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**Pandora's Box:
Iraqi Federalism, Separatism,
“Hard” Partitioning
and US Policy**

Working Draft

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Executive Summary

The attached report provides a major revision of the previous draft report on the prospects for federalism, separation, and partition in Iraq, and is virtually a new document. It has no simple bottom line, and all of the options present agonizing trade-offs and are almost certain to result in some degree of added separation and displacement.

At the same time, the analysis indicates that the vast majority of Iraqis -- other than Kurds -- do not want a weak central government or any form of division of the country. It shows that violence is serious in the areas dominated by the Kurds, Sunnis, and Shi'ite as well as in mixed areas, and that any form of federalism or partition that divided Iraq's economy, infrastructure, and petroleum sector would be almost impossible to achieve on anything close to an equitable basis or using Iraq's present governorates and divisions by sect and ethnicity.

As the current crisis between the Iraqi Kurds and Iraq shows, the situation would be further complicated by the creation of a vulnerable weak state, or group of states, that would come under immediate pressure from Iraq's neighbors. The result would not be security and stability, but constant pressure from both the sectarian and ethnic factions within Iraq and from Iraq's neighbors as they competed for influence and to ensure their own security.

At the same time, no one can deny that Iraq is already dividing along sectarian and ethnic lines in many areas. This process, however, has been forced upon Iraq's population by its violent extremists rather than by popular will, and Iraq's Kurds are the only faction in Iraq that have shown a high level of popular support for any formal effort at partitioning. Moreover, these divisions have already proved that the term "Soft Partitioning" has already been shown to be a cruel oxymoron. Virtually every aspect of sectarian and ethnic struggle to date has been brutal, and has come at a high economic cost to those affected. The reality is that partitioning must be described as "hard" by any practical political, economic, and humanitarian standard.

If such divisions continue, and reach the level of partitioning or federalism that divides Iraq on sectarian and ethnic lines to the point that Arab Sunnis, Arab Shi'ites, Kurds, and minorities cannot function as a nation, the consequences are likely to be much grimmer. It is far from clear that such developments will lead to a large-scale blood bath -- although this is possible. However, isolated cases of large-scale violence and local atrocities seem all too likely. Major new displacements of population are almost certain, and every step towards further division will come at great economic cost to those involved.

The divisions within Iraq, the lack of broad national political accommodation, and a weak and ineffective central government have already led to ongoing local and regional power struggles even within those areas dominated by one sect or ethnic group. The result of

broader and more permanent division will be continuing insecurity and political instability that easily could play out over a decade or more. The resulting mix of tensions, conflicts, rivalries, and instability might well cripple much of Iraq's economic development. It also could lead to political or military intervention by Iraq's neighbors as they take sides, and some – like Iran – will seek to exploit Iraq's weakness and divisions.

As for the role the US should play in Iraq, nothing about the history of US intervention in Iraq to date indicates that the US has the competence to pressure Iraq to adopt a particular solution to dividing up the country or redistributing its population. If the US does attempt to intervene in federalism, it will confront major new security problems in every divided area, and see Iraqi security forces polarize even further along sectarian and ethnic lines. Leaders and officials in the central government will question US motives and almost be forced to support given factions at the expense of any effort to build a nation or reach accommodation.

Any US effort to “plan” such divisions could well end in discrediting any such proposal simply because it came from the US. It would breed new sources of Iraqi anger against the US from whatever elements in Iraqi society felt the US proposals were unfair – if not all elements simply because the proposals came from the US. The US might also hopelessly compromise its ability to act as a buffer between Iraq's sectarian and ethnic factions or take humanitarian action to halt new outbreaks of open fighting between them.

There is, however, a good case for continuing the present US efforts to help Iraq's leaders find solutions that adjust to the grim realities that have emerged over the last four years. Al Qa'ida in Iraq is far less able to generate civil conflicts, and the tribal awakening in Anbar and other areas has created a time window in which negotiation seems far more possible. The Iraqi government may be slow to act, but there have also been meetings between the leaders of Iraq's factions that indicate progress may be possible outside the formal structure of Iraq's parliament, and can occur at the local and regional levels and not simply at the level of the central government.

No one can guarantee that Iraq's leaders will reach some form of accommodation, and the odds may be against. The fact remains, however, that Iraqi public opinion does support continued unity, and only political accommodation can create areas that empower Arab Shi'ites, Arab Sunnis, and Kurds without breaking up the country, that develop more legitimate local and provincial governments, and that ensure a proper sharing of the nation's oil wealth.

Iraq does not need help in dividing and in becoming less safe and less secure. It does need continuing help in moving towards accommodation. Unless the US helps the Iraqi government implement such an accommodation agreement – one that preserves the basic functions of a central government and ensures that any form of “federalism” comes largely through consensus – Iraqis will probably fail to achieve any workable solutions to their divisions that can actually be put into practice. Efforts to pay compensation and actually manage such separation in peaceful ways are almost certainly likely to fail in many cases because of sectarian and ethnic divisions over how to pay the money, the

specific details of any given set of shifts, and the inability to create housing and jobs in ways that match population migration. Efforts to create military and police forces and a justice system that is not divided along sectarian and ethnic lines are almost certain to fail. Preserving and improving Iraq's infrastructure -- petroleum, water, utilities and transport -- will at best present massive challenges.

In contrast, there is a solid case for continuing US security efforts and aid *if* Iraq can move towards such political accommodation. The US military presence and the ISF development effort may not be popular among Iraqis, but it is almost certainly doing more to reduce the cost of hard partitioning, and to make some form of gradual Iraqi political accommodation possible, than any US effort to encourage partitioning or federalism could possibly accomplish.

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The Competency Problem: Treating Iraqis Like 28 Million White Rats

There are times when the US should recognize its own limitations. The US should have learned some degree of restraint and humility from its mistakes over the last four years. Every time the US has tried to experiment with Iraq's destiny as if Iraq was populated by 28 million white rats, the results have been destructive and disastrous.

America's failures to date include the failure to anticipate the need for stability operations and nation building; the Coalition Provisional Authority, experiments with "democracy" that held national elections without having real political parties and which prevented local elections; a constitutional exercise that did far more to divide Iraqis than unite them; a horribly mismanaged and misplanned foreign aid problem that wasted most of some \$22 billion in US aid funds and \$10 billion in Iraqi funds inherited from Saddam's regime; and a series of Congressional "benchmarks" based on US political values rather than Iraqi needs. Nothing about US efforts in Iraq to date indicate that the US can design and manage Iraq's future beyond the broadest policy goals.

Any overt US effort to address federalism or partition that goes beyond a vacuous Senate bill would potentially interfere in the most difficult and contentious problem Iraqis face: saying how and where Iraqis should divide along sectarian and ethnic lines. Quite aside from the inability to go beyond persuasion to moderate sectarian and ethnic "cleansing, and a real ability to influence how Iraqis decide their future, there is the minor problem of a demonstrated track record of zero competence.

Creating Pandora's Box or Opening It?

No one can ever know the extent to which the US created Pandora's Box or merely opened it. Nor can one ever know whether the US could have prevented or controlled Iraq's drift into sectarian and ethnic civil conflicts if it had been ready to carry out stability operations after Saddam fell, supported Iraq with effective aid in nation building, and had set realistic goals for Iraq's development instead of idealizing a state and political system that it could not construct.

Many of the seeds of Iraq's present separations into sectarian and ethnic zones were sown long before the US invaded, and Iraqi claims and perceptions that Iraq was a unified state have never been real:

- Kurdish separatism long predates the creation of modern Iraq, and has led to several civil wars since the Versailles treaty. Saddam dealt with one in the early 1970s, ruthlessly suppressed another uprising during the Iraq-Iraq War, and still another Kurdish uprising in 1991. The US helped create a separate Kurdish identity by creating a Kurdish security zone from 1992-2003, and this was reinforced by constant threats and one major invasion by Saddam's forces.

- Divisions between Shi'ite and Sunni affected the largely Shi'ite led uprising against the British, and the foreign monarchy that the British imposed on Iraq played the Sunni card and Sunni tribalism as part of its divide and conquer tactics.
- Saddam and other neo-Ba'athists originally concentrated on destroying their secular political enemies, but state investment under their rule tended to favor Sunnis from the start, investing in the more secular urban areas, and discriminating against spending in Shi'ite urban and rural areas. The massive investment in the Sunni towns and cities in Anbar and the west and northwest, and largely Sunni areas in and around Baghdad, began in the late 1970s and continued through 2003.
- Once the Iran-Iraq War began, well over 100,000 Shi'ites fled to Iran, some religious Shi'ites turned against the regime, hostile Shi'ite enclaves built up in the border area and marshes south of Baghdad, and the security services cracked down on any Shi'ite religious voices that seemed to be a threat to the regime.
- During the actual fighting, Shi'ite dominated infantry units were often deployed to take the brunt of the casualties in the initial phases of Iraqi offensives, and promotion favored Sunnis in both the armed services and government because they were seen as most loyal.
- Some of the final clashes of the war were fought against Iranian sponsored Iraqi forces like the Badr brigades. Government investment favored Sunni areas and the more secular urban areas even more than in the past once Iraq became bankrupt in 1982 and reliant on foreign loans.
- During the Gulf War, Saddam left lower grade and largely Shi'ite divisions in the forward area in Kuwait with far less supply and support. When he began to rush his units out of Kuwait, right after the Coalition advance, largely Sunni Republican Guard and the better regular Army heavier divisions received priority, leaving largely Shi'ite and Kurdish lower-grade infantry units to find their own way out.
- The uprisings in the south following Saddam's defeat in the Gulf War were seen as Shi'ite, Iranian-sponsored, and with a religious character. The Iraqi army and security forces carried out a low-level counterinsurgency operation against hostile and potentially hostile Shi'ite elements from 1992-2003 -- draining the marshes in some areas, and carrying out a systematic security operation against Shi'ite leaders and religious figures.
- Saddam increasingly used divide and conquer tactics to favor Sunni and mixed tribes he saw as loyal, and Sunni cities in Anbar and Western Iraq after 1992. He increasingly played the religious card instead of supporting Ba'ath secularism, and played it as a Sunni.
- From 1975 onwards, Saddam encouraged or forced the displacement of Arabs and Kurds, and Sunnis and Shi'ites. Tensions grew along Iraq's sectarian and ethnic fault lines and in the more religious Shi'ite areas. Forced migration took place during the Iran-Iraq War, and after 1992. While no one has accurate numbers, UN estimates put internal displacements at over one million Iraqis by the time of the US invasion.

The fact remains, however, that the US failure to anticipate the need for stability operations and nation building has been a major factor in dividing Iraq along sectarian and ethnic lines and in forced displacements and various forms of "cleansing." Things were made worse by the Coalition Provisional Authority, the favoring of Shi'ite exiles with strong religious elements and ties to Iran, and by experiments with "democracy" that held national elections without having real political parties and where the CPA prevented

local elections. They were further compounded by a constitutional exercise that did far more to divide Iraqis than unite them; by a horribly mismanaged and misplanned foreign aid problem that wasted most of some \$22 billion in US aid funds and \$10 billion in Iraqi funds inherited from Saddam's regime; and by a series of Congressional "benchmarks" based on US political values rather than Iraqi needs.

Going From Concept to Grim Reality

This lack of US ability to tell the Iraqis how to restructure their nation is all too clear in the lack of any meaningful explanation by most advocates of partitioning, federalism, and separation as to what they really advocate. They talk in concepts and generalities, rather than in terms of specific operation plans. Most constantly shift their approach whenever they are pushed for details.

This lack of specific plans is not a minor issue when the same words can mean so many different things.

- ***Partitioning***: This paper, for example, describes "partitioning" in broad terms of some form of separation of Iraqis into regions that are largely Arab Sunni, Arab Shi'ite, Kurdish, or mixed, and which are dominated by one sect or ethnic group in terms of political and security control. Others leave the definition so vague that it could mean splitting Iraq into separate nations or the deliberate creation of sectarian and ethnic zones either peacefully or through forced migration.
- ***Federalism***: is generally left undefined in any practical way to the point it seems to mean almost anything from the kind of vote to create federal areas along the current boundaries of Iraq's governorates permitted by Iraq's constitution to the creation of new regions and areas, with new boundaries. The role of the central government is not defined, and some seem to imply the end result will be far closer to confederation than the existing concept of federalism in Iraq's constitution. It is not clear how different (or independent) the resulting regions can be in terms of law, human rights, political, systems, revenue sharing, security forces, or anything else. It is also unclear whether they represent the result of force, leadership agreements, referendums, etc.
- ***Separate states and/or autonomous regions***: Some advocates talk about the creation of separate states in vague terms, and a few advocate Kurdish independence or autonomy. No one tends to explain exactly how this would work or what happens in terms of boundaries, finding some form of consensus among those involved, or the treatment of minorities, infrastructure, petroleum and other resources, security, etc.

These conflicting interpretations and usages are all warnings about talking carelessly in general terms about federalism, partitioning, and/or separation. In the real world, any meaningful course of US action that goes beyond trying to help Iraq reach some form of political accommodation, and ameliorating the cost and damage done by its internal divisions, may well mean going from a bad concept to far worse practice..

Consider what really has to be involved for the US to define any concrete operational course of action:

- The same US that has only been able to slow – not prevent -- sectarian cleansing in Baghdad in spite of the “surge” is going to help shape federalism and partition nationwide? Is it going to do this with steadily declining US forces and other Coalition forces leaving southern Iraq?
- Is the US going to pressure the Kurds and Arabs into choosing a clear dividing line? Is it going to help determine whether the Kurds should seek autonomy or independence and define the end result? Is the US going to get involved in Kurdish partitioning and then not become trapped into some kind of security guarantees?
- Is the US going try to define how the Shi’ite south should federate?
- Is the US going to plan the future of divided areas like the greater Baghdad region and Diyala?
- Is the US going to help Iraqis chose boundary lines, enclaves, security systems, legal systems, and choices in given areas between religious and secular rule and custom?
- Is it going to advise Iraqis on repatriation and relocation, or status quo, and develop and administer suitable incentives and enforcement systems?
- Is the US going to try to tell the three largely Sunni provinces how to structure their future in spite of their deep divisions and minorities?
- Is it going to “help” Iraqis deal with mixed regions, tribal issues, smaller minorities, dividing up oil resources, moving populations?
- Is the US going to help Iraqis decide how to separate or not separate elements of Iraq’s infrastructure and economy?
- Is the US going to intervene directly in advising Iraqis how to divide up petroleum and water resources?

It is all too true that Iraqis are making their own mistakes, but this list of questions should be a warning to any Americans who feel they should try to intervene. The last thing Iraq needs is yet another exercise in the kind of American arrogance and incompetence that has done so much damage in the past.

“Hard” versus “Soft” Partitioning

It is equally important to understand how costly the sectarian and ethnic divisions in Iraq have already become. “Hard” partitioning is already underway, and it is not occurring in ways that suggest some neat or stable pattern of divisions within Iraq:

- ***Kurdish:*** The former Kurdish security zone within the three Kurdish dominated provinces in Northern Iraq (Dahuk Arbil, and A Sulaymaniyah) has long been something approaching a separate country or autonomous region. Kurds probably make up 4-5 million out of Iraq’s population of roughly 28 million. The region had many elements of a separate economic zone. It benefited from smuggling, aid, and UN oil for food money under Saddam Hussein. It has since gotten a large share of oil revenues since Saddam’s fall, plus a disproportionate share of aid because it was “secure” and aid projects could be safely executed there.

