

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES

Transcript of Monday, January 30 Program
“Iraq and Vietnam: Combating Insurgencies”

The following transcript was compiled by Joseph White from a recording of the event. He is responsible for any errors or omissions.

Participating from the podium were Thomas X. Hammes, Colonel (Ret.), U.S. Marine Corps; Peter W. Moore Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Political Science at Case Western Reserve University, and Joseph White Ph.D., Luxenberg Family Professor of Public Policy and Chair, Department of Political Science, Case Western Reserve University. We are grateful for the interesting and incisive questions from the other participants, in the audience.

DR. WHITE: Welcome.

My name is Joe White, I direct the Center for Policy Studies here at Case Western Reserve University, and on behalf of the Center, and the Frederick K. Cox Center for International Law, and the Cleveland Council on World Affairs, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the second installment of our series on Iraq and Vietnam. I would like to thank all of you for coming; I would like to especially thank Ms. Eloise Briskin for the generous endowment that allowed us to put on this program, and I would especially like to thank the speakers that have come today and that are coming for the rest of the series to discuss this theme.

Today we will be focusing on Iraq and Vietnam as insurgencies; and one of the reasons that seemed to me to be an important subject is that one of the common claims that is made about the similarity between the war in Iraq and the war in Viet has to do with the difficulties of fighting insurgencies, and the challenge of fighting insurgencies, and how that involves a requirement for a mix of both political and military tactics, and how that sets particular challenges for the American military – and for the American government.

I am very pleased to have today two very expert speakers to talk about this topic. Our first will be Colonel Thomas X. Hammes, retired, of the U.S. Marine Corps, who notes that he has trained insurgents in some parts of the world and helped fight them in others, in the course of his 30-year career after graduating from the Naval Academy. Colonel Hammes has served in a number of positions within the Marine Corps in his 30 years. At the time of the 9-11 attacks he was commanding officer of the Chemical/Biological Incident Response Force, which means he assisted in, for example, responding to the anthrax attacks at the Capitol. Afterwards he became a Senior Military Fellow at the National Defense University, during which he was sent over to Iraq to run Iraqi Armed Forces logistics, maintenance and base support, about which he might have some

interesting things to say either in his talk or if you want to ask him later. He is also the author of *The Sling and the Stone*, which is a very interesting book about the challenge of fighting insurgencies and the nature of what he calls Fourth Generation Warfare. It was published in 2004.

After Colonel Hammes talks he will be followed by Professor Pete Moore of Case Western's Department of Political Science. Pete Moore is a specialist in middle eastern politics who has done extensive field research in the region. He has written a book on business and the state in Jordan and Kuwait; he has extensive contacts and, I have found, is a fount of information and insight into conditions in the region. And so I have asked Colonel Hammes to talk about the general task of fighting insurgencies, and in particular in Iraq. I have asked Professor Moore to talk about both the situation in Iraq and the interesting comparison to the American situation in Iraq of what governments in middle eastern countries have done when they have had to fight insurgencies.

After they talk there will be a period for discussion and questions. I'd just like to ask you that if you have a question, would you please come to the microphone. We are recording this so that we can have a transcript and for possible rebroadcast later. And with that it is my great pleasure to introduce Colonel T.X. Hammes.

COLONEL HAMMES

It's good to be here. I was frankly surprised it started on time; that would never happen at Oxford. Nothing has started on time in the year I've been there.

The initial subject was comparing Vietnam and Iraq. And although I'll expand on that a little bit as you requested in terms of how is fighting insurgency different today, in many ways we're the same as in Vietnam. On our side one is, both wars were entered under dubious pretenses presented to Congress. It is pretty clear that the Tonkin Gulf affair did not happen. There is some question about WMD, who knew what when and was it an honest mistake or was it a lead-in. Both wars are essentially political contests, but all insurgencies are: there are no military solutions to insurgencies. In both countries, the counter-insurgent government was established by an outside power, which creates a good deal of credibility problems; that's why the recent elections were very important, because that gives them a great deal more credibility. In both places initial military efforts were focused on a conventional enemy, ignoring the insurgency and that was a wrong approach. The key thing from an insurgent point of view was that in both places they knew the critical weakness is the political will of the American people. If you can break the will of the American people, America will withdraw, and then you can get on with the fight with the host government.

5:45

Now, how is it not like Vietnam? It's actually not like Vietnam a lot more than it's like Vietnam. Vietnam is a very old culture that is fairly unified and homogeneous. For 900 years they worked out being Vietnamese and unifying Vietnam. There were still some differences in various areas, but much more unified. Iraq is a very new entity; it was

really created in 1920. They were forced together and have never gotten along; religious, ethnic, and cultural differences are enormous. Vietnam is a poor agricultural nation; Iraq is – was – a fairly industrial nation and has the potential to be quite wealthy. The other thing is, Iraq, there have been about five hundred years of forced semi-integration. The only entity in Iraq that was unified was the corps headquarters that ran the three provinces; that was the only entity that was unified from the previous empire. Twelve hundred years of internal Sunni and Shia fighting throughout that part of the world makes it very, very difficult.

On the government, the Vietnamese had a functioning bureaucracy; you may not like it but it was functioning. When we took over in Iraq there was no bureaucracy; there wasn't even a building that was intact. Even as late as I got there, which was 2004, the buildings had been totally gutted. There is apparently a market for used sewer pipes somewhere in the middle east, because they dug up the sewers and hauled them away – that is the kind of infrastructure destruction that you had. Wires had been stripped out of walls, every light switch was gone, every plumbing facility was gone, the pipes had been dug up and taken away. So you started from a much more difficult place.

On the military side, the big plus between there and here is, that we've got a professional force, a much more well-trained – it's hard to train a draftee force – much more accepting of the mission, and unit rotation, which is enormously important. You fight well only if you fight with people you know, and that's why you fight. Vietnam's individual rotation was one of the worst decisions ever made. On the other hand, in advising the Vietnamese, we had professional schools. You went to school for either six months or a year before you went to advise the Vietnamese unit; the U.S. [in Iraq] never did that. We're just now starting the schools, and the first one has an enormous three-week long period of instruction to prepare you to deal with the Iraqi armed forces.

This is where insurgencies have changed. In Vietnam and China it was a very unified insurgency. It was top-down driven, there were a lot of dissent early on and they killed them – they got it unified. Mao from about 1921 when he first joined the party, until about 1936 there's this long competition where he slowly eliminates all of his enemies, until he becomes first among equals and in the 1950s he becomes absolutely dominant. You don't see that in modern insurgencies. In modern insurgencies like you saw in Afghanistan against the Soviets, in Iraq, in Palestine, in Chechnya, these are coalitions of the willing. They don't like each other, they hate each other, they fight all the time. Except when there's an outside power. It's kind of like they get together for the international match and as soon as that's over they go back to intramurals. We have seen that repeatedly, and that is the pattern I think we're seeing in Iraq. It's a very diverse insurgency; the Sunni Salafi cannot possibly agree with the Shia fundamentalists, but they're all posturing themselves for taking the country.

9:22

We entered naïve in both. Politically, economically, socially, militarily, we were very naïve going into Vietnam. We didn't learn a damn thing, we went into Iraq the same way. We came out of Vietnam and immediately forgot everything we ever knew, we

intentionally threw away all of that information. We blundered in the beginning in Vietnam from when we started until about 1968. The administration was incredibly inept, both in-country and out-of-country. We have done the same thing in Iraq. The difference is that in Vietnam in 1968, when Abrams took over and when Comer took over for the COORDS side we really ran a very effective counterinsurgency program. And it was totally irrelevant, because though we won on the ground and pacified the country, they already had broken the will of the American people, so the war was effectively over by 1968; the decision had been made.

In Iraq we had no plan until late 2004, when Ambassador Negroponte and General Casey put together an effective counterinsurgency plan. Ambassador Khalilzad and General Casey are continuing that under the Clear-Hold-Build. The problem is the Bush administration is phenomenally inept. There may also be some moral bankruptcy here, just from the fact that they know guys are dying, men and women are dying every day because we don't have properly armored vehicles, and they will not go to Congress to ask for those vehicles. They're going to force us to buy American whether they're any good or not. I'm not sure if it's a conscious decision or they're just not paying attention; it's really hard to tell. The Bush administration has no emphasis on this war. There is no evidence the Pentagon is at war except for a very very small slice of it. The Army and Marine Corps are at war; the Pentagon and its procurement and personnel policies are not at war. So where do you go from here?

We have a good counterinsurgency strategy in Clear, Hold and Build. We are developing the troop base to do that. The people in Iraq, I think, are doing a pretty good job; they're not getting support from the people in D.C.. We are not providing the necessary number of advisors, we are not providing the proper equipment for the Iraqi forces or the U.S. forces. We've actually cut off funding for reconstruction. And they've announced that! If you're going to do it, do it quietly, don't announce it to the world.

