

# Testing Shinseki: Speed, Mass & Insurgency in Postwar Iraq\*

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## Abstract

In the wake of the rise of a vicious, costly, and enduring insurgency in Iraq following the initial battlefield success of Operation Iraqi Freedom, it was argued that a larger initial personnel footprint, as suggested by senior commanders such as Eric Shinseki and Anthony Zinni, would have significantly reduced the degree of post-invasion violence in Iraq. To study this claim, we relying upon a forecasting model grounded in the empirical analysis of violent conflict in 94 cases during the 1816–1994 period in which foreign powers sought to cultivate political institutions in target states. We conclude that even the most robust force deployment strategy would have had little effect on the overall degree of violence in post-invasion Iraq. Rather than footprint, the prime movers of post-invasion conflict are domestic conditions, such as ethnic cleavages, and attributes of the international environment, including the political similarity of neighboring states.

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## **Abstract**

In the wake of the rise of a vicious, costly, and enduring insurgency in Iraq following the initial battlefield success of Operation Iraqi Freedom, it was argued that a larger initial personnel footprint, as suggested by senior commanders such as Eric Shinseki and Anthony Zinni, would have significantly reduced the degree of post-invasion violence in Iraq. To study this claim, we rely upon a forecasting model grounded in the empirical analysis of violent conflict in 94 cases during the 1816–1994 period in which foreign powers sought to cultivate political institutions in target states. We conclude that even the most robust force deployment strategy would have had little effect on the overall degree of violence in post-invasion Iraq. Rather than footprint, the prime movers of post-invasion conflict are domestic conditions, such as ethnic cleavages, and attributes of the international environment, including the political similarity of neighboring states.

In postwar situations, speed does not substitute for mass.<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

The run up to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) revealed significant disagreements between members of the Bush Administration and a number of high-ranking military officers concerning the number of American and coalition troops necessary to remove Saddam Hussein from power and establish a stable democratic Iraq.<sup>2</sup> This debate came to a head in February 2003, when Army Chief of Staff, General Eric J. Shinseki, reasoned that it would require “something on the order of several hundred thousand soldiers” to stabilize and rebuild post-invasion Iraq.<sup>3</sup> This guarded and impromptu estimate drew strong, critical responses from Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and, most notably, Rumsfeld’s deputy, Paul Wolfowitz.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, in a widely quoted retort to Shinseki’s testimony, Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz characterized the latter’s estimate as “wildly off the mark.” It was highly unlikely, Wolfowitz argued, that it would take more troops to maintain stability in Iraq than would be required to remove Hussein from power.

In light of the protracted insurgency that followed Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Bush Administration’s decision to opt for a “light” footprint in Iraq has led many to consider the question as to whether the outcome would have been different had General Shinseki’s warnings been heeded.<sup>5</sup> Would a choice of mass over speed in the initial phases of the conflict have prevented the insurgency from breaking out, or would it have allowed the United States and its coalition partners to neutralize, or least contain, the nascent insurgency that ultimately emerged in the summer of 2003?<sup>6</sup> This paper examines this counterfactual outcome by way of empirically-based simulations, which enable us to measure the expected effects that varying troop levels would have produced on predicted domestic violence in Iraq given its economic, social, and political conditions. Our simulations are grounded in a broader empirical analysis assessing the joint impact of social, economic, and political conditions on domestic conflict in 94 political systems cultivated by foreign powers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>7</sup>

Our analysis suggests that while pre-war administration critics were correct in predicting that a light initial footprint would be insufficient to create a stable and secure Iraq, their own predictions for troop level requirements overestimated the pacifying impact of a large personnel footprint. That is, we find that even if the United States had followed Shinseki’s troop level suggestions, it would

still have faced a strong insurgency in Iraq. Furthermore, given the force structure and the global commitments of the United States military, we find that the creation of a stable and secure Iraq was well beyond America's existing capabilities. This conclusion, moreover, like the simulation itself, is based on data that was readily available before the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

While our simulation helps shed light upon the contentious pre-war debate on troop levels for Operation Iraqi Freedom, the significance of our findings reaches beyond the case of Iraq. It shows that even military professionals with a great deal of experience have difficulties in accurately predicting the number of troops that may be necessary for international stability and support operations. Yet, the events in Iraq and Afghanistan clearly demonstrate the importance of developing more accurate ways in which to predict such needs. Our study highlights the possibility of *forecasting* the impact of troop levels on the outbreak of insurgency and civil violence during international stability and support operations by using open-source data on political, social, and economic conditions in target societies. In doing so, the study offers potentially valuable insights into a number of current foreign policy debates, including those debates concerning the prospects of successfully stimulating regime change in rogue states and the more general, as well as the future role and structure of the United States armed forces.

The remainder of the article consists of four parts. First, we outline the pre-war debate and the competing claims that it generated about force level requirements prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Next, we discuss the basic parameters of the scientific study that serves as the foundation for the simulations that allow us to assess the competing claims about force level requirements for OIF. Third, we present the results of our simulations, which measure the likelihood of insurgency in Iraq for individual years in the period 2003–2008, given force levels corresponding to various strategies relevant to the contemporary debate. Last, we discuss the implications of our methodology and findings for American military policy.

### **Competing Visions: Mass versus Speed**

In the months preceding the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, a debate played out in Washington, DC regarding the troop-level requirements for post-war stability operations in Iraq. At stake in this debate was not whether the Iraqi army would be able to withstand the American-led offensive, but rather the requirements for post-war stability in Iraq. Striking a relatively cautious note on these

issues was Army Chief of Staff, General Erik K. Shinseki. When asked by Senator Carl Levin, of the Senate Armed Services Committee, to estimate the troop-level requirements for stability operations in Iraq, Shinseki responded as follows:

[S]omething on the order of several hundred thousand soldiers are probably, you know, a figure that would be required. We're talking about post-hostilities control over a piece of geography that's fairly significant, with the kinds of ethnic tensions that could lead to other problems. And so it takes a significant ground-force presence to maintain a safe and secure environment, to ensure that people are fed, that water is distributed, all the normal responsibilities that go along with administering a situation like this.<sup>8</sup>

Although General Shinseki's estimates were rough and certainly not precisely calculated (indeed, these estimates were subsequently characterized as "back of the envelope" calculations), they were most likely based on his considerable experience in stability operations. Specifically, as the commander of the NATO Stabilization Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina, General Shinseki witnessed first hand the degree to which post-war peacekeeping is personnel intensive. The NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) initially employed a stabilization force of approximately 54,000 troops, contributed by 32 countries: A force to population ratio of approximately 1 percent.<sup>9</sup> In providing his estimates to the Armed Services Committee, Shinseki may also have relied upon a war game conducted in 1999 by the staff of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM). Performed under orders of its commander, General Anthony Zinni, the *Desert Crossing Seminar* generated several conclusions that are consistent with General Shinseki's testimony before the committee.<sup>10</sup> Specifically, the *Desert Crossing*:

