



SPECIAL REPORT

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ABOUT THE REPORT

This report is a product of the United States Institute of Peace's Iraq Experience Project. It is the first of three reports examining important lessons identified in Iraq prior to the country's transition to sovereignty in June 2004 and is based on extensive interviews with 113 U.S. officials, soldiers, and contractors who served there.

This report is focused specifically on public security in Iraq under the Coalition Provisional Authority and also draws on the views of experts who attended a January 2005 Iraq Experience conference at the Institute. The other two reports examine reconstruction and governance, respectively. These reports are intended for use as training aids in programs that prepare individuals for service in peace and stability operations, so that lessons identified in Iraq may be translated into lessons learned by those assigned to future missions.

Robert M. Perito, coordinator of the Iraq Experience Project at the United States Institute of Peace, prepared this report. The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training conducted the interviews under a contract with the Institute.

The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Institute of Peace, which does not advocate specific policy positions.

Robert M. Perito

The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience with Public Security in Iraq

Lessons Identified

Summary

- Important lessons for future U.S. peace and stability operations can be found in the civil upheaval that occurred in Iraq following the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime. These include lessons pertaining to public order, street crime, border control, and police recruitment, training, and combat.
- Large-scale breakdowns in public order should be anticipated in the aftermath of international interventions, particularly in societies emerging from brutal oppression. However, U.S. military forces are neither trained nor equipped to control civil disorder or perform police functions, and local police and security forces are generally either unavailable or unable to deal with civilian violence and lawlessness. Therefore, without adequate planning, personnel, and procedures, critical law enforcement needs will not be met, endangering the success of the mission.
- Failure to control looting and civil disorder creates a climate of impunity and encourages criminal violence and street crime. Without an armed international police force with executive authority or a properly trained, equipped, and motivated local police force, ordinary citizens are left with no effective defense against rampant crime. This, in turn, seriously undermines popular support for intervention authorities and the willingness of citizens to cooperate with international forces.
- Effective border control is essential to restoring security in postconflict environments. Immigration controls and border patrols are the first lines of defense against terrorism and organized crime, while immigration fees and customs duties

CONTENTS

Background	2
U.S. Intervention	3
Lessons Identified	5
Conclusion	12

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The United States Institute of Peace is an independent, nonpartisan federal institution created by Congress to promote the prevention, management, and peaceful resolution of international conflicts. Established in 1984, the Institute meets its congressional mandate through an array of programs, including research grants, fellowships, professional training, education programs from high school through graduate school, conferences and workshops, library services, and publications. The Institute's Board of Directors is appointed by the President of the United States and confirmed by the Senate.

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provide an immediate source of earnings for new regimes that lack the administrative infrastructure to collect other types of revenue. A properly trained and equipped border guard may also offer intervention forces some measure of protection from external aggressors.

- In postconflict environments, local police are normally unprepared, unwilling, or unable to perform police functions. Even when local security personnel are re-equipped, retrained, and escorted by international police advisers, they still have difficulty adapting to new circumstances, providing police services, and gaining public acceptance. In addition, police institutions need to be reformed and new police officers need to be recruited.
- Police training is a resource-intensive process that takes at least five years under optimal conditions and requires civilian experts with specialized skills and extensive foreign experience. Attempts to rush the training of local police forces and to put "uniforms on the street" inevitably fail to meet either the short-term need for immediate security or the long-term requirement for professional law enforcement personnel.
- International and indigenous police cannot operate effectively unless the intervention military force is able to create a safe and secure environment. Without a reasonable level of public order, police will be fully engaged in providing for their own security, leaving the civilian population defenseless against common crime. This situation is exacerbated if the intervention military force utilizes local police as auxiliaries or even as strike forces against paramilitaries.

Background

Saddam Hussein ruled through a sophisticated structure of intelligence and security services, a vast network of informers, and a brutal hand in dealing with dissent. He skillfully balanced competing forces within the country, playing upon ethnic and religious rivalries and using cooptation and financial inducements. Saddam concentrated decision making within a tight circle of close relatives, fellow tribesmen, and individuals from his hometown, Tikrit. Beyond this ruling group, he relied upon patronage networks, tribal allegiance, ethnic affiliation, and economic leverage in maintaining power. At the core of this system was a pervasive security apparatus.