The problem is, the insurgents are seeing this as a breaking of American will. They are seeing that our political leaders are talking about withdrawal and about cutting off reconstruction funds. And they're starting to tout this as a victory. We can see it on their websites, we hear it in their discussions and their letters to each other. They think they're winning. In fact it's still very much up in the air, because the aspect I haven't talked about is the enormous courage of the Iraqi people. They're an extraordinarily resourceful people, and the people working for us show enormous courage. When I was there, they set off a car bomb right outside the base, and they killed fifteen employees, including two from our office. The next day, all but one person showed up for work. And they had to come through the same barrier plan. Why? Because our barrier plan was designed to protect Americans, and no Americans were killed so it must have worked. So nobody changed anything the next morning. And those of us working with the Iraqis could not get CJPF7 to change the procedures. You had to do some interesting things to get your people in safely.

And so: they keep coming to work. They keep taking chances, their children are getting murdered, their families are getting murdered, their wives are getting murdered, and they

keep coming back to work because they have a vision of a better Iraq. And that's the one thing that's still going for us. The combination of the Iraqi people with the Americans we've got operating in Iraq is the plus side. The downside is the administration is not interested, not focused, and not providing resources. I'll leave it there.

DR. WHITE Thank you very much Colonel Hammes. Professor Moore:

PROFESSOR MOORE

Thank you. I'm honored to be here but I have to admit I feel a bit out of place next to a man who led combat troops and trained them. But, oddly enough the Colonel and I do have a connection. He graduated from the Naval Academy and I graduated from the Virginia Military Institute, and while VMI is not very competitive with the Naval Academy in football and basketball, we are competitive in boxing. And I had a very short-lived career on the VMI boxing team, and my very first visit to the Naval Academy was my first and last boxing match. And I did lose very badly; I didn't go down, I lost a unanimous decision; and afterwards I sat down with my coach and he looked at me and said, "Moore: You're not going to box this weight class any more," and so I said, "coach, is there anything that I did positive? You know, I didn't fall." And he thought about it for a minute and said, "you take a punch well." And so the idea of a boxing match I think is apt, because often you do hear the argument that insurgencies don't have to win, they just have to stay in the ring.

What I want to do is slightly different than what the colonel presented, which is I want to look at the ongoing conflict in Iraq with the comparative frame, looking at what I think are similar conflicts in the region, specifically the Lebanese civil war, the Algerian civil war in the 1990s, and Egypt's war against the Islamic Jihad in the 1990s, and I want to make three simple claims: the first specific to Iraq, another more general regarding insurgencies, and then one last one to get discussion going about what we should do now.

14:56.

I'm going to hold the latter two comments to my conclusion, and I'll give the one specific to Iraq here. My argument is that Iraq is in the initial stages of a civil war or a more complex thing that social scientists call "protracted social conflicts," and the point of no return at least for U.S. interests passed some time ago. To place it within a comparative frame of these three other cases, Iraq is increasingly looking like the Lebanese civil war in both political and economic terms. In contrast to the conflicts in Algeria and Egypt, there lacks a central, rooted government capable of commanding institutional loyalty, which is one of the key variable in the ability to suppress insurgencies in those countries. The government that will eventually be formed in Iraq may have juridical sovereignty but it doesn't have empirical sovereignty; that is, it won't actually control the ground.

What I'm going to do the rest of this talk; first let me just generally introduce the topic of war in the developing world and get to my three cases specifically, and then talk about these other two themes and my conclusion.

A lot of people who look at war, the patterns are very clear. Basically war now in the modern world is war within states, no longer war between states. More importantly, the level of civilian deaths has increased exponentially. For instance, in World War I five percent of the casualties were civilians; World War II fifty percent; and in the wars of the 1990s over 90 percent of the casualties were civilians; this is borne out in the conflict in Iraq as well. When we look specifically at conflicts in the Middle East, or in Africa, it's difficult to categorize them neatly into civil wars, insurgencies, secessionist movements, because the lines are blurring between what is domestic and what is international. Nevertheless, I think these three cases – Lebanon, Algeria, and Egypt – pose both positive examples and negative examples. Positive in the sense that there are elements of these three conflicts that you see in Iraq, and there are elements of these three conflicts that you don't see. So let me just talk a bit about these three conflicts.

The Lebanese civil war, apropos in Cleveland, one of the homes of Lebanese Americans, lasted from 1975 to 1989. The war started ostensibly between PLO guerillas and Maronite Christians; eventually the war became a very complex, involving Muslim on Muslim, Christian on Christian, very complex conflict. One of the incidences in the early part of the war, in 1982, that's eerily similar for Iraq was Israel's invasion of Lebanon, a plan by then Defense Minister Ariel Sharon to obliterate the PLO and to put in place a more "friendly" Christian government, one that would acquiesce to Israeli interests. Well, the invasion in 1982 resulted in 20,000 casualties, mostly civilians. Israel's Christian President, Bashir Gemayel, was assassinated. And it turns out that the invasion helped bring about the birth of Hezbollah, a far more potent resistance organization than the PLO. And so I think that just as far as the Lebanese Civil War, I think we should be very wary of this idea of imposing governments and remember what economists like to call "negative externalities," that is, things that happen that you don't think are going to happen.

The war came to an end through a negotiation called the Ta'if Accords that essentially recognized the decreased power of Maronite Christians and increased power of Muslims, primarily Shia Lebanese represented by Hezbollah.

18:20

The Algerian Civil War starts in 1991. It is sparked by an election in which the Islamist alliance called the Islamic Salvation Front, its French acronym is FIS, seemed to win a large number of seats. The dominant revolutionary government, the National Liberation Front, the acronym FLN, with the military annulled the elections. The Islamists split into two camps, extremist and moderate, and we had a truly nasty conflict that lasted almost nine years, over 100,000 dead. The war eventually came to an end, although it has not been conclusively, there's still some low-level violence in Algeria, but by and large the Algerian government was able to use massive human rights violations to essentially crush the insurgency in rural areas.

Egypt in the 1990s is not so straightforward like the Algerian Civil War and the Lebanese Civil War. But nonetheless it's similar in that we had an Islamist offshoot of the Muslim

Brotherhood called Islamic Jihad; it fought a pitched battle in the rural areas of Egypt with Egypt's government; eventually the Egyptian government like the Algerian government was able to crush this insurgency, again with massive human rights violations, rounding up in some areas of Egypt all men with beards. In that conflict one to three thousand Egyptians died. One thing I forgot to mention, in the Lebanese Civil War about 7 to 10 percent of the Lebanese population were casualties, which if extrapolated to Iraq would mean something on the order of two million casualties, to give you an idea of the size we're talking here.

Now, out of these three examples I just want to talk briefly about two lessons, one in the economic dimension and one in the political dimension, that I think gives us some important insights into Iraq.

First the economic dimension. In all of these cases, incumbent political leaders blamed outside influences for the conflict. It's not Algerians, it's the Afghans; it's not Egyptians, it's the Algerians; it's not the Lebanese, it's the Syrians, it's the Israelis. However, in reality these were domestic conflicts. It was Egyptians killing Egyptians, and Algerians killing Algerians. There was an external dimension to this, but not as usually portrayed. Middle East countries have highly porous borders. Most Middle East countries, like Iraq, are highly dependent on imports. Thus, in Algeria and Lebanon what we saw was the development of war economies, and so the adage is, find the guy with the money and not far behind is the guy with the gun. This is not the argument of Lyndon B. Johnson [sic] to be wary of the military industrial complex, but the idea is to look for local organized crime, and that's your model for what's going on. In Lebanon major militias controlled taxation on exports and imports. Eventually when the Lebanese government collapsed these militias provided education and welfare services. In Algeria local insurgent leaders that were termed "emirs" or, euphemistically, "the mujahadeen for trade" acted in the first part of the war to destroy the infrastructure of Algeria's economy. Why would they do that? Because they replace those nodes with their own clients. By the late 1990s, one of the reasons that the Algerian conflict came to an end is that the Algerian government was able to radically privatize parts of their industry; the individuals that bought those industries were allied with the FLN, which closed the market share for the emirs, eventually drying up at least the economic component of the reasons the insurgency survived. In Lebanon the flight of Christians to a town like Cleveland gradually lowered the tax revenue for the Christian militias and they were simply powerless in the face of a resurgent Hezbollah and Sunni militias.

Iraq's war economy makes conflict resolution remote at best and puts the U.S. in a Catch-22. Let me just briefly explain this. War economies are built on previous arrangements. In 1992, a number of academics wrote about this and it's really ironic that this has not been mentioned very much, but back in 1992 Saddam Hussein radically privatized the Iraqi economy, selling off economic monopolies and industries. Who bought these industries and these monopolies? People in the Ba'ath party and the middle-ranking military commanders, the exact same people who are running the insurgency. When the U.S. CPA took control they made the situation worse. Paul Bremer skirted international law prohibiting occupying powers of changing social and economic situations, and signed a

law drastically privatizing Iraq's state-owned industries; but more importantly Paul Bremer obliterated all tariffs and duties on imported goods coming primarily into Iraq from Jordan and Syria. Who was in a position and who had the external links to make a windfall of profit but the Ba'athist insurgents who controlled much of Iraq's supply network.