- Underscored the possibility that regime change in Iraq could produce instability in the Middle East, as rival ethnic groups and aggressive neighbors vied for power and control over political outcomes in post-war Iraq.<sup>11</sup>
- Emphasized that Iran's response to an American invasion of Iraq would be critical to the success of post-war stability in Iraq. Reasoned that the American presence in the region could inflame Iranian anti-Americanism, and Iran's proximity to Iraq would enable the latter

to increase the costs of stability operations by using strategies ranging from “harassment of U.S forces to terrorist attacks.”<sup>12</sup>

- Concluded that the force levels necessary to successfully stabilize post-war Iraq—on the order of 400,000 troops in the region—would require coordination and contributions from other Arab nations, as well as proactive diplomacy to defuse threat perceived by Iran.<sup>13</sup>

According to Shinseki and the CENTCOM planners, a large ground force would help maintain stability by providing security for Iraqi individuals, by forming a buffer between rival ethnic groups, and by deterring Iranian (and other) intervention in Iraqi politics. While a large force could potentially create a backlash and be regarded as an occupation power, the advantages of mass was seen to outweigh its potential drawbacks. As such, the Shinseki strategy linked increased mass with a greater likelihood of achieving success in the stabilization and reconstruction phases.

In contrast to Shinseki’s pessimistic outlook, Bush Administration policymakers were much more optimistic about post-conflict stability. This optimism, perhaps most visibly illustrated in the congressional testimony of Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, was grounded in three primary and publicly stated beliefs. First, optimism regarding Iraqi society and its ability to overcome the depredations of the Hussein regime in the post-hostility phase. Indeed, Wolfowitz argued that Iraq and the Balkans differed in that Iraq had not historically suffered from inter-ethnic conflict and tension that would require a large external force to suppress.<sup>14</sup> Second, senior members of the Bush administration feared that the presence of a large American (or Western) force in Iraq would quickly be perceived as an occupying, rather than a liberating force. Senior members of the Bush administration, and some of the senior military commanders in the field, believed that an American occupying force would itself become the cause of resistance in Iraq. Last, in keeping with their general views about the role of government in society, the principals in the Bush administration wanted to minimize the size of American and coalition occupation forces in order to give Iraqis a strong incentive to rebuild their own country and to take responsibility for their own political future.<sup>15</sup>

While the events in Iraq and Afghanistan make Wolfowitz’s assessments appear grossly incorrect in hindsight, and make it easy to conclude that the Bush administration should obviously have followed the suggestions of a general officer of Shinseki’s stature, a closer review of the available

evidence suggests that such a conclusion would be premature. In fact, a review of the available literature on post-conflict operations and the public statements by CENTCOM's senior phase-IV planning officers, suggest that general Shinseki's estimate before the Senate committee was indeed what he suggested it was: *An educated guess, rather than an estimate based on a well-developed body of theory and/or empirical evidence or a generally accepted methodology for assessing troop level requirements for stability operations.*

Prior to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, interest in troop level requirements for stability operations appears to have been very limited both within the United States Army and beyond. For instance, the issue received surprisingly little attention from the academic community before the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.<sup>16</sup> While a number of studies have appeared since the Afghanistan campaign, these have either focused on single case studies or on a number of disparate case-studies that may not provide solid ground for systematic conclusions about manpower requirements for stability operations.<sup>17</sup>

More surprising than this lack of scholarly interest in the topic, however, is the fact that despite long-standing experience with such operations, the United States Army also seems to lack a clear and validated methodology for forecasting troop level requirements in stability operations. Thus, it appears that planning for Phase IV, or post-conflict stability, operations for OIF was not only left to a very late stage, it also seems to have been done in an ad hoc fashion, as well as in a theoretical and conceptual vacuum. According to Colonel Kevin Benson, the C 5 (Plans) officer of the Combined Force Land Component Command (CFLCC) in charge of developing Phase IV plans for Operation Iraqi Freedom, his team expected little indigenous support and the possibility of ethnic infighting, and "account settling." They failed, however, to anticipate the possibility of a full-blown insurgency. Colonel Benson's decision to use the size of California's police force as a model to determine troop level requirements for Phase IV operations in Iraq, moreover, appears to have been strictly based on the roughly similar geographic and population size of Iraq and California.<sup>18</sup> This can hardly be considered a very sophisticated method to predict troop level requirements. This observation is not meant as an indictment of the work done by Benson and his staff, however. After all, they labored under a stressful deadline with little in the way of institutional support. Moreover, as the Army's own study of its operations in Iraq suggest, Benson and his team appear to have had limited institutional resources available to help them produce more sophisticated forecasts.<sup>19</sup>

In short, while the post-invasion events in Iraq make it easy to dismiss the Wolfowitz hypothesis as the product of excessive optimism and hubris on the part of policymakers lacking military experience, it is far from clear that America's military commanders were working from anything more sophisticated than troop densities based on population and territorial size. In other words, while events on the ground seem to have decisively proven what can be termed the "Wolfowitz Strategy" wrong, this does not mean that the Shinseki strategy is necessarily right. The latter should be tested as well, in order to determine whether the outcomes on the ground would have been different. In the following sections, we undertake that task.

One strategy for assessing such a counter-factual reality, and the one that we adopt in this paper, is to develop a theoretical model of the causes of post-conflict violence and examine its performance on a sample of cases reflecting qualities similar to contemporary, post-war Iraq, but in which the mass strategy underlying the Shinseki strategy was implemented and in which variation in insurgency is observed. In turn, we use methods of statistical simulation to estimate the relative impact of post-conflict strategy choice on levels of political stability in contemporary Iraq. These simulations enable us to examine whether troop levels influence the likelihood of insurgency in post-conflict situations, and if so, by how much. Before identifying the components of this simulation procedure and testing the Shinseki claim, we will now first outline the deployment strategies that inform the simulation and that form the basis for our forecasts.

## **Deployment Strategies**

### **A Minimal Footprint: Eclipse II**

The civilian leadership paid the least amount of attention to post-conflict operations. Senior members of the administration were convinced that American troops would be welcomed as liberators and that Iraqis would soon be able to take control over their own country.<sup>20</sup> The result of this viewpoint was that the senior political leadership was convinced that no more than two to three divisions (one of which would be a coalition division) would be necessary for the transitional period between major combat operations and renewed Iraqi sovereignty. The Iraqi army and policy would rapidly be willing and able to assume the task of maintaining internal security and stability. In total, therefore, the Bush Administration believed that around 40,000–60,000 American

military personnel would be necessary for a few months following military victory to augment the approximately 400,000 members of the Iraqi security forces.

Despite the reluctance of the senior political leadership to seriously consider the post-combat phase of the invasion, American standard Army doctrine requires military commanders to consider not only major combat operations but also to plan for the operations that will lead to the desired political “endstate” of a conflict.<sup>21</sup> The job of considering post-combat, or Phase IV, operations fell to Colonel Kevin Benson, C5 (Plans) officer of the Combined Force Land Component Command, which would spearhead the invasion of Iraq under the command of General McKiernan.<sup>22</sup> While Phase IV was originally conceived as an integral part of COBRA II, it became clear to Benson that the plan was so complicated that it needed to be pursued and developed separately. In mid-March 2003, shortly before the ground-invasion began, Benson brought this to the attention of his superiors who gave him the go-ahead to work on the plan. The resulting plan was called ECLIPSE II, after the occupation plan that the United States and its allies employed for the pacification of Germany following WWII. ECLIPSE II was based on the unfavorable assumption that American forces would *not* necessarily be able to count on indigenous support, and that they might encounter former Saddam loyalists who would choose to continue fighting.