This network of interlocking military and civilian intelligence and security organizations had different official missions but overlapping functions. These services were responsible to Saddam through the National Revolutionary Council, which he chaired. Their redundant responsibilities and vaguely defined relationships ensured that plots against the regime would be detected early and that agencies would compete with one another for his favor. The result was a pervasive and encompassing system that converted Iraq into a police state and preserved Saddam's rule. The civilian security organizations included the following:

- **Special Security Directorate (SSD; al-Amn al-Khas):** Under the leadership of Saddam's youngest son, Qusai, the directorate's 5,000 members belonged to the president's Tikriti clan and were handpicked for their loyalty. The SSD was responsible for protecting the president, the presidential family, and the presidential palaces. It was also charged with such sensitive tasks as evading the embargo on sensitive technologies and supervising weapons facilities.
- **General Intelligence Directorate (Jihaz al Mukhabbarat):** The Mukhabbarat's primary missions involved foreign espionage and intelligence collection, supervision of Iraqi embassy personnel, covert action, assassinations, and terrorist operations. Its responsibilities also included suppressing Kurdish and Shiite opposition, monitor-

ing foreign embassies and other intelligence and security agencies, and conducting surveillance of government ministries, the Baath Party, and the Iraqi military.

- **General Security Directorate (GSD; al-Amn al-'Amm):** The oldest and largest of the security services, the GSD was concerned with internal security and responsible for detecting public dissent and monitoring Iraqi citizens, particularly prominent personalities. Its heavy-handed operatives were responsible for most of the official harassment suffered by the Iraqi population.
- **Baath Party Security Agency (BPS; al-Amn al-Hizb).** The BPS—the internal security apparatus of the Baath Party—monitored civilians through the party's security branches in commercial enterprises, universities, factories, and trade unions. It was also responsible for monitoring party members and providing security to party offices.

Below these security agencies, the Iraqi National Police (INP) was responsible for law enforcement. Established under the monarchy by British advisers, the INP operated under the Ministry of Interior and included personnel from all of Iraq's ethnic and religious groups. In the 1960s, police academies were established to improve the training of INP officers. But after Saddam came to power in 1968, the Baath Party enacted legislation that subjected the police to military oversight. Armed with aging assault rifles, the INP was forced to rely upon the more favored special security services to perform all but the most routine operations, such as controlling traffic and petty crime. Thirty years of neglect by Saddam's regime left the INP with low standards, poor management, and a "firehouse" mentality—that is, police officers remained in their stations until ordered to make arrests.

The pervasiveness of the regime's security apparatus and its brutal methods meant that crimes were more likely to be committed by regime operatives than criminals. In many cases, the security services stopped the INP from investigating crimes. Such repressive political leadership discouraged initiative and prevented efforts to modernize the police force. Later, following international sanctions and the resulting decline in living standards after the Gulf War, members of the INP turned to petty corruption to survive. Their modus operandi was simple: they would round up all possible suspects in a given crime, obtain confessions through brutal interrogations, and then collect bribes from family members to release the innocent. This led Iraqis to grow increasingly distrustful of the INP. Prior to the U.S.-led intervention in 2003, the INP had 60,000 personnel divided between an officer corps educated at the police academies and a poorly educated, untrained rank and file. And the public viewed the organization as just another oppressive tool of the regime.

U.S. Intervention

In planning for postconflict operations, senior Department of Defense (DOD) officials assumed that coalition forces would inherit a fully functioning state with its institutions intact. They believed the Iraqis would welcome U.S. troops as liberators and join coalition forces in quickly neutralizing the Baath Party, Saddam's security services, and other opponents of the new order. Gen. (ret.) Jay Garner and the staff of the Pentagon's Office of Humanitarian and Reconstruction Affairs (ORHA) presumed the Iraqi police and the regular Iraqi army would remain on duty, assume responsibility for security, and maintain public order. This would enable coalition forces to deal with regime holdouts and pockets of military resistance, while ORHA advisers would assist Iraqi technocrats with managing government ministries, public utilities, and other institutions. Instead, the Iraqi police and all government authority simply vanished when the U.S. Army's Third Infantry Division reached the center of Baghdad on April 9, 2003. Security officers, intelligence personnel,

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and Baath Party operatives went into hiding, while police officers and members of the regular army took their weapons and went home.

As U.S. military forces stood by and watched, jubilant crowds poured onto the streets and began looting Baghdad's commercial district, ransacking government buildings, and pillaging residences of regime officials. Once it became clear that U.S. soldiers were not going to intervene, a systematic effort to strip the capital's stores and public institutions of everything of value began. Organized criminal groups and gangs of men armed with assault rifles began to work their way through government ministries, removing their contents, tearing out the plumbing and wiring, and setting the buildings on fire.

In the capital's vast industrial parks, thieves "jumpstarted" tractors and bulldozers and drove them away. Mobs ransacked factories and warehouses, returning home in a parade of cars, trucks, and wheelbarrows piled with stolen goods. Additionally, looters ransacked, damaged, and destroyed facilities that were suspected of producing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. Over time, the economic and social impact of increasingly systematic looting was exacerbated by former regime operatives who sabotaged oil pipelines, electrical pylons, railroads, aircraft, and road transport.