The final element of this dilemma is our allies. The number one most important ally that we have in the war on terror in the Middle East and the broader war in Iraq is the country of Jordan, a non-democratic monarchy which has very close relations with the United States military and security services. It just so happens that it is Jordan where most of the Ba'ath party has relocated, where businesses are set up and oddly enough it is now front companies in Amman that are selling security to businessmen that are going from Jordan to Iraq. Who is supplying that security? The insurgents. They just change uniform, they meet the businessmen at the border and they take them through Ramadi and Fallujah. The problem, and the catch-22 of this, is, if we try to cut this trade off, we're going to hurt the insurgents but we're also going to hurt a very important, non-democratic ally, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. And once we upset that applecart -- a peace treaty was signed with Israel, we can see how the dominoes would fall.

The political dimension is a bit more straightforward and the Colonel has already mentioned this. In contrast to Algeria, and Egypt, a central government in Iraq is not in control, and I argue is not going to be in control in the near future. If we look to Algeria and Egypt, what we had there were incumbent, revolutionary, secular, nationalist regimes with deep roots in society. Why is this important? Because not only could these governments use coercion to beat off the insurgents, but they could co-opt. They could buy off allies. The difference is, no one seriously believes that the United States is going to be in Iraq for very long. Nor does anyone believe that this thing that's coming together in Baghdad is going to have power. And so the underlying problem is, we have no way of building institutional loyalty. And, more importantly, since Congress now is not going to send any more money for rebuilding, it seems that the United States has given up on rebuilding. And there's no sign, I think, that the training of Iraqi police or soldiers, at least in terms of bridging Sunni, Shi'a and Kurdish communities, is going to build institutional loyalty. These units are loyal to their militias.

Two conclusions. The first conclusion is general regarding insurgencies. You know, we often heard in this debate, the leadup to the war and this administration's more general war on terrorism, that negotiations or attention to political disputes that underlie insurgent movements amounted to appeasement, cutting and running, and that this would only embolden the bad guys. There was an implied flip side to this argument. The flip side was, that if we don't appease we must crush insurgencies, and that's the only way we might, quote, "win the war on terrorism." And so President Bush's famous "bring it on" statement, Ariel Sharon saying that we must beat the Palestinians down before we can negotiate with them. And the plain fact is that Lebanon, Algeria, Egypt and a whole host of cases show these assertions to be groundless. Under the right conditions military force can buy time, but unless political disputes and claims of injustice are addressed, conflict will endure only to erupt again in the future.

Finally, what does this mean for U.S. foreign policy? And this I just throw out here so we can have something to argue about. If one accepts the premise that the invasion of Iraq was not in U.S. interests in the first place, and that nothing has changed since, the answer is clear: we withdraw. If, on the other hand one believes that Iraq is vital to American national security interests, then the examples of Egypt, Algeria and Lebanon suggest that our commitment is woefully shallow. Overcoming Iraq's war economy and crafting a central authority that will command institutional loyalty will require nothing less than reviving VMI's greatest graduate, George Catlett Marshall, the architect of the Marshall plan. Seeing as how that's not likely, I think we have to seriously consider the question, "what's wrong with cutting and running?" Thank you.

27:24

DR. WHITE: OK, thank you very much, Professor Moore and Colonel Hammes. I'd like to ask you both to come up here because we have just one microphone and be prepared to answer questions from the audience; and people in the audience, because we're trying to record the questions, I'd appreciate it if you would come to that microphone to ask. And, while I'm waiting for some of the people who I am sure have questions to ask to come up, I thought that I would pose a question or maybe two. And I guess my first question is, why is it that we cannot use the kind of brutal tactics that the Egyptians and the Algerians did?

COL. HAMMES: This is something called the Hama solution. When Syria was first threatened by the Brotherhood, the Muslim Brotherhood, he said to his advisers, Assad said to his advisers, "find out what village is the most infested with these people." And they did, and it was the village of Hama. He then sent his troops in to kill every man, woman and child. Drag the bodies into the street – he did this with heavy artillery, armor, aircraft, dragged the bodies into the street – and get representatives from every community in Syria and bring them here, and show them that this is what I will do to your community. That's the level of brutality if you're going to do it. Now does that mean you will win? No, it only wins if you do it upfront, immediately, right away, never apologize, never back down. I can't see the United States doing that. The Soviet Union has tried almost as brutal an approach in Afghanistan, where they killed two million Afghans, and Chechnya, where they killed one quarter of the population. They got run out of Afghanistan, they got run out of Chechnya, they're back as the Russians and they're still not doing well. Brutality is not the answer, you've got to deal – you're absolutely right Professor Moore – the political and underlying issues have to be dealt with.

Q: I understand the embassy that the U.S. is building in Iraq is the biggest embassy that the U.S. has in the world and they're also building seemingly permanent military bases. That doesn't seem like indicators that they're going to leave any time in the near future. So in that case the shallowness of the commitment that you point out, that doesn't seem to make much sense.

DR. MOORE: Right, I'll have to let the Colonel answer. I'm not quite clear on this issue of bases, I don't know if we have a declared policy either way. But yeah, look, it seems at times as if the Bush administration is making foreign policy up as they go. I mean, there are elements that look very clearly like the old realism, then they kind of veer into the Wilsonian idealism and it's not quite clear. If it is the fact that we have bases that we're not going to be letting go of them, but at the same time we've made it very clear we're not going to spend any more money on reconstruction, then that does seem puzzling.

COL. HAMMES: I think your points are absolutely correct, that we don't know what the hell we're doing there. We're building the largest embassy in the world but it's totally ineffective because nobody goes outside the wall. This is a self-licking ice cream cone. As far as bases, the permanent bases we're building is 'cause somehow we've got the weird idea that American soldiers and Marines overseas have to have ice cream and pizza to fight. So we build these huge bases with all kinds of facilities, and the guys who actually fight never get to use them. It's the rear echelon that get to use them. And all they do is make the guys in the fighting line mad. It's a huge waste of manpower and effort, it's all part of an indication that we have no real concept of what we want to do in Iraq.

Q: Hi, I have two questions if you don't mind. My first is, how would you view the role of infantry versus armored and flying forces, with insurgencies versus fighting conventional wars? And the second is, what steps do you think are the most necessary and the most immediate the Pentagon would need to take to fight the insurgency if they approached the level of dedication that you feel is required?

COL. HAMMES: OK, the balance of infantry and armor and air. What you really need is a balanced force that can do it all. Armor provides you protection, infantry is what you need if you want to go in and do the work, but what you really need is an integrated American-Iraqi force. Frankly, when you're on a street corner in Iraq and you don't have any language speakers, you don't know what the hell is going on. So that's the balance there. The second question was...

Q: What does the Pentagon do...

COL. HAMMES: What do we do? The Pentagon can't solve the problem. Counterinsurgency is theoretically very simple. It's about government. If you can provide security for the people, and hope of a better future – not even necessarily for them, but for their children, then they will struggle with you. That sounds easy, but it's extraordinarily complex. What you have to do is provide real security, 24/7. I bet there's areas of Cleveland just like there's areas of D.C. where the police don't really run the place, where there is no government writ. Because they don't provide security 24/7, and they know the gangs are there, and if you go to the government they're going to pay for it. Until we can do that, we can't win. To do that you need sufficient forces. If you don't have sufficient forces, you use what the British did in Malaya, which is a gray/white/black plan, where you abandon certain parts of the country because you don't

have the manpower to hold it; you focus on the important parts and very slowly bring them into functioning government; and then you move on to the next. That requires about a ten-year plan.

Q: Colonel, you said that Iraq's people have never gotten along, and that for twelve hundred years there have been internal fighting. And Professor Moore, you're talking about that there is a Civil War in the making. That comes as news to me as an Iraqi, who spent six months there living with relatives, working in an office with a couple of dozen locals, and with dozens of siblings, cousins, who are intermarried. And, to your last point, 95% of Iraqis support the government, support the change, and to a person believe that they now have hope, that they now have a future, where they didn't before. So where is the past history of civil war or fighting...?

COL. HAMMES: First off, on the 95%, if that's true then the 5% have a hell of a lot of bullets.

Q: Well, it's basically Saddam's people.

COL. HAMMES: Because it's more than 5% that's coming at us, and it's not Saddam's people anymore. The bodies that we're picking up and we're searching are not former Ba'athists necessarily.

Q: Well, the suicide bombers, the cannon fodder, are Arab fighters, but the organizers are less than...

COL. HAMMES: The Arab fighters are less than 5% of the population. You also don't explain Sadr militia, or the SCIRI or Badr militia.

Q: They all support the government and the process. They're not fighting us.

COL. HAMMES: They support the religious Islamic parties, Shi'a religious Islamic parties. As far as the interrelation, are you from Baghdad?

Q: Yes.

COL. HAMMES: That's the most cosmopolitan area with the most intermarriage. As you get out into the south, or you get out into the west, there's very little intermarriage, and if they're getting along so well I'm not sure why we keep finding ten bodies, twenty bodies, thirty bodies executed and left in the river or left in the desert. I agree with Professor Moore, there's an incipient civil war going on. There's a lot of Iraqis that don't want it to be a civil war, who very much have a sense of Iraq and want to make it work. Most of them are more sophisticated and unfortunately a lot of them are being driven out because of safety; a lot of them are crossing the border and getting out. There's a tremendous brain drain going on now, that may be one of the greatest dangers to Iraq.

