

Iraq and Afghanistan

Four Times in Iraq



- March 2003 – April 2004 (1 Year) Set Up and Advise Baghdad Provincial Councils
- October 2005 – March 2006 (6 Months) Evaluate
- October 2007 – January 2008 (4 Months) Evaluate
- May – October 2009 (6 Months) Iraqi Security Forces

HDNet World Report

Iraq: Inside the Transition

“There has been substantial progress, but that progress is fragile and potentially reversible.”

-General Petraeus on the status of Iraq

“We’re not where we want to be. We’re not where we need to be. But thank God we’re not where we used to be.”

- General Helmick’s assessment of the Iraqi Security Forces

“Inside Iraq there’s an urgency. A race against time.”

- Correspondent Tamara Banks describing efforts to develop the Iraqi Security Forces before US troops depart

Phases of the Iraq War

- 2003-2004: **“The Lost Year”**
- 2004-2006: **“Rush to Failure”**
- 2007-2008: **The Surge** (Troops and Approach)
- 2007-Present: **Development / Transition**

History of Iraq

The Cradle of Civilization

- Rise and Golden Age of Islam (circa 765 - 1258 AD)
 - Part of the Ottoman Empire (1534 - 1918)
- British: *Direct Rule* (1918-1921) *Indirect Rule* (1921-1924)
 - Monarchy / British Influence (1924 - 1958)
 - Republic / Series of Coups (10 years)
 - Ba'athist Dictatorship (1968 - 2003)

Saddam Vice-President 1968-1979 / President 1979-2003

Sunni, Shiite, and Kurd

- Arab and Kurd are ethnic differences
- Sunni and Shiite are religious differences
 - Disagreement over leader succession after Mohammed
 - Shiite are minority everywhere in Arab world but Iraq
 - Iran is majority Shiite; but they are *Persian*, not *Arab*
 - Most Kurds are Sunni, but some are Shiite (Faily)
(There are also many other ethnic/religious groups in Iraq)
- Sectarian tensions have a historical basis and some relevance - *but not as much as we think*
- The vast majority share an *Iraqi* identity

How Did Things Go So Wrong?

- *Virtually no focus beyond major combat operations*
- *Based on best-case scenarios and assumptions*
- *Some mistakes were “hindsight 20-20”, but far too many resulted from negligence and ignoring advice*



Photos from the Internet

Personal Photo

Poor Planning and Initial Mistakes

A few examples...

- Ignoring the State Department's "Future of Iraq" study
- Failure to plan for or control rampant looting and street crime
- Disbanding the Iraqi Army and DeBa'athification
 - Failure to properly resource the post-war civil administration effort



Looting: The complete breakdown of law and order



Demobilized Iraqi Army Soldiers

8

Afghanistan

- What is our national interest?
- Link between Al Qaeda and the Taliban
 - AQ: Ideology, Franchise, Logistical Network & Training
 - Taliban Local Org: Hardcore, Mafia, & “Convenience”
- Counter-Terrorism vs. Counter-Insurgency
- Troop Levels: 40k, Pres Obama +20k, +30k Now
- Pakistan: Tribal Areas, India, Now Fighting
- President’s Plan: Shift to Counter-Insurgency, Surge to Calm, Develop ASF & GoA Capacity, with end-date and “off ramps”; Then Spt or CT

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