Without the assistance of Iraqi security personnel, U.S. military forces were unprepared to deal with the outburst of civilian violence and destruction that followed their arrival. The small number of U.S. troops in Baghdad did not view looting as a military threat and had no orders to interfere, especially since U.S. military forces were still engaged in combat elsewhere. Lack of U.S. response to the looting created a situation of impunity that shocked Iraqis and encouraged continued lawlessness. Commanders explained that civil administration and postwar reconstruction were the responsibility of Gen. Garner and his staff. Security conditions, however, prevented Garner and a small advance team from reaching Baghdad until April 21, twelve days after U.S. forces arrived in the city.

Garner's plan for Iraq's reconstruction was based upon the assumption that his advisory teams would find government ministries intact. Instead, they found that seventeen of Iraq's twenty-one ministries had been reduced to burned-out shells and that their staffs—frightened and demoralized—had scattered. ORHA had no ability to restore public order nor could it rely on the type of international police force that had been part of peace operations in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor. Senior U.S. officials had rejected Garner's pre-intervention appeals for U.S.-led international constabulary and police forces, repeating assurances from Iraqi exiles that Americans would be welcomed with "sweets and flowers."

Like the U.S. military, ORHA had no plans for dealing with the breakdown in public order and the collapse of essential public services. Only a small number of Garner's staff had experience in peace operations and fewer had ever visited Iraq. Almost none spoke Arabic and there was only one former police officer among them. At their heavily guarded headquarters in one of Saddam's former palaces, ORHA personnel found that there was little or no office equipment and that no provision had been made for interoffice e-mail or telephone communication. Staff members could communicate only by visiting one another's offices, and they could not communicate with other parts of the country without first exiting the palace to use a satellite telephone. With temperatures hitting 120 degrees, living accommodations were primitive; many people shared a single room and there was often no electricity to run computers or air conditioning.

In the aftermath of Baghdad's capture, the Iraqi National Police was the only institution in Saddam's network of intelligence and security services to remain intact. However, police infrastructure was either heavily damaged or completely destroyed by looters and arsonists following the collapse of the regime. Rampaging mobs destroyed police stations, stole police vehicles, and walked away with weapons and equipment. With fires still burning in police stations and other government buildings, U.S. military authorities decided to make a public appeal for Iraqi police to return to duty. On April 14, 2003, joint patrols of U.S. soldiers and Iraqi police made their first tentative appearance on the streets of

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the capital. Though the Iraqi police were not permitted to carry weapons, the presence of certain officers—alleged to have committed abuses under Saddam—produced outrage among many citizens.

Ultimately, given the INP's record of abuse and corruption, a thorough vetting of its personnel would be needed to remove Baath Party loyalists and those guilty of criminal behavior. Policemen who survived the vetting process would require retraining and new weapons and equipment, and would need to undergo a probationary period during which international supervisors could monitor their performance.

Lessons Identified

Important lessons for future U.S. peace and stability operations can be found in the civil upheaval that occurred in Iraq following the collapse of Saddam's regime. These include lessons pertaining to public order, street crime, border control, and police recruitment, training, and combat.

Public Order

Large-scale breakdowns in public order should be anticipated in the aftermath of international interventions, particularly in societies emerging from brutal oppression. However, U.S. military forces are neither trained nor equipped to control civil disorder or perform police functions, and local police and security forces are generally either unavailable or unable to deal with civilian violence and lawlessness. Therefore, without adequate planning, personnel, and procedures, critical law enforcement needs will not be met, endangering the success of the mission.

Iraq was not the first time U.S. forces faced a general breakdown in public order at the start of a stability operation. Similar outbreaks of civilian violence occurred immediately following U.S. interventions in Panama, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. In Panama, U.S. troops stood by while mobs looted the commercial district of Panama City, seriously damaging the country's economy. In Haiti, U.S. military forces watched as Haitian police beat to death demonstrators celebrating the U.S. intervention. In Bosnia, U.S.-led NATO forces observed the destruction of the Sarajevo suburbs but did not intervene. In Kosovo, the United Nations administration was confronted with a wave of ethnic cleansing and street crime. A law enforcement plan for Iraq prepared by the U.S. Justice Department's police expert assigned to ORHA reflected the public order-related lessons learned in these previous operations, but implementation of this plan was ultimately delayed pending an in-country assessment after the end of major combat operations.