As noted earlier, relying upon the size of the State of California’s police forces as a guideline, Benson’s team estimated that the equivalent of 20 combat brigades (in addition to the necessary support units) would suffice to maintain stability in the transition phase between the end of Saddam’s regime and the hand-over of sovereignty or command to someone other than the CFLCC. The plan further relied on the notion that enough forces would be employed during COBRA II to provide the necessary 20 brigade equivalents. In sum, ECLIPSE II called for about 125,000 combat troops and around 175,000 support troops to maintain stability.<sup>23</sup> It is unclear how long these troops were to remain deployed in Iraq, but declassified briefings from CENTCOM suggest that this period was predicted to be relatively short.<sup>24</sup>

According to these CENTCOM briefings, COBRA II would be initiated with a small force. The latter, however, would grow rapidly as combat conditions dictated. All in all, CENTCOM planners believed that major combat operations would take about four to five months, during which the initial invasion force would grow to about 270,000 troops. After the end of combat operations, however, the troop levels would immediately start to decline. Phase IVa stabilization

operations were expected to last two to three months, during which the troop levels would drop by around 105,000–165,000. Phase IVb, the recovery phase, was expected to last anywhere from 18–24 months, at the end of which only 25,000 American troops would remain in Iraq. Finally, the transition phase (IVc) that followed the recovery phase would see the draw down of American forces from 25,000 to around 5,000 and was estimated to last between 12–18 months. According to CENTCOM’s most optimistic predictions, therefore, it would take around three years for most United States forces to be withdrawn from Iraq. At most, approximately one division would remain in Iraq after two years.

### **Mass Over Speed: Zinni/Global Crossing**

General Shinseki’s estimate of the troop requirements for post-combat operations in Iraq, while vague, has already been mentioned. Another vocal administration critic was General Anthony Zinni, Commander of CENTCOM until 2000. In 1999, CENTCOM conducted a number of war games, including the aforementioned *Desert Crossing*. *Desert Crossing* left Zinni convinced that winning the war against Saddam’s army would be the easy part, and that difficult part of regime removal would be found in maintaining stability and order in Iraq after the fall of Saddam. *Desert Crossing* suggested that a force of 400,000 troops would be necessary to maintain order in Iraq during Phase IV operations. Significantly, General Zinni emphasized the importance of having a large number of “boots on the ground” from the outset. This suggests that Zinni disapproved not only of the maximum number of troops envisioned for deployment during COBRA II, but also of the “running start” concept that stood at the basis of the latter.<sup>25</sup>

Assuming a similar tooth-to-tail ratio (T3R) as used by the CFLCC planners, the simulation therefore called for approximately 160,000 combat troops and 240,000 support troops.<sup>26</sup> Using CFLCC estimates, therefore, the Zinni plan for OIF called for approximately 26 combat brigade equivalents, more than half of the total number present in the Active Component (AC) of the United States armed forces (both United States Army and Navy.) Considered in conjunction with America’s other military commitments (such as missions in Europe and Asia and the maintenance of a Rapid Deployment Force), the Zinni plan meant that approximately 40 combat brigade equivalents would be deployed simultaneously. Theoretically, this force structure would have been within reach of the American military, given the presence of ten reserve combat divisions and 15 enhanced

separate brigades in the Army National Guard. In practice, however, the length of time that the United States could keep such a force in the field was severely limited for several reasons:

- The necessity of making the terms of service attractive enough to continue attracting and retaining high-quality volunteers made American political and military leaders acutely aware of the necessity to restrict the number and duration of active deployment of AC combat and support units.
- Since the 1970s, the military increasingly came to rely on reserve units not only to augment its fighting forces, but especially to provide combat support and combat service support functions. Thus, the military leadership sought to limit the deployment of reservists to one year (or shorter) deployments once every five or six years. United States laws, moreover, limited the amount of time and the conditions under which the reserves could be called up by the president. While the President could call up 200,000 reservists to augment active component operations, this authority is limited to 270 days. Larger numbers of reservists can be called up for longer time-periods, but only if the President declares a national emergency or with the approval of Congress.<sup>27</sup>
- The reserve component of the United States Army was under-equipped and undermanned as a result of a tiered resourcing policy. Even the 15 enhanced separate brigades of the National Guard, considered “first to fight” units by Army war planners, would take a minimum of 90 days to prepare for combat operations. The latter would have been a time and resource intensive strategy that would have to be started more than a year before the invasion of Iraq in order to generate sufficient forces for a massive stabilization campaign.<sup>28</sup>

Given the desired rotation policies of the United States Army for its active and reserve components outlined above, therefore, it is obvious that the United States could not sustain the troop levels of a Zinni-like plan for more than a single deployment cycle.<sup>29</sup> In theory, the United States Army had about 20 combat brigades readily available for operations given all of its existing commitments. Assuming that the Zinni plan would have received top priority, however, the Army could have postponed the conversion of the two Stryker brigades and called upon the four brigades making up the rapid deployment forces. This would leave the Army with four brigades deployed

in the field during 2003 that could not be deployed to Iraq under any conditions. Leaving four brigades to provide these units with at least one unit rotation, this would have left the Army with about 25 brigades for an invasion and occupation of Iraq. This force could have been augmented by units from the United States Marine Corps. In 2003, the Marine Corps deployed four Marine Expeditionary Units (MEU) as part of its Amphibious Ready Groups, while one regiment was stationed to Okinawa.<sup>30</sup> This means that about two out of the Marine Corps eight infantry regiments were deployed. It would therefore have been possible for at least one Marine regiment (or a Marine expeditionary brigade) to have been used for stability operations in Iraq.<sup>31</sup>

Under this scenario, at the end of one deployment year no active component forces would be available to rotate to Iraq. The year could, however, be used to bring the 15 enhanced separate brigades of the National Guard to full combat strength and conditioning. A number of these brigades could have been deployed to Iraq after the withdrawal of the initial occupation force. Because the National Guard already provides two combat brigade teams to Bosnia and Kosovo, and one battalion to maintain peace in the Sinai desert, this means that around ten National Guard enhanced separate brigades would have been available for deployment to the Iraqi theater of operations. Including combat support and combat service support units this would constitute a force of around 120,000 troops. Given the army's deployment plans, if ten enhanced separate brigades would be deployed for service in Iraq for rotations of no longer than one year, the total number of forces available for stability operations would be approximately 120,000 (ten brigade equivalents) for the first three months after the withdrawal of the AC component forces, 72,000 (six reserve brigade equivalents) for the following three months, and 24,000 (two brigade equivalents) for the following three months.