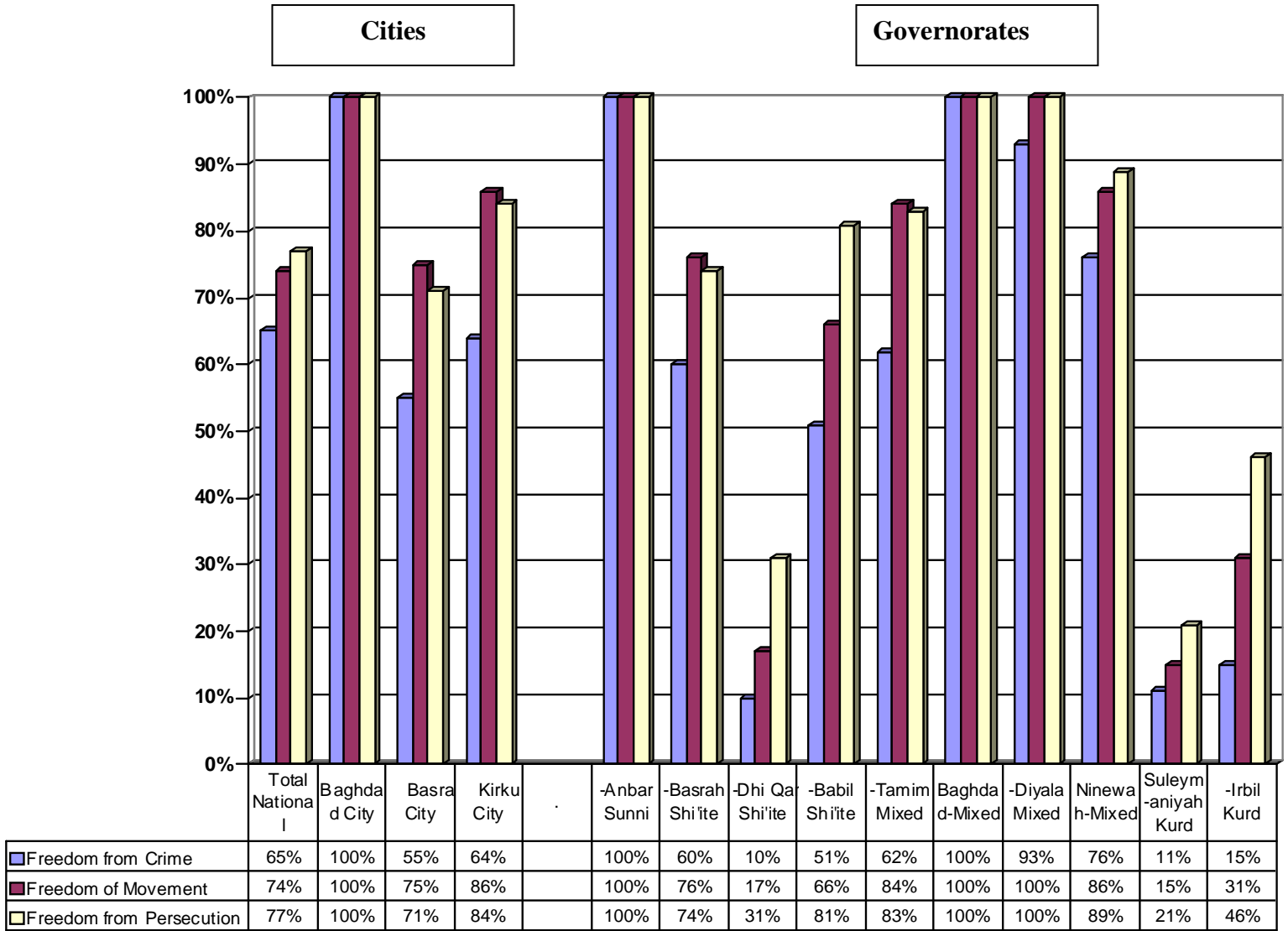
- Polls show a majority of Kurds favor actual independence, and much of the Kurdish area's young population has been educated as "Kurds" and speaks little or no Arabic. There are, however, significant minorities in the so-called Kurdish area, including large numbers of Turcomans. Kurd and Arab contend for territory along the Kurdish-Arab "fault line" that separates the ethnic groups, and smaller minorities complain about pressure from both groups.
- The provinces of Ninewa and Ad Ta'mim remain major areas of Kurdish-Arab contention, as do northeastern Salahadin and eastern Diyala. Eastern Mosul, the greater Kirkuk area, and Iraq's northern oil fields remain major areas of contention with strong Arab (Dubus) and Turcoman (Tuz Kurmatu) populations. A referendum is supposed to decide on these issues, although it should be noted that the history of such referendums in other countries shows they often have been extremely contentious and have rarely put an end to violence.
- **Arab Sunni:** Substantial numbers of Sunnis have already been displaced out of southern Iraq, particularly in the Basra area, from the greater Baghdad area, and from parts of the north. Three provinces still have large Sunni majorities: Anbar, Ninewah, and Salahadin, but even Anbar has Kurds in the north and significant Shi'ite minorities in the east.
- These areas have never functioned as any kind of political or ethnic entity in the past. The tribal awakening in Anbar has also created a new source of tribal power to challenge religious leaders, Sunni political parties, and local secular Sunni authorities. The Neo-Salafi Sunni extremist groups have scarcely been defeated, however, and the Neo-Ba'athist elements that have arisen since Saddam's fall have split in ways where many are now allied with the Neo-Salafi Sunni groups. It is far from clear how much legitimacy the elected Sunni officials in the central government now have, and no cohesive Sunni leadership or concept of region and federalism seem to exist.
- Western Baghdad and much of the Baghdad ring are areas of Sunni-Shi'ite contention with no clear reason to separate on sectarian grounds. Diyala is a key center of Sunni-Shi'ite fighting.
- **Arab Shi'ite:** The Shi'ites have won much of the struggle for sectarian cleansing in Baghdad and southern Baghdad, and dominate most of southern Iraq – although virtually every governorate still has at least small Sunni or mixed enclaves. The Shi'ite United Iraqi Alliance largely dominated Babil, Basra, Dhi Qar, Karbala, Najaf, Qadisiyyah, and Wasit provinces during the December 2005 election, although the national vote showed there was a substantial pro-Iraqi National List minority in each such province. Muthanna was the only Shi'ite province not to have at least a 5% vote against the UIA.
- The apparent unity of the Shi'ite coalition in the December 2005 elections that gave the UIA 130 out of 275 seats in the national assembly has also since been shattered. Sadr and his supporters had withdrawn and returned whenever this best suited their own advantage. Fadillah has turned against its Shi'ite rivals. Much of the negotiation between factions, and groups like the SIIC and Sunni and Kurdish groups, now bypasses the assembly, and sometimes the prime minister and Al Dawa. The Iraqi cabinet now has lost so many members due to Shi'ite and Sunni defections that it is unclear how long the Prime Minister can survive.
- Polls indicate that most Arab Shi'ites do not support the division of the country or strong divisive federalism. Many think of themselves as nationalists, and do not support the more extreme religious practices advocated by hardliners in the various religiously dominated parties. Shi'ite moderates, however, are often dominated by violent factions, particularly in the Basra area and four governorates – Muthanna, Basra, Dhi Qar and Maysan -- in the southeast. In other areas -- like the Babil governorate -- local police and military leaders such as General Qais Hamza Aboud often operate as increasingly independent forces.

- Much of the southeast is now the scene of an ongoing power struggle between the Sadrists and the SIIC and Al Dawa. Rival gangs from each party, plus another Shi'ite party called Faddilah, are struggling for power in the south. Wasit governorate, for example, is a major center of the power struggle between the JAM and Badr Organization. Basra is partly under the control of a Fadhila-led militia by its governor, Mudammed al Waeli.
- Religious and family rivalries divided Shi'ites in virtually every major shrine city. The Ayatollah Sistani has had five senior advisors and staff killed by other Shi'ite factions.
- The four oil-rich governorates have a history of seeking their own separation or autonomy from the Shi'ite governorates in the west and to the north. Sadrists seem to have assassinated several SIIC governors, the control of Basra's city government is debated, and organized Shi'ite dominated crime is stealing a substantial amount of Iraq's oil production and product imports.
- **Mixed:** Polls show many Iraqis think of themselves as Iraqis or as Muslims, not as Arab Sunni or Arab Shi'ite. They also show most Arab Iraqis have no desire to split Iraq or for strong divisive forms of federalism. Violent extremists on both sides, however, exist in every area with a mixed population. They have no safe option for partition or separation and no secure enclave.
- Current estimates put the population of Baghdad at 4-5 million and the greater Baghdad area at around 7 million. It is the potential core of a mixed area, but the surge has not stopped sectarian cleansing and elements of the JAM and other Shi'ite militias from continuing to push Sunnis out of western and southern greater Baghdad while Sunnis seek to push Shi'ites out of the north.
- **Other minorities:** Various Christian groups, the Turcomans, and small non-Muslim minorities have become caught up in the struggles between Arab Sunni, Arab Shi'ite, and Kurd. None are large enough to control any significant amount of territory or have more than small rural enclaves. All are vulnerable and have become targets of one faction or another. A substantial number of Christians have been pushed out of Basra and others out of Sunni areas. The wealthier minority members have sometimes left the country.
- **Tribal:** The lack of security in urban areas, the failures of the central and provincial governments, and local threats like Al Qa'ida have pushed many Iraqis back towards their tribal identity as one way to try to find security. Some tribes and tribal confederations are mixed and act as a counterbalance to secular divisions, but others reinforce such divisions – a situation made worse by central government and Shi'ite coalition distrust of the Sunni tribal awakening in Anbar.
- **Isolated and Enclave:** There are many villages, urban areas, and rural areas where isolated enclaves of minorities exist surrounded by hostile majorities or are struggling for security in the face of growing sectarian and ethnic tension. There is nothing neat or clean about Iraq's separations, and they do not occur along the lines of governorates. The more isolated or enclave pockets and minorities also tend to remain because they are poorer or have fewer outside ties and options and are less able to relocate.
- **Exile:** Many of Iraq's best educated, wealthiest, most secular and most professional citizens have fled the country. They tend to be more Sunni than Shi'ite, but also include many who think more in secular terms or regard themselves as nationalists. Much of the secular core of the country now lives outside it.

These issues are reflected in the results of recent public opinion polls that ask Iraqis about the level of violence in their areas, and the sources of violence. As **Figure One to Three** show, divisions along sectarian and ethnic lines do not, by themselves, bring stability. The two largely Kurdish governorates, which have been part of a separate security area since 1992, do show a higher level of security, but intra-Shi'ite fighting produces very high levels of perceived violence in Shi'ite dominated areas.

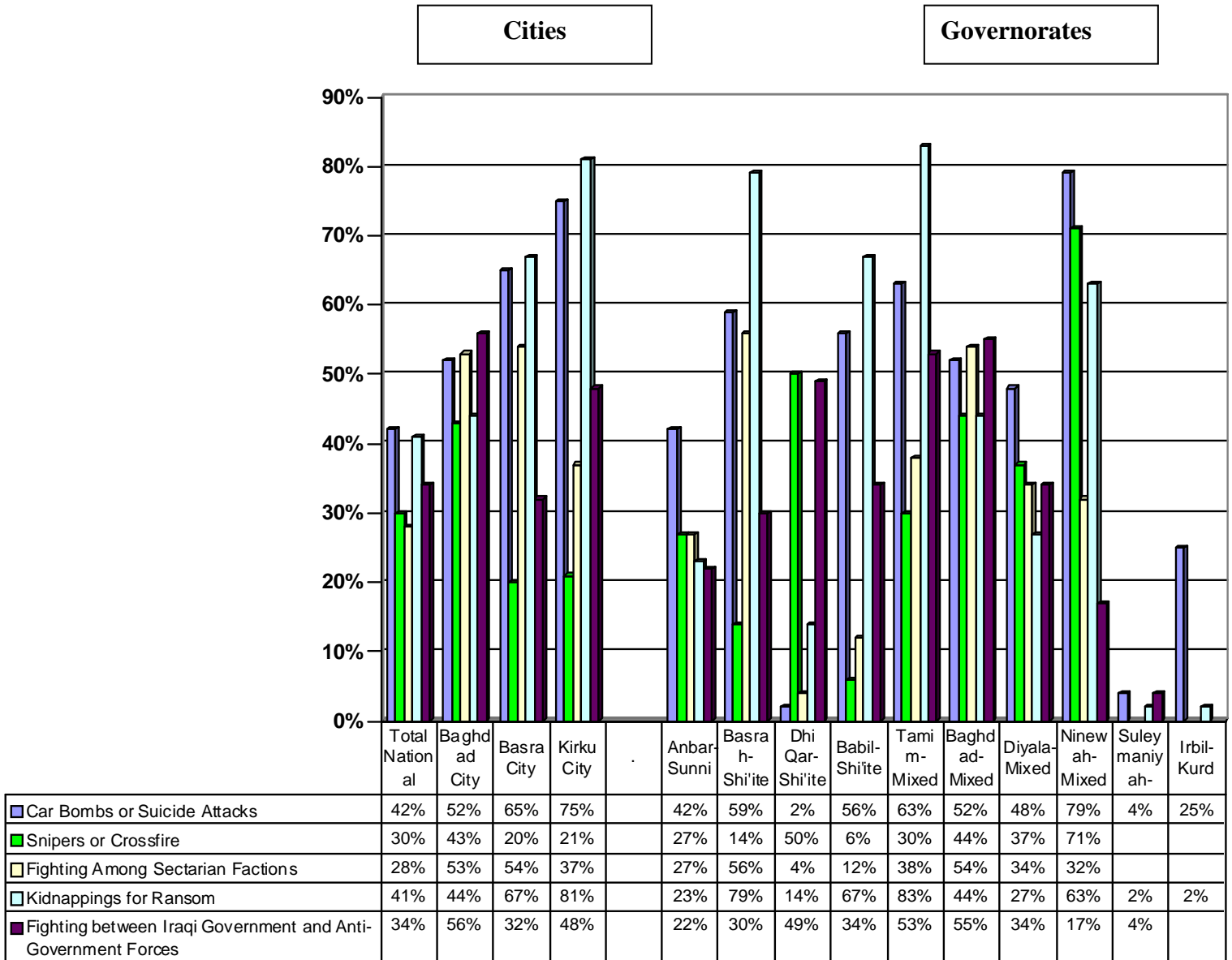
It also should be noted that Iraq's key cities show very high levels of perceived violence. This is critical because Iraq is a highly urbanized country with a relatively developed economy. Sectarian and ethnic cleansing that divide Iraq's major cities present far more serious problems for future economic development, high employment levels, and the creation of earned wealth than cleansing in rural areas or dividing up oil fields and oil reserves. Any viable form of federalism, separation, or partition must solve the problems of creating viable urban structures and economies, not simply draw lines on a map.

Figure One: Percent of Iraqis Rating Key Aspects of Personal Security as “Bad” – ABC Poll (August 2007)



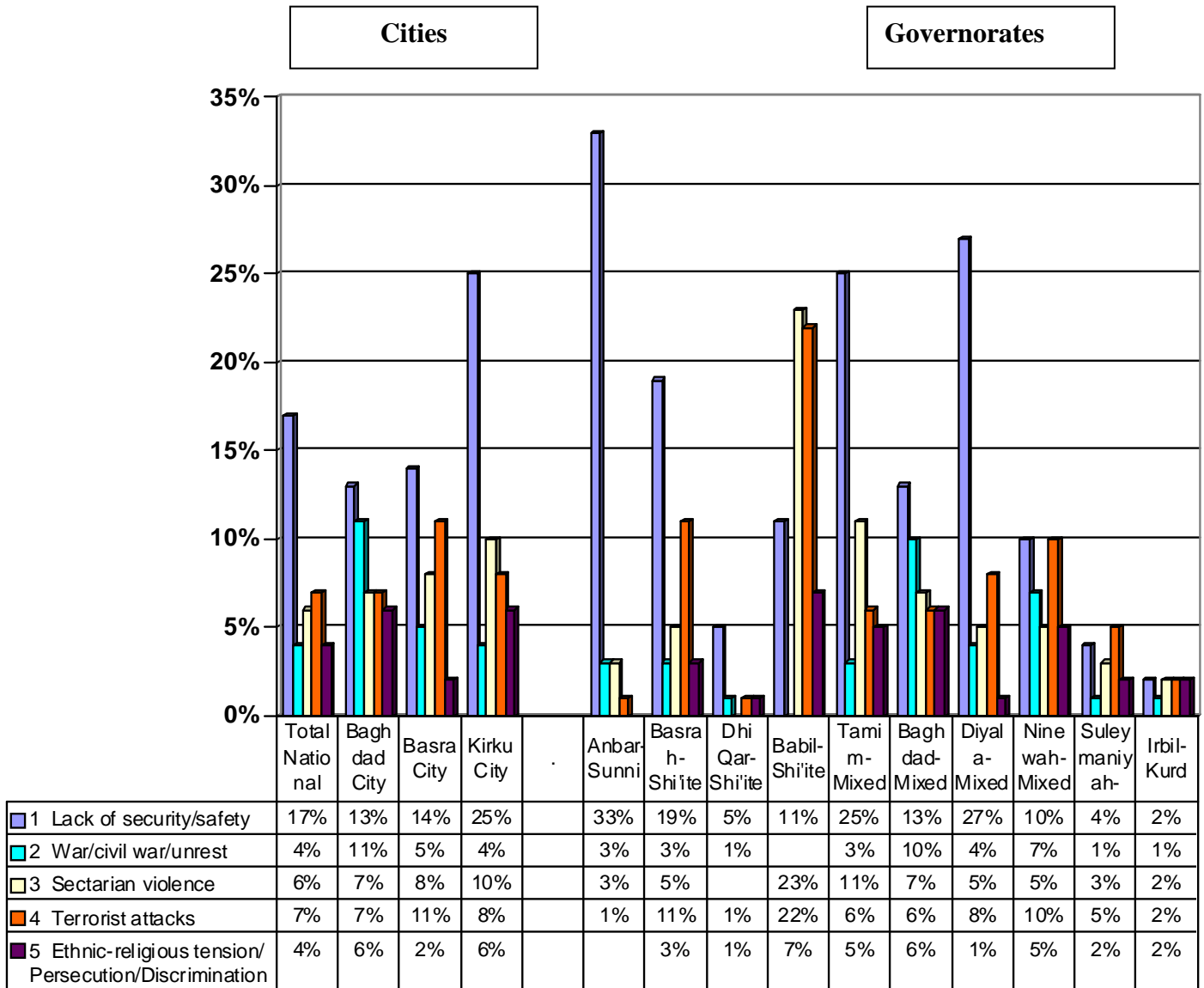
Source: ABC News Polling Unit, based on ABC/BBC/NHK Poll “Iraq, Where Things Stand, August, 2007.

Figure Two: What Kinds of Violence Have Occurred Nearby? – ABC Poll (August 2007)



Source: ABC News Polling Unit, based on ABC/BBC/NHK Poll "Iraq, Where Things Stand, August, 2007.

Figure Three: What is the Single Biggest Problem Facing Your Life these Days? ABC Poll (August 2007)



Source: ABC News Polling Unit, based on ABC/BBC/NHK Poll "Iraq, Where Things Stand, August, 2007.

Displacements and the Human Cost of Iraq's Divisions to Date

It is easy to talk about federalism, separation, and “soft partitioning” in the abstract, but real world partitioning has already been extremely hard. The end result has been suffering and violence rather than security, and further divisions could be extraordinarily costly to Iraq's future in human, economic, and security terms.

There are no precise data on displacements, but Iraqi perceptions of the levels of sectarian and ethnic separation are shown in **Figure Four**, and breakouts of the broad human costs of displacements by region, country of location, sect and ethnicity are shown in **Figures Five to Eight**. It is important to note that these counts are based on earlier reporting and that displacements occur in a wide range of governorates, that many displacements leave families without adequate food and shelter, and most internally displaced Iraqis were Shi'ite rather than Sunni – at least before the surge began to weaken Al Qa'ida and other neo-Salafi Sunni extremist movements.

The levels of suffering involved have also risen significantly since the dates for most of the reporting in **Figures Five to Eight**. The January – March 2007 UNAMI report estimated that up to 8 million people could be classified as “vulnerable” and in need of immediate assistance; 2 million people were actively seeking asylum or refugee status outside of Iraq; 1.9 million were internally displaced; and 4 million lacked sufficient food.¹

The UNAMI report for May 2007 summarized the impact of hard partitioning as follows, and the impact of displacement alone had already directly involved some 17% of the entire Iraqi people:²

- **Iraqis unable to access basic services:** Millions of very poor Iraqis are food insecure and enduring poor or non-existent supplies of basic survival requirements: water, sanitation, food, shelter and health services. This is compounded by personal security, as they face increasing violence on a daily basis. Even those who have found temporary refuge are not guaranteed that the host community's ability to absorb and provide for their needs is sufficient and sustainable.

- **1.8 Million IDPs:** An estimated 2 million Iraqis are displaced inside Iraq, of which nearly **800,000** have become displaced just since February 2006.¹⁹ Prior to the 2003 US Invasion **1,024,000** Iraqis were already displaced and an additional **148,000** were displaced from 2003 to 2006.²⁰ Such a dramatic population shift in only 12 months was neither anticipated nor can it be easily supported for an indefinite period of time, due to ongoing violence and the steadily deteriorating living standards facing most Iraqis. This combination of unfortunate circumstances has resulted in dramatic humanitarian needs for IDPs and their host communities. With populations remaining displaced for longer periods, the strain on infrastructure and services in impacted communities has become acute. In addition, tensions with host communities are rising, due in part to local price increases and competition over access to basic services, infrastructure and employment.

