

THREAT: Inter-State Conflict

*War is not an independent phenomenon,
but the continuation of politics by different means.*

- Vom Kriege (1832), General Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831)

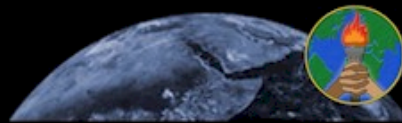
Although the US has not declared war since the World War II, it has been involved in several dozen war-like circumstances occasioning the death of soldiers and others. These range from the UN *Police Action* in **Korea** (1950+), to *Military Assistance* in **Vietnam** (1961–72), to *All Necessary Means* under UN Security Council Resolution 678 (**UNSCR 678**) in **Iraq** (1991), to the present **Iraq** liberation (2003+) based in **UNSCR 687**, the cease-fire conditions for the 1991 action.

Because very few profit from war, it is often bad press to start one. This may explain the few wars but very many *police actions*, *military operations*, *pre-emptive strikes* and *responses* to something the enemy did. Also – to use scurrilous logic -- if war is not declared it can not be lost, there can be no *war crimes*, no blame for starting a war (which is against international law), no obligation to obey rules of war, or rules for treatment of combatants, or rules for the protection of Cultural Property under the **Hague Convention** (1899). Not calling a war “war” also circumvents constitutional and legal constraints on *Declaration of War*. In the US, only Congress has power to “declare War”. Whether this means Congress alone has power to approve *war-like* actions has not been tested in the Supreme Court.

Clausewitz says war is a complex interplay of a three elements – the goals of government, the sentiments of the population, and the intrinsic uncertainty of warfare itself. A war may start with popular support and then lose it; government imperatives may change during the war, an unbeatable army may be defeated by a trick, or the weather, or by the enemy general. This trinity of war – Government, Population, Military – seems to work well for any of the euphemisms for war and for other actions counter-posed to war such as *civil war* and *insurgency* where two or more political wills, populations, and armed groups are in conflict. But war is not going to get any easier. In future there may be fewer howitzers but a grinding globalised antipathy lasting decades, routine sabotage of home and foreign assets and infrastructure, and the occasional devastating 9/11 type of incident – the sort of continuing social unease that renders fielded forces, and some of Clausewitz, useless.

The euphemism of politics has largely done away with War – we may now be in for a century or two of something worse.

Near-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term
<p>Iraq (and Somalia) remind us there is also politics and a population on the other side. A military may be defeated but is rarely possible to defeat a population. Recent events prove that war is foolish without clear, <i>achievable</i> goals, a supportive population, and a military up to that specific task.</p> <p>One of the prime causes of War are previous wars. War whether won or lost is a bell that can’t be unrung, a 12 month war can bring 12 generations of enmity. As General Colin Powell said “<i>If you break it: you own it.</i>”</p>	<p>Wars go very wrong through a failure to appreciate the full cultural, political and military picture. It is even more crucial to understand this if today’s wars are grinding cultural antipathy with little to shoot at – an eternal urban insurgency.</p> <p>Effective and flexible military prowess will be as important as ever but more important will be broad-based global monitoring, political and cultural analysis, and scenario development – all of a quality not yet seen. But this quality Peace-keeping will still be cheaper than war.</p>	<p>As Clausewitz says, war is <u>not</u> an independent phenomenon. In war-time the generals take control of all the khaki bits, but a society that is not mobilized for peace will need to fight unnecessary wars.</p> <p>All nations will need to marshal their best resources (largely knowledge-based) for success in both peace and war. In comprehending and managing the threats to peace – <i>Poverty, Civil War, Water Wars, ...</i> -- all military and civil intelligence must be harnessed toward the national and global good.</p>



[688 words]

Hazard Level

Change Codes
↓ Deteriorated
• Steady
↑ Improved
!!! Alert

week-ended

See daily [list of news items](#)

2007 Jul 01

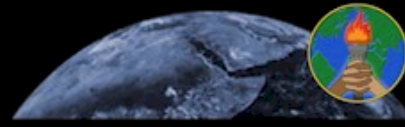
↓ The Prime Minister of **Ethiopia** says his country made an error on **Somalia** -- "*his government 'made a wrong political calculation' when it intervened in Somalia, where Ethiopian troops are bogged down in a fight against a growing insurgency.*" **Ethiopia** has announced it is preparing for an **attack** by traditional foe **Eritrea** -- "*Eritrea and Ethiopia fought a nasty border war from 1998-2000, where tens of thousands of people died, and continue to dispute the UN-patrolled frontier.*" The *Institute for War and Peace Reporting* says **Afghanistan** is increasingly a stage-managed disaster -- "*No amount of **public relations** work can convince people in **Helmand** that the situation is improving.*" The **Pentagon** reports this three-month period in **Iraq** as the deadliest for **US** personnel since the war began. A **arrest warrant** was issued for the **Iraqi** Minister of Culture **Asaad Kamal al-Hashemi** on **terrorism**-related charges. With the formal end of their mission, **UN arms inspectors** in **Iraq** can not resist an '*I told you so*' -- "*in-country verification, especially on-site inspections, generate more timely and accurate information than other outside sources such as **national assessments**.*"

