

~~SECRET~~



Director of Central Intelligence

DCI Red Cell

A Red Cell Report

Number 110

28 March

(b)(3)



(b)(3)

After Saddam: Could Revenge Become Mass Murder?

In response to the events of 11 September, the Director of Central Intelligence commissioned CIA's Deputy Director for Intelligence to create a "red cell" that would think unconventionally about the full range of relevant analytic issues. The DCI Red Cell is thus charged with taking a pronounced "out-of-the-box" approach and will periodically produce memoranda and reports intended to provoke thought rather than to provide authoritative assessment. Please direct questions or comments to the DCI Red Cell at [redacted]

(b)(3)

The destruction of Saddam's Ba'hist regime could see an unleashing of and religious emotions, possibly reaching the level that produced mass murder in Rwanda and Burundi. Media reports of revenge-based ethnic or sectarian atrocities would eclipse US success in ousting Saddam. Because coalition forces will be physically unable to head off every threatened instance of atrocity, repeated public warnings to opposition leaders and the Iraqi populace may be needed—even as combat goes on—to help contain the risk of large-scale revenge killings. Suggesting a preventive UN role might embarrass France and Russia into desisting from obstructing post-Saddam planning.

(b)(3)

The DCI Red Cell [redacted]

[redacted] speculates on the risk that ethnic and religious clashes could escalate into mass killings. [redacted]

(b)(1) (b)(1)

(b)(3)

(b)(3) (b)(3)

(b)(3)

Hour of Defeat, Hour of Revenge

As Saddam's instruments of coercion collapse under coalition blows, [redacted] Shia tribes in the south and Kurds in the north are likely to extract retribution against Ba'hist party members and security forces. [redacted]

[redacted] The circumstances in which Basra falls might be the first test of coalition ability to prevent large-scale revenge killings. [redacted]

(b)(3)

The tribal and religious emotions that will be released as Saddam's regime falls strike us as uncomfortably similar to those behind ethnic clashes that escalated into genocide in Rwanda and Burundi in 1994. Although the historical animosity between Sunni and Shia pales in comparison to the blood feuds of the Hutu and Tutsi, years of repression, violence, and murders by Saddam's regime are spark and tinder for an inevi(b)(1) conflagration. (b)(3)

- In Rwanda and Burundi, the key issues were power sharing in the government, property rights, and extremist views on the hereditary rights of each clan. Similar issues are likely to emerge in post-Saddam Iraq.
- Other factors that contributed to the Rwanda-Burundi genocides were the availability of weapons, previous human-rights violations, racist propaganda, and militia complicity in massacres. All these factors also exist in Iraq. [redacted] (b)(3)

(b)(3)

The Sunni-dominated militia have suppressed the Shia and Kurds by dislocation, imprisonment, and execution, all of which are shaded with communal overtones. Although the Shia have access to weapons, the Sunni have better training and superior weaponry. The Kurds, with US help, have been able to hold their own against the Republican Guard.

- As the Ba'hist hold in the south collapses and civil war possibly breaks out in Baghdad, the Sunnis could be split over maintaining loyalty to Saddam. A Sunni split

~~SECRET~~

(b)(3)

~~SECRET~~

(b)(3)

could mirror the split between Hutu extremists and moderates that helped open the way to mass killings in Central Africa.

- In the north, the possibility of killings mounting to wholesale ethnic cleansing could occur when Kurds return to Kirkuk to reclaim homes and property lost in Saddam's Arabization program. More than a million Kurds have been displaced from their homes in Kirkuk and the surrounding regions.
- Turks and Turkomans could help perpetrate mass slaughter in the north if Turkish forces move aggressively to prevent formation of an independent Kurdish state.

[REDACTED]

(b)(3)

Invaders As Peacekeepers [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

The disintegration of the regime before US and coalition forces are in place in Baghdad and other sensitive locations could provide the stimulus for ethnic purges. Such violent anarchy might put isolated coalition units in the precarious position faced by US forces when surrounded by hostile mobs in the Somali capital of Mogadishu.

- Coalition forces already contending with the Iraqi military could confront Shia and Sunni civilians engaged in a blood feud. An all too plausible scenario might find coalition units in a firefight with Iraqi forces as a simultaneous riot breaks out between ethnic and religious groups—with all four contending for the same ground.

[REDACTED]

(b)(3)

Several steps by coalition forces might limit the danger that localized and individual acts of revenge against Saddam's men will get out of control.

[REDACTED]

(b)(3)

Leaflet Campaign. Messages and instructions might be conveyed and followed that would limit participation in ethnic barbarities. Iraqis are indeed reading, distributing, and following the instructions provided in coalition leaflet drops. Casualties during recent bombing runs were significantly reduced when Iraqis stayed away from work during the designated time and targets were successfully destroyed.

[REDACTED]

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

(b)(3)

Confiscating Weapons. Removal of weapons from the general Iraqi populace and militia and then forming an ethnically diverse Iraqi security force could be crucial steps in limiting the opportunities for mass killings. To this end, locating caches of regular arms and chemical-biological weapons and preventing weapons disbursements to ethnic groups may be as much a priority as keeping such caches from criminals or terrorists.

[REDACTED]

(b)(3)

Establishing Legal Forums. Establishing an interim judicial system with the three major ethnic groups equally represented could reduce ethnic tensions and offer reassurance that justice will be served through law, not vengeance.

[REDACTED]

(b)(3)

Coalition and International Presence. Having US or UK forces occupy regions where ethnic or religious factions could square off would have an ameliorating affect on tensions and reduce the likelihood of killings on a large scale. Asking for an expeditious UN contribution to policing especially dangerous areas might lessen the risk that coalition forces will get caught in an ethnic crossfire—and could force France and Russia to "put up or shut up" on their supposed interest in sparing the Iraqi people from mayhem.

[REDACTED]

(b)(3)

(b)(3)

~~SECRET~~