In May 2003, a police assessment team from the Justice Department's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) concluded that the Iraqi police were incapable of maintaining public order and required international assistance to accomplish this task. The team called for the deployment of 6,600 international police advisers, including 360 professional police trainers who would be assigned to the police academy. The mission also recommended the provision of ten armed and fully equipped international constabulary units with a total of 2,500 personnel to assist coalition military forces with restoring stability and training Iraqi counterparts. This civilian security force was consistent with the size and composition of international constabulary and police forces deployed in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and East Timor. Numbers were understated in relationship to actual needs, but they represented a balance between the concerns of experienced professionals

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regarding the country's security challenges and serious doubts about donor interest and the availability of international personnel.

The assessment team's report was discussed at White House meetings in June 2003, but the recommendations were considered overly ambitious and, therefore, were not accepted. Additionally, a State Department effort to recruit one thousand U.S. police advisers as part of the larger international police force was suspended and did not resume until late fall. Finally, U.S. police advisers, who were recruited and trained by DynCorp, a commercial contractor, began arriving in Iraq in spring 2004. By then, however, the target number of advisers had been reduced from 6,600 to 500 because of limited funds. Though armed for self-defense, these U.S. police did not have executive authority to engage in law enforcement. Rather, they were assigned to provide train-the-trainer programs in secure locations, as it had become too dangerous for them to mentor Iraqi police in the field. By June 2004, only 283 U.S. police advisers had been deployed, as repeated rocket and car bomb attacks on their Baghdad hotel and the deteriorating security situation in other cities discouraged volunteers. Personnel for the remainder of the international civil police force and the entire constabulary force—to be provided by other coalition countries—were never deployed either.

As a result, six members of the DOJ assessment team were asked to remain in Iraq and were pressed into service. Under the direction of former New York City Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik, they were assigned responsibility for reforming the Interior Ministry, creating the Iraqi Police Service (IPS), and re-establishing immigration, customs, and border checks. They were also asked to restore Baghdad's fire and rescue service. These massive tasks were clearly beyond the capacity of a small group of individuals. Their often heroic efforts could not compensate for the lack of advanced planning or for the failure of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to recruit the hundreds of additional advisers needed to stand up a series of Iraqi institutions that collectively employed more than 200,000 personnel.

Leadership provided by the small cadre of U.S. advisers also could not compensate for the massive loss of management skills resulting from de-Baathification. The CPA's decision to ban ranking Baath Party members from public-sector employment meant that large numbers of senior officers in the Interior Ministry and police and security-related services were released from duty. Many of these officers were apolitical and had only become party members as a condition of employment. While in previous peace and stability operations officials were vetted on an individual basis, allowing those with good records to continue to serve, in Iraq the mass firing of senior officers removed an entire layer of ministry executives whose leadership and managerial skills would have been useful in rebuilding the Iraqi Police Service and confronting crime and the insurgency. De-Baathification seemed not only unwise but also unfair. Many Iraqi police officers who were once Baath Party members had been making a positive contribution toward the coalition's efforts before being relieved of duty. In several instances, U.S. advisers attempted to challenge the dismissal of critically needed, skilled personnel, but these efforts were generally unsuccessful.

With the Pentagon in charge of Iraq's reconstruction, routine DOD contracting, hiring, and procurement procedures were utilized for obtaining additional U.S. personnel and services, and the vehicles, uniforms, weapons, and equipment needed by the IPS and other Iraqi security forces. Although the Fiscal Year 2004 U.S. supplemental budget earmarked millions of dollars for the IPS, these procedures proved extremely slow in responding to immediate needs. U.S. police advisers were constantly forced to improvise to obtain needed equipment and supplies, but such ad hoc measures generally failed to satisfy critical needs. By June 2004, IPS and border enforcement units had received less than half of the weapons, vehicles, communications equipment, and body armor they needed. The reconstruction and refurbishing of provincial

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police headquarters, police stations, and regional training facilities were also behind schedule. Further, recommendations made by those in the field to improve procurement procedures were lost in the constant shuffle and turnover of CPA administrative personnel. And the presence of eager but inexperienced appointees in middle management and contracting positions negatively impacted all aspects of CPA operations, particularly in security-sector reform.

Street Crime

Failure to control looting and civil disorder creates a climate of impunity and encourages criminal violence and street crime. Without an armed international police force with executive authority or a properly trained, equipped, and motivated local police force, ordinary citizens are left with no effective defense against rampant crime. This, in turn, seriously undermines popular support for intervention authorities and the willingness of citizens to cooperate with international forces.