Q: In all the big cities – Kirkuk, Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, Sulmaniya, Irbil – there is a lot of variety and pluralism that has been going on for thousands of years actually. That’s one. Then it IS all organized by the Ba’athis. The documents show it, the people captured and interrogated show it. So what they’re trying to do is, they’re trying to incite civil war.

DR. MOORE: On the question of civil war: I, you know, I can remember sitting, looking out at the beach in Beirut in ’87, civil war was raging. I know lots of Lebanese that have gone back and forth, Palestinian-Americans go back during the first and second intifadas. Civil War does not mean what we think of in the American context. It’s not bombing Fort Sumter and then there’s a surrender at Appomatox. Civil wars in places like Angola and Sierra Leone and Lebanon and the middle east, these things are very nasty, they have highs and lows, and you can have whole sections of the country that look very civilized. But I think some of the things that we need to look at that are signals of the civil war: Brain drain. OK? 85% of Iraq’s higher education is destroyed. I know lots of Iraqi academics that are now in Jordan. Capital flight: it’s massive from Iraq. So when the businessmen are getting out, at least the ones that have fixed investments and they’re converting their investments into real estate, that’s another signal. And the other signal is when you have militaries that are divided by sect, which is exactly what you had in Lebanon. You had Christian brigades, you had Sunni brigades, you had Shi’a brigades, and that’s exactly what’s transpiring in Iraq. Najaf is controlled by militias that are paid and trained by Iran. So, I think – I don’t think it’s incipient, I think it is a civil war, it’s just that this is the gentle part of the civil war. 30,000 Iraqis are dead right now. I think we’re going to look back at this period and go, “that was when it was quiet.”

37:30

DR. WHITE: I would just like to follow that up with a question for Pete and maybe Colonel Hammes. If you say this is the gentle part of the civil war, doesn’t that mean we’re doing some good by staying and damping it down? And why wouldn’t it be much worse when we left?

DR. MOORE: Yeah, I think it will. It’s possible; it could go either way. For a while you could have a standoff, you know Christians in Lebanon had a standoff for a while. But at the end of the day we have to decide what we are doing in the region. What are our interests, what are our goals, and then how are we going to go about doing that? And so I don’t see how staying in Iraq meets our national security interests. Now, we can argue about, if there’s a war after, maybe it might threaten oil, I mean I think this is all conjecture. But I think that is what we need to do, we need to decide what we want and I the end of the day, that’s a sad thing to say, if we have to pull out of Iraq and there’s a lot of dead Iraqis because of that, and I think that maybe a way to start would be to have apologies from our national leaders for these kinds of problems and policy mistakes. But it’s about American interests.

COL. HAMMES: I think the key question is civil war and how close is it coming. And that’s where you talk to people across the spectrum and there’s a good deal of uncertainty about how far we are. And everybody believes it has at least started, the question is how

far down the road are we and can we reverse it. And then the key question beyond that is, “what are America’s interests?”

We went to Iraq because President Bush said there were terrorists there. There weren’t any terrorists there. There are now! The only terrorists in Iraq were Ansar al- Salaam, which were protected by our aircover. They were a Kurdish Shi’a group, operating in the north, under our air cover. Other than that there was almost no terror activity there because Saddam couldn’t tolerate it. Now it is the center of mass for terror. We are seeing about, I think a good friend of mine, Rohan Gunarantha, who studies Al Qaeda, has tracked hundreds of individuals who’ve gone to Iraq for training and returned to Europe. Now the problem is that these guys are what they call “clean skins.” It means they have no police record and they were born in Europe. So they have a European passport. The problem in penetrating America is getting a clean skin who can function in the west. There are now hundreds of them living in Europe. And they will target both Europe and possibly the United States. And that’s the question: if it breaks down into civil war, does this really become an area like Kandahar used to be for Al Qaeda? Does it become a place that both draws and trains those insurgents? It’s happening now, how much worse will it get?

The problem is, the administration won’t even have that discussion.

Q: Colonel, can we win this, and what would we have to do to win?

COL. HAMMES: We cannot win it, the Iraqi people can. We would have to get serious about supporting the Iraqi people. We have to restore the money. We have to get the control out of the Pentagon and out of D.C. and into the country. We have to insist that the U.S. government support it. That doesn’t mean that when State Department gets tasked to send somebody out there to be a political officer, that they send the 23-year-old straight from college. We’ve got to send people with great experience. We’ve got to invest in translators.

The Dutch army had a standard of one translator per nine soldiers. The U.S. army has to make do with one translator per 125, because the Bush administration won’t spend the money to hire more.

All of those things have to happen. We have to focus on security for the people and on reconstruction. We’ve taken away the reconstruction money and we’re not serious about security for the people. Until we reverse those trends and get serious, we can’t win.

Q: Do we need more troops?

COL. HAMMES: We don’t need more troops, we need to reallocate the ones we’ve got. The guys that are running the pizza stands could probably be doing something useful. We need to rethink that whole process; we need to support the people that are there. Again, effectiveness: a rifle squad patrolling out in town without a translator is almost totally ineffective. A rifle squad patrolling with a translator or two becomes

effective. For instance, you want to tell me about a terrorist next door and I don't have a translator. How do you do that? But if I have translators, we can go over and be poking around at your orange stand or your banana stand – remember all the bananas? Iraqis love bananas, and they hadn't had them under Saddam, so there are bananas all over Iraq now – So you go over and buy some bananas, and the guy when he's making change will go, "look behind the police station. Blue car." That's all he has to tell you and you've got the car bomb. But he can't tell you, because you can't understand him.

Q: Do you expect the religious Shi'a to turn on us?

COL. HAMMES: No, in fact the religious Shi'a have shown remarkable restraint. The only reason we're not in **real** trouble is that Sistani has kept them under control. That's one of the real dangers, if Sistani has a heart attack we've got all kinds of problems.

DR. MOORE: I think this is an important point. The basic question we have to ask ourselves, vis a vis the Shi'ite groups in Iraq, is why is it that the leadership in Iran supports our presence in Iraq? I mean, it seems patently obvious that it's in Iranian interests to have, at least right now, American troops in Iraq. If the United States wanted to be more forceful with Iran on the nuclear weapons issue, it seems that the Iranians could exact a huge price. The uprising by al-Sadr was disorganized, was not well led. An uprising by the two major Shi'ite militias would make that look very favorable by contrast. So I think that part of the problem we have in Iraq is that we are captive, and we are vulnerable to responses by the Iranian regime if we were to do something in other areas to injure their interests.

43:43

Q: I have two questions, one for each presenter. For Dr. Moore: It appears from your comments that Iraq has been effectively disassembled up to this point. And I'm wondering now in terms of what you see the role of our military forces over there, in either creating an effective central government, or is the process of disassembly gone beyond the point of no return if you will? And, then, please, Colonel, in terms of the targeted assassinations and open-ended detentions, as a strategy or a tactic, is it your opinion, based on your experience, that this is a good and productive pair of tactics to use in a counterinsurgency where, forgive me, the "hearts and minds" are at stake.

DR. MOORE: Yes, as I said, I think the point of no return is gone, we passed it a while ago. Even if we can argue about that, it's clear that the U.S. government is not going to commit to the resources the Colonel has argued we need to, or other strategists have argued – the oil spot strategy, moving out. We are not -- \$20 billion in reconstruction funds, Paul Bremer admits to losing \$12 billion, just gone. It would take Yasser Arafat hundreds of years to lose, and to waste that kind of money, and the United States government can do that in the space of three years. That's really impressive. We don't have the political will to do this. I think the argument can be made that that is completely rational, that that is not the place where we should be spending blood and treasure. OK? We have other interests in the region that are looming very large, and our presence in Iraq is hamstringing us from making the changes down the line when Iran has a nuclear

weapon; when the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan becomes unstable; when Mubarak dies; what happens with the Palestinians. These things are connected; the fact that we are in Iraq limits our strategic flexibility and pins us down. Ultimately we're going to have to make a choice. We're either going to have to go back to the old policy, which was backing the Sunnis and the Arabs on the other side of the Gulf, the side of the Gulf with Iraq. Why? Because we don't want any power rising in the Gulf that can challenge us or the Israelis. Or, we're going to have to come to a strategic agreement with Iran: essentially recognize Iran and deal with them as a real country and make the environment more conducive for the time, and it will happen, when they have a nuclear weapon. And as long as we're in Iraq, we can't do any of that.