2007 Jun 24

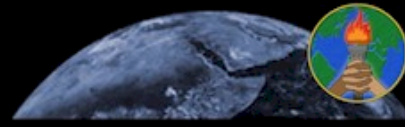
↓ In the **Palestine Occupied Territories**, the **US** and **Israel** bet on a horse-race; **Fatah** politicians are not popularly elected, and are "*unimaginative, self-serving and corrupt, satisfied with the emoluments of power*" -- just the type the **US** sadly often chooses as friends -- [West Chooses Fatah, But Palestinians Don't](#). Some analysts say, five months in, the **Iraq** "**surge**" has already failed; "*[it] could not compensate for the lack of an **effective government and security forces** ... nor provide a quick fix for the four years of failed strategy, passivity and complacency*" - [Eye on Iraq: Why the surge failed](#). No-one seems to be following even the basic lessons proven by the author of the one truly successful counter-insurgency campaign in modern times, Sir Robert **Thompson** in the **Malay Emergency** -- [Can Counter-Insurgency Succeed?](#). But slowly, very late, **US** forces are being introduced to the new kind of war; "*We're starting to realize that we're never leaving that country if we don't do it right*" -- [How US Army trains for a different kind of war](#).

2007 Jun 17

↓ The *International Crisis Group* releases two reports on the "unknown" conflict between **Western Sahara** and **Algeria** -- [Western Sahara: Out of the Impasse](#). New **Israeli** Defense Minister **Barak** promises to crush the **Hamas** domination of **Gaza** -- "*the question is not if, but how and when.*" [The "how" would also be making the **Merkavah**-heavy **Israeli** Defense Force nervous.] **Israel** says it has a secret "back-channel" to **Syria** but **Syria** says it is not sure of the message -- [Syria accuses Israel of placing irrelevant pre-conditions on peace](#). The **Baghdad curfew** following the bombing of the **Askariya** shrine in **Samarra** has been lifted, but a U.S. general says only 40% of the city is under control -- "*40 % is really very safe on a routine basis — with about 30% lacking control and a further 30% suffering a high level of violence.*" The **US** military is now **arming** some **Sunni** groups, a risky gamble that they are ready to rid themselves of [*al Qaeda*] foreign militants. Meanwhile, it's not all progress in **Afghanistan** -- [Afghanistan hit by deadliest bomb](#)



	<p>since 2001.</p> <p>It's called <i>Asymmetric Conflict</i> ... "An army with unimaginable firepower is being driven out by guerrillas armed with a crude arsenal of explosives and blasting caps, triggered by cell phones and garage-door openers." -- Low-tech bombs pose worst threat.</p>
2007 Jun 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The recent Lebanon debacle may be because "the army has been doing police work for 40 years instead of training for war" -- Some say Israeli army now police force. [Or is it the "war" that's changed?] 3,000 years of Semitic tribal hatreds and mistrust continue to envelop ways out of the abyss -- Israel offers the Golan Heights to Syria. Useful UPI papers on how to convince natives that America is here to help -- Afghan hearts & minds -- Part 1 [Analysis] and Afghan hearts & minds -- Part 2 [Analysis].
2007 Jun 03	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Another Iraq defeatist ... another British [four-star] General says all is lost -- 'We can't win, so pull troops out of Iraq' says general. US Defense Secretary Gates suggests "<i>extremism</i>" has a cause -- Gates Calls for Focus on Extremism's Causes. [Comment: It is truly astounding if Secretary Gates does not know the "cause of terrorism" -- for Muslims -- is the 100 "Iraqs" over the last 1200 years; this Iraq is just more gasoline to the fire ...] Insurgents have destroyed a major bridge in northern Iraq -- for "insurgents" some Iraqi groups are also doing quite well at the tactics of <i>conventional warfare</i>. In signals and counter-signals about Turkey's threat to enter northern Iraq, Turkey asks the US not to repeat recent "accidental" incursions into its <i>airspace</i>. Coalition forces in Iraq are now doing what should have been done on day-1 of <i>mission-completed</i> ... forming alliances with tribal rulers -- Gathering the Tribes.
2007 May 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A veteran jihadist has emerged as leader of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan following the death in battle of his predecessor. WFP says rising insecurity in Afghanistan is preventing delivery of food aid to about <u>one million</u> people. Pakistani carriers of fuel to US and NATO troops in Afghanistan have halted from a major refinery because of repeated militant attacks. "They are getting strategic guidance from Quetta but this is not translating on the ground" -- Taliban 'stalled by lack of commanders'. A UK Lieutenant-General's meetings with Sunni insurgents in Baghdad's <i>Green Zone</i> are designed to deepen their split with the foreign fighters once their allies. [At last, classic counter-insurgency.] Coalition forces are doing what several analysts have said they should <u>avoid at all costs</u> ... direct engagement against the Sh'ite militia. A redacted intelligence report suggesting what could happen after an invasion of Iraq, now released by a <i>Congressional committee</i>, is eerily prophetic; "Sadly, the administration's refusal to heed these dire warnings -- and worse, to <u>plan</u> for them -- has led to tragic consequences for which our nation is paying a terrible price." -- Intel Agencies Warned of Post-War Risks. "The US Army tried to kill or capture Muqtada al-Sadr, the widely revered Shia cleric, after luring him to peace negotiations at a house in the holy city of Najaf ..." -- Secret US plot to kill Al-Sadr. The US has carrier groups on the seas, but Iran has an agenda on the ground -- Iran's 'secret' plan to force US out of Iraq. More details on Turkey's opposition to a <i>de facto</i> Kurdish state in northern Iraq -- Turkish anxiety on Kirkuk may mean new conflicts.
2007 May 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Bush administration looked for a "war czar"; instead it got a "junior war coordinator" -- War czar compromise. [The official title is Deputy National Security Adviser for Iraq and Afghanistan Policy and Implementation.] Oil arrangements consonant with US perceived interests is one of the unspoken preconditions for pulling out of Iraq but Iraqi lawmakers are still failing to agree on the terms of oil legislation. [Note on the day Baghdad was entered, the <i>Oil Ministry</i>