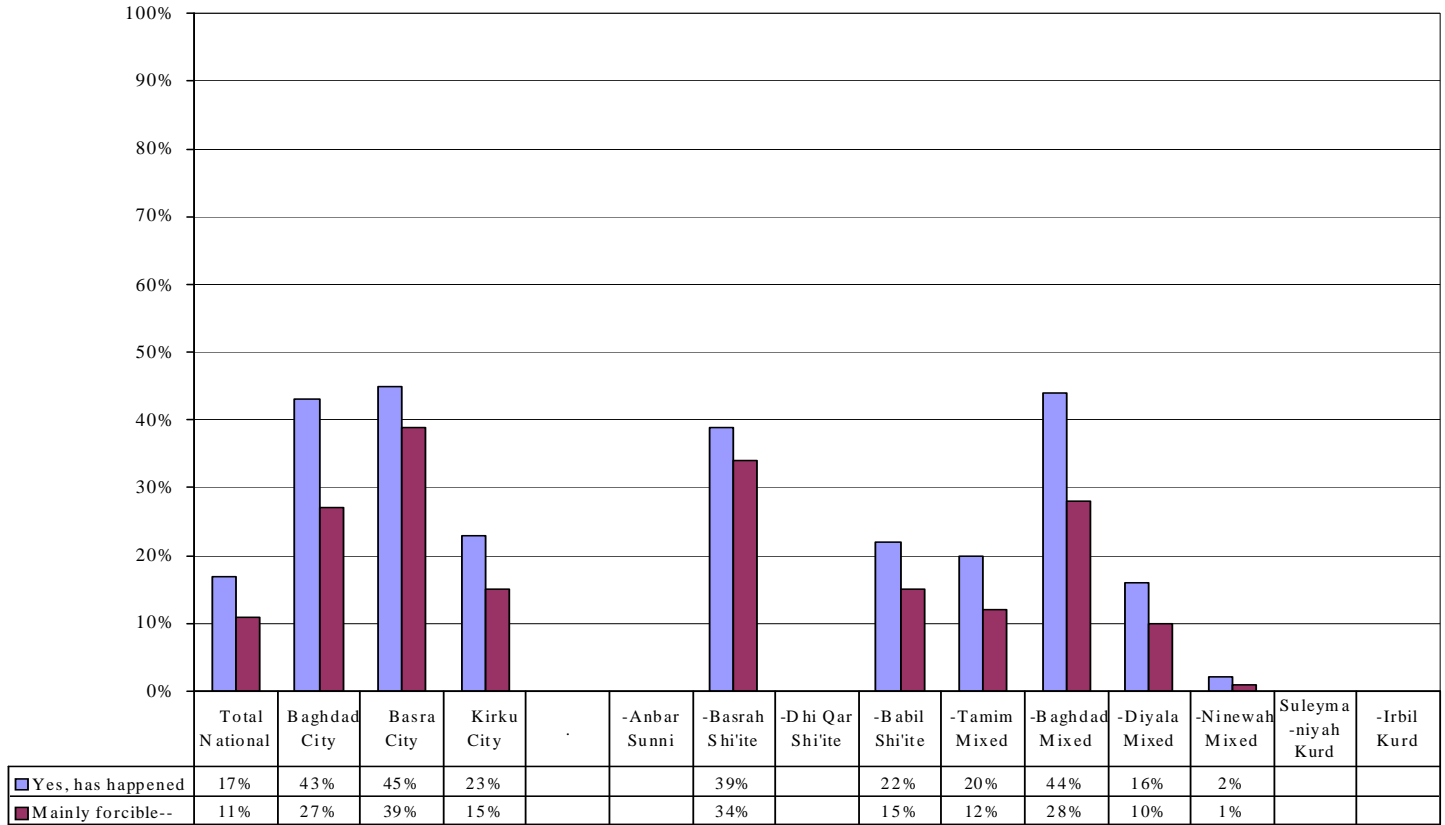
- **Refugees in Iraq:** There are more than **50,000** Palestinian, Syrian, and Iranian refugees in Iraq who have been targeted in deliberate discrimination and attacks by local communities.²¹ Like Iraqis, they are facing difficulties accessing basic services, shelter and protection, but this difficulty is compounded by their legal status within the country, and the fact that they have fewer options for safety.

- **Two Million Iraqis in Neighboring Countries:** Almost two million Iraqis have fled Iraq and are taking refuge in neighboring countries (mostly in Jordan and Syria)²² with an additional outflow of **40,000** to **50,000** thousand per month²³ as conditions continue to worsen. Iraqi asylum seekers in

neighboring countries often are unable to access the full range of social services. The international community must support these neighboring countries to cope with the steady influx of Iraqis. In the interim, personal coping mechanisms and resources are being eroded, as they seek to find shelter and support in a foreign land. Unfortunately, the situation has led to newly arrived Iraqis, who are often poorer than previous asylum-seekers, being blamed for overcrowding in schools, increased rates of crime, prostitution and real-estate prices, and shortages of food and commodities.²⁴ Those forced to flee their communities – whether internally or externally displaced – should be accorded basic protection and human rights, and provided with access to key social services to sustain their basic needs and to maintain their dignity. It is important to tackle the root causes of these displacements and to address their regional implications so that safe, voluntary and dignified returns can be possible.

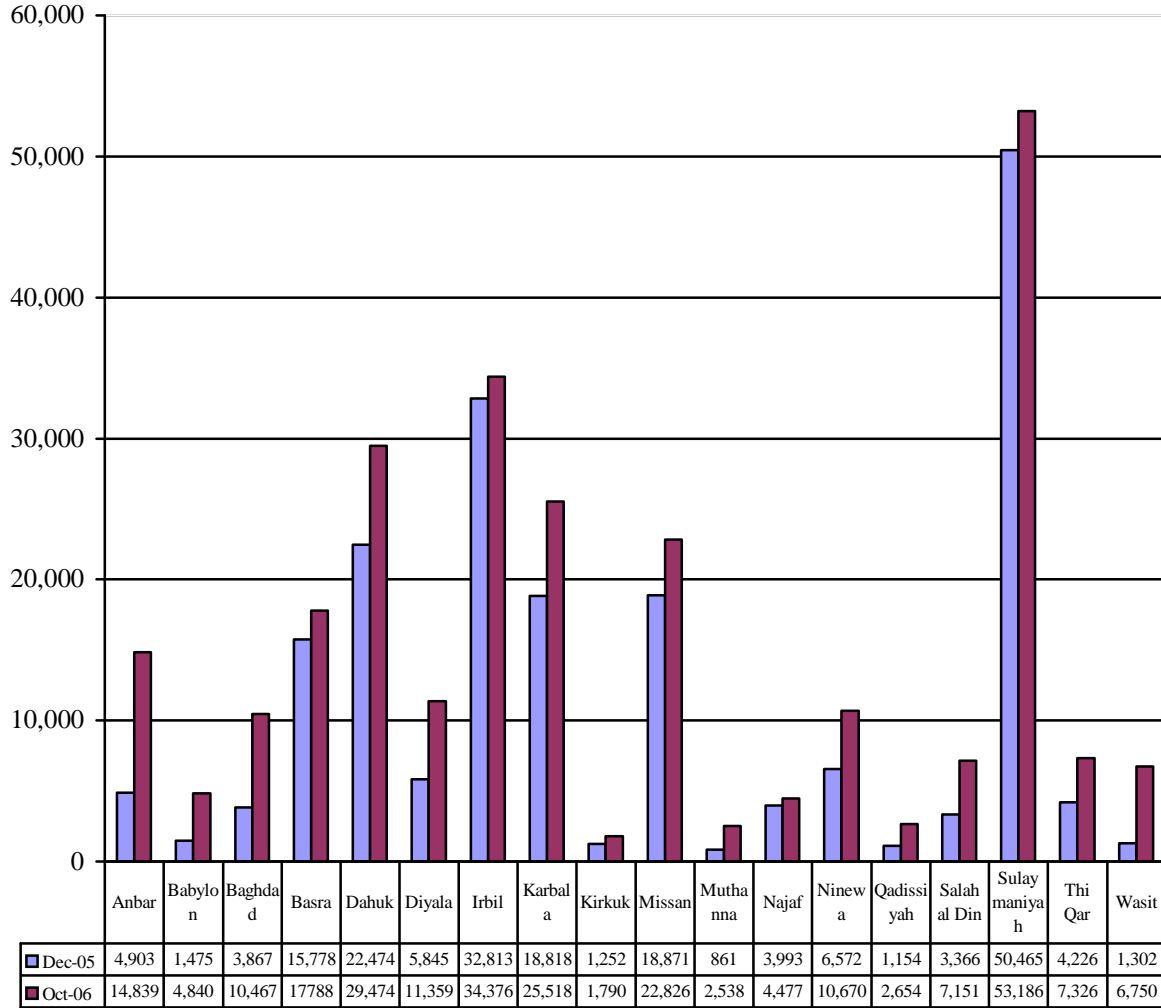
- **Children:** The conflict is having a particularly profound impact on the physical and psychosocial well being of children who are disproportionately affected by the lack of security, protection, and basic services. Malnutrition, school dropouts, and mental trauma are prevalent amongst Iraqi children, and these critical issues need to be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Figure Four: Percentage of Iraqis Reporting Separation and Forcible Separation in Their Neighborhood– ABC Poll (August 2007)*



Source: ABC News Polling Unit, based on ABC/BBC/NHK Poll "Iraq, Where Things Stand, August, 2007.

Figure Five: Number of Internally Displaced Families by Province/Major Cities: Comparison of December 2005 and October 2006



Total Number of Internally Displaced Families

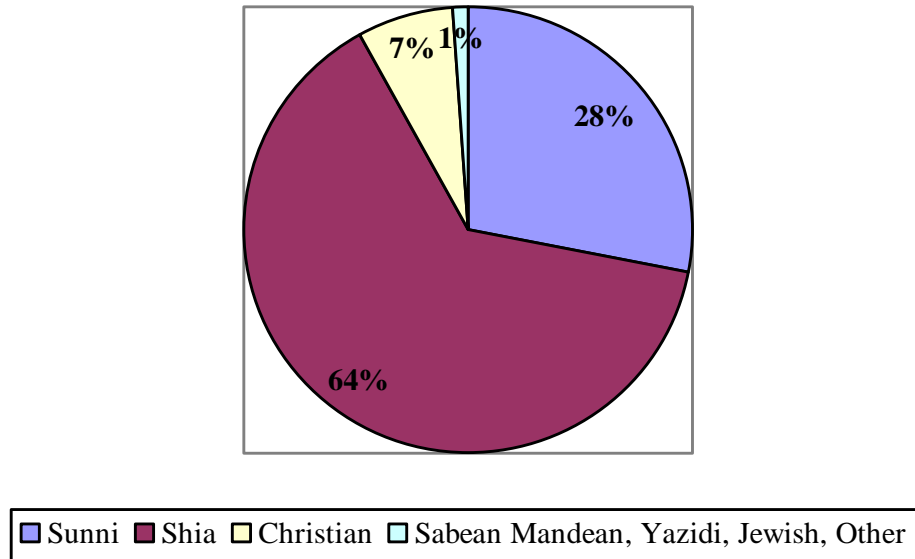
Source: Adapted from material provided by United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq, October 2006, available at: www.uniraq.org

Figure Six: Refugee/Internally Displaced Person Crisis in Iraq, 2007

Type of Population	Origin/Location	Actual: Jan 2007		Projections/Targets: Dec 2007	
		Total	To be Assisted and/or Registered by UNHCR	Total	To be Assisted and/or Registered by UNHCR
Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Iraq	Palestinians	15,000	5,000	7,500	7,500
	Turkish	16,110	16,110	8,950	8,950
	Iranian	11,960	11,960	11,150	11,150
	Syrian	870	870	-	-
	Sudanese	142	142	0	0
IDPs	Iraq	1,700,000	100,000	2,300,000- 2,700,000	150,000- 600,000
Iraqis in neighboring countries	Syria	500,000- 700,000	40,000	500,000- 1,000,000	100,000
	Jordan	500,000- 700,000	21,000	500,000- 700,000	70,000
	Egypt	-	2,500	-	20,000
	Lebanon	20,000- 40,000	3,500	30,000- 50,000	7,000-10,000
	Turkey	-	5,100	-	5,100
Returnees	Iraq	300,000		50,000	

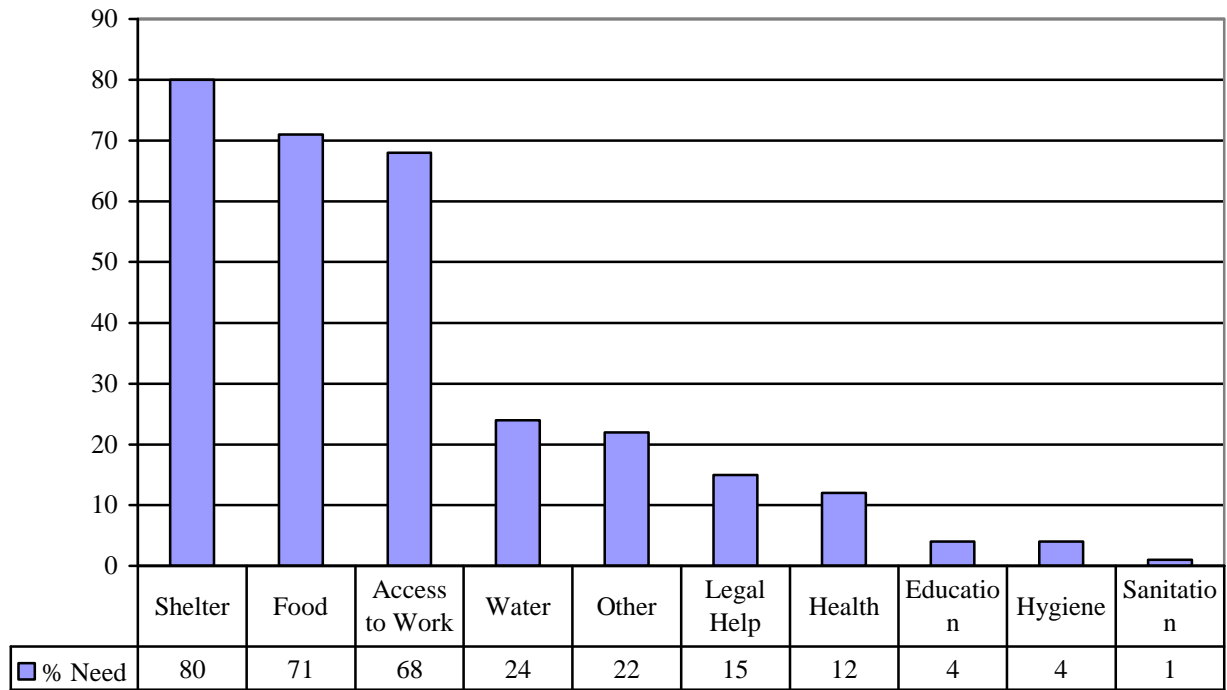
Source: "Supplementary Appeal Iraq Situation Response," UNHCR, January 2007.

Figure Seven: Religion/Sect of Internally Displaced Persons in 2006



Source: "Iraq Displacement: 2006 Year in Review", International Organization for Migration, January 2007, available at: www.moi-iraq.net

Figure Eight: Priority Needs of Internally Displaced Persons in 2006 (in Percent)



Source: "Iraq Displacement: 2006 Year in Review", International Organization for Migration, January 2007, available at: www.moi-iraq.net

Economic and Civil Hardship

UNAMI reporting In May 2007 summarized the overall impact of hard partitioning in Iraq as follows:³

- Internally displaced persons: 1,024,000 (prior to 2003), 148,000 (2003 to 2006), and 800,000(2006 to present)
- Refugees in Iraq: 50,000
- Iraqis in neighboring countries: 2 million
- Poverty: 54% of the population living below US\$1/day.
- Unemployment: over 25-40%
- Inflation: 70%
- Recorded civilian casualties in 2006: 34,452
- Recorded civilian injuries in 2006: 36,685
- Children under the age of 5 who suffer from malnutrition: 43%

UNAMI found that women and children made up about 75 percent of the newly displaced. Displaced persons continued to face greater health risks and many lacked access to basic services, such as electricity, water, healthcare, and education. The UNAMI report stated that ten governorates had imposed stricter laws on the entry of IDPs, making it difficult to obtain residency permits and access to these basic services.⁴

The UN report stated that:⁵

An estimated 54 percent of the Iraqi population is living on less than US\$ 1 per day, among whom 15 percent is living in extreme poverty (less than US\$ 0.5 per day); acute malnutrition rapidly rose from 4.4 to 9 percent from 2003 to 2005, as per the latest available data. Some 432,000 children were reported to be in immediate need of assistance, while the annual inflation rate in Iraq jumped to an estimated 70 percent in July 2006. The unemployment rate has risen to around 60 percent; only 32 percent of Iraqis have access to drinking water and health facilities lack critical drugs and equipment.

The January – March 2007 UNAMI report cited women and children as being particularly effected by the ongoing civil war and humanitarian crisis.⁶ UNAMI estimated that for every male killed, 5 or more family members became vulnerable and in need of assistance. The UN also stated that the governorates in south and central Iraq were most in need of humanitarian aid, which clearly corresponded with the lack of security in these provinces.