It is important to note that none of these scenarios included the forces contributed to Operation Iraqi Freedom by those of America's allies found willing to participate. Altogether, an average of approximately 21,000 coalition troops (including British, Australian, and Dutch units) took part in the stabilization of Iraq in the two years following Operation Iraqi Freedom.<sup>32</sup> By contrast, members of the Desert Storm coalition a decade earlier had contributed approximately 175,000 troops to that endeavor. Even if one takes into account that two of the main contributors to that conflict Britain and France (who contributed 45,000 and 10,000 troops, respectively) saw a

significant diminution in the size of their armed forces in the intervening years, the United States could have plausibly raised a larger coalition.

In the remainder of this article, we simulate the impact of parameters grounded in two two aforementioned strategies: Eclipse II and the Zinni strategy. Grounding the simulations in the Eclipse II and Zinni strategies permits as to develop counterfactuals for comparison to the actual forces deployed in OIF, and in turn allowing us to examine the impact that each force strategy would have had upon the occurrence of political violence in Iraq. In this sense, these three different strategies constitute differing troop deployment “treatments” conditioning insurgency in post-invasion Iraq. The actual force deployment represents a “low” treatment, Eclipse II a “medium” treatment, and the Zinni strategy is a “high” force treatment. Because the Zinni strategy represents a “high” treatment, we use in our simulations what we refer to as the “Zinni+Desert Storm” strategy, an initial force deployment equivalent to the 575,000 troops deployed in Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Because the Zinni+Desert Storm carries the maximum potential troop supply available to be used in Iraq, using this strategy allows us to simulate the maximum effect that a high force deployment in the early stages of the war in Iraq would have had upon the outbreak of insurgency.

## **Forecasting Deployment Strategies & Insurgency in Iraq**

### **Source Study**

Our forecasts of insurgency in Iraq draw on a more extensive study of similar design.<sup>33</sup> Said study contains an analysis of several causal factors that inhibit, or stimulate, the occurrence of insurgency in 94 political systems established by foreign powers during the period 1816–1994. The study provides a reasonable basis for making out of sample forecasts of contemporary Iraq. Briefly, the set of causal factors includes the following: (1) the type of political institutions that are imposed (i.e., democratic or autocratic); (2) whether or not the imposing state (in the contemporary case, United States) remains present in the target country (in the contemporary case, Iraq); (3) the process by which the imposition takes place (colonial or military defeat); (4) the size of the host state’s military force; (5) the population size in the host state; (6) Level of ethnic heterogeneity of the host state; (7) the level of economic development in the host state; (8) the degree to which the host state is in an international environment composed of similar political systems; (9) whether the

host state engages in interstate conflict at time; and (10) the recency of domestic political violence in the host state.

The original study examines a broad class of conflictual political behavior in host states, including insurgencies, revolutions, rebellions, bombings, assassinations, protests, and strikes per year in the host state. We assume that our operationalization of conflictual political behavior reflects events that are similar to the insurgent and sectarian violence in contemporary Iraq.<sup>34</sup> Central to our forecasts is the measurement of the presence of combat personnel, and their impact on the occurrence of insurgency and sectarian violence. To do so, we assume that the primary military force contributions come from three countries: The United States, Britain and Iraq. In turn, we collect per annum data corresponding to actual as well as plausible potential troop contributions by each state, given variants of the aforementioned three force strategies (Actual deployment, ECLIPSE II and Zinni+Desert Storm.)<sup>35</sup> The annual troop strength values employed in each simulation are reported in Table 1. Our forecasts are grounded in simulations derived by estimating a statistical model on a large-N sample. Next, we use parameters estimated with this empirical model in combination with plausible inputs for our variables of interest (in particular, the total deployed military forces per annum reported in Table 1) to derive our forecasts of insurgency per annum for Iraq.<sup>36</sup>

**Table 1:** Coalition & Iraqi Force Deployment (Actual & Alternatives.)

Year	Actual	ECLIPSE II	Zinni+	
			Desert Storm	Iraq
2003	132444	200220	575000	1700
2004	133917	106500	293667	47900
2005	145292	25567	13750	105700
2006	138500	4000	0	134700
2007	156667	4000	0	161380
2008	145286	4000	0	222935

*Note:* Annual troop strength values for each strategy are calculated by taking the average of each monthly troop deployment. Troop deployment in month 1 for each strategy: Actual (92,000), ECLIPSE II (100,000), Zinni+Desert Storm (575,000).

## Forecasts

The key factors emerging in the general empirical analysis model that influence the likelihood of insurgency are the prosperity and ethnic divisions of the imposed state, the international environment surrounding the imposed state, the process by which the imposition is conducted, and the recency of previous political violence. Said factors suggest an increase in domestic conflict in host states sharing national attributes similar to that of post-invasion Iraq. For example, Iraq reflects modest levels of economic prosperity and high levels of ethnic divisions, both of which stimulates increased likelihood of domestic conflict. Historically, those political regimes imposed through a military defeat by an outside power, as was the case in Iraq, fare significantly worse than regimes imposed through other means.

Given, this challenging environment, our model retrospectively predicts a high probability—78%—of insurgency in Iraq in 2003. Even more importantly, despite the significant increase in the size of the coalition force in Iraq over time and the increasing capacity of the New Iraqi Army, the probability of insurgency forecast by the model actually *increases* over time such that by 2008, such that the probability of political violence is 2% *higher* in 2008 than in 2003 (see Figure 1.) Driving this increase is a vicious cycle in which prior political violence begets future political violence. Although the size of both the American and Iraqi forces in country increase from 2003 to 2008, they constitute efforts to swim against an increasingly challenging tide. In this respect, key to reducing the probability of Iraqi political insurgency in the years after 2003, is the prevention of the violence from breaking out in the first place.