was secured while the *Museum* was being looted.] [Iraq is on the verge of collapse](#) -- "across huge swathes of territory, [the Iraqi government] *is largely irrelevant in terms of ordering social, economic and political life*" says **Chatham House** [UK]. The **US Army** wants urgently to buy 3,700 *Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles* (MRAPs) at about \$1 million each, sending some 3,000 to **Iraq**. **Pakistan** [again] proposes a **Muslim** peace-keeping force for **Iraq** -- "a political solution is a dire necessity now. We have to stop all outside *interference*...".

[Poppy Fields Are Now a Front Line in Afghan War](#) – Western forces have the choice of tackling the "war on terror" or the "war on opiates", but not both simultaneously. The **German** Defence Minister **Franz** has complained to **NATO** about the increased number of *civilian casualties* during **US**-led operations in **Afghanistan**.

2007 May 13

↓ A **Taliban** leader observed that the **Afghan** insurgency can continue for a long time - - at these prices, the Taliban could go on "forever", not something that can be said of **NATO**. Confronted with this naked reality, and with naked anger at recent **US/NATO** "*collateral*" damage, the **Afghan Senate** has called for *direct talks* with the Taliban and to take back ownership of the conflict -- "if the need arises for an operation, it should be carried out with coordination of the national army and police and with the consultation of the government of Afghanistan." [Civilian Deaths Undermine Allies' War on Taliban](#) -- if hearts and minds is the objective, "collateral damage" is the same as losing a battle, or a war -- "[Afghan patience is wearing dangerously thin, officials warn](#)". As in Iraq, the insurgents show *military* acumen in striking the weak spots of a high-tech enemy-- the loss of 44,000 litre of fuel on the Pakistan border was the fifth attack on **NATO's** Afghanistan *fuel supplies* in four months. But Afghans are not just out of patience with **NATO**; in some places "Afghan civilians are exhausted by the death and destruction Taliban fighters represent and have risen up against the enemy" -- [Tribal elders stand up against enemy fighters](#).

It may all be a typing error, or someone has been stealing a lot of *oil* in **Iraq** for four years -- [US study finds billions of Iraqi oil missing](#). In **Iraq**, any lessening -- if any -- of activity in **Baghdad** is now matched by a surge in insurgent activity in northern **Diyala** province.

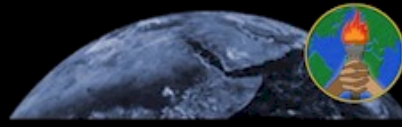
"Vice President **Dick Cheney** was in the Middle East Wednesday trying to put Humpty Dumpty back together" writes estranged CIA officer Robert **Baer** -- [What Cheney Needs to Tell the Saudis](#).

Fortunately it was not in the middle of an address on *reconstruction*; the **Iraqi Parliament** was plunged into a prolonged *blackout* causing that day's session to be adjourned -- "it was unclear what caused the blackout. The building has also had little or no *water* for months."

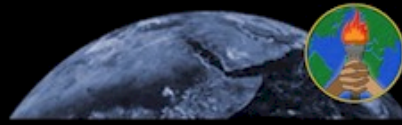
Brotherly Leader and Guide of the Libyan Revolution **Gaddafi** says the latest "*Darfur agreement*" is "laughable" – signed between **Chad** and **Sudan** in **Riyadh** on 03 May under the auspices of **Saudi King Abdullah**, it is the *same* as the agreement signed in **Tripoli** [**Libya**] in April -- "[They told us they tried to explain to the Saudis that they had already signed a similar agreement but they signed the new one anyway](#)." [Cynical "photo opportunities" count for more than real progress.]

2007 May 06

↓ The **UK** defence minister in the lead-up to **Iraq** says "And you think: What did we miss? I think we missed **Cheney**" -- [Cheney Iraq role reviewed in Britain](#). **UK** Gen Sir **Michael Rose** says the **US** and the **UK** must "admit defeat" and stop fighting "a hopeless war" in **Iraq** -- [Insurgents 'right to take on US'](#). There have now been 65 attacks on **US** forces using highly lethal *EFPs*; although the munitions originate in **Iran** there is no evidence of state-level involvement. The death of the reputed leader of *al Qaeda* in **Iraq**, **Abu Ayyub al-Masri**, in a *factional* fight – if true -- may, or