A comparison of reporting by the Department of Defense in September 2007 with earlier UNSCHR reporting indicated that by the end of May 2007, the number of displaced per month had risen from roughly 50,000-60,000 per month in May 2006 to 80,000-100,000 per month in May 2007. The DoD estimate did indicate, however, that it might drop back to levels of 40,000-50,000 month as security in Iraq improved.⁷

Flashpoint Risks Along Iraq's Civil and Ethnic Fault Lines

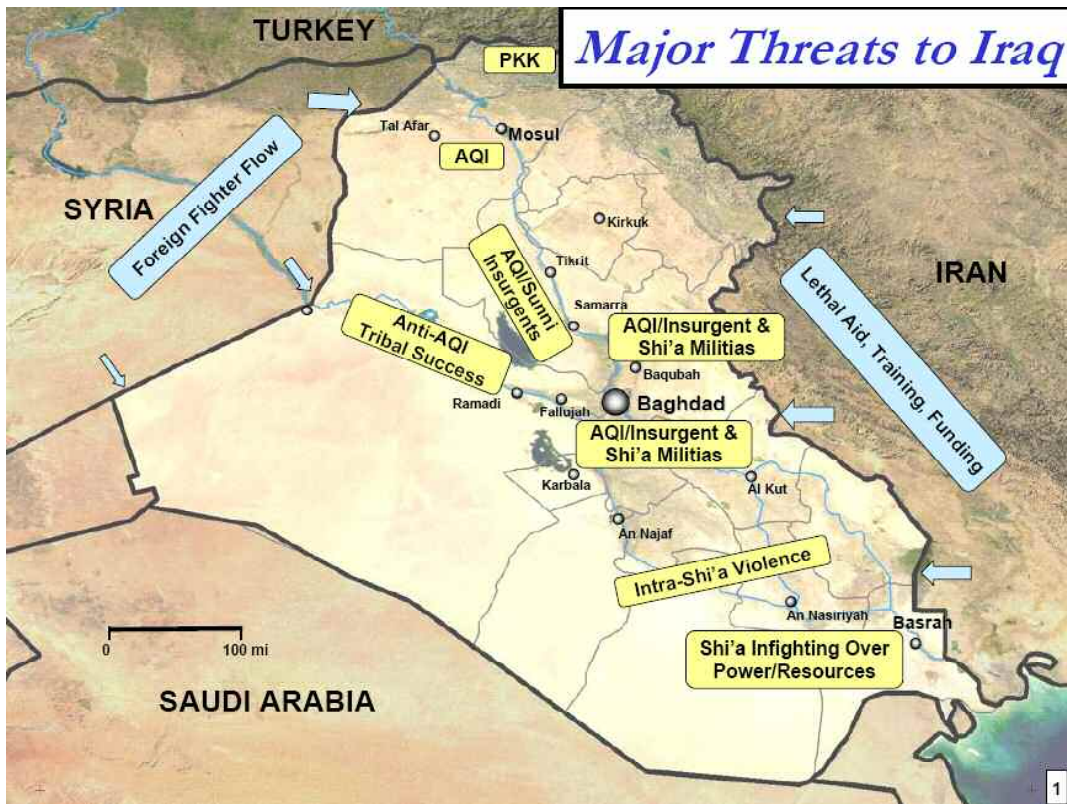
As the maps in **Figures Nine and Ten** show, the struggle against Al Qa'ida, other neo-Salafi and neo-Ba'athist Sunni extremists, and hard-line Shi'ite extremists in the JAM and other Shi'ite militias are only part of the story in Iraq. Iraq's divisions are being driven by a series of major civil conflicts and flash points in Iraq where any careless action could make hard partitioning much worse.

Figure Ten does show that the US has been able to sharply reduce the level of overall violence in Baghdad. As US testimony and reporting in September 2007 made clear, however, Baghdad continues to be a center of Shi'ite sectarian cleansing that has already pushed many Sunnis out of the city and into areas like the Baghdad "ring" of Sunni towns to the north of the city and Diyala. The scale of this separation is hard to estimate in detail, and has been downplayed by the MNF-I, but a good neighborhood by neighborhood summary developed the *New York Times* is available at http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2007/09/06/world/middleeast/20070907_BUILDUP_MAIN_GRAPHIC.html.

The greater Baghdad area also continues to be a destination for many internally displaced Iraqis in spite of this violence. Some were Sunni despite Shi'ite efforts at sectarian cleansing. UNAMI estimated that at least 120,000 IDPs were displaced and living in Baghdad, although, many had been displaced from other areas in the capital, moving from areas in which they were a sectarian minority to ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods.

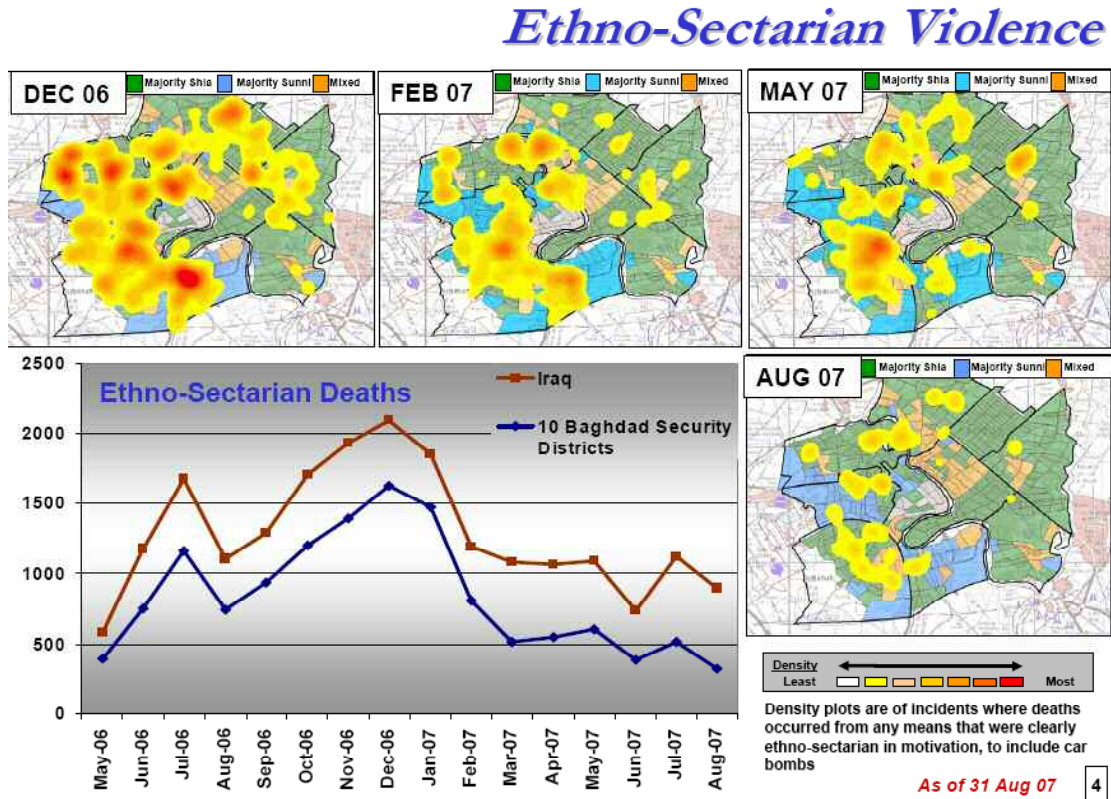
Worse forms of hard partitioning are almost inevitable unless Iraq's leaders move ahead with national political accommodation, and they are not developments that the US can manage, and they certainly are not developments it should encourage. If anything, it should focus on finding even more ways to use its influence to reducing this kind of partitioning and do nothing that could carelessly or indirectly encourage it.

Figure Nine: Map of Major Threats to Iraq



Source: MNF-I, "Charts to Accompany the Testimony of GEN David H. Petraeus" 10-11 September, 2007. Pg. 1.

Figure Ten: Map of Ethno-Sectarian Violence in Baghdad



Source: MNF-I, “Charts to Accompany the Testimony of GEN David H. Petraeus” 10-11 September, 2007. Pg. 4.

Iraqi Civilian Casualties and Hard Partitioning

There are no real estimates of the other costs to Iraqi civilians from Iraq's sectarian and ethnic conflicts. The estimates of killed are unreliable and difficult to tie to a given cause or faction, particular body dumpings and disappearances. No estimates exist of civilian wounded and the number of Iraqi civilian dead do not to reflect the impact of "soft" ethnic cleansing by sectarian groups in order to control political and economic space

A true estimate of casualties would have to include the wounded and those involved in the physical and psychological trauma from intimidation campaigns, threats, kidnappings, propaganda, corruption and blackmail to force other ethnic groups out of an area. There also are radical differences in estimates of Iraqi killed, although some estimates seem better than others.

Estimating Civilian Killed

Iraq Body Count (www.Iraqbodycount.org) and Iraq Coalition Casualties (<http://icasualties.org/oif/>) seem to have consistently provided the best data, or "guesstimates," among non-governmental organizations on Iraqi casualties, even though these counts are still extremely uncertain.⁸ Iraq Coalition Casualties provided the data for the monthly breakouts of Iraqi military and Iraqi civilian casualties beginning in 2005, shown in **Figure Eleven** below. Although such figures are uncertain, the much higher estimates made by some other organizations, however, use methodologies and databases that are so weak that they lack credibility.

The data on the methodology used by Iraq Body Count and Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, reporting by various elements of the Iraqi government, and sporadic reporting by MNF-I, make it unlikely that less than 100,000 Iraqi civilians were killed by other Iraqis between the fall of Saddam Hussein and September 2007. Given past wars and civil conflicts, it also seems likely that some three to five times more Iraqis had been wounded -- given the normal ratios of killed to wounded. It also seems likely that several hundred thousand Iraqis had suffered severe wounds. The number of crippled, disabled, or without the ability to earn a living almost certainly has to exceed the number killed.

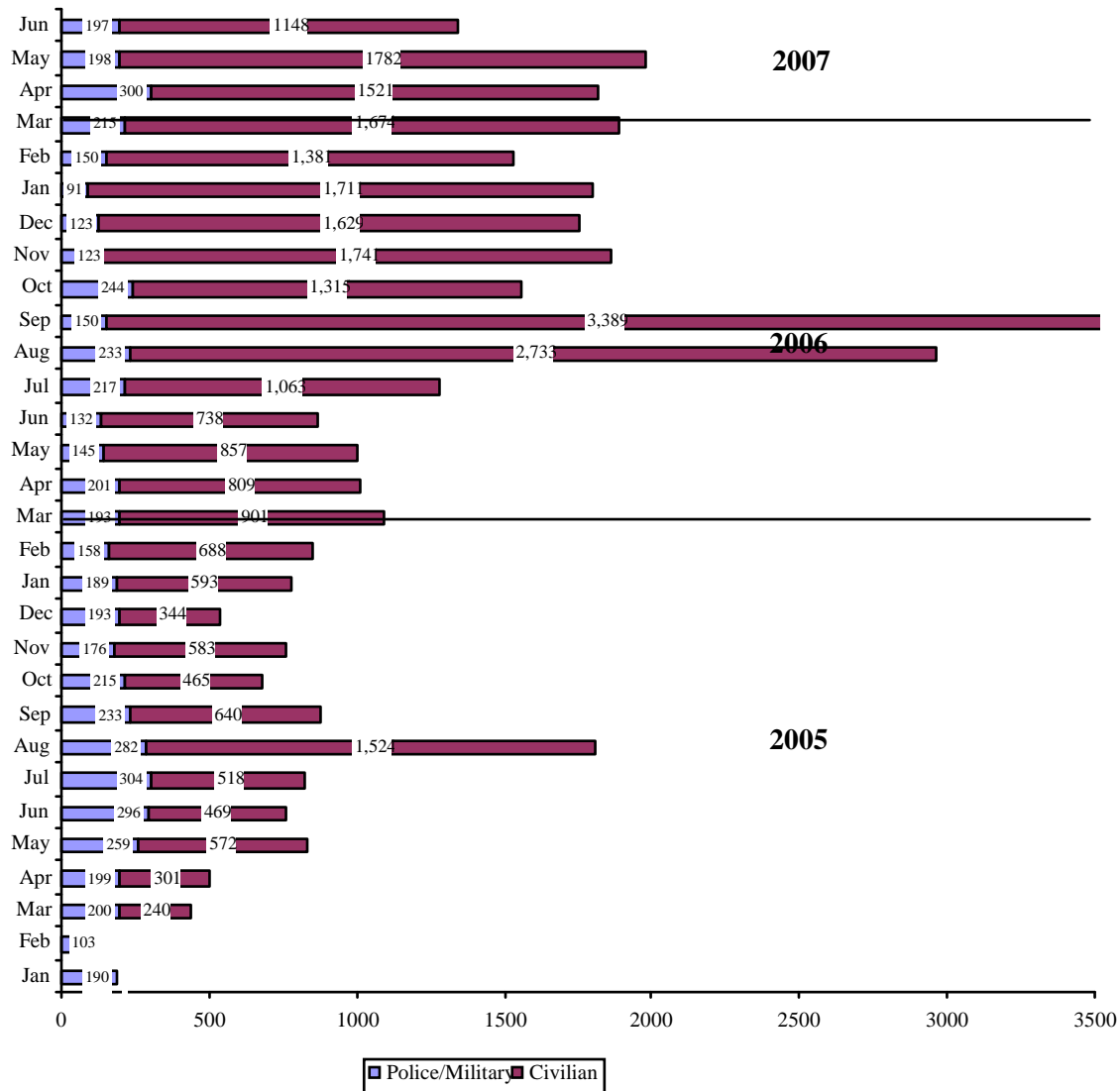
Looking Towards the Future

Tragic as these numbers are, it is also clear that they could well be the prelude to far higher costs in human terms if hard partitioning continues. If the current insurgency and civil conflicts lead to bloody civil conflict along every sectarian and ethnic fault line, the Iraqi casualties to date may seem small in retrospect. Even if the end result is more of the less violent forms of sectarian and ethnic cleansing that have already taken place, millions of additional Iraqis are almost certain to suffer severely in the process and many are likely to be hurt or killed.

The Iraqi casualty data that do exist are still a measure of moral and ethical obligation the US has incurred in invading Iraq. They are a clear warnings that US strategy must look

far beyond warfighting and counterinsurgency to succeed, and of the risks of trying to go beyond efforts to persuade Iraqis to find their own solutions and trying to shape what those solutions should be. In many ways, the most important principle of any effort at limited war and armed nation building must be the same as the most important principle of medicine set forth by Galen in ancient Rome: *primum nil nocere* or, “First, do no harm.”

Figure Eleven: Total Iraqi Military and Civilian Casualties by Month: January 2005-June 2007



Source: Adapted from material provided by Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, July 7, 2007, available at: <http://icasualties.org/oif/IraqiDeaths.aspx>

Iraqi Public Opinion on Federalism, Separatism, and Partitioning

The US also needs to recognize that public opinion polls show that Iraqis as a whole have no desire for the kind of sectarian and ethnic splits that are taking place in the country, for the creation of separate states, or for the creation of strong federal entities that would deprive the central government of all meaningful power. The Kurds are an exception, but it should be noted that polls do not ask the Kurds what specific territory they think they can get, or whether they would want separation without Kirkuk and the northern oil fields and security guarantees from Iraq’s neighbors (and Arab populations).

Forced hard partitioning has not yet occurred because of popular support. Reporting by the Department of Defense in September 2007 stated that.⁹

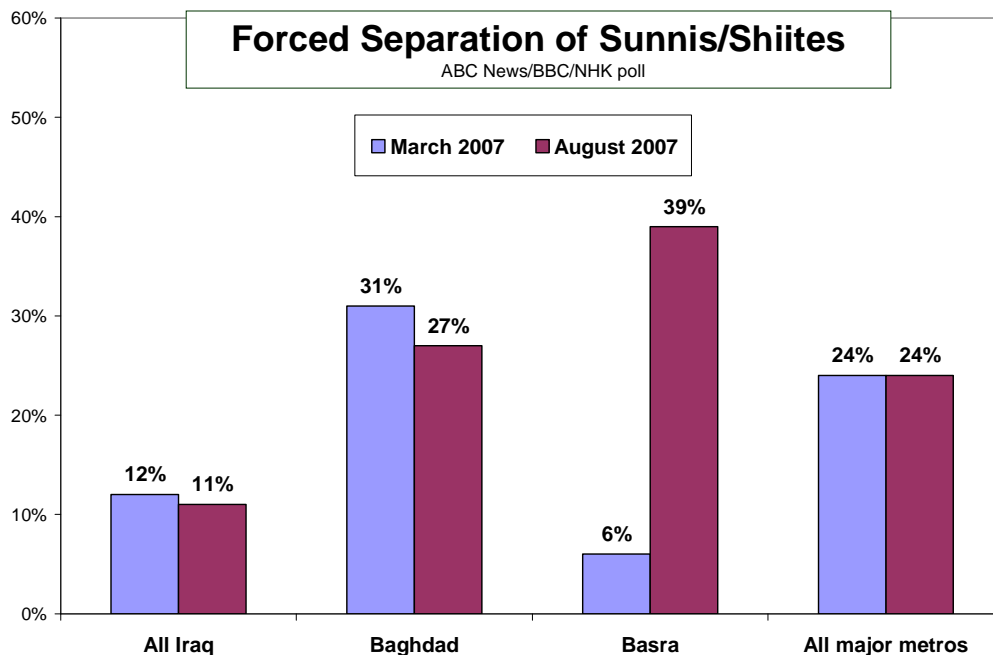
National polls show that most Iraqis continue to believe that Iraq should remain a unified state; only one third of Iraqi people say that they would be better off if the country were divided into three or more regions that better reflected ethnic or sectarian populations, and those who most strongly oppose division are found in the regions of greatest sectarian mixing. Those areas with the strongest sectarian homogeneity (northern and southern Iraq) are most interested in division. Continued violence, however, reinforces sectarian tensions that undermine reconciliation.

A much more detailed survey of Iraqi attitudes reported in an ABC/BBC/NHK poll conducted in August 2007, and summarized in **Figure Twelve**, found that,¹⁰

Segregation of Iraqis – both forced and voluntary – continues to occur. Across the country, one in six Iraqis – 17 percent – report the separation of Sunni and Shiite Arabs on sectarian lines, including 11 percent who describe this as mainly forced. In Baghdad, it soars: 43 percent report the separation of Sunnis and Shiites from mixed to segregated areas and 27 percent say it's mainly forced – similar to the 31 percent who said so in March.

Ethnic cleansing clearly is not isolated in Baghdad. The forced separation of Iraqis along sectarian lines is reported by 39 percent in Basra city, in the mainly Shiite south; and by 24 percent – one in four – across all major metropolitan areas.

Figure Twelve: Iraqi Public Opinion Regarding the Partitioning of Arab Sunnis and Shi'ites



Source: ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, "Iraqis' Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains," September 10, 2007

In a continued sign of hope, this separation is enormously unpopular: 98 percent, with agreement across ethnic and sectarian lines, oppose it.

Related results underscore the difficulty of life in Iraq: 77 percent rate their freedom to live where they want without persecution negatively; 74 percent rate their freedom of safe movement negatively. Both are essentially unchanged from March.

Ethnic cleansing is far from the only violence being visited upon Iraqis. As noted, 42 percent report car bombs and suicide attacks nearby; that includes 26 percent – one in four – who say these have occurred in the past six months.

41 percent report unnecessary violence against Iraqi citizens by U.S. or coalition forces (26 percent say this has occurred in the last six months). Four in 10 also report kidnappings for ransom in their areas; notably that soars to 82 percent in Kirkuk and 68 percent in Basra, vs. 44 percent in Baghdad.

Other forms of violence are also troublingly high: 34 percent of Iraqis report fighting between government and insurgent forces in their local area (two in 10 in the last six months), 30 percent report snipers or crossfire; as many report unnecessary violence by local militias, 27 percent report sectarian fighting and two in 10 report unnecessary violence by the Iraqi army or police.