COL. HAMMES: I really gotta agree with the professor about Iran. Our current policy on Iran is flat-out stupid, not to put too fine a point on it. We keep making these noises that "you can't have nuclear weapons," well, what are we going to do about it? I've talked to the guys who do the targeting and the bombing, and I've been an Intel officer. The Iranians saw what happened to Iraq's program and they've scattered their program all over the country. Some of it's deep in the ground, some of it maybe in mines, we don't know where it is. You notice how good our intelligence on where the Iraqi program was. So the idea that we're going to run an airstrike and set them back is absurd. But even if you talk to the guys who do this, even if we run an airstrike and we get all the targets, we delay them for two years. So now it's two years later, they're nuclear-armed, and I'm thinking they're not feeling very friendly. The only way we can stop this is to invade, and if you think 25 million pissed-off Iraqis are fun, wait till you try 77 million Iranians, who have a much better reputation as warriors, and much worse terrain to operate over. We cannot do anything about it. Accept they're going to be a nuclear power, and start figuring out today, how do you live with a nuclear Iran? What do you do to make them an included recognized power, rather than treating them like this third part of the Axis of Evil. And I've gotta think that phrase just came because a speechwriter needed another country.

Q: (Reminder of the part of the question about targeted assassination)

COL. HAMMES: Yeah. Targeted assassination assumes you know what the heck is going on. It can be an extraordinarily valuable tool. I mean, as bad a reputation as Phoenix got in Vietnam, when Phoenix was done in the provinces where it was well run by a good intelligence; where you build, with patience to spend a year or two years developing the intelligence picture, so you know who's who, then you try not to assassinate. The problem with assassination is you just eliminate him. If you capture him, they have to worry about everybody he ever knew. And then there's a catch and release program you can run. If I catch four terrorists in Iraq, and I interrogate them, and they're not giving me anything, but I've got some other information that confirms a target. I hit that target and then I release a couple of these guys tomorrow. And they've got cigarettes, clean shoes, clean shirts, and a little spending money. What I've done is introduce distrust into their system. And an insurgency is based on trust, it's a network and networks are based on trust. So what you have to do is introduce distrust into this network. A catch-and-release program can do that for you. 'Cause then you can also

turn somebody, and once they've figured out that you're releasing people that haven't betrayed them, then you can release some people that have betrayed them. You've got to raise their level of uncertainty in their network, so they can't trust each other. But just blind, targeted assassination isn't going to work, and the long-term detention doesn't work. We make more enemies than we fix with that one.

[Unclear follow-up]

COL. HAMMES: No, those are not about winning hearts and minds. Those are about providing security for the people, by taking the bad people out of circulation. Again, all the building I do doesn't do any good if you're not safe. You know, you may be driving a Cadillac and have a swimming pool, and the economy's great, but if you can't let your daughter go to school because she's going to get snatched off the street, you're not supporting me. You're supporting the militia that's in your neighborhood that can protect your family. And that's the problem; it's got to be a balance of security and progress, and that's a very tough mix to do. That's why insurgencies are hard to deal with.

DR. WHITE: I'm sorry, but can I ask both Colonel Hammes and Professor Moore to follow up on the subject of trust? And in particular, we're talking about networks; there's insurgent networks but then the government would have to be some network of trust also; and what is the prospect for building trust within an Iraqi government at the moment?

50:43

DR. MOORE: Not good. I don't think that... that's correct. Inside an insurgent group or a criminal network you've got to have trust among members, but then the whole operation itself is about creating distrust in the larger society, because you want people to come to you for things like protection; you want people to come to you when they need something and they don't want to go to the bureaucracy of it. I was recalling this little story from Paul Bremer's book, he was talking about how he cut through the red tape when there was a hospital in Baghdad that needed generators, and to buy them would have had to go through all this paperwork to get them from a contractor. So he just took some money – this was part of his explanation for how the 12 billion dollars went bye-bye – and he purchased from quote local sources the generators. And the question is, who would possibly have generators in Baghdad less than a year after the fight? And again, I spent a lot of time in Jordan with many of the people who do the trading in Iraq, and I can guarantee you that the same people that they dealt with during the Ba'ath regime are the same people that they're dealing with now; they just call them different names. They fill out forms instead of bribery. So, to build trust ultimately means you need to have a stronger central authority that can give people in small villages the incentive to vest their loyalty there. And building that kind of thing in Iraq – unless we want to go back to the old version, which was the strongman – is a long, long way off.

COL. HAMMES: I agree, trust is a long ways off, but that shouldn't surprise us. We declared our revolution in 1776, wrote articles of confederation, and it took us 13 years until we trusted ourselves enough to write the constitution. It took us a hundred more years and a civil war before we really started to trust each other, and the whole

reconstruction period and finally the civil rights movement. This is from a country that didn't, that wasn't split up, that didn't have an outside threat, that had all the things we had going for us. So to expect democracy to blossom in a couple of years is one of the strangest ideas the Bush administration has ever had.

But you can – it's encouraging that they're working together. The very fact that they're meeting every day with people that are potential enemies is encouraging. The very fact that they're talking is encouraging. So I think we keep working that down the line and hope we get there. As far as the \$20 billion -- a lot of money. Guess what, the Pentagon loses that much every year. You've got to decide what your national priorities are. When you go to war, the American way of war is not to go to war on the cheap. We spend the money that's necessary to win.

And you know, that might mean that the upper income have to pay more taxes. Probably not gonna happen, but it might mean that. Another amazing thing, is we're trying to do it on the cheap and, for the younger people in the audience, we're doing it on your credit card. So those are all the things we've got to fix. Whether we can or not depends on whether we can make the administration get serious about the war. Until we can make the administration get serious, we've got real problems.

Q: Could you better describe when you think the turning point towards a civil war was, and what failures at the beginning stages of the war led up to this turning point?

MOORE: Yeah, real simple for me, obviously I'm a pessimist. And I really don't think, it would be very difficult for me to envision a way we could have done this. When did it start? Lets recall the first three major suicide car bombings. First was of a Shi'ite cleric in Najaf that the U.S. brought in, very powerful and also very close to the Americans. Killed him and 90 worshipers. Second major bombing was the Jordanian embassy. The third major bombing was the U.N.. This was all before there was even a guy called Zarqawi from a little town in Jordan. This was strategic bombing. It was very clear what was going on. So I don't think that, deep down in Ba'athist headquarters they had a secret plan; I don't think that Saddam was that good; any good analyst of Iraq saw the disfunction of the Ba'ath party really in the middle of the Iran-Iraq war. But rather, this is what happens when you lop off a central political authority. People are going to go down to what is most, where their closest bonds are. And the Ba'ath party provided that, good or bad, for a lot of people in Iraq. And so, yeah, I think the turning point was the middle we marched in. I think that was pretty much it, we've kicked the bees nest over now, and as Colin Powell says, it's ours and as Secretary Rice said, we've become ineffective occupiers.

Q: Colonel, a question for you. When I was a student at the Defense Language Institute, we were running through entire companies of Marines for short-course Vietnamese, aside from the people who were taking the long one-year course. I don't believe that that kind of language training is being given to even the Marines who are going over to Iraq now. Have you seen any indication that the administration would institute something like this? Or maybe they are and I just don't know about it.

COL. HAMMES: This is one of the indications that nobody's paying attention. General Madison actually did that for First Marine Division before they went back over to do their counterinsurgency. You had to use division money because DOD wouldn't pay for it. And Defense Language Institute wouldn't provide the instructors, so he hired locals.

Q: They wouldn't provide the instructors because there were no funds, or they just didn't have enough, or?

HAMMES: They said they didn't have enough, that they were busy. So he put 400 of his hand-picked NCOs through this course. It was a three-month course, that was all they had to do morning to night, to study, and it made a big difference. Second Marine Division didn't do it because the commander didn't think it was necessary because he wasn't big on counterinsurgency. And this has been one of the problems from the very beginning, it's been very commander and personality dependent. H.R. McMasters up in Tal 'afar had been running a brilliant counterinsurgency campaign and putting it together. He leaves this month. Who comes in after him is going to be a big difference. It's the difference between watching the 82nd Airborne thrash around, killing whatever's in sight, and Petraeus and the 101st. There has been no coherent military response to this because the Pentagon has been adamant there is no insurgency.

Although I think your point is absolutely right. In August of 2003 an intelligent observer knew there was an insurgency. And knew, if you studied network theory and emergence, you knew what was happening. This is a network that has not yet established itself but there is emergent intelligence occurring – and there are some good books out there on emergence that I would really recommend.

Q: My question is kind of about, since personally I don't think there's any way to win this war, I do think though there is a responsibility that we have towards giving the Iraqi people something back in return for creating this mess. Considering that part of the Sunni insurgency is probably reasons for the way they do things is that they want to negotiate eventually to get a significant portion of power within the government, why not call them on their bluff and split the country up? Because then the Sunnis are left geographically with no real natural resources and no real way to have any significant power over the other groups. I mean, would that work?

DR. MOORE: Well, you know, Iraq has neighbors, and they would just go through the roof if the country split up. I mean, lets take Turkey. They have made it very clear the red line is an independent Kurdistan. The next step is NATO soldiers going over the border. They're NATO soldiers, they're not supposed to go over the border, but they would. Jordan, Syria, these things are connected in ways that the United States has invested, really since World War II, we've invested in stability and local despotic regimes and deliver what we want at certain times. Peace treaty with Israel, free trade agreements, so on and so forth. So that whole applecart would be upset.