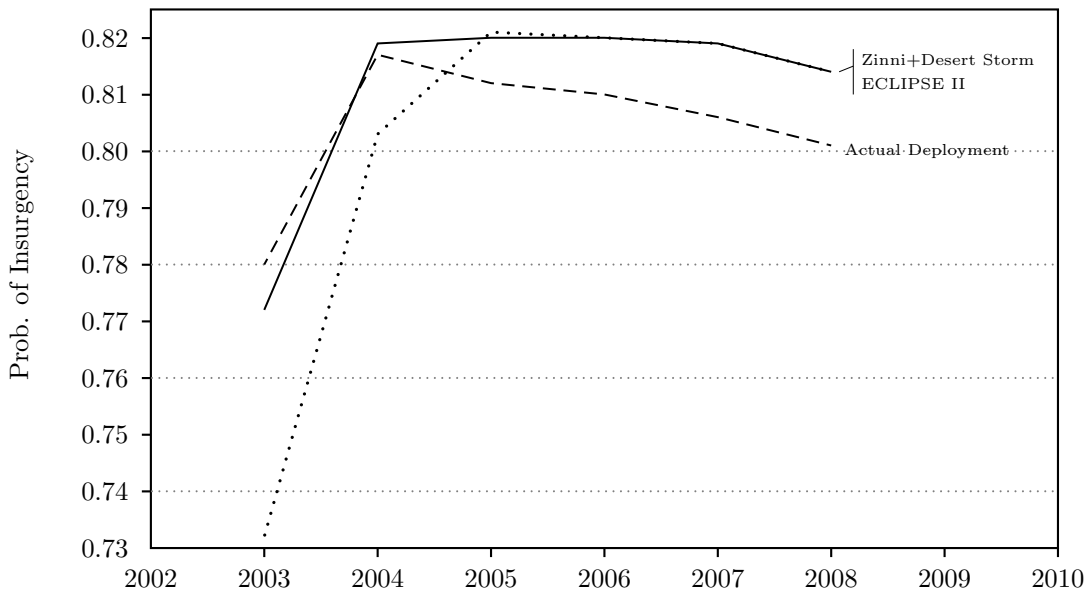
## Alternative Deployment Strategies

If the actual force strategy deployed to Iraq was insufficient to prevent the outbreak and continuation of political violence in the country, it makes intuitive sense to expect that different deployment strategies, particularly those that are marked by a significant increase in the initial deployment of American forces, would have significantly reduced the probability of the outbreak of political violence in Iraq. In order to examine the impact of higher troop levels we focus on two strategies proposed in the lead-up to the war in Iraq. First, the ECLIPSE II strategy called for an initial year one maximum invasion force of approximately 270,000 troops, an increase of 81% over the actual 149,000-strong maximum force deployed in 2003. The Zinni+Desert Storm strategy proposes an

even more robust 575,000-strong invasion force patterned after the force deployed during Desert Storm, which included both American troops and those contributed by the large multilateral coalition. This Zinni+Desert Storm strategy represents nearly a four-fold increase in troop deployment over the actual force deployed in 2003.

Despite its significant increase in size, our simulations, as reported in Figure 1, illustrate that implementing the ECLIPSE II strategy would likely have resulted in only a negligible reduction in the probability of insurgency in Iraq in 2003, a reduction of less than 1%. Furthermore, because ECLIPSE II carried with it a rapid draw down of American troops in country, this strategy would have actually increased the probability of insurgent violence, albeit modestly, during the 2004–2008 period. The fundamental weakness of the ECLIPSE II strategy, as revealed by our model, is that its increase in deployed forces is insufficient to prevent the outbreak of political violence in 2003, the most critical post-invasion stage. Once the vicious cycle of violence commenced, its self-perpetuation is only further exacerbated by the draw down of American forces between 2004 and 2008.

**Figure 1:** Probability of Insurgency in Iraq, Various Deployment Strategies.



In this respect, the Zinni+Desert Storm plan, with its mammoth increase in the size of the initial invasion force, would appear to offer greater hope for stability in Iraq. Although the model predicts

that applying the Zinni+Desert Storm strategy to Iraq would have reduced the probability of insurgent violence breaking out, this reduction, is only modest. Following the Zinni+Desert Storm strategy would have reduced the probability of sectarian violence in Iraq by about 6%, dropping the predicted probability of violence to 73%. While this reduction in the probability of insurgency is not trivial, it is insufficient to neutralize the outbreak of violence in 2003 that provided the foundation for continued violence through 2008. Indeed, the forecasts for the Zinni+Desert Storm strategy only show the probability of insurgency declining by less than 2% in 2004 and increasing by a similar amount between 2005 and 2008 as the size of the American force contribution declines.

These model predictions run in direct contrast to the conventional wisdom that the outbreak and continuation of political violence in Iraq was rooted in the initial size of the American invasion force. While the model suggests that the size of the invasion force should influence the likelihood of violence breaking out in Iraq after the invasion, *troop levels are not the most decisive influence*. The domestic and international contexts in which the invasion and the effort to build a democratic regime took place strongly condition the probability of domestic conflict and strife in post-invasion Iraq.

### **Iraqi Army Disbandment**

If none of the proposed deployment strategies significantly reduce the likelihood of political violence, are there other policy choices that could have more decisively impacted Iraqi stability? One of the most controversial decisions made following the removal of the Hussein regime was the decision to disband the Iraqi army. Although this policy was consistent with the broader de-Baathification program conducted by the Coalition Provisional Authority, it came with two very high costs. Not only did the disbandment of the Iraqi military remove a tool that might have been used to prevent and put down any sectarian violence that emerged after the fall of Hussein, it turned loose without pay or further employment prospects several hundred thousand trained soldiers. As a result, the disbandment of the Iraqi military created a new pool of recruits from which the insurgency could draw, thereby threatening the stability of the new democratic regime in Iraq.

In order to gauge the effect of the decision to disband the Iraqi military, we employ our model to forecast the probability of political violence if policymakers had instead chosen to retain the 300,000-strong Iraqi military rather than disband it. As in our earlier simulations, to see the

maximum effect that such a decision could have had upon the probability of political violence we adopt the most liberal perspective with respect to counting the contribution that Iraqi forces would have made to fighting a prospective insurgency, treating the additional security provided by each additional Iraqi soldier as equivalent to that provided by each additional American soldier. We simulate the effect of the maintenance of the Iraqi military under two scenarios, the actual force strategy followed by the United States and the most aggressive deployment strategy, the Zinni+Desert Storm strategy.

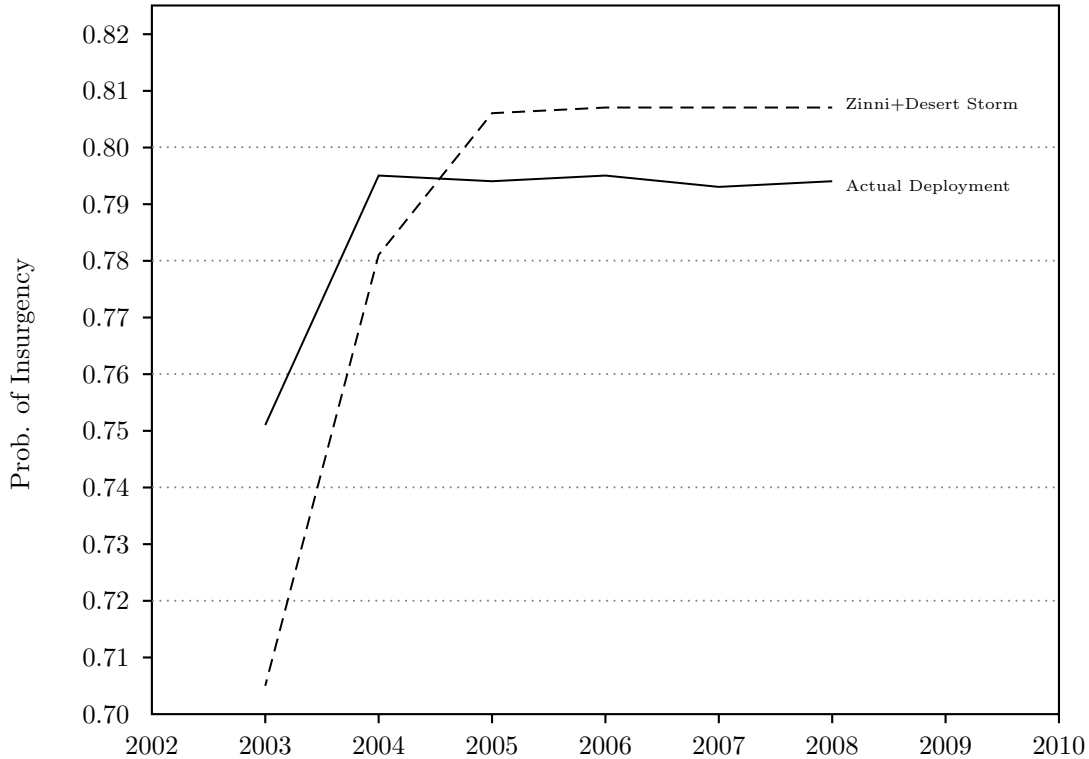
Although the simulation for each strategy shows that choosing to not disband the Iraqi military would have reduced the probability of political violence, this decision alone does not significantly change the probability of violence in post-invasion Iraq, as we illustrate in Figure 2. Specifically, retaining the Iraqi military under the actual American force deployment strategy, for example, would have reduced the probability of insurgency by nearly 4%. Coupling the retention of the Iraqi military with the Zinni+Desert Storm strategy has an even stronger effect, reducing the probability of political violence breaking out in 2003 by more than 9%. Yet, while maintaining the Iraqi military reduces the probability of political violence in each simulation, the likelihood of violence remains high in both scenarios (75% in the scenario with the actual number of deployed American troops and 71% in the Zinni+Desert Storm scenario.) Even without the dissolution of the Iraqi military, the model in each scenario predicts that violence will occur in each year between 2003 and 2008.<sup>37</sup>