The number of Iraqis who believe Iran is encouraging sectarian violence in Iraq, 79 percent, is up by eight points since March, chiefly because a majority of Shiites now share this view (62 percent, up 15 points). There's also been a nine-point rise, to 65 percent, in the number who believe mainly Sunni Saudi Arabia is encouraging violence. (Just 28 percent of Sunni Arabs hold this view, but that's up by 17 points, and it's risen among Kurds as well.) As many, 66 percent, also suspect Syria of encouraging violence.

As **Figure Thirteen** shows, the poll found consistent Arab Sunni support for unity and a strong central government in spite of the impact of sectarian cleansing. At the same time, it found a rise in support among Shi'ites for a single centrally controlled state during the course of 2007, possibly reflecting a growing confidence in their hold on power. The general pattern seems to be a growing rise in Shi'ite confidence that the Sunnis cannot retake their past degree of power and control, which has had a unifying effect. Most Sunnis see national unity as their only hope of sharing Iraq's oil wealth and gain some degree of political power.

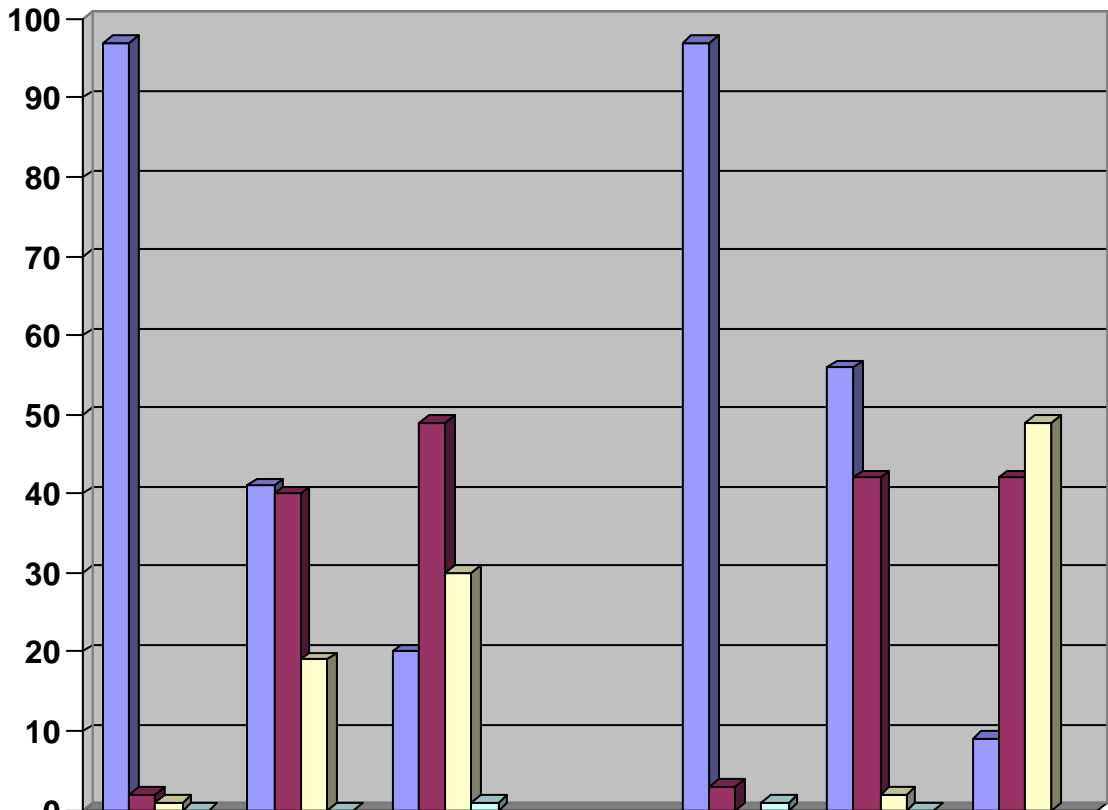
In contrast, the poll found a rise among Kurds in support for independence (from 30 percent to 49 percent). This indicates that Kurds are much more interested in separatism than their leaders, but it may reflect growing Kurdish disquiet with the situation in the south, and polling took place during a period where Kurdish confidence in the stability and prosperity of the Kurdish zone was shaped by conditions where Kurds may have felt the threat of Iranian, Syrian and Turkish pressure were limited. The Kurds polled also were not asked about whether they felt they could provide for their own security, get a secure share of oil revenues proportionate to their population, and by being able to act as a successful economy once massive inflows of US aid halted.¹¹

The data on Iraqi popular feelings about sectarian separation by urban area and governorate show similar trends and provide some important further insights. These data are summarized in **Figure Fourteen**. The poll only asks about sectarian, not ethnic separation, and Iraqis in virtually every area strongly oppose this at the popular level. It is

interesting that is true in Kurdish areas as well, and it may indicate that much of the Kurdish response to how Iraq should be structured as a state may depend on the specific nature of any accommodation involving the Kurds rather than a firm support for some form of federalism per se.

It is also notable that Iraqis still favor national unity and oppose sectarian cleansing in spite of low – and steadily dropping – confidence in their present government. This is a pattern shown in **Figure Fifteen**, and it is a warning that Iraq's present leaders are not providing the degree of stability, security, or nation building necessary to maintain popular support and legitimacy.

Figure Thirteen: Arab Sunni, Arab Shi'ite, and Kurdish Public Opinion Regarding a Unified Iraq, Regional Federal States, and Independent

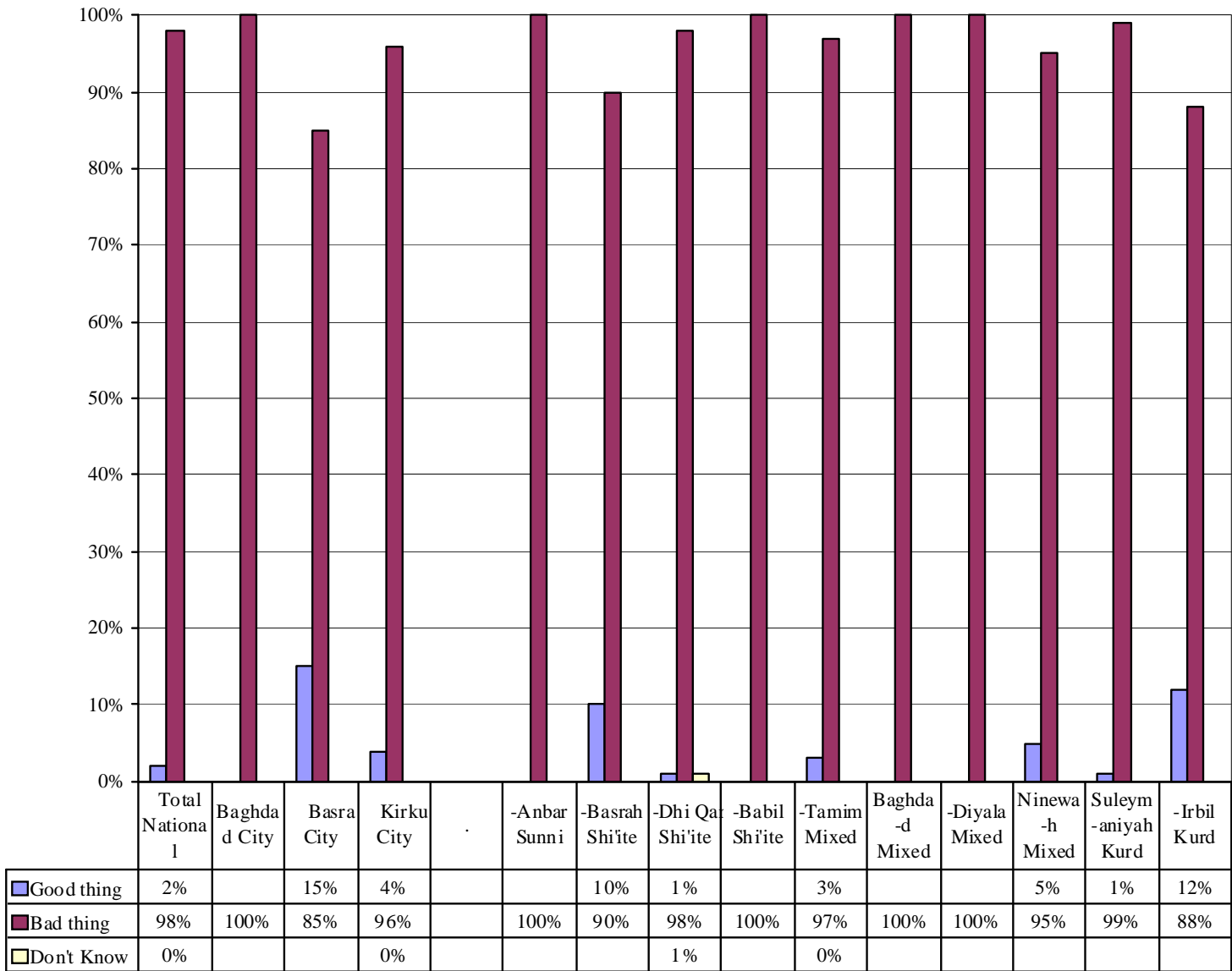


■ One unified Iraq with central government in Baghdad	97	41	20		97	56	9
■ A group of regional states with their own regional governments and a federal government in Baghdad	2	40	49		3	42	42
■ Dividing the country into separate independent states	1	19	30		*	2	49
■ No Opinion	0	0	1		1	0	*

States

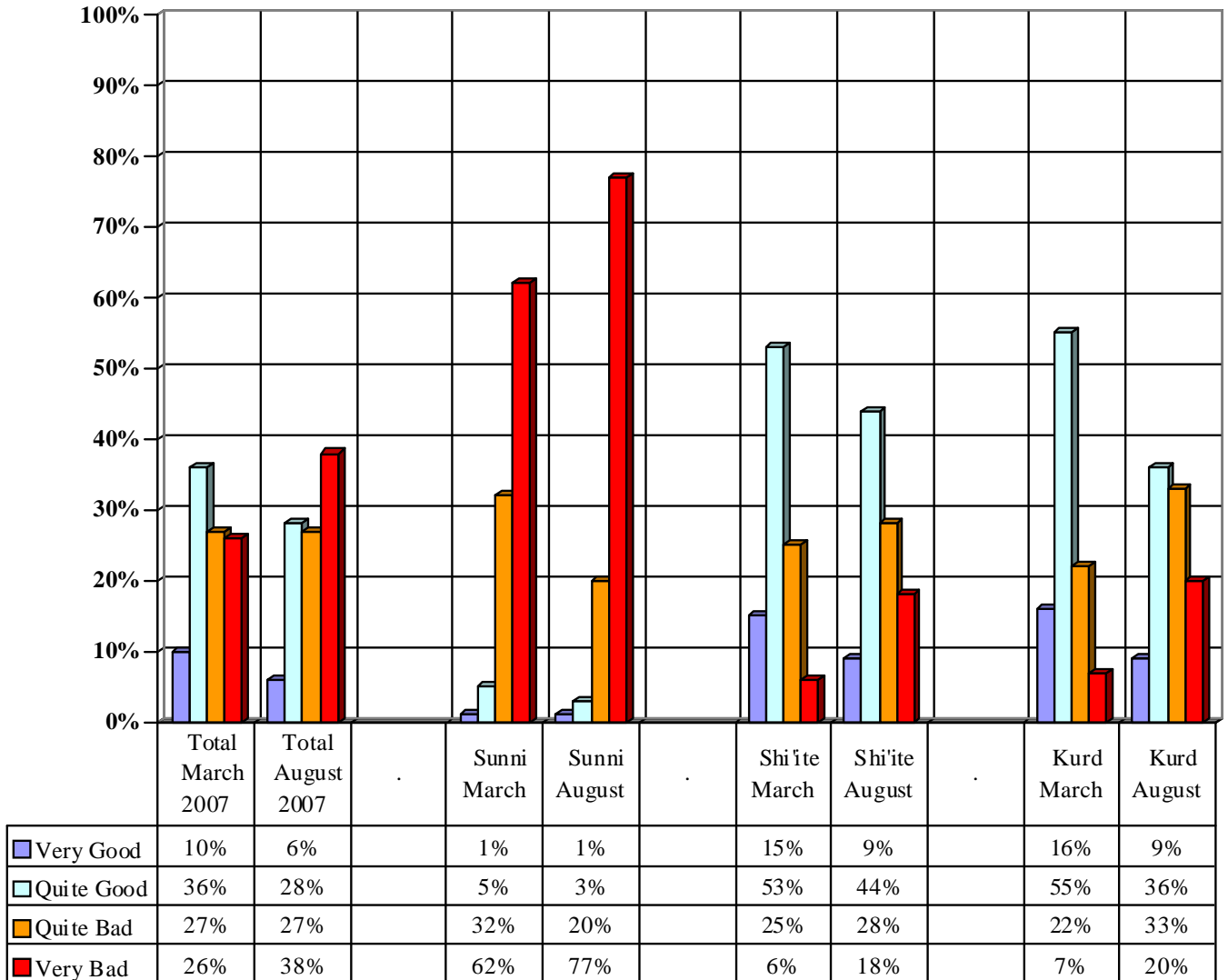
Source: ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, "Iraqis' Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains," September 10, 2007

Figure Fourteen: Do you Think the Separation of People on Sectarian Lines is a Good Thing or a Bad Thing? – ABC Poll (August 2007)*



Source: ABC News Polling Unit, based on ABC/BBC/NHK Poll "Iraq, Where Things Stand, August, 2007.

Figure Fifteen: Iraqi Popular Approval of the Iraqi Government



Source: ABC News Polling Unit, based on ABC/BBC/NHK Poll "Iraq, Where Things Stand, August, 2007.

Real World Iraqi Demographics and Federalism, Separatism, and Partitioning

All of these problems are compounded by the practical problems in trying to reach a working settlement that can allow Iraq or its successors to function as states. Part of the problem is demographic. All kinds of maps and estimates exist on the present degree of sectarian and ethnic separation in Iraq, but **Figures Sixteen and Seventeen** are probably broadly correct in portraying the pre-invasion sectarian and ethnic divisions in demographics and how these align with the present boundaries of Iraq's governorates, and how demographic comparisons relate to the result of recent elections.

The boundaries of the governorates are the constitutional basis for federalism, but it is clear that even by the broadest standards, such boundaries never matched the major sectarian and ethnic divisions in the country. Moreover, the various Iraqi elections have shown that major sectarian and ethnic minorities exist in most governorates, often in isolated pockets and other times in mixed towns, cities, and areas.

It should be noted, however, that no unclassified current version of these maps and data has more than the most marginal credibility and recent survey results raise major issues about the level of understanding anyone really has of Iraq's past and current demographics. The recent ABC/BBC/NHK poll found that,¹²

Iraq commonly is described as a majority Shiite nation, apparently on the basis of an undated and unsourced reference in the CIA's "World Factbook" proposing that 60 to 65 percent of Iraqis are Shiites.

In this survey, instead, Shiite Arabs comprise just under half of the population, 48 percent, as they did in the March poll, 47 percent.

Sunni Arabs account for 33 percent in this poll, again very similar (and within sampling tolerances) to their 35 percent in the March poll.

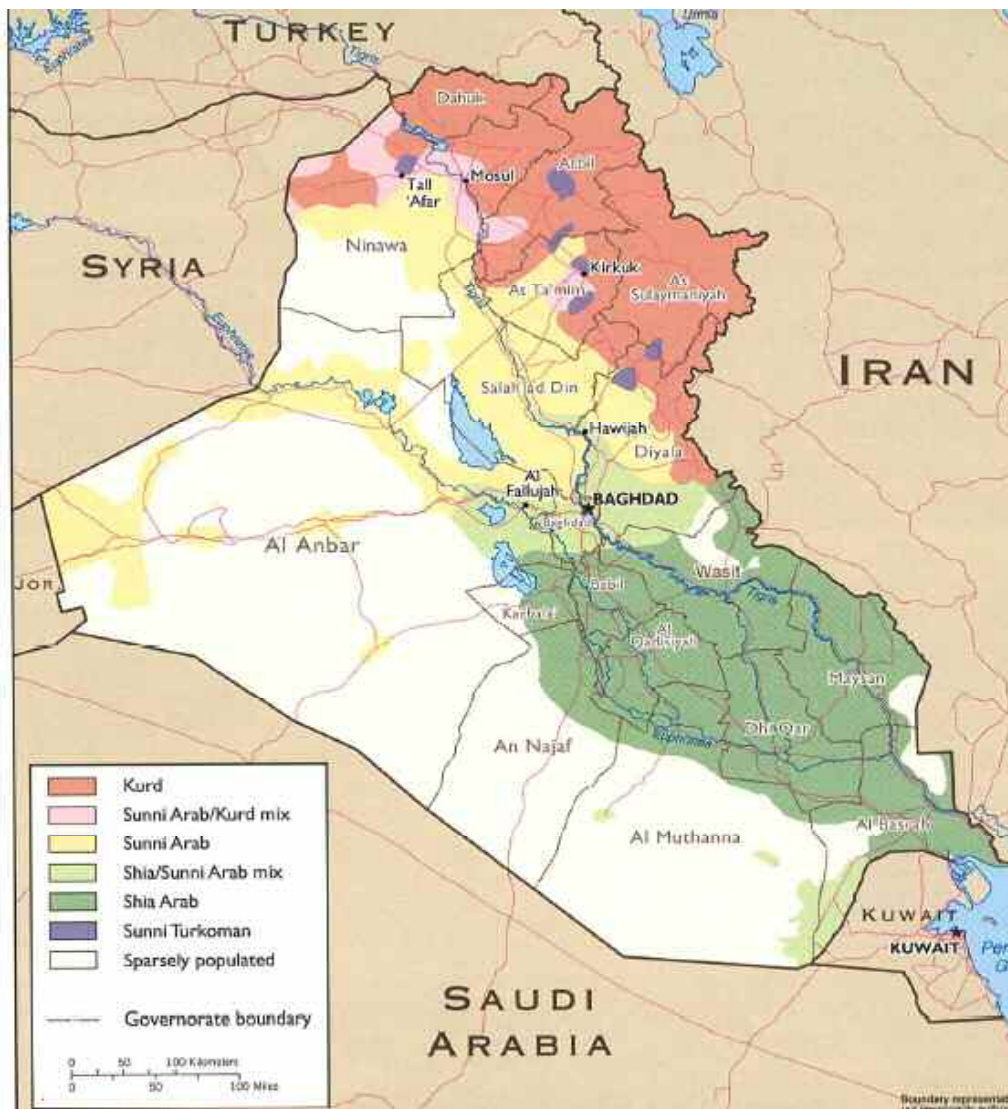
Kurds accounted for 16 and 15 percent respectively in the two surveys; with three percent "other" in both. Together these two surveys consist of more than 4,400 interviews from 915 sampling points, a large combined sample with an unusual level of geographical coverage.