Nevertheless, I think there is lurking an agreement between the insurgents, if they can ever have a unified political voice, which at this point they don't have, and the U.S. And I think that's what's happening, in the stories we're starting to hear – and I think they are stories – of this infighting that is supposed to be occurring with the insurgents. Because on the one hand the insurgents know that they want to have a relationship with the U.S., but they're going to have to give the U.S. something. The U.S. is not going to walk out of Iraq not claiming victory. The Pentagon knows they have to have victory too. So, the agreement would fall along the following lines. The Sunni insurgents give up the “terrorists”: those bad outside Jordanians and all of these guys that are coming in supposedly doing the bombings. You can pull up these people anywhere, deliver them, the Americans then can claim, “look, we've defeated the terrorists and we're allowing the legitimate Iraqi insurgents to have a discussion and we're going to negotiate.” You know, that's the basis of the agreement. The assumption here that I'm operating on is that the foreign element is miniscule, but it can be used as a bargaining tool to have that relationship.

1:00:45

DR. WHITE: OK, I want to push you on that one Pete. How do the Americans sell that one to Sistani and the Kurds and the other people involved in the current Iraqi government?

DR. MOORE: One step at a time! U.S. foreign policy for the last several years has been, first make a decision and worry about the ramifications later. I mean, we have to come to an agreement with the Shi'ites and, larger, with Iran. But, I think this is what our Sunni allies – Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and I think Syria to a certain extent is an ally of the U.S. in this fight – is pushing the U.S.. Because what they want is a preservation of a Sunni, centralized government somewhere in Iraq because, just like George Bush says, “we don't want to fight them here,” the Syrians and the Jordanians and the Egyptians don't want to fight them in their country. They'd rather fight 'em in Iraq. And so this is what they're trying to push as an agreement. What would Sistani do? I mean, he's got what he wanted? He demanded elections before they formed a constitution; he got that; and more or less the major cities of the south are now controlled by allied militias. So as long as it doesn't monkey with things like oil or arming the Sunnis with things like the ability to project force, like armored vehicles or things like this, I think the Shi'a might accept that. They've achieved a great deal in the last few years, historically.

COL. HAMMES: I'll start with your initial premise, that the Sunni want to negotiate. I don't think they do. The Sunni want a civil war. The Sunni actually believe they're a majority in that country. They do. Which is proof that our government's not the only delusional player in this game. Second thing: split the country, you've got a real problem with demographics if you split the country. There are two million Shi'a in Baghdad. The Kirkuk region is so volatile because it's about a third to 40 percent Arab. It sits on 3.5 trillion dollars worth of oil if oil is selling at \$60 a barrel. Neither side is going to give that up easily. So you try to split up a country that really isn't frankly interested in splitting up and may be impossible to split up.

And finally the intramurals. I agree the foreign fighters are a very small element, five or ten percent. I've got some friends who are battalion commanders in the west and Anbar, and by inspecting bodies, passports, clothing, things like that, they determine about five or ten percent of the people they're killing and capturing are foreigners. The rest of them are home-grown Iraqis. Zarqawi's movement, he's starting to respond to Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda sent him the letter that said you've got to do three things for us. You've got to form a coalition of the various foreign fighter groups; you've got to reduce the number of murders you're doing, and you gotta take the attack to Jordan and the United States. He has taken the attack to Jordan. We don't know yet what he's doing to attack the United States.

Q: Gentlemen, when I walked in here this evening I felt very bad about things. I want you to know you've given me one whopping case of indigestion. And I'm sure everybody in this church. Within the constraints of reality, of January 31st 2006, what would you see as the best possible scenario and the worst possible scenario of the whole thing?

DR. MOORE: I guess the best possible scenario – I'm a comparativist, so I'm always thinking about other cases – but –Somalia. If we could get Iraq to where Somalia is right now, great. A failed state with a rump state in the north, pretty quiet. The problem is, Iraq's in a much more dangerous neighborhood than Somalia is by contrast. What's the worst? The worst is an Angolan, Lebanese kind of civil war with lots of people being killed. And I do want to make one thing clear, you know it's not easy, the middle east is a part of the world that I have very strong connections to. I go there often. I take my family there, my kids, the safest streets in the world can be found in Cairo and Amman, I have very good friends there. It's not easy to advocate pulling out when I know full well that a lot of friends of mine and family friends will pay the price for this down the road. It's not an easy decision and I don't advocate it without those consequences in mind. But I think a switch has been thrown in the middle east, and the next ten to fifteen years I think are going to be really different than the 1970s and '80s, and the chances of the United States being drawn into a much larger war have risen since the invasion of Iraq. But that doesn't mean that I don't see this with great sadness for a part of the world that I really do respect and enjoy traveling to.

COL. HAMMES: Your students call you Mr. Happy? Best case: we somehow keep this government limping along. And over the next 20 to 30 years they evolve into a government that can live together in a loose confederation of some kind. Kind of the timeline it took America to get itself organized. Worst case is a Lebanese-type civil war, smashes the oil infrastructure, spreads across the border and perhaps even into Saudi Arabia, although we've got a disagreement on that -- whether the Saudi Shi'a would be in on this or not. As part of just sheer anger and striking out they may strike out at the Saudis. Because remember, if it gets to civil war, the Sunni are gonna support the Sunni. So the Saudis who are already supporting the insurgency will provide even more money. If I want to stop the flow of that money and I'm a Shi'a, the easiest way is to go after the eastern oil terminals. And the Saudi national guard may be the least effective

conventional army in the world. They're not too bad as a security service between the national guard and the Army, but those are extraordinarily vulnerable targets. And they have the engineers who run oil systems so they know how to take them out. That would be worst case. And then you'd see oil, a hundred dollars a barrel, a hundred fifty? And some serious recession.

Probably shouldn't have asked that question, huh?

Q: This question probably has been asked and answered already, but I need a more clear-cut answer... Some people say that Iraq is going OK and some people say it's a disaster, depending on who they are and where they stand politically. But taking into account all that's happened in Iraq, with bringing down Saddam Hussein and setting up a democracy in Iraq, where is Iraq right now. Is it going OK or is it all going to hell, and if it's going to hell, why – who sets the scale for where we should be in Iraq?

DR. MOORE: Her question is where we are right now in Iraq, right?

Q: And who sets the standard

DR. MOORE: That's a good question, that's a question that the Secretary of Defense has asked a couple of times: what's the metrics for this, how do we measure it? We don't have a good handle on that, but what I claim are measurements are things like capital flight; brain drain; the makeup of the security and police forces being more or less sectarian and divided; the fact that there's a very robust, flourishing war economy that means that you're not only fighting, at least some people are not only fighting for these religious and political goals, they're fighting for social advancement and making money, which is a very powerful incentive. But you're right, I think that's a very big open question, because choosing how we measure this does determine a lot of where we're going. Let me just say one thing. Part of the problem is, what the administration puts forward as measurements are incomplete. The President about three weeks ago made the statement that there were 30,000 new companies that were established in Iraq. And I thought this was great, because this reminds me of what every government in the middle east does. They publish these glowing statistics about how many companies were established and they don't know how many failed. So you have no idea of what's going on really, or what counts as a business. But I think that's a good question and we're not getting anything from Washington that gives us set metrics. We don't talk about body counts really any more; we don't talk about the number of civilians. And so it's an open question.

COL. HAMMES: I think probably the most reliable statistics I've seen are on the CSIS website. And he essentially lays out the metrics of what's going on. Where are we? I think it's too early to call. Insurgencies last a decade. Optimists say insurgencies last a decade; pessimists say somewhere between three and five decades. So we're three years into at best a ten year war. It's like calling a game in the bottom of the third. You're not sure. The question is whether you think you can recover and whether you're serious about it or not. Again, until this administration gets serious, I'm as pessimistic as you

{Prof Moore} are. The only reason I think they might get serious is they actually responded when Representative Murtha challenged them. They actually stirred. He finally got an impact because he made it important to their political chances here. One of the variables we've not talked about is the midterm elections. They scare the hell out of me because this administration is more likely to focus on the midterm elections than on the war in Iraq. And if we go that route there will be a distinct message to the insurgents there that they are winning.

1:10:58

Q: Given the rise of a radical and possibly nuclear-armed Iran, how can it not be in American interests to try and establish a stable and strong and at least neutral if not U.S. - friendly U.S. government in the region? Even if Iran could not really threaten the United States but it could threaten stated American interests in the area. And, as a secondary, does the U.S. government itself no longer believe in this war? Or is it that it simply did not sufficiently sell the cause of this war and the cause that we need to stay to develop a government in Iraq to the American people?

DR. WHITE: It may be a long question or two questions, but it's two very good ones. Pete, do you want to start with that?

DR. MOORE: I'll address the first one. [Exchange clarifying the question] The problem is that the government that's now the United Iraqi alliance is made up of militias and parties that were born and bred and funded in Iran. And so it's not clear that we would be establishing a relationship with a "friendly government" if we expect the definition of "friendly" to be one that's going to act as a bulwark against the Iranians. We've already played that game. That was 1983, Donald Rumsfeld shaking Saddam Hussein's hand after he had gassed the Kurds. Right? That was 1987 when the company that I worked for sold computers to the Iraqi military. I mean, those were the days when we saw this side of the Gulf, the Arab side, as the bulwark against the Persian radical Shi'ites. Those days are over with now. We've destroyed that edifice of a foreign policy. The question is what are we gonna build in its place.