With the disappearance of regime authority, Iraqis were subjected to an uncontrolled wave of criminal violence. (Prior to the war, Saddam released 38,000 inmates from prison.) Home-invasion robberies, muggings, and murders increased dramatically following the war, affecting all levels of society. Abductions, rapes, carjackings, and kidnappings terrorized families. Baath Party members and former regime informants were gunned down in a wave of revenge killings. Many crimes went unreported because people could find no one in authority to report them to. As a result, families armed themselves, barricading their homes to protect themselves from the “Ali Babas,” gangs of thieves that roamed freely. According to even the most conservative estimates, 10,000 Iraqi civilians were killed in the year following the U.S. intervention. For people accustomed to an overbearing security presence and the near absence of street crime, the loss of personal safety was particularly traumatic. Crime—not terrorism or the insurgency—was the primary concern of most Iraqi citizens.

Responsibility for law and order fell to coalition military forces that were neither trained nor equipped to perform police functions. U.S. soldiers complained they had not been trained to fight crime and should not be asked to make arrests. The Third Infantry Division’s M-1 tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles were too large to move through Baghdad streets clogged with traffic. However, tank crews lacked the required body armor and training to undertake foot patrols. Two U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopters were lost in a midair collision as one was tracking a robbery suspect in the manner of small police helicopters in the United States, another example of the problems encountered when combat units attempt to perform police functions. Additionally, an emphasis on force protection meant U.S. troops were unable to adequately protect Iraqi citizens from criminals whose numbers only grew. In late May 2003, nearly two months after U.S. forces captured Baghdad, some 4,000 U.S. military police were finally deployed in the capital. The addition of this force proved advantageous, but it still meant that a military force smaller than many U.S. metropolitan police departments was responsible for policing a war-damaged, looted, and lawless city of 4.5 million inhabitants.

Over time, coalition forces became increasingly insensitive to “Iraqi-on-Iraqi” violent crime. Commanders maintained that the IPS was responsible for protecting Iraqi citizens, although it was evident to Iraqis that the Iraqi police were incapable of controlling the general lawlessness without considerable direct support from coalition forces. This callous attitude on the part of coalition forces toward the plight of Iraqi citizens probably accounts, in part, for the lack of Iraqi concern about insurgent attacks on coalition soldiers. Additionally, the involvement of U.S. forces in counter-insurgency operations further exacerbated the growing animosity between Iraqis and coalition troops.

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As there was no prior planning, the U.S. response to the problem of controlling Iraq's borders was delayed.

As attacks by the insurgency increased, coalition forces relied more and more on using speed and armor in their patrols, thereby reducing positive contacts with local citizens. More significantly, as U.S. combat troops were used to search homes, operate traffic checkpoints, and control public demonstrations, tensions increased, further reducing popular support for the CPA. Iraqis specifically complained that soldiers searched private areas without permission, entered homes without men present, and addressed wives and daughters directly, offensive acts in a conservative Muslim society. Further, the growing risk of insurgent attacks resulted in more frequent incidents of U.S. troops dealing harshly with and even firing on Iraqis. Human Rights Watch reported that U.S. military forces killed at least ninety-four Iraqi civilians at checkpoints and during house raids in Baghdad between June 1 and September 30, 2003. Since U.S. activity was concentrated mainly in Sunni areas, insults, abuse, and violations of local codes of honor only bolstered the number of those willing to join the insurgency, perpetuating the cycle of violence.

Border Control

Effective border control is essential to restoring security in postconflict environments. Immigration controls and border patrols are the first line of defense against terrorism and organized crime. Additionally, immigration fees and customs duties can provide an immediate source of funding for new regimes that lack the administrative infrastructure to collect other types of revenue. Finally, the absence of trained and properly equipped border guards and immigration and customs officers may place the intervention force in jeopardy from external elements.

In Saddam's Iraq, responsibility for border security was divided among four ministries, the president's office, special security services, and the military. With the arrival of U.S. forces in Baghdad, Iraqi authority on the country's borders disappeared. The nation's 240 border-control stations were unmanned and the conscript, 614-member border guard force fled. The immigration and customs officers at Baghdad airport and their counterparts at the country's seaports also left their posts. In addition, border control facilities had been badly damaged, destroyed, or looted and required rebuilding. However, contracting and procurement procedures utilized in the Interior Ministry were never updated and proved so cumbersome that millions of dollars allocated to provide for new construction and equipment remained unspent.

Failure to establish immediate and effective control of Iraq's borders meant that everything from looted industrial equipment and consumer goods to stolen antiquities and possibly chemical and biological weapons disappeared across the border into Syria and Iran. Petroleum smuggling and other types of illicit trade conducted previously by criminal elements and Saddam's security services quickly resumed. A massive flow of consumer goods entered the country without fees or duties, depriving the CPA of revenue that could have supported reconstruction. Senior Baathist officials and Iraqi military officers escaped arrest by fleeing the country, while returning émigrés and thousands of Shia pilgrims flooded in without documentation. Perhaps more significantly, criminals, foreign agents, terrorists, and partisan militia groups were able to enter the country without notice.

