Vulnerabilities**

##### **Synchronized Coalition/CPA IO and Strategic Communications campaign**

1.4a, 1.4g

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1.4a, 1.4g

**Iraqis in control of their own security**

1.4a, 1.4g

**A country rebuilt (social, political and economic measures at all levels)**

1.4a, 1.4g

**Conclusion**

1.4a, 1.4g

(b)(3), (b)(6) CJTF-7 Red Cell, DSN (b)(6)

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