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Director of
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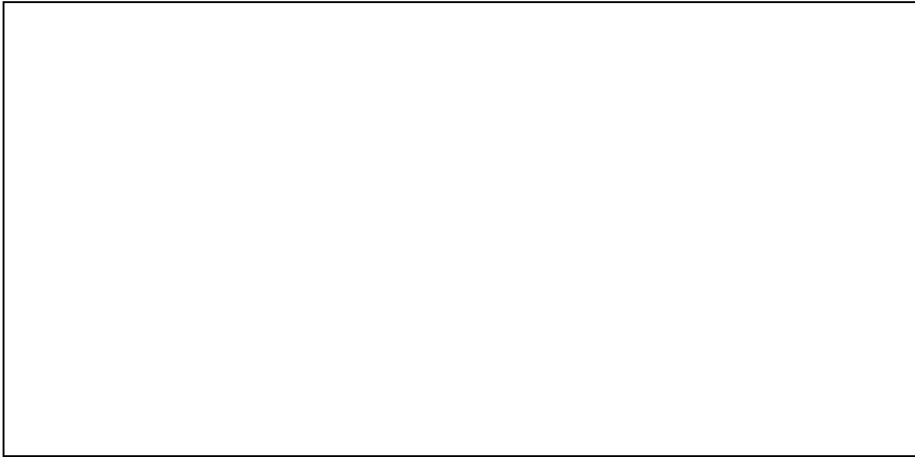
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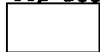


Special Analysis

Iran-Iraq: *Implications of the Iranian Victory* 7



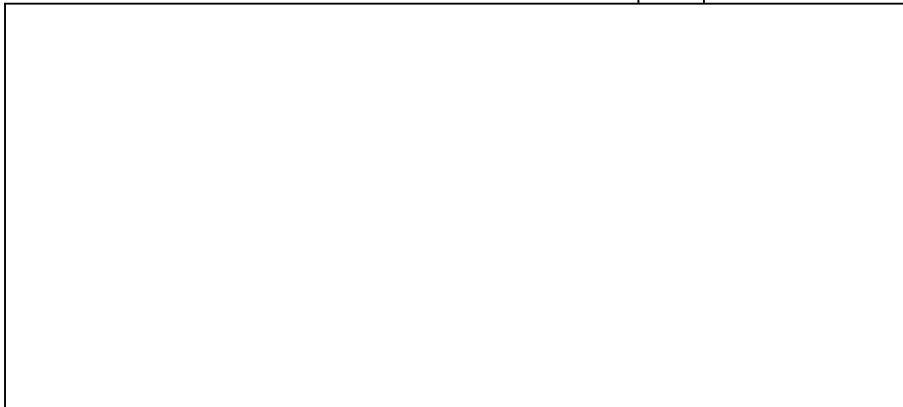
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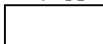
SPECIAL ANALYSIS

IRAQ-IRAN: Implications of the Iranian Victory

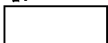
Iraq's defeat by Iran in the recent heavy fighting has left President Saddam Hussein, the personal architect of the war, in dire straits. He has no prospect of improving Iraqi military fortunes or of persuading Iran to negotiate. Saddam probably is considering withdrawing completely from Iran, while taking steps to shore up his weakened position at home. Any earlier Iranian interest in negotiations is likely to evaporate as expectations of Saddam's downfall increase. Moderate Arab states are increasingly apprehensive about the threat from a victorious Iran.



//Despite suffering substantial losses, the Iranian Army appears strong enough to continue prosecuting the war. Tehran probably is contemplating another major offensive later this spring. It might launch a diversionary attack in the north to threaten the strategic approach to Baghdad.//



//Iran's primary effort, however, is likely to be aimed at recovering the area between Ahvaz and Khorramshahr. This is the largest piece of territory still held by Iraq, but Iraqi forces holding it are thinly spread.//




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


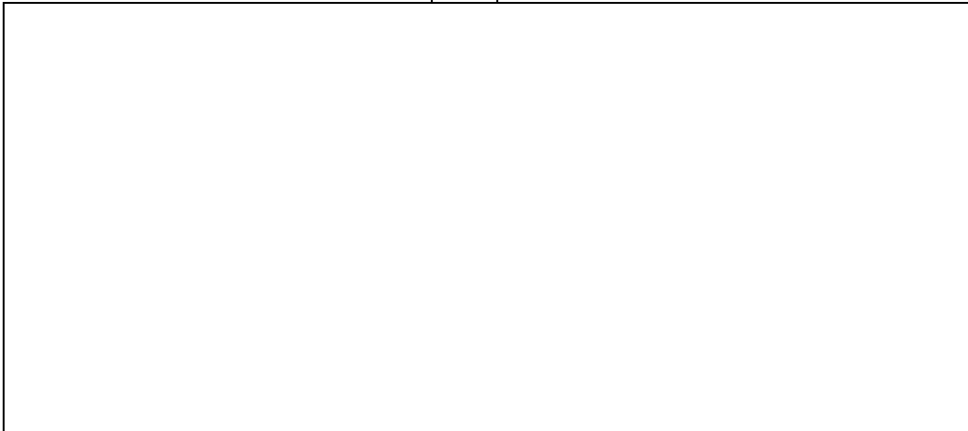


Saddam's Vulnerability

The Iraqi leader's total identification with the war has increased the possibility that his rule will be challenged. The military failure will heighten other longstanding--but suppressed--grievances, including Saddam's "personality cult," his deemphasis of the Ba'th Party's status, and his refusal to share power with his colleagues. These differences are over style more than policy. 

A palace coup involving both Ba'th Party and military figures is the most serious threat. Party and military leaders probably are concerned that opposition to "Saddam's war" could engulf the entire regime. Political change in Baghdad might improve prospects for a negotiated settlement with Iran, but Tehran would still remain opposed to any lasting accommodation with a secular Ba'thist regime. 

A post-Saddam regime initially would be collegial. Dramatic foreign policy changes are unlikely. Contacts with both the West and the USSR would be maintained to facilitate rebuilding the economy and the military, and to avoid political isolation in the face of collaboration between Syria and Iran. 



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