### **Right Strategy, Wrong Country?**

Regardless of which force deployment strategy was chosen for Iraq, we predict that no strategy would prevent the initial outbreak of political violence in 2003. The concatenation of an unfavorable domestic social and economic environment coupled with a regional environment hostile to democracy makes Iraq an extremely challenging case in which to successfully impose democracy while avoiding civil violence. As such, only the most herculean deployment of coalition forces, one virtually impossible to achieve, could have hoped to completely prevent the violence that Iraq has seen since the invasion and the fall of Saddam Hussein.

Given that the force deployment strategy applied to Iraq was unable to prevent and terminate the outbreak of political violence, we turn now to examining the political, economic, and social conditions under which, given the deployment strategy followed in post-invasion Iraq, *would have*

**Figure 2:** Probability of Insurgency in Iraq, Actual and Zinni+Desert Storm Strategies (Iraqi Army Retained.)

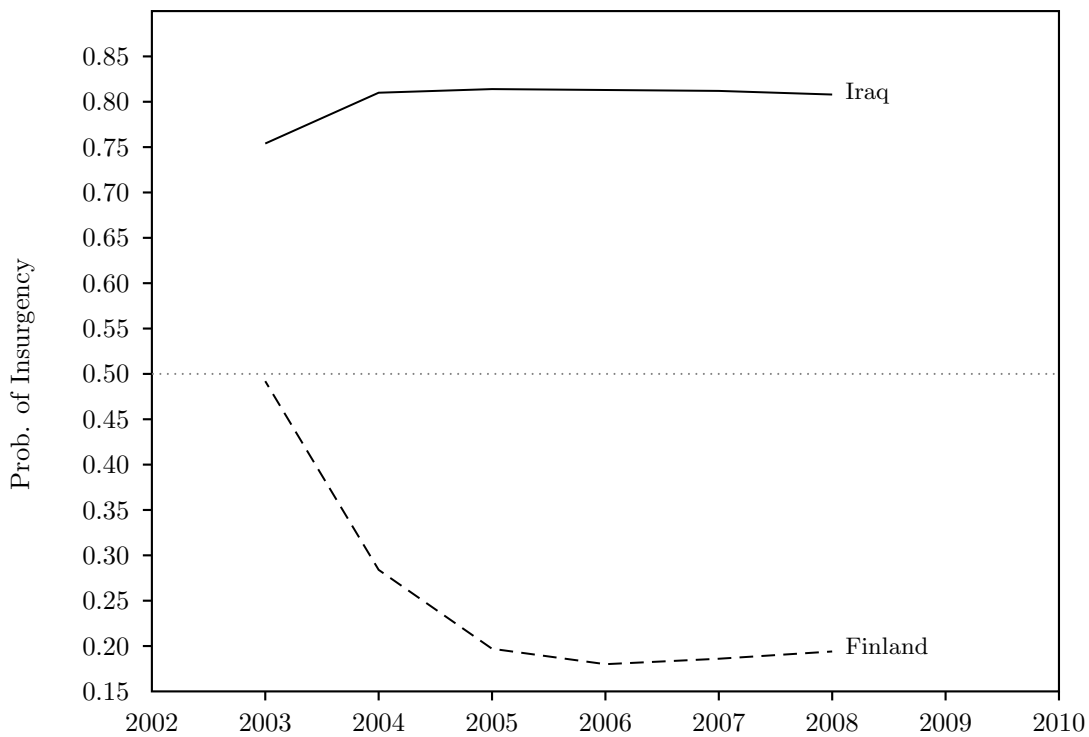


prevented the outbreak of insurgency. In this respect, we ask, given that Iraq was not the optimal environment in which to follow the strategy employed by the Bush Administration in 2003, in what environment does said strategy prove successful? To reveal this case, we modify our simulations to identify the conditions under which, given the actual number of American troops deployed to Iraq, the model predicts “no political violence” in the first post-invasion year. Given their importance as causal mechanisms associated with the onset of political violence, we focus on three factors as central to promoting an environment favorable for the imposition of democracy without the outbreak of political violence: (1) the level of ethnic heterogeneity; (2) the extent of economic prosperity; and (3) degree of regional support for democracy faced by the state into which a political regime, such as democracy in Iraq, is imposed.<sup>38</sup>

Our model predicts that the strategy applied to Iraq would have been significantly more likely to avoid political violence in a country more similar to Finland in 2003. As a wealthy, post-industrial economy, Finland enjoys a level of prosperity that is significantly greater than that of pre-war

Iraq. Finland's per capita GDP is ten times larger than that of pre-war Iraq. This higher level of prosperity serves to dissuade the outbreak of political violence, not only by increasing the capacity of a government to respond to challenges to its rule, but also expands the pool of resources available to the citizenry. In this respect, prosperity undermines the incentives for political violence to break out in the first place.

**Figure 3:** Probability of Insurgency (Mean of Deployment Strategies from Figures 1 & 2) Applied to Finland in 2003.



Given this high level of prosperity, the likelihood of political violence is further dampened as the level of ethnic heterogeneity diminishes. Again, the social environment faced by Finland is significantly more favorable for stability than that faced by Iraq. Finland's level of ethnic diversity is nearly 63% lower than that of Iraq. This increased social cohesion not only reduces the security dilemma that competing ethnic groups face with respect to one another, but reduces the extent to which ethnic divisions become politically relevant in the first place.