As there was no prior planning, the U.S. response to the problem of controlling Iraq's borders was delayed. The one member of the DOJ police assessment mission who had been a member of the U.S. Border Patrol was charged with creating all the agencies required for border security. This task was far beyond the capacity of a single individual. To open the Baghdad airport and the critical border crossing with Jordan, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security dispatched a training team that provided three days of instruction on immigration and customs procedures to a group

of thirty U.S. military personnel. Other border checkpoints and seaports eventually were opened under coalition military supervision. Soldiers serving as immigration inspectors received a three-hour training module, but without language skills or Arabic interpreters they were unable to decipher regional passports or commercial documents. These soldiers were aware of their shortcomings, but the U.S. military had no personnel trained in border control or experienced in handling customs and immigration. Beyond making a good faith effort and assigning military police to maintain order at airports and crossing points, there was little the military could do to control effectively travel into and out of the country.

To remedy this situation, the CPA reorganized the border control responsibilities of various Iraqi agencies into a new Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) under the Ministry of Interior. The DBE was designed by U.S. advisers and given authority over immigration, customs, and border-control functions. Since the former ministry staff and border guards had fled or been removed under de-Baathification, new personnel had to be recruited and trained. Iraqi Interior Ministry staff were assigned to the new department, but there was no one with expertise in detention, deportation, port security, civil affairs, or other functions. Border guards were to be trained at a new border patrol academy, but the CPA continued to assign nearly all available recruits to the regular police-training program. By June 2004, only 255 members of the 18,000-member Iraqi border guard force had received training at the new border patrol academy. Lack of forethought and recruiting problems meant only a tiny staff of CPA advisers were able to assist Iraqis in dealing with their new responsibilities. There was little support from other members of the coalition.

Local Police

In postconflict environments, local police are normally unprepared, unwilling, or unable to perform police functions. Even when local security personnel are re-equipped, retrained, and escorted by international police advisers, they still have difficulty adapting to new circumstances, providing police services, and gaining public acceptance. In addition, police institutions need to be reformed and new police officers need to be recruited.

As Iraqi police reappeared on the streets, they encountered hostility from citizens who identified them with the corruption and brutality of the Baathist regime. Police stations and vehicles became targets of mob violence, and police personnel were reluctant to maintain public order or remain on duty. Police wore their old, green, military-style uniforms, but initially the U.S. military did not allow them to carry weapons. U.S. police advisers eventually replaced the traditional hats and shirts of Iraq's police officers with newly provided baseball caps and white shirts. The Iraqi police resisted the change, complaining that they were not playing sports and that white shirts made them look like nurses, but the U.S. advisers believed the new uniforms would be an important symbolic change and promote greater public acceptance of the police. Eventually, blue U.S. Coast Guard uniforms were provided to the police, but these were not very imposing, did not always fit well, and were not well received.

Planning for institutional reform of the IPS was based on the assumption that police would serve in a reasonably permissive environment similar to Bosnia and Kosovo. Equipment procurement was based on the requirements for community-oriented policing in an emerging democracy. Unarmed or lightly armed Iraqi police initially were assigned to unprotected and largely ruined police stations, while U.S. soldiers with no prior law enforcement experience were placed in charge of directing police operations. U.S. military police were also pressed into service as advisers to the new Iraqi force. This was helpful, but the small number of U.S. military police in Iraq had limited impact on a rapidly growing force that would eventually reach 90,000 officers.

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In the face of growing local hostility toward the occupation and attacks on coalition forces, U.S. military officials insisted—against the advice of the DOJ’s police advisers—that recruiting programs be accelerated. The size of the police force jumped so quickly that U.S. advisers in the Interior Ministry were unable to track the number of police recruited by various U.S. military units. On the eve of transition to Iraqi sovereignty in June 2004, the number of police on the government payroll had ballooned to 120,000, although only about 90,000 were reporting for duty. In response, the Interior Ministry announced a \$60 million buyout program to reduce the official ranks of the police by 25 percent.

This emphasis on quickly recruiting and deploying Iraqi police meant that the U.S. military could not conduct careful background checks on new recruits or adopt vetting procedures that had been utilized effectively in previous peace and stability operations. As a result, many recruits were later found to be unsuitable for the job, and several thousand were disciplined or dismissed for corruption, human rights abuses, or criminal offenses. Ultimately, the U.S. military’s attempt to rush the creation of the IPS undermined public confidence in the CPA and did little to reduce the anxiety among Iraqi citizens about the country’s lack of security.

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While rebuilding the IPS was among the primary tasks of the CPA, it was never given the priority, resources, and political support it required.