COL. HAMMES: I've gotta say it's not a question of whether it's a good idea or not to have a stable Iraq. The question is can we do it. And that's I think the point that we've been trying to make, that unless we get serious we can't. One of the problems I have, we keep blustering about Iran, about how we're going to take them down, we're going to destroy them if they don't give up nukes, and then we wonder why they're helping in Iraq. Do you just kind of wonder, I don't know, is the bureaucracy so divvied up that the Iraq desk doesn't talk to the Iran desk? So I wonder about that. You'd also said that...

Q: Does our government no longer believe in establishing or did it fail to sell the idea?

HAMMES: They believe, but it's a faith-based belief. It's just like the war was faith-based planning. If you have a faith and you believe this is the outcome, then you can't have a branch plan. Everyone knows that we went in to Iraq with no branch planning. A

branch plan is just, “OK, we started this and it doesn’t work;” you should have a plan running for every bad thing that can happen to you, a prudent planner does, I did for much of my career. Good general officers have six or eight or nine or ten branch plans running all the possible options. But if it’s faith-based you can’t have a branch plan because then you say the faith isn’t true. It’s kind of like a catholic priest saying, “what do we do if the Pope isn’t infallible?” He doesn’t get to ask that question, he gets tossed out of the church, and that’s what happened. I think we’re at the same place now: you either believe Iraq is getting better, you believe the statistics they publish, or you’re out of the camp. So there is nobody in there going, “OK, boss, wait a minute. We’ve got a problem.” He’s intentionally isolated himself from all but his senior-most advisors, and his senior-most advisors are still reluctant to go in and say, “we’ve got some problems. Serious problems.” And that surprises me because this war is going to be the legacy of this administration. They may have wanted it to be reforming Social Security or changing health care or whatever, but this war is going to be their legacy.

Q: I have two questions really. One thing I seem to be noticing a lot of is the Bush administration seems to have zigged when it should have zagged in various instances, and bearing off with that, our current state of intelligence also seems to in this kind of faith-based belief that the intelligence we have is absolutely correct or the intelligence that we need... what do we need to do to reform the intelligence bureaus so that we can get more effective intelligence, and the second question is, what can world organizations like the United Nations do when they stop condemning this war and start wanting to take an active hand in trying to help stabilize this very, very unstable conflict?

DR. MOORE: Let me just say something about the last part of your question. What’s going on right now is that both officials of the State Department and Cheney have approached Egypt – and this is the second time they’ve done this – to see what the level of Egyptian willingness [might be] to send troops to Iraq. Because the idea is ala the Lebanese civil war, we didn’t want to send troops so the Syrians went in in ’76 and never left for a while. So the idea is that when we pull out we want to replace them. The U.N. is not where we’re going, that’s a non-starter. It’s the League of Arab States. The problem is, the Egyptians and other potential troop donors like Morocco have made it clear that they’re not going into Iraq until two things are met. One, a centralized, sovereign Iraqi government asks them to come in; and two, there are no U.S. troops. So help from international organizations is a long way off.

COL. HAMMES: Yeah, I’ve got to agree that not only is help a long way off; the U.N. does some things well; security and peace operations are not [among them]. I was part of the force that turned over to the U.N. in Somalia; you want to see a goat-rope in action, watch the U.N. try to do anything military with the U.N. in charge of it.

On intelligence. We’re all a little puzzled as to why our intelligence doesn’t work. And I think there are two things. One, personnel. Everything comes back to personnel. No matter what your organization is, it’s what you reward, how you train, educate, promote. All of that goes back to the manpower policies that were adopted in 1900 by the Secretary of War, Elihu Root. So our manpower policies are firmly rooted in 1900.

Does everybody here know what the GSA is, the General Services Administration? These are the guys – the idea is a good one, if you get the whole purchasing power of the U.S. government together, you'll get things cheaper, faster, and more what you want. The reality is, when you give a bureaucracy a monopoly it doesn't work. If you buy a tablet from the GSA it's going to be the wrong size, delivered three weeks late, for four times as much money as if you'd bought it at one of the local stores. And yet, the CIA has exactly the same manpower policies as GSA. The people running our intelligence have the same promotion incentives and organization as the whole rest of the government; it makes no sense at all. So you've got to change the underlying intelligence policies. And the other thing you've got to do is admit that adding another layer of headquarters, another bureaucracy, is not the way to improve efficiency. And yet when we had an intel problem after 9-11 we decided the real solution was to put a really big headquarters over what we've already got – that'll improve things!

1:19:00

Q: Hello, I heard you on the radio this morning, thank you very much for your talk. I'm with the Council on American Islamic Relations, and I have so many questions I don't know where to start. I'll try to be very brief... We did a training with the Ohio National Guard, a captain there had a lot of initiative of her own. Later I think she got kind of thrashed for that I think. But she brought us in for some training with her about the middle east, and we had some people from the middle east come. Basically, the guard there, it was really sad, some of them had been to Iraq and fortunately they came back alive. But they basically said that all we were told before we went to Iraq was don't use your left hand. I think that's really a shame, and I feel so sad about our troops being put in harms way with so little training and so little preparedness... and I guess what I want to ask is, why are the generals so brave at fighting a war, but why are they so cowardly at standing up to Rumsfeld? Who is he, why is he allowed to do this, why does he have so much power, why do our generals allow him to do that? The second question, to the Colonel, have you read Janet Karpinski's book? She was the first woman general to maintain combat troops behind the lines, in a war zone... she was in charge of Abu Ghraib. They basically destroyed her, and Bush took away her Generalship and they tried to accuse her of, fifteen years before stealing her own moisturizer in the commissary. And they really wanted to destroy her for Abu Ghraib and she tried to say that the chain of command goes down but it also goes up, and she said, 'someday I will sleep peacefully when I know that those people at the top like Miller and Sanchez and those people that basically told our troops that they were to torture people in Abu Ghraib... why is this happening to our military? Lets not even talk about the Iraqis' interests; lets talk about American interests in our military. Why is our military not standing up to this? Their nobility is being taken away, it just grieves me.

DR. WHITE: I'd like to comment that in a way you've answered your own question but it's a very important question, and I'm very interested in hearing what Colonel Hammes as a military officer of thirty years has to say about the pressures on the military.

COL. HAMMES: The question is how do the general officers get to this point where they get shy about giving their opinion. Under Bush 1, expanded greatly under Clinton –

Clinton made a fine art out of this, based on his experience with Colin Powell – and then Bush 2 has refined it further, there's a very careful selection process that goes on between two and three stars. Three stars begin to move into the arena where you will be a public figure and you will make public statements. They are very, very carefully screened for their political position. If they say anything bad about an administration, any administration at any time, they go away. So when you get guys who run an entire career on that way for success, don't expect them to change stripes when they're suddenly at the top. So there has been a massive failure on the part of the general officers.

The training on Islamic beliefs: it's been abysmal. Again, the problem is, the administration keeps acting like in the next six months this will be over so there's no point in investing in training. We haven't invested in training, we haven't invested in equipment, we haven't invested in translators, because we've got this belief it's going to be over in six months.

General Karpinski I have absolutely no sympathy for. Massive failure of leadership. She shouldn't be discharged, she should be in jail. Then we should start working our way up the chain. Problem is, the chain ends with the Attorney General of the United States and the Secretary of Defense of the United States who signed the orders. And that's a problem for the administration. She shouldn't whine. A commander's job is to get out and walk their perimeter. If you're running a prison, and you're not on deck at two in the morning to see what's going on periodically, you're not running that prison. They have turned the colonel who worked for her, they've given him immunity, and he is now spilling the beans on the people above him. Whether that ever progresses to anything I don't know. It really is almost a moot point at this point because we have so radicalized the Islamic world on that. If you look at Islamic websites, one of the most famous pictures is the guy on the soapbox that's wired up – that's all over the place on their websites. Because it's about justice and dignity. Islam is about justice. Not about freedom, not about opportunity, it's really about justice. And being treated properly by those in authority. It's a massive failure, we didn't do anything about it, it's almost too late to do anything now, we'll never get that one back.

Q: My second question real quick on this too. One of the reasons for the war, I don't know if it was the 16th or 17th or 18th, was we have to fight them over there so we don't have to fight them over here. What will happen if there's a second attack in the United States with relation to our Iraq war strategy of trying to fight the insurgents and the terrorists over there?

COL. HAMMES: I'm not sure but I guess... the key thing about our system of government is every four years you get a choice. One of the downsides is, the other team in this race, the Democrats, can't organize a two-car parade. How could they possibly lose to Bush in the last election? But they did. How could they possibly be not scoring now? But they're not. I mean, this is one of the most inept, corrupt administrations in a long time and the Democrats can't get their act together.

DR. WHITE: I should point out that on Thursday John Mueller, who is probably the expert on war, presidents, and public opinion, will be talking and he might possibly have some thoughts on that particular topic. Thank you for the question, if you're not here to raise it maybe I will.