Figures Eighteen and Nineteen also show that the results of the December 2005 election made it clear that even when a given sect or ethnicity dominates a given governorate, this does not mean that it does not have strong minorities and or that large numbers of Iraqis did not vote for a national, rather than sectarian, or ethnic party.

Figure Sixteen: Iraq by Governorate and Potential Federal Areas

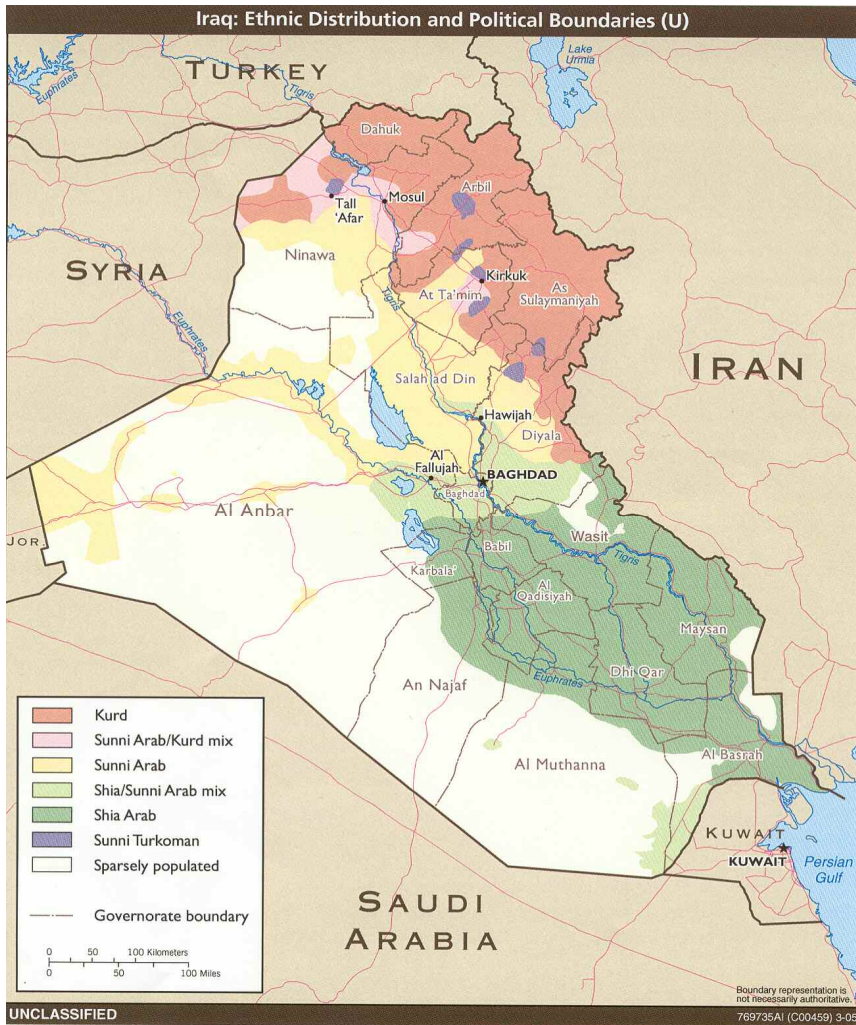


Figure Seventeen: Iraq's Demographics Before the US Invasion



Source: CIA

Figure Eighteen: Iraq: Size of Minority Vote in 2005 by Governorate



Minority Votes by Province		
Province	Majority	Minority Vote December 2005 Election
Anbar	Sunni	26%
Baghdad	Mixed	43%
Basra	Shi'ite	23%
Diyala	Mixed	62%
Dhi Qar	Shi'ite	13%
Najaf	Shi'ite	18%
Maysan	Shi'ite	13%
Qadisiyah	Shi'ite	19%
Muthanna	Shi'ite	14%
Wasit	Mixed	19%
Babil	Mixed	24%
Karbala	Shi'ite	24%
Salahaddin	Mixed	67%
Ninewa	Sunni	73%
Kirkuk	Mixed	57%
Dahuk	Kurd	10%
Sulaymaniyah	Kurd	13%
Arbil	Kurd	5%

Figure Nineteen: Parties Garnering 5 percent or More by Province in the December 2005 Election by Province

PROVINCE	RELIGION/SECT	VOTES	PERCENT
Anbar (Total of 9 seats)	Sunni		
Tawafiq Iraqi Front		272,707	73.75 percent
Hewar National Iraqi Front		66,322	17.94
Babil (Total of 11 seats)	Shi'ite, some Sunni		
United Iraqi Alliance		418,919	75.74
Iraqi National List		48,593	8.79
Baghdad (Total of 59 seats)	Shi'ite and Sunni		
Unified Iraqi Alliance		1,398,778	58.46
Tawafiq Iraqi Front		454,107	18.98
Iraqi National List		330,082	13.80
Basra (Total of 16 seats)	Shi'ite, some mixed		
Unified Iraqi Alliance		615,255	77.46
Iraqi National List		87,538	11.02
Diyala (Total of 10 seats)	Kurd, Sunni, Shi'ite		
Tawafiq Iraqi Front		182,223	36.77
Unified Iraqi Alliance		110,285	22.26
Kurdistani Gathering		66,508	13.42
National Iraqi List		52,624	10.62
Hewar National Iraqi Front		50,971	10.29
Dohuk (Total of 7 seats)	Kurd, some minority		
Kurdistani Gathering		355,084	89.97
Kurdistan Islamic Union		28,957	7.34
Erbil (Total of 13 seats)	Kurd		
Kurdistani Gathering		628,181	95.15
Karbala (Total of 6 seats)	Shi'ite, some Sunni		
Unified Iraqi Alliance		230,211	76.02
Iraqi National List		35,502	11.72
Tamim/Kirkuk (Total of 9 seats)	Mixed Kurd, Sunni, Shi'ite, Turkman		
Kurdistani Gathering		266,737	51.89
Hewar National Iraqi Front Minority		14.24	
Iraqi Turkomen Front			11.62
Tawafiq Iraqi Front			6.17
Missan/Maysan (Total of 7 seats)	Shi'ite		
Unified Iraqi Coalition		275,505	86.86
Muthana (Total of 5 seats)	Shi'ite, small Sunni		
Unified Iraqi Alliance		176,222	86.42
Najaf (Total of 8 seats)	Shi'ite		
Unified Iraqi Alliance		302,573	82.03
Iraqi National List		28,777	7.80
Ninewa/Nineveh (Total of 19 seats)	Sunni, Kurd, Shi'ite, minorities		
Tawafiq Iraqi Front		302,518	36.88
Kurdistani Gathering minority		157,476	19.20
Iraqi National List		91,661	11.17
Hewar National Iraqi Front		82,976	10.11

Unified Iraqi Coalition		61,038	7.44
Qadisiyyah (Total of 8 seats)	Shi'ite, some Sunni		
Unified Iraqi Coalition <i>Alliance</i>		269,609	81.38
Iraqi National List		28,296	8.54
Salahaddin (Total of 8 seats)	Sunni, some Shi'ite		
Tawafoq Iraqi Front		164,116	33.67
Hewar National Iraqi Front		94,180	19.32
Iraqi National List		52,116	10.69
Liberation and Reconciliation Gathering		45,490	9.33
Unified Iraqi Coalition <i>Alliance</i>		35,951	7.38
Sulaymaniya (Total of 15 seats)	Kurd		
Kurdistani <i>Kurdistan</i> Gathering		685,900	87.13
Islamic Union of Kurdistan		85,145	10.82
Theqar/DhiQar (Total of 12 seats)	Shi'ite		
Unified Iraqi Coalition		499,582	86.63
National Iraqi List		29,028	5.03
Wasit (Total of 8 seats)	Shi'ite/Sunni		
Unified Iraqi Coalition <i>Alliance</i>		279,616	80.68
Iraqi National List		28,053	8.09

Note: Kurds are mixed, but largely Sunni. Sunni in this table equals Sunni Arab; Shi'ite equals Shi'ite Arab.
 Source: Adapted from Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq Web site, December 20, 2005,
http://www.ieciraq.org/English/Frameset_english.htm.

The Economic Impact of Federalism, Separatism, and Partitioning

As has already been discussed, forced separation has helped to create major problems in Iraq's economy and infrastructure. This is partly very direct. Displaced Iraqis normally lose their homes, businesses or jobs, and get little more than token – if any compensation. What they have is taken by insurgents and militia groups or destroyed. They are forced to work overseas or in lower paying jobs in Iraq -- if they can find work -- or become a burden to family members or friends.

Increased partitioning and forced separation seem unlikely to create viable sectarian and ethnic economic zones without years of adjustment and turmoil. In case after case, divided cities are going to exist with lasting anger and tension, or villages and areas that coexist with neighbors with different sectarian and ethnic boundaries. Even if Iraq does split or federate, too many Iraqis are too poor to move, and the result will not be neat lines on a map, but rather many scattered urban and rural "Ulsters."

Unemployment and underemployment are already over 60% in most areas with serious tension or conflict. Even if one includes the more stable areas like part of the Kurdish zone and Babil governorate, the US Department of Defense estimated in its quarterly report on Stability and Security in Iraq that conservative estimates by the Iraqi government put direct national unemployment at 17.6% and underemployment at 38.1% for a national total of 45.7%.¹³

The breakdown of medical, legal, and educational services leaves other kinds of lasting scars, and any further deterioration in security and stability will make this worse. This is compounded by the lack of stable career and education opportunities in many areas, the inability to carry out normal family and social life, the stress placed on Iraqis with mixed sectarian and ethnic background, and the grandly, constant inconvenience of not having reliable utilities like power and water. All this takes place in what is often a climate of fear, exhaustion, anger, and revenge.

It is also important to note that these forces – like the economic issues discussed in the next section of this analysis – affect a highly urbanized population and a state whose rural population is extremely dependent on the effective national management of water resources. As has been noted earlier, it is easy to draw lines on the map of Iraq. It is far harder to figure out how to divide up its cities and urbanized areas, its industries, and its service sectors.

Arab Sunnis, in particular, face major problems in any future solution that pushes them out of Iraq's major cities. Iraq's industrial base and service sector are concentrated in mixed cities like Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk and Mosul, and the Sunni dominated areas of Anbar and other largely Sunni governorates have a much smaller share of these sectors than the Shi'ite areas, and the greater urban areas in and surrounding Basra and Baghdad. It is easy to talk about displacing people along sectarian and ethnic lines, but this becomes extraordinarily difficult if they are to have homes and an economic future, and if

Iraq's exiles and refugees in other countries are to be relocated and given jobs and careers.

Oil, Infrastructure, Federalism, Separatism, and Partitioning

More broadly, however, partitioning is not occurring in ways that reflect Iraq's lines of communication, ports, utility or water systems, nor is it clear than any form of partitioning or federalism can divide up Iraq's industrial base, oil and other resources in equitable ways.

The Petroleum Issue

Petroleum export income and reserves are the key to current political and economic power in Iraq. Iraq, however, is a state with a highly integrated petroleum sector whose pipelines, power facilities, and oil fields are far easier to develop and produce on a national level. Petroleum is also virtually the nation's only source of hard currency other than aid, and funds roughly 90% of its government revenues. Partitioning is not simply a matter of power and territory. It inevitably is a matter of oil.

As the maps and charts in **Figures Twenty to Twenty-Two** show, Iraq's petroleum sector does not lend itself to any form of peaceful partitioning, particularly since some 80% of all current oil exports come from the Shi'ite provinces in the southeast. The northern fields can only export through the south and Turkey, rehabilitation of existing fields would take around three years, and major development of new or shut-in Iraqi fields would take at least half a decade. Moreover, if Iraq is to reduce its dependence on imports of product, it needs efficient, large-scale refineries, and at present only the south or some form of nationally unified investment and distribution can really support them.

The latest country report on Iraq from the US Energy Information Agency notes that,

Iraq's oil infrastructure needs modernization and investment. Despite a large reconstruction effort (including Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF) support of \$1.72 billion), the industry has not been able to meet hydrocarbon production and export targets since 2004.

According to the January 2007, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) report, Iraq's petroleum sector faces technical challenges in procuring, transporting and storing crude and refined products, as well as managing pricing controls and imports, fighting smuggling and corruption, improving budget execution, and managing sustainability of operations. Oil production has not recovered to pre-war levels, and parliament and cabinet officials are working to map out investment and ownership rights that will help move the industry forward.

Another challenge to Iraq's development of the oil sector is that resources are not evenly divided across sectarian-demographic lines. Most known hydrocarbon resources are concentrated in the Shiite areas of the south and the ethnically Kurdish north, with few resources in control of the Sunni minority (Click [HERE](#) to link to oil resources maps). For this reason a legal framework for investment in the hydrocarbon sector remains a main policy objective.

According to reports by various U.S. government agencies, multilateral institutions and other international organizations, long-term Iraq reconstruction costs could reach \$100-billion or higher,

of which it is estimated that more than a third will go to the oil, gas and electricity sectors. In addition, the World Bank estimates that at least \$1 billion in additional revenues needs to be committed annually to the oil industry just to sustain current production.

According to the Oil and Gas Journal, Iraq's proven oil reserves are 115 billion barrels, although these statistics have not been revised since 2001 and are largely based on 2-D seismic data from nearly three decades ago. Over the past two years, multinational companies, at the request of the Government of Iraq (GoI), have reexamined seismic data and conducted comprehensive surveys of Iraq's hydrocarbons reserves in locations throughout the country. Geologists and consultants have estimated that relatively unexplored territory in the western and southern deserts may contain an estimated additional 45 to 100 billion barrels (bbls) of recoverable oil. While internal Iraqi estimates have ranged into the hundreds of billions of barrels of additional oil, the seismic data under review by a host of international firms seem to be pointing to more conservative, but significant, increases. Iraq has the lowest reserve to production ratio of the major oil-producing countries.

The majority of the known oil and gas reserves in Iraq form a belt that runs along the eastern edge of the country. According to the GoI, Iraq has around 9 fields that are considered "super giants" (over 5 billion bbls reserves) as well as 22 known "giant" fields (over 1 billion bbls). According to independent consultants, the cluster of super-giant fields of southeastern Iraq forms the largest known concentration of such fields in the world and accounts for 70 to 80 percent of the country's proven oil reserves. An estimated 20 percent of oil reserves are in the north of Iraq, near Kirkuk, Mosul and Khanaqin. Control over rights to reserves is a source of controversy between the ethnic Kurds and other groups in the area.

The Western Desert is of interest to oil prospectors as well as to the sectarian groups occupying these areas where there is no active oil production. Minor oil formations beneath western territory have been known of for decades, but little has been done in the way of development. Much of this area is just now undergoing exploration, although it belongs to same geological formation as part of the Saudi Arabian deposits. According to an Egyptian news source from February, 2007, a test well at the Akkas field in the Al-Anbar province is flowing at rates equivalent to larger fields elsewhere in Iraq.

...Historically, two-thirds of production came from the southern fields and the remainder from the north-central fields near Kirkuk. At present, the majority of Iraqi oil production comes from just three giant fields: North and South Rumaila and Kirkuk. The Rumaila fields, operated by Iraqi parastatal South Oil Company, along with a ring of nearly a dozen smaller fields, including Subha, Luhais, West Qurna and Az-Zubair, have been producing 1.5 to 1.9 million bbl/d; close to pre-war levels. Conversely, average production at Kirkuk and the northern fields of around 200,000 bbl/d is only a fraction of the pre-war peak of around 680,000 bbl/d, due to reservoir damage from gas and water injection as well as shut-in export routes. In May 2007, the Iraq Ministry of Oil (MoO) reported that total production from the northern fields was 206,000 bbl/d, all of which went to domestic consumption.

... Currently, the MoO has central control over oil and gas production and development in all but the Kurdish territory through its two operating entities, the North (NOC) and South Oil Companies (SOC). According to the North Oil Company's website, their concession and jurisdiction extends from the Turkish borders in the north to 32.5 degrees latitude (about 100 miles south of Baghdad), and from Iranian borders in the east to Syrian and Jordanian borders in the west. The company's geographical operation area spans the following governorates: Tamim (Kirkuk), Nineveh, Irbil, Baghdad, Diyala and part of Babil to Hilla and Wasit to Kut. The remainder falls under the jurisdiction of the SOC, and though smaller in geographical size, includes the majority of proven reserves.

... The MoO has announced a goal of 6 million bbl/d of sustainable production by the end of the decade, stating that between \$25 and \$75 billion in investment is needed to get Iraq's sector

producing at such levels. The southern fields intended for development in the immediate term for export are West Qurna, Halfaya, Majnoon and Nahr (Bin) Umar. Experts suggest that these fields could produce an additional 2 million bbl/d in the medium-time frame with moderate investment. In the north, further development at a number of fields, including Bai Hassan, Jambur, Khabbaz, Ajil, Ain Zalah, Butma and others may depend on the final status of Kirkuk (Tamim) and settlement of Kurdish claims on the Nineveh governorate (Mosul). A referendum is scheduled to take place in late 2007.

Despite the lack of agreement over the national law governing investment in hydrocarbons, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has signed a half-dozen oil production sharing, development and exploration contracts with several small foreign firms. In June 2007, the KRG announced an offering of 40 additional exploration blocks during the summer of 2007. In addition, more than a dozen contracts signed by the central government with international companies during Saddam Hussein's regime are being renegotiated or may come under review when Iraq's oil law and investment framework is in place. Below is a table detailing the status of reported international investment in Iraq's upstream petroleum sector.

...Refinery operations, with antiquated infrastructure, are often disrupted by thievery, employee intimidation, and sabotage to feeder pipelines, lack of feedstock, and unreliable power supply. The fuel mix, including high levels of heavy fuel oil, does not reflect the current demand mix. The sector has not been able to meet domestic demand for refined products like gasoline, kerosene, LPG and diesel for the generators that supplement electric power since 2003, and shortages are reported. In 2006, Iraq's petroleum product consumption was approximately 545,000 bbl/d.

... A lack of continuous refining operations has forced the GoI to import light fuels, relying heavily on deals brokered by the USG and the MoO with neighboring countries including Turkey, Iran, Syria and Kuwait. According to SOMO, in May 2006, imports of refined products totaled nearly 160,000 bbl/d. Before the war, Iraq was a large exporter of petroleum products and crude. However, according to the IMF, imports have cost the GoI close to \$2.5 billion annually since 2004. In early 2007, the GoI liberalized the fuel import market and now relies on private importers of refined products to meet local demand.