Finally, the regional environment surrounding Finland is far more favorable for political stability than that faced by Iraq. Imposing democracy is a tenuous process, fraught with risks and challenges.

Imposing democracy in a state with few democratic neighbors is a significantly more difficult undertaking. Not only can such non-democratic neighbors provide a source of political violence by promoting instability both overtly and covertly, but the lack of regional democratic examples can undermine the confidence a populace is likely to have in its newly imposed democratic regime. By contrast, democratic states are likely to provide support to nascent democratic regimes in the region. Regionally, Iraq is surrounded by only two states with any measure of democracy, Turkey and Iran. Finland faces a much more supportive environment, with seven states that are at least nominally democratic and within 500 miles of Finish territory.

Put together, the prospects for maintaining political stability in an imposed democracy are significantly improved given Finland-like levels of domestic prosperity, ethnic heterogeneity, and regional democracy relative to Iraq, given the same deployment of American forces. As we illustrate in Figure 3, the first year of a democratic imposition in a state similar to Finland would see a 49% chance of political violence, given the same invading force of 119,000 troops applied to Iraq, a prediction is 37% lower than that forecast for Iraq. The prospects for stability grow over time in the Finland-like state, such that by the third year, predicted violence reduces to only 18%, a drop of 78% relative to the forecast for the Iraq case. The comparison of these two cases demonstrates that while the decisions that policymakers make regarding the size of force deployment has an important effect upon political stability, *the environment in which forces are deployed is apt to have an even more significant effect for the prospects for violence and political stability.*

## **Conclusions & Implications**

In the wake of the rise of a vicious, costly, and enduring insurgency in Iraq following the initial battlefield success of Operation Iraqi Freedom, it is not surprising that many observers have suggested that a different force deployment strategy would have led to different outcomes altogether. It has been argued that a larger initial footprint, as suggested by senior commanders such as Eric Shinseki and Anthony Zinni prior to the war, would have made a significant difference in the overall level of post-invasion violence. Our analysis, however, suggests that even the most robust force deployment strategy suggested by such senior American commanders would likely have had little effect on the outbreak of the insurgency in Iraq. In short, the force structure that would have been required

to maintain post-conflict stability in Iraq was well beyond the one that was available to American policymakers in the early months of 2003.

Our findings have a number of important implications for current and future policy debates. In particular, our findings suggest that any talk of United States-led regime change in the international system should be preceded by a sober assessment of the resources necessary for such operations. While this may appear to be an obvious statement, the fact is that neither the Pentagon nor the academic community has thus far produced accurate tools for forecasting such needs. As such, the debate that preceded the invasion of Iraq was devoid of a reliable metric to accurately assess the competing claims offered by its participants. In this context, it is especially important to note that even the pessimistic assessments of officers such as Shinseki and Zinni were still too optimistic about the capabilities of the United States. Furthermore, our analysis suggests that attempts at regime change cannot be pursued by relying solely on the Active Component of the United States armed forces as they are configured today unless the target society is particularly suited for external imposition of a political system. That is, the current force structure of the United States armed forces is simply not conducive to large-scale stability operations in hostile environments.

In sum, our analysis highlights both the limits to American power and the fact that more attention should be paid to the developing an accurate methodology for forecasting troop level requirements for stability operations. Clearly such a methodology is necessary to inform any debate about the desirability and viability of military interventions in the developing world and beyond. The model employed in this paper offers a promising first attempt at developing such a forecasting tool. Its promise lies not only in its greater accuracy, but also in the fact that it is based on open source data and incorporates a variety of national-, regional- and international-system influences that condition the degree to which foreign powers can achieve post-combat stability in target states.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor. *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*. (New York: Pantheon, 2006), p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>Clayton Dennison, “Operation Iraqi Freedom: What Went Wrong? A Clausewitzian Analysis,” *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Volume 9, Issue 3 (Spring 2007), pp. 1–35.

<sup>3</sup>Testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee, February 25, 2003, downloaded from *LexisNexis Congressional* on March 4, 2007.

<sup>4</sup>For Secretary Rumsfeld’s remarks see “Secretary Rumsfeld Media Availability with Afghan President Karzai,” downloaded from the United States Department of Defense Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) on March 4, 2007, at <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=1957>. For Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz’s remarks, see his testimony before the House Budget Committee, February 27, 2003, downloaded from *LexisNexis Congressional* on March 4, 2007.

<sup>5</sup>OIF was initiated with only 140,000 American troops in theater, and only approximately 80,000 ground troops (Dennison, “Operation Iraqi Freedom,” p. 14.) A recent study by the United States Army Contemporary Operations Studies Team, for instance, argues that the lack of manpower was a key factor in allowing the insurgency in Iraq to emerge and grow. See also Carter Malkasian, “Did the United States Need More Forces in Iraq? Evidence from Al Anbar,” *Defence Studies* Vol. 8, Issue 1 (March 2008): pp. 78–104.

<sup>6</sup>The latest study to weigh in on this question was published recently by the United States Army. See Donald P. Wright and Col. Timothy Reese, *On Point II: Transition to a New Campaign*, (Forth Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008).

<sup>7</sup>See Andrew J. Enterline and J. Michael Greig, “Perfect Storms? Political Instability in Imposed Politics and the Futures of Iraq and Afghanistan,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Volume 52, Issue 6 (December 2008), pp. 880–915.

<sup>8</sup>Testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee, February 25, 2003, p. 14, downloaded from *LexisNexis Congressional* online on March 4, 2007.

<sup>9</sup>See John J. McGrath, *Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations*. (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006). It is fair to assume that these experiences informed, at least in part, Shinseki's estimates of the manpower requirements for post-war stability operations in Iraq. According to Max Boot, the fact that Tommy Franks did not have such experience made him less adamant in his demands for greater troop levels for Operation Iraqi Freedom. See Boot, *War Made New: Technology, Warfare and the Course of History*, (New York: Gotham Books, 2006).

<sup>10</sup>*Desert Crossing Seminar: After Action Report*, downloaded from <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB207/index.htm> on November 11, 2006.

<sup>11</sup>*Desert Crossing Seminar*, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup>*Desert Crossing Seminar*, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup>*Desert Crossing Seminar*, p. 20. The long-standing invasion plan for Iraq developed by CENT-COM (OPLAN-1003-98), also called for a force of at least 380,000 troops, or three army corps. See Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II*, p. 26.

<sup>14</sup>For Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz's remarks, see his testimony before the House Budget Committee, February 27, 2003, downloaded from *LexisNexis Congressional* on March 4, 2007.

<sup>15</sup>One might argue that an additional, perhaps crucial, factor played a significant role in determining the choice for a light footprint in Iraq during OIF, one in which the civilian leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Defense pushed the Army leadership to transform the Army into a nimble force structure, one that would rely less on personnel, and more on technology and stand-off weaponry. The campaign in Afghanistan, in which a small contingent of American special forces, supplemented by local allies and backed by the precision and firepower of the American air force, toppled the Taliban regime in short order, was seen as the future of the American way of war fighting.