	<p>may not, change the nature of the Iraq insurgency. Senators Clinton and Byrd say they will seek a vote to rescind the authority Congress granted Bush to use force in Iraq in October 2002. All is revealed -- "Slam Dunk? What were you thinking?" -- George Tenet [Interview].</p> <p>The new Iraq Oil Laws are a battle waiting to happen, between the Iraqi state and the self-reliant Kurds -- "The Kurdistan autonomous region backed the draft law ... but has disputed annexes to it that would give control of oilfields to a new state-run oil company."</p> <p>How to win against an insurgency -- Ten counterinsurgency commandments from Afghanistan. The correct <u>strategic</u> position to take on Afghan opium is still far from clear; "NGOs have suggested several alternative crops, such as fruits, medicinal herbs or saffron, but each has its drawbacks" -- Holding Fire in the Opium War?</p>
<p>2007 Apr 29</p>	<p>↓ An independent inspection has sadly found a high proportion of Iraq reconstruction projects are inoperative -- "in a sampling of eight projects that the United States had declared successes, seven were no longer operating as designed ..."</p> <p>Textbook asymmetric tactics continue in a lethal attack near an Iraqi Shi'ite shrine -- "The terrorists have started to come up with creative attacks so that it's impossible for police to uncover them." April was the bloodiest month for UK troops in Iraq since 2003 -- "Shi'ite militias are increasing their attacks so that they can claim victory when British forces eventually pull out." The US construction of a wall in Baghdad has been halted by Prime Minister Maliki.</p> <p>A former Afghan foreign minister accused President Karzai's administration of a fatal lack of "strategic vision" -- Taliban Back Due to Karzai's Poor Strategic Vision [Interview]. Elsewhere ... President Musharraf, bristling with years of being goaded on all sides, accuses the Afghan president of losing the war against the Taliban -- "those who do nothing against terrorism, like Karzai, are also the ones who criticise those who are fighting, like us."</p> <p>The Somali conflict is emphasizing other regional tensions -- "there is a close relationship between Somalia's Islamists and several rebel groups in Ethiopia."</p> <p>Fighting words in a fighting journal: <i>Armed Forces Journal</i> published an intelligent paper on "failures of generalship" in Iraq, and Vietnam -- A failure in generalship. [Generals are always one war behind.]</p>
<p>2007 Apr 22</p>	<p>↓ The Sunni insurgent group Islamic State of Iraq says it has formed an 'Islamic cabinet' for Iraq -- "It has become a necessity at this stage ... to declare the formation of the first Islamic government.". [Comment: This may be empty bravado, or may be an indication of a move little-by-little towards a political settlement.] The US in Iraq has started to wall off a Baghdad neighborhood -- "when the wall is finished, the minority Sunni community of Azamiyah, located on the eastern side of the Tigris River, will be completely gated...". The Iraqi Prime Minister has asked the US to <u>halt</u> construction of the wall -- "I said that I fear this wall might have repercussions which remind us of other walls, which we reject," said Prime Minister Maliki. [An obvious reference to the Israeli wall in Palestine.] An unverified report claims that several armed groups in Iraq are ready put themselves at the disposal of the government and chase al Qaeda from Iraq.</p> <p>With the shock outbreak of Islamist bombings Morocco sees a new urgency to try to resolve the Western Sahara issue -- Morocco's dual offensive [Analysis].</p> <p>A dramatic insight into how insurgent groups can succeed in Afghanistan; "when the snows melt in the spring, men, weapons and supplies begin moving in small groups, often along mountain ridges, on donkeys and motorcycles" -- Taliban are eluding U.S. hunters.</p>
<p>2007 Apr 15</p>	<p>↓ A UPI analyst says the worst mistake in Iraq may be yet to be made -- the present</p>



26,000 US casualties may pale into insignificance if the *Neocon Pentagon* is allowed to make open war on the *Shi'ites*. In *Iraq*, a bombing in the center of the *Green Zone*, and destruction of a major *bridge* on the same day give a glimpse of the *strategic leverage* that *asymmetric* actions can attain. From left field emerges another element of *Iraq's* rich tapestry -- "*some 10,000 Baghdad residents packed a sports stadium March 31 to celebrate the 73rd anniversary of the Iraqi Communist Party.*" Presidential contender John *McCain* says he sees '*no Plan B*' for the war in *Iraq* -- "*if I had a good alternative, maybe we could consider it now*". [A "no plan B" approach assumes the present *world-view* and all *presuppositions* are correct; a god-like (or child-like) position.] The *Iraqi intelligence community* is more divided than that of the *US* -- "*If no critical compromise is reached, the security services are going to fall apart on ethnic, sectarian and party lines.*" On 20070415, the *Sadr* bloc announced it is withdrawing support again from the *Maliki* government.

A retired *Pakistan* Brig-General says the key to success in *Afghanistan* is to treat with *Pushtoon* and non-Pushtoon groups equally, favoring neither. *Australia* is doubling its modest but important *special forces* deployment to *Afghanistan*. The *Emergency* organization has left *Afghanistan* after the head of the *Afghan Intelligence Service* said it "*supports terrorists and Al Qaeda men in Afghanistan*".

Three retired generals have so far declined the proposed position of '*War Czar*', to coordinate both *Iraq* and *Afghanistan* -- one said "*they don't know where the hell they're going*". [No-one said *poisoned chalice*.]

UNHCR says there are about 100,000 refugees in *Yemen*, most of whom are *Somalis*, living in squalid conditions.

The *Pakistani* Prime Minister *Aziz* says world instability is bigger than what can be seen through a gun-sight -- *Pakistani premier for "holistic approach" to end world conflicts*.