Local Police Training

Police training is a resource-intensive process that takes at least five years under optimum conditions and requires civilian experts with specialized skills and extensive foreign experience. It is not simply an “add on” to the list of duties performed by regular military or civilian police. Attempts to rush the training of local police forces and to “put uniforms on the street” inevitably fail to meet either the short-term need for immediate security or the long-term requirement for professional law enforcement personnel.

While rebuilding the IPS was among the primary tasks of the CPA, it was never given the priority, resources, and political support it required. In Haiti and Kosovo, the U.S. established a police academy and began training new police recruits within the first month of the intervention. In Iraq, the U.S. did not establish a training program for new recruits until the end of 2003. In the interim, U.S. police advisers developed a three-week reorientation course, the Transition and Integration Program (TIP), for rehired members of the Iraqi National Police. With U.S. Military Police serving as instructors, some 40,000 members of the IPS received training in weapons handling and the use of force in making arrests, and instruction on human rights, ethics, and law. The TIP was little more than a stop-gap measure, but it did provide a large number of Iraqi police with an introduction to modern police practices and some understanding of the nature of policing in a democratic society. The program was also used to verify the backgrounds and review the records of serving police officers, to remove those who were guilty of abuses, and to identify those who would benefit from additional training.

In December 2003, the U.S. Justice Department’s basic training program for Iraqi police recruits finally opened at the Jordan International Police Training Center in Amman. In twelve months, some 30,000 Iraqis were brought to the facility on U.S. military flights for eight weeks of training. Recruits were selected with minimal background checks or other types of vetting. The curriculum, which was tailored for Iraq, was based on the sixteen-week course given at the Kosovo Police Service School. Indeed, the program initially utilized international administrators and instructors from Kosovo. Once in full operation, the center graduated 2,500 police every month—a force the size of the Boston Police Department. However, after returning to Iraq, newly minted officers received little or no additional mentoring or training. Attempts to create a field training program using newly arrived U.S. (DynCorp) police advisers were abandoned after a few months because of security considerations.

As the transfer to Iraqi sovereignty approached, the DOD determined that only the U.S. military had the resources required to “fast track” the police training program. In March 2004, the Civilian Police Advisory Training Team (CPATT) was established under the control of the Multi-National Force-Iraq (later the Multi-National Security Transition Command) and assigned responsibility for training, equipping, and mentoring the IPS. CPATT was led by a general officer with a civilian (DOJ/ICITAP) deputy and included both military and civilian personnel. Transferring responsibility for civilian police training to the military was resisted in Washington and resented in Baghdad. U.S. police advisers believed the military did not understand either the ethos or the practical requirements for training law enforcement officers and was intent on simply “putting Iraqi guns on the street” in order to reduce pressure on coalition forces.

In fact, the U.S. military and DOJ civilian police advisers had markedly different goals for the IPS. DOJ advisers were intent on creating an efficient, lightly armed, civilian police “service” that utilized community-policing techniques and operated in conformity with Western, democratic standards for professional law enforcement. The U.S. military, meanwhile, was determined to create an indigenous security force that was capable of protecting the Iraqi government against its internal enemies—the insurgency and hostile militias—and permitting the withdrawal of U.S. forces. DOJ advisers believed the solution to Iraq’s problems lay in establishing the rule of law and relying on arrest and prosecution to remove terrorists and criminal elements. They were concerned that the rapid recruiting and accelerated training of unvetted personnel for specialized “commando-style” units would militarize the IPS, repeating the process that had occurred under Saddam. They also believed that sacrificing long-term institutional and personnel development for expediency would have negative consequences, saddling Iraq with security forces that could possibly endanger the country’s future.

Unfortunately, following the June 2004 transition to Iraqi sovereignty, this conflicted approach to police training and utilization remained unresolved. By December 2004, there were 90,000 Iraqi police “available for duty.” This figure included 43,800 “rehired” officers—former members of the old Iraqi National Police who had completed the three-week TIP reorientation program—and 18,300 “rookies” who had graduated from the training program in Amman. Though these officers were trained to perform civil police functions, they were immediately thrown into the fight against the insurgents, operating alongside coalition forces.

Police in Combat

International and indigenous police cannot operate effectively unless the intervention military force is able to create a safe and secure environment. Absent a reasonable level of public order, police will be fully engaged in providing for their own security. This will leave the civil population defenseless against common crime. This situation is exacerbated if the intervention military force attempts to utilize local police as auxiliaries or even as strike forces against paramilitaries.