It is easy to talk about Iraqi plans to triple Iraq's current oil production to levels of 6 MMBD, but oil resources and export income are something no faction can afford to give up. Some form of national agreement is virtually necessary if Iraq is ever to truly secure its existing and future fields and facilities.

Dividing Up the Rest of Iraq's Economic Infrastructure

Similar issues affect Iraq's borders, its road system (which Figure 10 has shown is uniquely poorly suited to separation along sectarian and ethnic lines), its rail system, its electric power grid, and its water and irrigation systems. Iraq's economic development will move far faster if it remains a nation without federal restrictions or barriers in terms of investment, economies of scale, and freedom of movement.

Iraq already has problems in effectively sharing electric power, largely from the Shi'ite south. As an EIA Report notes,¹⁴

A resistance to power sharing, primarily in the south, has contributed to the country's power inequity. Reportedly, provincial authorities are fighting the central authorities in the distribution and rationing of supplies to almost seven million consumers in Baghdad. In the long-term, the GoI aims to reduce Baghdad's dependency on power sharing by extending generation capacity in and

around the capital. The GoI is also pursuing opportunities to link grids with neighboring countries including Jordan and Saudi Arabia. In the north, the KRG has accused Baghdad publicly of “turning off the lights” in retaliation for political moves. The KRG’s regional 10-year Master Electricity Plan calls for increasing hydropower and thermal capacity annually but expects to remain dependent on imports from abroad from Turkey, Syria and Iran and the national grid at least through 2015.

...The World Bank estimates that an additional \$20 to \$25 billion is needed to ensure reliable electricity supply and increase available capacity to approximately 24,000 MW by 2015. Unfortunately, according to the January 2007 SIGIR report, the GoI Operation and Maintenance (O&M) budgets are reportedly too low to support all of the existing installations, in addition to new capacity. The April SIGIR report noted that “O&M allocations by the GoI continue to limit the sustainability of U.S. funded projects as responsibility is transferred to Iraqi operators.” However, the electricity ministry is believed to have started issuing independent tenders to bring in private investment to support development. The USG program formally ends in September 2007.

The World Bank recently approved two loans for the electricity sector (only the fourth such loan in 30 years): A \$40-million Emergency Hydropower Project at Dokan and Derbandikhan (KRG) in December 2006, and a US\$124-million loan for the Emergency Electricity Reconstruction Project for Hartha (Units 2&3, doubling capacity to 800 MW), in March 2007.

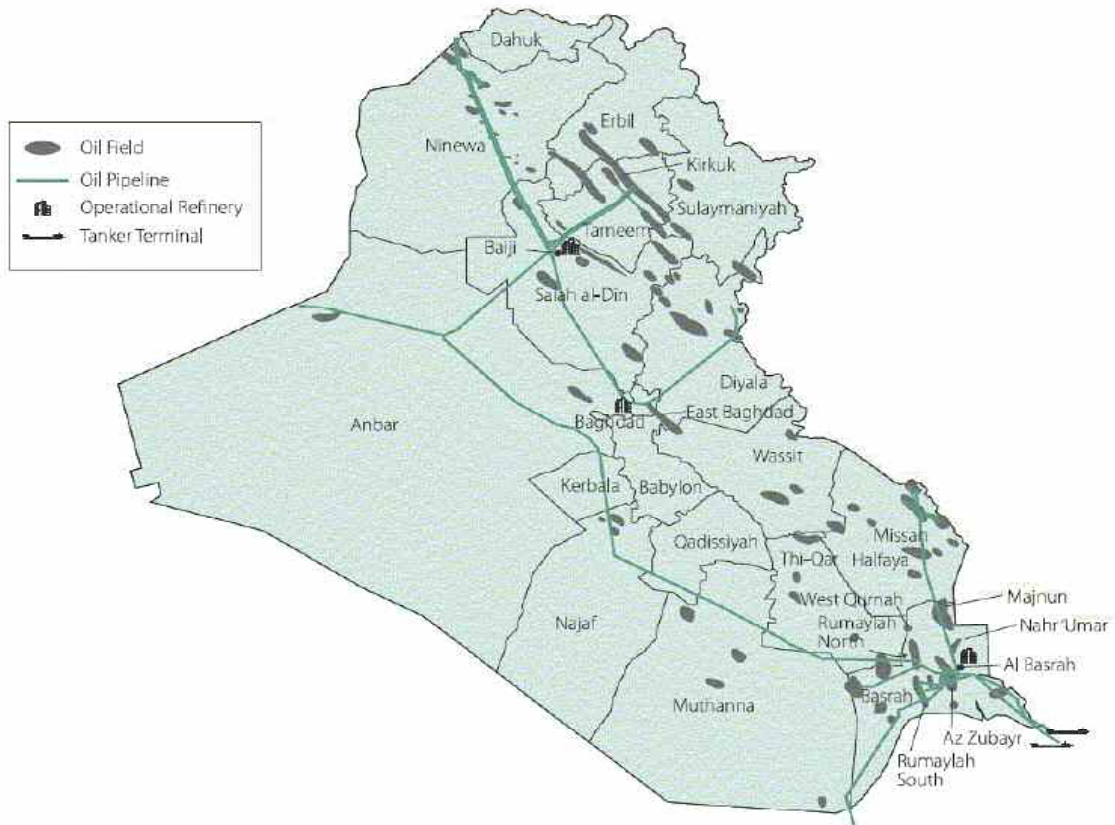
The Water and Irrigation Issue

Iraq is critically dependent on irrigation in its agricultural structure and already had major problems in funding and rehabilitating key dams. Freedom of trade requires freedom of movement to all its borders and regions, and its narrow 58-kilometer seacoast and limited offshore waters are critical both to seaborne trade and petroleum exports.

While Iraq may appear to be “water rich,” this depends on a complex national system of dams, canals, and irrigation systems. It also depends on development of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers system contingent upon agreements with upstream riparian Turkey; and large-scale national efforts to deal with soil degradation (salination), erosion and desertification.¹⁵ This system involves some 5,300 kilometers of managed waterways -- Euphrates River (2,815 km), Tigris River (1,899 km), and Third River (565 km) are the principal waterways -- and well over 10,000 kilometers of canals.¹⁶

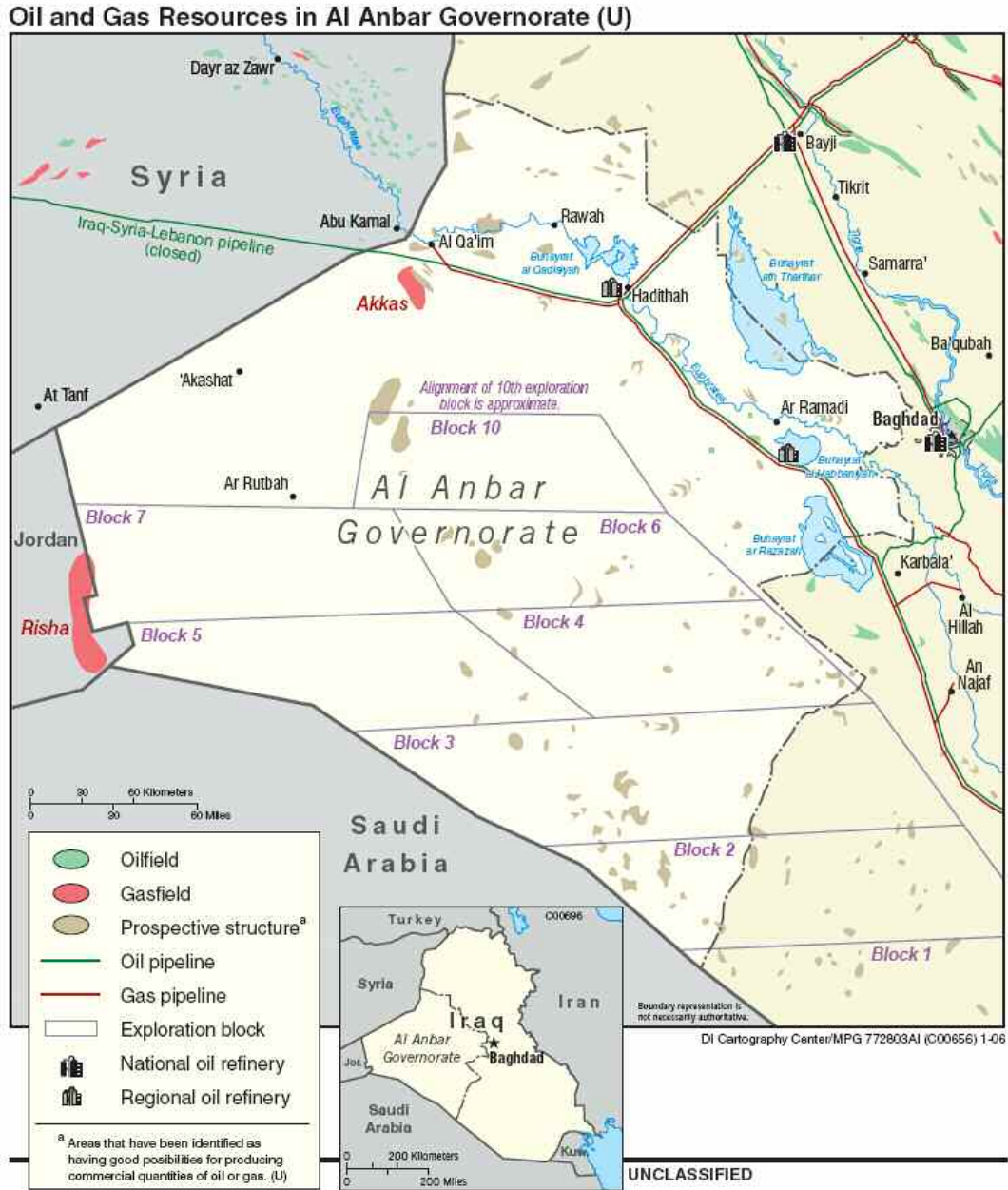
Today’s focus may be on sectarian and ethnic issues, but even today no one can really ignore economics and infrastructure, and the need to preserve as much integration and freedom of access as possible.

Figure Twenty: Iraq Oil Fields by Governorate



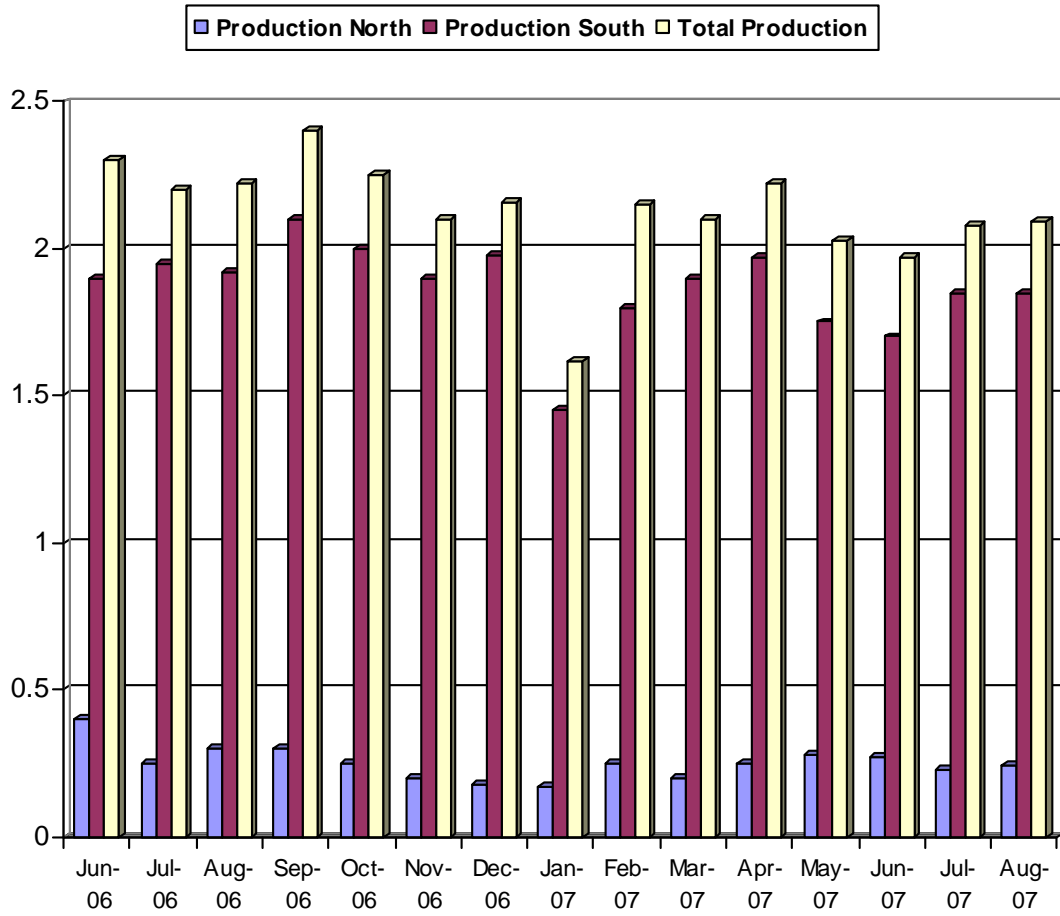
Source: EIA, Iraq Country website.

Figure Twenty-One: Anbar and Central Iraq: Proximity to Oil Without Developed Sunni Fields



Source: EIA, Iraq Country website.

Figure Twenty-Two: Iraqi Oil Production: Output from the Shi'ite South versus Production from the Kurdish/Arab North



Source: Department of Defense. "Measuring Security and Stability on Iraq" September 14, 2007. Pg. 12

*Note: +/- 5%

Iraq's Neighbors and Federalism, Separatism, and Partitioning

Iraq is not always fortunate in its neighbors. Its border countries include: Iran 1,458 km, Jordan 181 km, Kuwait 240 km, Saudi Arabia 814 km, Syria 605 km, and Turkey 352 km. Each set of neighbors could present a growing problem in the case of any form of federalism or partitioning that weakened Iraq.

The key problems are already all too evident as a result of Iraq's current military weakness and lack of unity:

- A Kurdish zone or enclave that would be under pressure, if not under active threat, from Turkey over the PKK and from Iran and Syria to a lesser degree because of their fears of their Kurdish minorities and the prospect of Kurdish independence on their borders.
- A Shi'ite south that could be weak and divided if its current factional quarrels and struggles continue with its own sub-regional and city divisions, open to Iranian influence, infiltration, and meddling.
- A Shi'ite (and Kurdish?) dominated rump central government, equally vulnerable to Iranian pressure and influence.
- Competing pressures from Sunni states to win influence over the Sunni West with separate efforts by Neo-Salafi religious extremist groups like Al Qa'ida to keep a divided Iraq a Sunni-Shi'ite battleground and exploit Sunni territory as a base or sanctuary.
- Syria as a wild card standing partly aside from the Sunni states, and with its own ties to Iran, trying to exploit the situation for its own self-interest (or that of its Alawite-dominated regime).

It will be at least several years before the security forces of even a united Iraq have any hope of standing on their own in dealing with any given neighbor. A deeply divided or portioned Iraq would not have the ability to create effective national forces, and each sectarian and ethnic area would have a strong need to reach out to some neighbor for security, arms and money.

It is also a more than passing problem for the United States. In practice, federalism and/or partitioning could make it very difficult for the US to stay in Iraq, to exert any real influence over Shi'ite areas to check Iran and deal with the Shi'ites. Equally important, the US might well have an inherent a major strategic liability in the form of an isolated and land-locked Kurdish "state" that could not export or support an independent economy, which would need US military protection or basing, would present a target for Islamic and other extremists, and where the US would not have local basing rights or overflight rights to maintain its operations.

Iraqi Public Opinion and the Probable “Backlash Effect” of US Efforts at Federalism, Separatism, and Partitioning

Finally, there is a high probability that any overt US efforts to shape how Iraq creates federal areas or partitions will produce a massive backlash effect – at least among Iraq’s Arab population and minorities other than the Kurds. Any form of US interference that goes beyond the existing level of quiet and patient influence by the US embassy, and more overt pressure from senior American officials, is going to be seen as foreign interference, is going to make at least one side hostile to the US, and will add to Iraq’s problems in political accommodation rather than ease them.

The US is not exactly popular in Iraq, and if it openly or publicly interferes without the kind of cause that can win at least strong local Iraqi support is certain to produce a new wave of massive resentment against the US.

Figure Twenty-Three shows a recent ABC/BBC/NHK poll which found that many Iraqis see the US and coalition as threats rather than as protectors. **Figure Twenty-Four** shows that the same poll found that 65 to 70 percent of Iraqis say the “surge” has worsened rather than improved security, political stability and the pace of redevelopment alike.¹⁷ There were some exceptions. 38 percent in Anbar province, a focal point of the surge, now rate local security positively; none did so six months ago. In Baghdad fewer now describe themselves as feeling completely unsafe in their own neighborhoods – 58 percent, down from 84 percent. Yet other assessments of security in these locales did not improve, nor did the view nationally.

The ABC/BBC/NHK poll focused on the most positive aspect of US action in Iraq – direct military efforts to bring security – and still found Iraqi doubt and anger:¹⁸

Overall assessments of security show no improvement since last winter, and direct ratings of the surge are highly negative. In one measure, the number of Iraqis who rate their local security positively (43 percent) is no better than it was in March. In another, as noted, just 24 percent say local security has improved in the last six months, including 16 percent in Baghdad, and not one respondent in Anbar.

Even fewer, 11 percent nationally, think security has improved in the country as a whole.

The widespread nature of the violence is part of this. In Baghdad, 52 percent report car bombings or suicide attacks in their local area, the same as in March; but so do 39 percent in the country, up from 26 percent six months ago. Accounts of other forms of violence – such as snipers or crossfire, kidnappings for ransom and sectarian or factional fighting – also remain widespread, though their prevalence has not increased.

Figure Twenty-Three: Iraqi Perceptions of Violence Affecting Their Lives: 2007

	Occurred nearby?		Change
	August	March	
Car bombs, suicide attacks	42%	32%	+10%
Kidnappings for ransom	40	40	=
Gov't/anti-gov't fighting	34	34	=
Snipers, crossfire	30	30	=
Sectarian/factional fighting	27	25	+2
Unnecessary violence by:			
U.S./coalition forces	41	44	-3
Local militia	30	31	-1
Iraqi police	21	24	-3
Iraqi army	19	24	-5

Across the country overall, feelings of personal safety are no better than in March; just 26 percent of Iraqis feel “very safe” in their own neighborhood. And that’s almost nonexistent across Iraq’s major metro areas – Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk and Mosul – where 98 percent of residents feel either “not very safe” (50 percent) or “not safe at all” (48 percent). Ratings of personal safety are better, though hardly good, in Iraq’s smaller cities, villages and rural areas.