2007 Apr 08

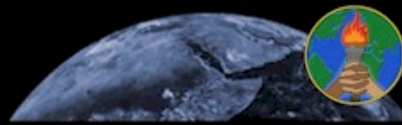
- This is the *fourth anniversary* of *Mission Accomplished* in *Iraq*. An indictment of US health-care for the elderly; despite all evidence vice president *Cheney* is still hearing those voices. -- *Cheney still insists al-Qa'ida had links with Iraq, despite evidence*. An account of the *US* raid on the *Iranian* liaison office in *Arbil* in northern *Iraq*; the subtext of much recent interplay with *Iran* -- *The botched US raid that led to the hostage crisis*.

In *Afghanistan*, the *Taliban* are still sometimes seizing ground -- "*100 Taliban members overran Khak Afghan district in the troubled Zabul province.*" Speaking to *Reuters* by satellite phone from an undisclosed location in *Afghanistan*, Mullah *Dadullah*, the *Taliban's* military head says he will deploy "thousands of bombers" in the coming killing season -- "*this year is regarded as the crunch period both for the Taliban and U.S.-led Western troops.*"

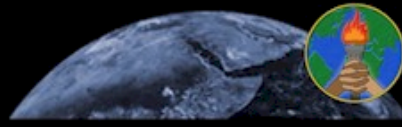
On the 25th anniversary of the *Falklands War*, *Argentina* reminds everyone of its claim to possession -- "*Neither war nor the passage of time changes reality: the Malvinas are Argentine*" said Vice President *Daniel Scioli*.

2007 Apr 01

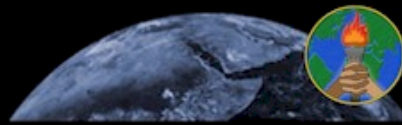
- ↓ In *Iraq*, deaths from car bombs in *Baghdad* have decreased since the "*surge*" began, but the death toll from car bombs outside the capital has more than doubled. Now more than ever, the well-funded *Iraq militias* are feeding on *poverty* -- "*working-class people unable to leave because they are poor and unskilled have been falling prey to militias who enjoy incredible financial power.*" The non-partisan *Baghdad Institute for Public Policy Research* says the *US* should stay out of *Shiite* areas and stick to the more diverse areas of *Baghdad*.-- *An Iraqi plan to oust militias [Analysis]*. *US* forces claim two men detained in northern *Baghdad* are responsible for manufacturing many of the *car bombs* used in the area, responsible for as many as 900 deaths. The *USMC* has called 1,800 more from the *Ready Reserve* -- there is a



	<p>shortage of <i>volunteers</i> to fill some jobs in Iraq. A detailed essay on the use of <i>EFPS</i> in Iraq and the Iran connection -- U.S. worried that Iran supplied weapons to Iraq & Lebanon.</p> <p>In Afghanistan, the <i>West</i> has involved itself in a conflict it does not understand, an insurgency with deep roots in <i>Pashtun</i> history -- West a partisan in the Afghan civil war.</p>
2007 Mar 26	<p>↓ Iraqi police have prevented a further <i>chlorine</i> attack following the recent one that debilitated hundreds. Following a tip to Iraqi National Police, a further large <i>weapons cache</i> has been found in <i>Sadr City</i>. [Most weapons used by insurgents in recent years are those inexplicably <u>not</u> secured when Iraq was invaded.] <i>Logistics</i> are "the most significant shortcoming" for Iraqi forces, as well as legacy problems such as maintenance of 21 types of vehicles – Iraqi forces sometimes run out of <i>fuel</i> during a mission. A <i>Baghdad rocket attack</i> near enough the UN Secretary General to perturb him demonstrates again the insurgents' sophisticated sense of occasion. Continuing investigations confirm much money has been <i>wasted</i> in the name of Iraq redevelopment – more importantly, <i>hearts-and-minds</i> benefits have also been lost. Iraq's Kurdish north is provocatively taking the posture of a sovereign state over regional <i>petroleum</i> resources.</p> <p>A retired Egyptian Major-General says the US "surge" in Iraq is just a stalking-horse-- US 'Surge' in Iraq Is To Prepare Attack on Iran.</p> <p>Afghan village <i>vigilantes</i> now guard their <i>schools</i> against <i>Islamists</i> -- "Education has a special importance in Afghanistan, and that is what our enemies know."</p> <p>Chad says Sudan has repeatedly <i>bombed</i> eastern border towns, breaking a <i>truce</i> -- "two bombers had been pounding the settlements of Kariari and Gregui near the lawless eastern border with Sudan's Darfur region since Wednesday [20070321]"</p>
2007 Mar 19	<p>↓ In Iraq, a <i>chlorine</i> bomb killed 10 and injured at least <u>350</u> -- at least one miscreant group is learning the leverage of <i>CBRN</i>. [This attack may be timed to coincide with the anniversary of the 1988 <i>Kurd incident</i>.] Iraqi Kurds commemorated the <i>chemical attack (gassing)</i> in March 1988 – it is likely to remain a reminder of one of Iraq's fault-lines.</p> <p>Morocco is playing on terrorism fears to deprive Western Sahara of independence - - "We are extremely concerned about increased terrorist operations in the <i>Sahel region</i>".</p>
2007 Mar 12	<p>↓ Senior US generals give a bleak picture of how Iraq has shown US military might can be exhausted by <i>lightly armed irregulars</i> capable of destroying multimillion-dollar vehicles and aircraft. General Petraeus says there is <u>no military solution to Iraq</u>, leaving the US Administration [and perhaps some insurgents] now as the only party on earth who believes otherwise. A witty yet sad remark on the US contingency plan for Iraq -- "<i>Plan B was to make Plan A work</i>." "<i>The US invasion of Iraq virtually instructed Iran to develop a nuclear deterrent. The message was that the US attacks at will, as long as the target is defenceless</i>." – Noam Chomsky in <i>The Guardian</i> explores what next now the Bush administration has failed to establish Iraq as a reliable <i>client state</i>. A predator becomes more dangerous when wounded</p> <p>Civil Affairs takes another hit -- a US air-strike in Kabul killed nine members of a family, attracting condemnation of the Afghan president and others. Other reports from Afghanistan said the Taliban is tightening a noose around the capital Kabul. Another remark on the battle for <i>hearts and minds</i> in Afghanistan gone awry – "A single death In an Afghani tribe can create scores of bitter foes, and NATO, like the Taliban, has killed hundreds".</p> <p>Iraq says the <i>Baghdad conference of neighbors</i> was a success; symbolic more than practical but all parties agreed that none present would benefit from a <i>disintegrated</i></p>