In May 2003, the CPA formally disbanded Iraq’s special security and intelligence services, the Defense Ministry, the army, and the Republican Guard, and decided to replace them with a newly created Defense Ministry and a small, professional, light infantry force dedicated to protecting the country’s borders against external aggression. The decision (later rescinded) to limit the mission of the New Iraq Army to national defense meant primary responsibility for internal security would rest with the Iraqi police. While this approach was consistent with the practice in democratic societies, it meant the IPS became the first line of defense against the insurgency, which began attacks on coalition forces in early summer.

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The use of the Iraqi civil police as auxiliary forces for the military left Iraq's civilian population unprotected. The police hunkered down in their stations against insurgent attacks and were unable to deal with street crime or provide police services. Iraqi authorities were also unable to deal with well-entrenched Saddam-era organized criminal networks that quickly re-emerged after the major combat phase of the conflict ended. These criminal enterprises engaged in systematic looting, petroleum smuggling, trafficking in persons, extortion, and kidnapping, while exploiting the chaos, open borders, and easy access to all types of weapons.

In Iraq, the usual U.S. assumptions concerning local police forces did not apply. Iraqi police who had been trained and equipped for community policing were utilized to fight the insurgency. These poorly led, ill-trained, and improperly equipped police were pitted against a heavily armed insurgent force of former military personnel, veteran security operatives, and foreign terrorists. Iraqi police operated from unprotected facilities, patrolled in thin-skinned vehicles, carried simple side arms, lacked body armor, and took increasingly grievous casualties. No civilian police force could be expected to deal with repeated attacks from car bombs and forces equipped with rocket-propelled grenades and other military weapons. In the period of CPA control, more than one thousand IPS members were killed in the line of duty. Hundreds more were killed or injured in terrorist attacks while standing in line at recruiting stations. They were a primary target for terrorists who wished to demonstrate the danger of cooperating with the coalition. Though Iraqis volunteered for police duty in large numbers, this seemed more a function of economic necessity and patriotism than support for the coalition.

It was not until the creation of the CPATT in March 2004 that the U.S. military began to develop so-call "heavy-end" police units that were recruited, trained, and equipped to perform counterinsurgency missions. The Emergency Response Unit and the Civil Intervention Force were augmented after the transition to Iraqi sovereignty by a Special Police Commando Unit composed of former members of Saddam's Republican Guard. This unit was recruited, equipped, and supported by the Iraqi interior minister and led by his cousin, a former Iraqi Air Force intelligence officer. The unit quickly distinguished itself in fighting the insurgents. Unfortunately, the creation of such a unit threatens to militarize the police and to once again place personal loyalties above loyalties to the state.

Conclusion

The U.S. experience in Operation Iraqi Freedom was remarkably similar to the U.S. intervention in Panama. In Operation Just Cause, the United States acted unilaterally to remove a threat to its national security by deposing a brutal dictator, Gen. Manuel Noriega. Following a quick U.S. military victory, massive looting occurred in Panama City. U.S. troops stood by as government buildings and the city's commercial district suffered billions of dollars in damage. U.S. military forces had no instructions to intervene and were not prepared to deal with large-scale civil disorder. The U.S. plan for postconflict "restoration" assumed that Panamanian police would maintain public order. Unfortunately, the country's only security service, the Panamanian Defense Force (PDF), had been routed by U.S. forces and its surviving personnel were in hiding. After five days of rioting, additional U.S. troops and military police were deployed to restore order. Subsequently, a stubborn, low-level insurgency led by paramilitary "dignity battalions" ensued in which the United States suffered far more casualties than it had during the major combat phase of the operation.

In preparing for the Panamanian intervention, U.S. planners assumed that a grateful public would welcome U.S. intervention and that local authorities would imme-

diately assume responsibility for postwar security. Unfortunately, the U.S.-installed Panamanian government was a hollow shell with an empty treasury and insufficient personnel. Additionally, the country's infrastructure was in a state of serious disrepair. There the United States had no security policy for the period following the use of force. No thought was given to including military police in the intervention force, nor was there a plan for quickly reconstituting local security forces that would perform in accordance with democratic principles. The Panamanian government utilized vetted PDF personnel to form a new organization, the Panamanian National Police, while U.S. Military Police hastily organized a twenty-one-day training program, began conducting joint patrols, and provided on-the-job training to local police officers. Eventually, the U.S. Justice Department opened a police academy in Panama, offering a comprehensive training and technical assistance program.

While time, geography, culture, and political circumstances separate Panama and Iraq, the parallels in the lessons identified but not learned in these two operations are striking. One reason for the repetition of past mistakes is that the United States lacks a mechanism for ensuring that lessons identified in one operation are included in training for the next. The Iraq Experience Project is a small but potentially valuable effort to correct this shortcoming. It is hoped that this report and the others in this series will be used in training programs for future operations and advance the process of properly preparing those who will take part in them.

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