Direct ratings of the surge itself are particularly negative. At best, only 18 percent of Iraqis say it has improved security in surge areas; at worst, just six percent say it’s improved the pace of economic development. Indeed, as noted, the surge broadly is seen to have done more harm than good, with 65 to 70 percent saying it’s worsened rather than improved security in surge areas, security in other areas, conditions for political dialogue, the ability of the Iraqi government to do its work, the pace of reconstruction and the pace of economic development.

Figure Twenty-Four: Iraqi Perceptions of the Impact of the Surge

	Impact of U.S. surge:		
	Better	Worse	No effect
Political dialogue	10%	70%	20%
Security in surge areas	18	70	11
Security in other areas	12	68	20
Pace of reconstruction	9	67	24
Pace of econ. development	6	67	26
Govt’s ability to function	12	65	22

Every respondent in Baghdad, and also in Anbar (where George W. Bush paid a surprise visit to a sprawling U.S. base last week), says the surge has made security worse now than it was six months ago (anti-U.S. sentiment in these areas is very high, and likely a factor in these direct assessments). Views in the rest of the country are hardly positive: Outside Baghdad and Anbar, still just 26 percent say the surge has improved security.

A broader question, not specifically linked to the surge, has an equally negative result: Just 18 percent of Iraqis say the presence of U.S. forces is making security better in their country overall, about the same as in March (21 percent). Instead 72 percent say the U.S. presence is making Iraq’s security worse.

...– Other assessments of the United States are overwhelmingly negative. As noted, nearly two-thirds of Iraqis now say it was wrong for the United States and its allies to have invaded Iraq – 63

percent, up from 52 percent six months ago and from 39 percent in the first Iraq poll by ABC, the BBC and NHK (and the German broadcaster ARD) in February 2004.

Even among Shiites, empowered by the overthrow of Saddam, 51 percent now say the invasion was wrong, up sharply from 29 percent in March. (Further deterioration may be ahead; among Shiites who still support the invasion, the number who call it “absolutely” right has fallen from 34 percent in March to 14 percent now.) Only among the largely autonomous Kurds does a majority still support the invasion, and even their support, 71 percent, is down by 12 points.

79 percent of Iraqis oppose the presence of coalition forces in the country, essentially unchanged from last winter – including more than eight in 10 Shiites and nearly all Sunni Arabs. (Seven in 10 Kurds, by contrast, still support the presence of these forces.)

Similarly, 80 percent of Iraqis disapprove of the way U.S. and other coalition forces have performed in Iraq; the only change has been an increase in negative ratings of the U.S. performance among Kurds. And 86 percent of Iraqis express little or no confidence in U.S. and U.K. forces, similar to last winter and again up among Kurds.

Accusations of mistreatment continue: 41 percent of Iraqis in this poll (vs. 44 percent in March) report unnecessary violence against Iraqi citizens by U.S. or coalition forces. That peaks at 63 percent among Sunni Arabs, and 66 percent in Sunni-dominated Anbar.

This disapproval rises to an endorsement of violence: 57 percent of Iraqis now call attacks on coalition forces “acceptable,” up six points from last winter and more than three times its level (17 percent) in February 2004. Since March, acceptability of such attacks has risen by 15 points among Shiites (from 35 percent to 50 percent), while remaining near-unanimous among Sunnis (93 percent).

Kurds, by contrast – protected by the United States when Saddam remained in power – continue almost unanimously to call these attacks unacceptable.

Acceptability of attacks on U.S. forces also varies by locale, peaking at 100 percent in Anbar, 69 percent in Kirkuk city and 60 percent in Baghdad, compared with 38 percent in Basra and just three percent in the northern Kurdish provinces.

As the poll notes, these judgments are not based on the military success of the surge, but on a much broader set of political and personal values that shape Iraqi attitudes towards the US and the Iraqi government. And ones likely to be far more sensitive to any US efforts to shape federalism or partitioning:¹⁹

Iraqis’ own views can differ from military evaluations of the surge for good reason. Public attitudes are not based on a narrow accounting of more or fewer bombings and murders, but on the bigger picture – which for most in Iraq means continued violence, poor services, economic deprivation, inadequate reconstruction, political gridlock and other complaints. For instance, the reported drop in Baghdad from 896 violent deaths in July to 656 in August may simply have been insufficient to boost morale – particularly when violent deaths nationally were up by 20 percent, largely on the basis of bombings that killed an estimated 500 in two villages near the Syrian border on Aug. 14.

Indeed just a quarter of Iraqis in this poll say they feel “very safe” in their own neighborhoods, unchanged from six months ago. (And none reports feeling “very safe” in Baghdad or Anbar province.) Reports of car bombings and suicide attacks are more widespread; 42 percent now say these have happened nearby, up 10 points.

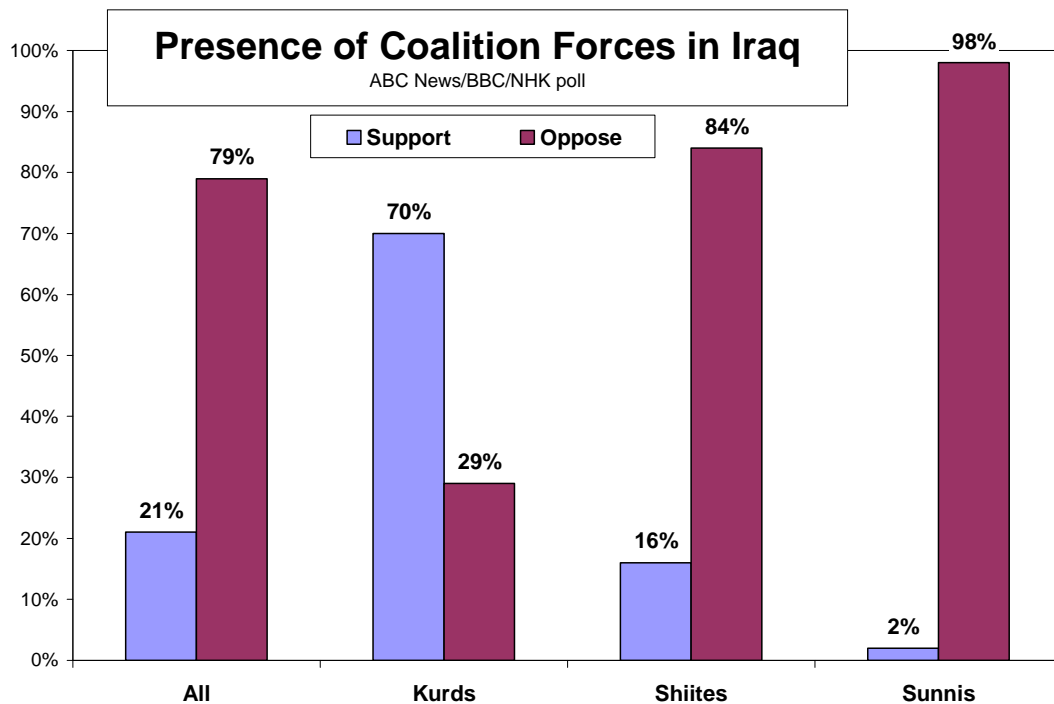
With both continued violence and no improvements in living conditions, frustration with Iraq's own government has grown as well. Despite billions spent, only 23 percent of Iraqis report effective reconstruction efforts in their local area. And about two-thirds disapprove of the work of both the current government overall (up by 12 points since winter), and of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki personally.

The surge is only one of the reasons why the US should be extraordinarily cautious about actively and openly interfering in federalism and partitioning in any way that could trigger still further Iraqi anger and resentment. **Figure Twenty-Five** shows the ABC, BBC, NHK poll results for Iraqi public opinion regarding the continued presence of US forces in Iraq. The supporting analysis of the poll also pointed out,²⁰

– Other assessments of the United States are overwhelmingly negative. As noted, nearly two-thirds of Iraqis now say it was wrong for the United States and its allies to have invaded Iraq – 63 percent, up from 52 percent six months ago and from 39 percent in the first Iraq poll by ABC, the BBC and NHK (and the German broadcaster ARD) in February 2004.

Even among Shiites, empowered by the overthrow of Saddam, 51 percent now say the invasion was wrong, up sharply from 29 percent in March. (Further deterioration may be ahead; among Shiites who still support the invasion, the number who call it “absolutely” right has fallen from 34 percent in March to 14 percent now.) Only among the largely autonomous Kurds does a majority still support the invasion, and even their support, 71 percent, is down by 12 points.

Figure Twenty-Five: Iraqi Public Opinion on the Presence of Coalition Forces in Iraq



Source: ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, "Iraqis' Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains," September 10, 2007

79 percent of Iraqis oppose the presence of coalition forces in the country, essentially unchanged from last winter – including more than eight in 10 Shiites and nearly all Sunni Arabs. (Seven in 10 Kurds, by contrast, still support the presence of these forces.)

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Kurds, by contrast – protected by the United States when Saddam remained in power – continue almost unanimously to call these attacks unacceptable.

Acceptability of attacks on U.S. forces also varies by locale, peaking at 100 percent in Anbar, 69 percent in Kirkuk city and 60 percent in Baghdad, compared with 38 percent in Basra and just three percent in the northern Kurdish provinces.

...Given such hostile views, 47 percent now say the United States and other coalition forces should leave Iraq immediately – a view that’s risen equally among Sunni Arabs (72 percent now say the U.S. should leave immediately, up 17 points) and Shiites (44 percent, up 16 points). Kurds almost unanimously disagree; just eight percent favor an immediate withdrawal.

The number of Iraqis favoring an immediate U.S. withdrawal has risen from 26 percent in November 2005 and 35 percent last winter; at 47 percent it’s now a plurality for the first time (in the next most-popular option, 34 percent say U.S. forces should “remain until security is restored”). The fact that support for an immediate pullout of U.S. forces is not even higher, given the vast unpopularity of their presence, likely reflects the uncertainty of what might follow their departure.

Indeed, apart from Kurds, support for immediate withdrawal is lowest, and has risen the least, in Baghdad, whose mixed Shiite-Sunni status puts it at particular risk. Desire for the United States to “leave now” is highest in Anbar, still deeply anti-American despite any accommodation its leaders have made with the U.S. military.

The rise in support for U.S. withdrawal is linked to worsening views of the country’s condition. People who think things are going badly for Iraq are far more likely to favor immediate withdrawal – 56 percent vs. 16 percent. Similarly, people who are pessimistic about the country’s future also are far more likely to favor withdrawal – 53 percent, vs. 23 percent among optimists. With optimism down, support for withdrawal is up.

Figure Twenty-Six: Which Iraqis Say the U.S. Should “Leave Now”

Things in Iraq:
Good 16%
Bad 56%

Expectations for future:
Better 23%
Worse 53%

Clearly there are concerns – varying sharply by population group – about the implications if the U.S. does withdraw without first restoring civil order. Nearly half of Iraqis, 46 percent, foresee Shiite-dominated Iran taking control of parts of Iraq. As many foresee parts of Iraq becoming bases of operation for international terrorists. Fewer, just over a third, think U.S. withdrawal would lead to full-scale civil war in Iraq, but with big differences: Two in 10 Shiites foresee full-scale civil war, but that rises to four in 10 Sunni Arabs and six in 10 Kurds.

Paradoxically, Sunni Arabs – who dislike the United States most intensely and are most apt to favor its immediate withdrawal – are most apt to foresee a takeover of parts of Iraq by Shiite-dominated Iran if the United States does pull out. This apparent lack of palatable alternatives underscores Sunni Arabs’ quandary, leaving them, in particular, so discontented with conditions in Iraq today.

... While U.S. efforts are viewed resoundingly negatively, this does not translate into support for activities of al Qaeda in Iraq. Disturbingly, nearly half of Iraqis (predominantly Sunni Arabs) say it’s acceptable for al Qaeda in Iraq to attack U.S. and coalition forces. But Iraqis – Sunni and Shiite alike – almost unanimously reject other activities of al Qaeda in Iraq – attacking Iraqi civilians (100 percent call this unacceptable), attempting to gain control of some areas (98 percent) and recruiting foreign fighters to come to Iraq (97 percent).

More generally, **Figure Twenty-Seven** shows that the poll asked the question: “Since the war, how do you feel about the way in which the United States and other coalition forces have carried out their responsibilities in Iraq? Have they done a very good job, quite a good job, quite a bad job or a very bad job?”²¹

Figure Twenty-Seven: How Have US and Coalition Forces Performed Since the Fall of Saddam Hussein?

	-----Good-----			-----Bad-----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Quite	NET	Quite	Very	
8/24/07	19%	3%	15%	80%	32%	48%	1%
Sunni	2	-	2	98	33	65	0
Shiite	18	2	16	82	35	47	-
Kurdish	53	14	40	42	22	20	4
3/5/07	23	6	18	77	30	46	0
Sunni	3	-	3	97	30	67	0
Shiite	21	4	17	79	34	45	0
Kurdish	74	22	53	26	19	7	0
11/22/05	36	10	27	59	19	40	5

Figure Twenty-Eight poll found in the process that US non-military efforts had generated even less popularity than its security efforts:²²

Figure Twenty-Eight: Perceptions of US Success or Failure in Nation Building

“Do you think this increase in US forces has made... [read category] better, worse, or had no effect?”

	Better	Worse	Had no effect	No opinion
Conditions for political dialogue in Iraq	10%	70%	20%	*
Sunni	1	85	14	0
Shiite	12	66	22	*
Kurdish	20	55	24	1
The ability of the Iraqi government to carry out its work	12	65	22	*
Sunni	2	79	19	0
Shiite	16	63	21	0
Kurdish	22	47	30	1
The pace of reconstruction in Iraq	9	67	24	*
Sunni	3	78	19	0
Shiite	11	66	23	0
Kurdish	11	52	37	1
The pace of economic development in Iraq	6	67	26	*
Sunni	3	79	18	*
Shiite	9	67	24	*
Kurdish	5	49	45	1

These results cover a period in which the US surge has as yet had little impact on the daily lives of most Iraqis, and when the tribal awakening in Anbar was still taking hold. They do not mean that the US cannot aid Iraq in gaining stability and security, or help it reach accommodation through the diplomatic and military efforts it already has underway, but they are a clear warning about how far the US will have to go in building Iraqi trust and the likely impact of further open US interference in Iraqi affairs.

What they do show is that the US might well create new problems in dealing with Iraq's Sunnis at a point where its efforts in dealing with Sunni tribal forces may well be beginning to pay off, and that the fact the US is seen so much more favorably by Kurds could make the US a target for Arab resentment in any efforts that appeared to support the Kurds.

¹ UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Report, 1 January – 31 March 2007, released 24 April 2007, pp. 21, available at: www.uniraq.org

² UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Report. "Humanitarian Briefing on the Crisis in Iraq." May 2, 2007, at <http://www.uniraq.org/docsmaps/humanitarian.asp?pagename=humanitarian>. Also see UNHCR Iraq. (2007, February). *IDP report*, (p1).; UNHCR Iraq. (2006, November). *Update on the Iraq Situation*, (p2).; and UNHCR. (2007, March). *Humanitarian needs of persons displaced within Iraq and across the country's borders: an international response*, (p4). Also see <http://www.unhcr.org/country/irq.html>

³ UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Report. "Humanitarian Briefing on the Crisis in Iraq." May 2, 2007

⁴ UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Report, 1 January – 31 March 2007, released 24 April, 2007, pp. 19-20, available at: www.uniraq.org

⁵ UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Report, 1 January – 31 March 2007, released 24 April, 2007, pp. 21, available at: www.uniraq.org

⁶ UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, Human Rights Report, 1 January – 31 March 2007, released 24 April, 2007, pp. 21, available at: www.uniraq.org

⁷ Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, September 2007, p. 16; and UNHCR Iraq. (2006, November). *Update on the Iraq Situation*.

⁸ Iraq Body Count, for example, is careful to qualify its estimates, and the user should note how the count is made and defined. Iraq Body Count describes its estimate as follows: "The count includes civilian deaths caused by coalition military action and by military or paramilitary responses to the coalition presence (e.g. insurgent and terrorist attacks). It also includes excess civilian deaths caused by criminal action resulting from the breakdown in law and order that followed the coalition invasion. Results and totals are continually updated and made immediately available here and on various IBC web counters which may be freely displayed on any website or homepage, where they are automatically updated without further intervention. Casualty figures are derived from a comprehensive survey of online media reports from recognized sources. Where these sources report differing figures, the range (a minimum and a maximum) is given. This method is also used to deal with any residual uncertainty about the civilian or non-combatant status of the dead. All results are independently reviewed and error-checked by at least three members of the Iraq Body Count project team before publication."

⁹ Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, September 2007, p. 1. "Nationwide

poll, August 2007: “The Iraqi people would be better off if the country were divided into 3 or more separate regions that better reflected ethnic or sectarian populations.” Nationwide, 33% of Iraqis agree to this statement. Sample Size: ~12000. Margin of Error (MoE): ~1%.

¹⁰ ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, “Iraqis’ Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains,” September 10, 2007. This poll for ABC News, the BBC and NHK was conducted Aug. 17-24, 2007, through in-person interviews with a random national sample of 2,212 Iraqi adults, including oversamples in Anbar province, Basra city, Kirkuk and the Sadr City section of Baghdad. The results have a 2.5-point error margin. Field work by D3 Systems of Vienna, Va., and KA Research Ltd. of Istanbul. See ABCNews.com/pollvault.html for methodological details and additional reports.

This survey follows a similar poll in Iraq by ABC, the BBC and other partners last Feb. 25-March 5. Together the two surveys bracket the surge, providing an independent assessment of changes in local conditions and attitudes.

¹¹ E-mail from Gary E. Langer, ABC News, September 28, 2007.

¹² ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, “Iraqis’ Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains,” September 10, 2007.

¹³ Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, September 2007, p. 10.

¹⁴ Energy Information Agency (EIA), Country Analysis Briefs, Iraq, Department of Energy, October 2007, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Iraq/Full.html>.

¹⁵ CIA, World Factbook, “Iraq,” <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>.

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¹⁸ ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, “Iraqis’ Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains,” September 10, 2007.

¹⁹ ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, “Iraqis’ Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains,” September 10, 2007.

²⁰ ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, “Iraqis’ Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains,” September 10, 2007.

²¹ ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, “Iraqis’ Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains,” September 10, 2007.

²² ABC NEWS/BBC/NHK POLL, IRAQ: WHERE THINGS STAND, “Iraqis’ Own Surge Assessment: Few See Security Gains,” September 10, 2007.