	<p>Iraq. [That may or may not be a sincere belief in all cases.] “My troops have little left to give” says the head of UK Armed Forces; his forces are experiencing a "skill fade".</p>
<p>2007 Mar 05</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Everyone in Afghanistan is a <i>Taliban</i>” says an Afghani government minister; Taliban - the former allies of the US -- is <u>not</u> a dirty word in Afghanistan; and it is not the same as “<i>terrorist</i>”, or “<i>al Qaeda</i>”. The British Foreign Secretary has expressed sympathy with Pakistan’s difficulty in controlling its <i>border</i> region and supports <i>fencing</i> appropriate stretches -- “<i>responsibility to strengthen control over the movement of Taliban fighters across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border lay on all coalition partners</i> ...” Britain says it is switching to more holistic tactics to undermine the <i>Taliban</i> -- “<i>We can’t kill our way out of this problem.</i>” [Dust of those <i>Malay Emergency</i> files!] The new DNI has told the <i>Senate Armed Services Committee</i> that <i>sectarian violence</i> in Iraq has become “<i>self-sustaining</i>”. Secretary of State Rice warns Congress not to interfere in the detail of the Iraq war. [Secretary of State Rice seems to suggest that the Iraq adventure is no concern of Congress.] Who Won in Iraq: the Iraqi People [by Jalal Talabani, president of Iraq] is one in a <i>Foreign Policy</i> series called <i>Who Won in Iraq</i>; other “answers” are ... China, Old Europe, Israel, the “<i>Clash of Civilizations</i>” <i>theory</i>, ... The <i>Jerusalem Post</i> says Prime Minister Olmert has told defense heads to prepare Israel for <i>war</i> with Syria. [A gratuitous reminder that the two <i>Semitic</i> tribes, Israel and Syria, are in constant high preparedness for war.]
<p>2007 Feb 26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslim Foreign Ministers held talks in Pakistan on a solution to the <i>Mideast impasse</i> -- “to discuss a joint strategy for the Middle East ahead of a proposed leaders’ summit in Saudi Arabia.” There were reports of sporadic heavy fighting in Mogadishu [Somalia] -- “A resident said the gunmen hit the defence ministry with <i>mortars and rockets</i>.” As a former US ambassador to Colombia assumes duties in Afghanistan, some see a pattern; Colombia and Afghanistan have commonalities -- <i>asymmetric insurgencies, major drug industries</i> -- <u>and there are concerns the same mistakes will be made.</u> A savage view by <i>The Independent [UK]</i> of Britain’s part in the Iraq adventure -- The retreat from Basra. The Lebanese Army fired at Israeli aircraft doing “aggressive” reconnaissance over Lebanon -- UN French forces had already repeatedly warned Israel to cease aggressive flights over Lebanon. The Pakistani Foreign Minister says <i>the West</i> has a share of blame for the situation in Afghanistan – afterall, who armed the <i>Taliban</i>? Has a geophysical answer to Iraq presented itself – an uncorroborated report says there has been an <i>oil</i> find in the Sunni “third” of Iraq comparable to resources in Kurd and Shiite areas. [Important but uncorroborated] Iraqi insurgents made a “<i>brazen and highly unusual attack</i>” on a US base north of Baghdad on 20070219, less <i>asymmetric</i> than most.
<p>2007 Feb 19</p>	<p>↓ In Baghdad [Iraq], just hours after many spoke of a “lull in violence” comes a psychologically impactful bombing bigger than most. The conspicuous increase in <i>downed US helicopters</i> seems to evidence a definite tactic, method in the madness of Iraq’s insurgents and some order of command and control. Indicative of the shifting situations, 173rd Airborne Brigade based in Vicenza (Italy) will now be redirected from deployment to Iraq to Afghanistan. Serious journalists in Afghanistan continue to report that Afghan people do not necessarily prefer NATO to the <i>Taliban</i> -- “<i>the Taliban rule by night, and the</i></p>



2007 Feb 12

government rules by day."