<sup>16</sup>Quinlivan’s article stands out as a notable exception. See James Quinlivan, “Force Requirements in Stability Operations,” *Parameters* (Winter 1995), pp. 59–69.

<sup>17</sup>See Malkasian’s study of operations in Anbar province, “Did the United States Need More Forces.” See also McGrath, *Boots on the Ground*.

<sup>18</sup>See, Colonel Kevin C.M. Benson, “‘Phase IV’ CFLCC Stability Operations Planning,” in Lt. Col. Brian M. De Toy (ed.), *Turning Victory into Success: Military Operations after the Campaign*, (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004): 179-195.

<sup>19</sup>Wright and Reese, *On Point II*. In their treatment of troop levels in Iraq, Wright and Reese suggest that the United States Army never developed a common methodology to estimate troop level requirements for stability operations. The authors state that “many analysts” use troop density measures to determine such requirements, suggesting an absence of a generally accepted methodology. The authors also point out that analyses based on troop density levels relative to population size miss “intangible factors” such as “terrain and population density, population diversity and ethnic division,” and other factors. Considered together with Colonel Benson’s statements, these assessments seem to suggest that population density levels were the main, if not only, tool to determine the troop level requirements for Eclipse II, and that the Army has not developed a more sophisticated methodology for determining such requirements.

<sup>20</sup>The lack of interest in post-conflict planning may also have something to do with Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld’s aversion to predicting the future. See James Fallows, “Blind Into Baghdad,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, Volume 293, Number 1 (January/February 2004).

<sup>21</sup>McCreeedy, Kenneth, *Waging Peace: Operations Eclipse I and II. Some Implications for Future Operations*, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks PA., 3 May 2004.

<sup>22</sup>The following account of planning for Eclipse II is based on Benson’s own account (see De Toy, *Turning Victory into Success*) and on McGrath, *Boots on the Ground*.

<sup>23</sup>CFLCC planners used 6, 250 as the number of troops in a brigade equivalent, excluding support units.

<sup>24</sup>Briefing slides made available on website of the National Security Archive at George Washington University, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB214/index.htm>.

<sup>25</sup>See Zinni in [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2003-07-21-war-aftermath\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2003-07-21-war-aftermath_x.htm).

<sup>26</sup>For the T3R ratio, see John J. McGrath, *The Other end of the Spear: The Tooth-to-Tail Ratio (T3R) in Modern Military Operations*, (Forth Leavensworth: CSI Press, 2007), pp. 50–52.

<sup>27</sup>Martin Binkin and William W. Kaufman, *U.S. Army Guard and Reserve: Rhetoric, Realities, Risks*, (Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1989).

<sup>28</sup>For an assessment of the readiness of the reserve component see DOD, *Reserve Component Employment Study 2005: Study Report*.

<sup>29</sup>The assumption of sufficient support personnel is, in fact, a heroic one. For the purposes of this study, we assume that the number of support troops in the United States active and reserve components would be enough to sustain one year long rotation at the T3R ratio specified earlier.

<sup>30</sup>Information on United States deployments in 2003 obtained from Douglas Holtz-Eakin (CBO), “The Ability of the U.S. Military to Sustain an Occupation in Iraq,” Statement before the Committee on Armed Services United States House of Representatives, November 5, 2003.

<sup>31</sup>Although it would have taken three Marine regiments to provide a year long rotation in Iraq, given that Marines usually work on seven month rotations (albeit with a smaller amount of downtime than members of the United States Army and other services.)

<sup>32</sup>Michael O’Hanlon and Jason H. Campbell, *Iraq Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security in Post-Saddam Iraq*, The Brookings Institution, February 28, 2008, accessed online at: <http://www.brookings.edu/saban/iraq-index.aspx>.

<sup>33</sup>Enterline and Greig, “Perfect Storms?”.

<sup>34</sup>Hereafter, we refer to these conflictual domestic political behaviors in the state hosting an imposed political regime interchangeably with the terms “insurgency,” “sectarian violence,” “domestic conflict,” and “violence.”

<sup>35</sup>Data on Iraqi military strength was taken from the United States State Department’s “Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 24, 2007”: [www.state.gov/documents/organization/79483.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/79483.pdf). Data on British military forces in Iraq were taken from a report in the *Telegraph*: [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1539200/3,000-British-troops-to-pull-out-of-Iraq-by-May.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1539200/3,000-British-troops-to-pull-out-of-Iraq-by-May.html). Data on American force strength is based upon a report in *USA Today*: [www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-01-12-coalition-partners\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-01-12-coalition-partners_x.htm).

<sup>36</sup>For example, we set the parameters of our model for Iraq in 2003 to the following: *Colonial Imposition*= 0; *Military Defeat*= 1; *Democracy*= 1; *Initial Intervention*= 1; *Outside Intervention*= 0; *Militarized*= 4.90; *Militarized*<sup>2</sup>= 24.00; *Per Capita GDP*= 2400; *Ethnic Diversity*= .4; *Interstate Dispute*= 0; *Similar Neighbors*=2; *Population (Natural Log)*= 10.20; *System Concentration*= .23; *Time Since Last Insurgency*= 0. We generate our forecasts with *CLARIFY*. See King, Gary, Michael Tomz, and Jason Wittenberg. “Making the Most of Statistical Analyses: Improving Interpretation and Presentation,” *American Journal of Political Science* Volume 44, Issue 2 (April 2000), pp. 347-61.

<sup>37</sup>Although we only observe a small reduction in the probability of insurgency by maintaining the Iraqi military, it is possible that disbanding the Iraqi military impacted the emergence of political violence in other ways. For example, by increasing the number of armed, disaffected Iraqis disbanding the Iraqi military may have served to significantly increase the intensity and frequency of violence in Iraq, two measures of insurgency that data limitations prevent us from examining. In this respect, while maintaining the Iraqi military might not have significantly reduced the probability of political violence taking place, it might have reduced the scope and scale of the violence.

<sup>38</sup>Specifically, we pursued an inductive strategy to identify conditions in which the model predicts “no insurgency” and varied the environmental parameters of the model (GDP, degree of ethnic divisions, and number of similar neighbors) until we identified a combination of values that corresponded to a first year insurgency prediction less than .50. We held the population value the same as in the Iraqi simulations, however, so that the scenario was still similar to Iraq (Iraq’s population is approximately five times that of Finland.) Given this approach, we determined that a condition under which the predicted probability of insurgency in year one dropped below .50 when GDP= 24,000, number of similar neighbors= 7, and the level of ethnic fractionalization= .15

(values for Iraq in the first post-invasion year were GDP= 2,400, number of similar neighbors= 2, and level of ethnic fractionalization= .40). We compared these values to the data that we assembled for the testing of our statistical model. Data sources for GDP, ethnic fractionalization, and number of similar neighbors are reported in Enterline and Greig, "Perfect Storms?". These favorable conditions nearly exactly correspond to the profile of Finland in 2003. In this sense, if Iraq had the regional democratic support, social demographics, and economic prosperity similar to Finland, our the empirical model predicts "no insurgency" in 2003 even if all other parameters are held identical to those associated with post-invasion Iraq in 2003.