1:25:16

Q: I have a comment on the worst scenario in Iraq. I believe it's not realistic, and I'm not surprised to hear that some people are thinking that Sunnis in Arabia might support the Sunnis in Iraq just because they're Sunni. This will bring us back to the point of lack of understanding not only the Arabic language but also the Arabic culture and the Arabic history... If we stop, as American people, if we stop looking at the "Middle East" as undeveloped third world countries, and if we start recognizing the fact that they did exist hundreds of years ago, even before America, maybe then we can develop a better understanding for their culture. And we'll know they did exist before ours and will not have all this, like the media is talking about, the fight between the Sunnis and about Saudi Arabia and the Sunnis. Thank you.

DR. WHITE: I guess I'll ask Pete to comment on the history of the divisions...

DR. MOORE: I just want to say briefly, I agree, I don't mean to make this argument that there is some sort of primordial conflict between Shi'as and Sunnis, I reject that. I think that culture is a product of politics, OK? If you have a dysfunctional culture, somehow, somewhere, that was because of despotism and dysfunctional politics. Fix the politics, then you fix the culture. And I think that when Shi'a/Sunni or Alawi/Sunni or Druse/Sunni or Maronites vs. Greek Orthodox Christians, these are all wars and fights that have occurred in the Middle East – when these happen, this is not because there is some secret place in Islam or Christianity that says, "No, we're going to fight." These are products of politics. The wars of intolerance in Europe between Protestants and Catholics were driven by kings that were trying to control territory. So I agree with you, I don't think this is written in the fabric of Islam or any religion, it's the politics that drives groups to conflict.

COL. HAMMES: As far as, will the Saudis support the Sunnis in Iraq: they are doing that today. Not necessarily the Saudi government. You gotta understand that one of the traits of insurgencies today is they are self-supporting. They run business, they run charities, they get donations. The Saudis are in fact supporting them; we've got the documents that show the money trail back. I also, one of the places I trained insurgents was Afghanistan, and we were spending about \$500 million of official Saudi government money every year to support the Afghan insurgents. So the Saudis will send their money out to fight. And they [Afghan insurgents] had about another 500 million in money that didn't come through us but through individual businessmen. That's how Osama funded himself for a great period of time. He put tap on friends. And you know, if you're worth a billion dollars, ten million here, fifteen million here is not a big deal.

DR. WHITE: I'd just like to emphasize that nobody should imagine that to say there are potential clashes among groups is to say anything about the level of civilization of the group or anything like that. Yes, in general, in a lot of situations at least, group loyalties are used by other people to feed conflict. But I do think that one of the fundamental questions in politics is, "which side are you on?" You know, the Balkans are in Europe; nice, modern Europe had two really, really, really nasty world wars over the last century. This is not a matter of levels of civilization, and it's not a matter of there being any necessary thing that all Sunnis will always be at all Shi'as throats. But, when the conflict begins occurring, people do choose up sides, and it can happen.

We will take the last three questions. I'm sorry – I'm very happy actually that so many people have had such fine questions. I'd like to remind you than on Wednesday we'll have another session focusing on how having the U.S. involved shapes the situation in Iraq. And on Thursday, Professor Kathryn Lavelle – who must be taking notes and thinking of things she wants to talk about – many of the questions have been relevant to her subject, which is the relationship between the outsiders and the insiders, the international context of the Iraqi conflict – and of course Professor John Mueller from Ohio State will be here.

Sir:

Q: Both speakers mentioned that it is possible that friendlier relations with Iran may help the situation stabilize in the middle east. Do you think Israel will ever allow that, and the pro-Israeli forces, such as the Congress, the Senate, the President himself, Dick Cheney, the neocons? And don't you think that Israel and the pro-Israeli forces such as the neocons were the ones who pushed the U.S. to go into Iraq and of course want to follow that with destroying Syria and Iran?

DR. WHITE: This is a domestic politics question, and I'm sure everybody has all sorts of opinions on it. The question of the extent to which the intervention in Iraq was driven by the neocons due to beliefs about Israel is one that you have to make judgments about those neocons themselves, and then you have to make judgments about their role within the administration. I think it's fairly safe to say that there were a lot of different reasons; that you cannot look at the invasion of Iraq and see a coherent single position for that. There were coalitions within the administration with many different sides. Peter or Colonel Hammes can comment on that if they'd like. The other thing I would say is that I think it's important to remember that the United States has a lot of reasons for dealing with Iran, whatever the position of the Israelis may be. That the language of axis of evil, which creates a lot of the tension with Iran, certainly didn't come out of the Israelis – it came out of a speechwriter for the Bush administration, without any particular logic to it. Our history of dealings with Iran is hardly limited to aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and so I think it's a gross simplification to say that American politics driven by the Jewish lobby in the United States will determine our position on Iran. That is my position as a political scientist who analyzes Congress; that's why I jumped in on this, because it's sort of more my topic, but if you two want to comment, please do.

DR. MOORE: I think it's an important question. The question faces the U.S. coming to a strategic agreement with Iran. That's very clear. And one of the major obstacles is that since 1967 U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has been overt: we will not allow the creation of any power in the Middle East that can counterbalance either Israel or the U.S. presence. That stood for the Soviet Union, that was the justification for Rumsfeld's famous handshake, that was the justification for the Baghdad pact, I mean, the idea is clearly there. Now, there are people that argue that that is a strategic view that we ought to have; we ought not to allow that to happen. The counter-argument is, it's going to happen anyway. That Iran will rise as a regional power, and we need to create the environment to make that rise as least damaging to our interests as possible. And yes, that also means that the U.S. alliance with Israel is going to have to change to accommodate that. Because it is clear from the military leaders in Israel and the civilian leaders, that they view the Iranian acquisition of the ability to have a weapon as tantamount to having a weapon. And so I completely agree with you, I think these things are connected. Now, what will overcome this obstacle in U.S. strategic thinking? It could be domestic politics, it could be external events. But these are real questions, these are not questions of anti-Semitism or anti-Israel; these are questions about U.S. foreign policy interests in a vital part of the world that we have now lost a number of American lives and treasure, and probably will lose a lot more.

COL. HAMMES: I absolutely agree. Iran's coming whether we like it or not. We've got to figure out how we live with that. Part of that has to be a discussion of our position relative to Israel in the Middle East and we have got to avoid any accusations of racism, anti-Semitism etcetera. Those generally are arguments, when people raise arguments like that, it means their intellectual argument is bankrupt so they simply shout. You cannot tolerate that in a discussion. We're a democracy, we need to have a rational discussion, we may decide our current policy is the right policy, we may decide we gotta change, but we've got to have the discussion.

Q: We have the present administration until January of 2009, and along with their bureaucracies in the State Department and the Defense Department. And the successor may be like-minded. So we have the immediate problem, which is, if change is required, how do we get them to change policies, tactics and do things differently. And a little context for that, a lady mentioned or suggested, "what would happen if another attack on U.S. soil?" And we can imagine maybe an extreme response, something we may not want to see. So what would you do to get this administration to do things differently?

1:35:39

COL. HAMMES: I think the midterms are our best shot. Much like the Democrats have been whining for weeks about the Supreme Court nomination. Now's not the time to whine. You should have won in 2004, you wouldn't have to have this problem. If you want to change the administration in a democracy, a representative democracy, every two years you've got your shot. If you want to change this you've got to speak out, you've got to organize, and you've got to make clear to the administration, much like

Representative Murtha does, that the current course is not doing it. They have to be shocked out of their complacency.

Q: A question probably for both of you. First, Colonel, thank you for your service to your country and I'm sure you're not on the Christmas card list at the White House. First, each side, there's been people speaking on each side of this topic, and there's been doom and gloom and then there's the rosy picture that's been placed. You've alluded to the thirteen years that the United States finally came together with a Constitution. What kind of timetable should we expect out of this, or is there one that we should either get up and go or stay the course? And also, what if any has any like General Schwarzkopf, whose long list of attributes has been in the Middle East, has he ever been talked to on going over there and helping bridge those gaps that may be there?

COL. HAMMES: OK, the timeline. Gunnar Sepp, who is a former special forces officer and has been very successful as a counterinsurgent in a couple of countries, says the average counterinsurgency lasts for nine years. He's a bit of an optimist, again I think it can last for decades. So that's what we need to say up front. The administration also has to be honest with the American people. Again, central to this is the will of the American people. We have to explain the costs, we have to explain the benefits, and we have to go. Schwarzkopf, not considered a subtle man. Not considered the brightest of the general officers we have. Have general officers spoken out? General Zinni, who is generally regarded as one of the smartest and as one of the most politically astute general officers we've had in a long time has been yelling about this since well before the war started, and has been ignored.

DR. WHITE: I'd like to thank you all for coming and bringing your questions and your thoughts to Case Western Reserve University for the second installment of our series on Iraq and Vietnam. I'd like to especially thank Professor Pete Moore and Retired Marine Colonel Thomas X. Hammes for sharing with us their expertise and wisdom. Thank you very much to all of you.

1:38:36.