The *Jerusalem Post* suggests that a **Saudi protectorate** may be one solution for **Palestine** -- "*The time has perhaps come to consider that the Palestinians may need a guiding hand ...*" Another **Israeli** source also suggests a **Wahhabist Palestine** would be an acceptable outcome "*even the Bush administration would not be able to reject an intra-Palestinian compromise agreement led by the Saudi king.*"



The **US Army** is struggling with a huge backlog of **equipment** damaged in action -- "*There's a big problem right now because they simply don't have enough equipment.*" **US General Pace** says there is not yet enough **equipment** to support the "surge" in Iraq -- "*Pace said it will be July before enough equipment is in place.*"

Some **Iraqi** insurgents are said to have offered a **peace deal** in Iraq -- "*The present terms would be impossible for any US administration to meet...*" but perhaps it's the thought that counts. The **Iraqi** health minister was arrested suspected of killings and of funneling money to **Sadr's militia**. Ethnic rivalry in **Kirkuk** [northern Iraq] have become tense -- any attempt to reverse the "**Arabisation**" of **Kurdish** Kirkuk under **Saddam** will not be simple. An **Iraqi** police officer says "*I sold my Glock pistol and my bullet-proof vest for \$1,500 so that I can feed my family until I find a safer job.*" Investigations show that pallet-loads of billions in **cash** were sent to **Iraq** -- somebody's palms were crossed with silver; whose remains largely undocumented. Five were charged over alleged **Iraq** contracting scams, with stealing \$8.6 million from the *Coalition Provisional Authority*.

A **US Senate Committee** concludes the **Office of Special Plans** acted *inappropriately* with pre-war **Iraqi intelligence**. The **Pentagon** is now recruiting "**officers with PhDs**" to advise on war efforts. [Back-room *boffins* can win wars, but maybe it's too late for these.]

"*Unlike Iraq, Afghanistan is a war fought backward*". One possible **US** ally in Afghanistan, Bashir Noorzai, is in a **US** jail for **drug** offenses.

Pakistan says it could use more needs more help in policing its wild-west border with **Afghanistan**; it is not just a matter of desire -- "*if it were that simple it would have been resolved long ago in Palestine, in Lebanon and Iraq and in Afghanistan. Obviously it's more complicated.*"

Palestinians have rioted in **Jerusalem** where **Israel** is doing excavations -- "*I think they want to change the view of the al-Aqsa mosque so when anyone looks at it from the outside they will see only Jewish tradition.*" **UNESCO** called on **Israel** "*to suspend any action that could endanger the spirit of mutual respect until such time as the will to dialogue prevails once again.*"

The **UN Secretary General** says the *Department on Peacekeeping Operations* (**DPKO**) should be split it into two - **peace operations** and **field support**.

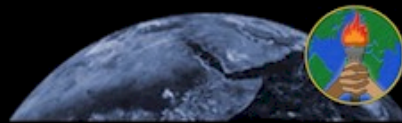
2007 Feb 05



In **Afghanistan** the **Taliban** promise 2007 will be the bloodiest year for foreign troops yet; commentators say it probably is a now-or-never year. A **NATO** agreement with **tribal elders** that they would not allow **Taliban** into the town -- somehow -- failed and **NATO** seeks to retake the town. **Afghanistan's** President **Karzai** offers talks with **Taliban** -- "while we are fighting for our honour, we still open the door for **talks and negotiations** with our enemy...". The **US** handed over major weapons supplies to the **Afghan** army -- "*This is the first time that we have received such major help for strengthening our army.*"

The **Western Sahara** -- that "stalled, forgotten war" -- has had a 15 year **cease-fire** but still needs just solution. With feelings running high over **Somalia**, **Ethiopia** says it foiled an **Eritrean**-backed attack -- "*Ethiopia's anti-terrorist task force apprehended all perpetrators of the intended terrorist acts...*".

Fifty years on, some see parallels between **Iraq** and **Algeria** -- "*De Gaulle got out*



with nothing. He lost everything because he let it drag on too long and this to my mind is the big danger in Iraq." The latest **National Intelligence Estimate** on **Iraq** says It's Broken. A précis of key points – [Quick Highlights of the National Intelligence Estimate Report](#), Some doubts emerged over the reported battle with the messianic (*Madhi*) cult -- Patrick Cockburn of the *London Independent* writing from **Baghdad** called the official account "a fabrication." Former Secretaries of State **Kissinger** and **Albright** accord with the **Iraq Study Group** -- get a STRATEGY and TALK to **Iraq's** neighbors. Admiral **Fallon** says the US miscalculated on -- "*Our ability to correctly assess the political, economic and security situation in Iraq has been lacking.*"

President **Musharraf** notes that **Pakistan-India** relations are better than ever -- "*military action is no longer an option by any one of us.*"

Pakistan and **Indonesia**, the largest two Muslim nations, "have consonance of views in a requirement of a new initiative" in **Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan.**

2007 Jan 29

↓ **African Union** leaders are meeting to discuss conflicts in **Chad, Sudan, Somalia** – Sudanese President, Omar al-**Bashir**, is scheduled to become **chair** of the African Union (AU) this year.

The **US** military reports that **Afghan** leaders have appropriated about half of all direct **aid** given -- "*tribal leaders had to be persuaded that the aid was not intended for them alone*"

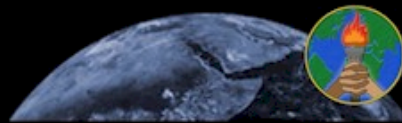
Vice president **Cheney** said that talk of blunders in **Iraq** is 'hogwash' -- "*The world is much safer today because of it*". Elsewhere, vice president **Cheney** said that a **Senate** resolution against a *surge* "*Won't stop us.*" Another *think tank* joined calls for an **Iraq** pull-out -- "*Iraq will continue to need substantial external assistance, but a new multinational framework is essential.*" *UPI* reveals that an **Army War College** assessment on **Iraq** in 2003 made stunningly-accurate forecasts of the risks of invading Iraq. *see US Army report got Iraq right* **Historians** offered a dismal forecast for **Iraq** -- no amount of *schlock-and-awe* is a match for history -- only a political miracle can bring any good outcome to the "jerry-built nation" of Iraq. [Built by The Powers from three Ottoman provinces.]

Several sporadic shootings and bombings continued across Mogadishu [**Somalia**]. A civilian said "It is a pity that the government and **Ethiopian** forces are operating like insurgents." **US** troops were seen in the Somali south -- "*He saw about 30 white men in military dress, some showing US Marine insignia, with Ethiopian counterparts at the village of Kuldio*".

The **Taliban** expressed the intention of opening (Islamic) *schools* in **Afghanistan** -- as elsewhere in the Islamic world; the school is seen as a cornerstone of a Muslim society.

2007 Jan 22

↓ The **Israeli** military chief has resigned -- "*Halutz, a former air force chief, came under criticism for relying heavily on aerial barrages in the first part of the war ...*" Women speakers at a conference in South Africa stress the key role **women** can play in *peacekeeping* operations throughout the world. *Boston Globe* listed [Current peacekeeping missions in Africa](#) *The Telegraph* [UK broadsheet] says "*Mogadishu slides towards anarchy*" -- a thin line of **Ethiopian** soldiers is all that stands between the government and a 3,500-strong rump of **Islamist** fighters. **Kenya** is sending captured **Islamist** suspects back to **Somalia**; one report "had seen **US** troops on the ground in south Somalia working with **Ethiopian** forces hunting fugitive Islamists." In **Somalia**, *disarming* the **warlords** seems to be proceeding but what, if anything, will replace the **Ethiopian** forces is still unknown. An attack on the **president's** residence indicated not all fighting is over -- "*gunfire and explosions were heard across the capital, the most*



spectacular violence since [the President] took up residence." **Kenya** says any peace plan at present for **Somalia** is "doomed" -- "Regional diplomats said it was unlikely **African Union** (AU) members would agree to send **peacekeepers** unless fighting halted." The **EU** warned the **US** that **bombing** will escalate **Somalia** violence -- "I repeat: the future of **Somalia** depends on **political** solutions." **Eritrea** warned the **US** that its involvement in **Somalia** would "incur dangerous consequences". The **UN** is contemplating cutting the **peacekeeping** force monitoring the stalled **Ethiopia** - **Eritrea** border dispute which predates the **Somalia** conflict.

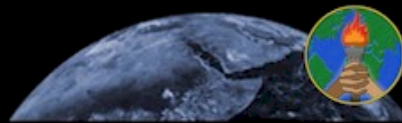
Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki says all he needs is the **arms** to secure the country; if armed properly "I think that within three to six months our need for American troops will dramatically go down". *Time* says it's time to "tell the truth about the surge" -- "After nearly four years of occupation, **Iraqis** have made up their minds they do not want to live together." **Iran** has offered to train **Iraqi** troops -- "We are working for, not against, security in Iraq, because we know that insecurity justifies maintaining foreign troops in the country." Vicious debates on **Arab cable-TV** after the Saddam execution has put the **Sunni-Shi'ite** seismic rift in the foreground.

2007 Jan 15

↓ A **Kurdish** Brigade is set to be deployed to **Baghdad** -- "We do not represent any sect or ethnic group" say the Kurds; but not all will agree. It is evident that insurgents in **Iraq** are using *Google maps* to hit **UK** troops -- "...raids on the homes of insurgents last week uncovered print-outs from photographs taken from Google." The **US** announced it will also name a **Reconstruction Coordinator** in **Iraq**. The **UK** wishes President Bush well with his Iraq "surge" plan but Britain will not do the same. [Highlights of Bush's Iraq plan](#) -- a checklist of the major points. Reports claim that **air-raids** in **Somalia** have won few friends -- "...bombs have hit vital water sources and large groups of nomads and their animals who had gathered round large fires at night to ward off mosquitoes." **Somalia** is still far from quiet -- "This is not something that is going to stop. Until the **Ethiopians** leave, people will be determined to kill them." Contrary to earlier reports, the **US** ambassador to **Kenya** and **Somalia** says **Fazul** Abdullah Mohammed and other targets of the **US air-raid/s** had not been killed.

2007 Jan 08

↗ Even **moderate Afghan** politicians are pessimistic about the future and predict a "**very big war**" - **mass uprising** against **NATO**-led forces and a **civil war** -- "Everything is gone now, we have nothing". **Britain** is said by some to be increasingly out of step with **NATO** allies in **Afghanistan** -- like **Pakistan**, "Britain is increasingly at odds with its coalition partners over its policy of making arbitrary peace deals with the Taliban". [Analysis: As the two parties with most understanding of the region -- Britain has already been defeated in Afghanistan twice in the 19th century -- it is still possible that Pakistan and the UK know best.] **Israel** was said to have plans for a **tactical nuclear strike** on **Iran** -- "two Israeli air force squadrons had been training to blow up an enrichment plant in **Natanz** using low-yield nuclear '**bunker busters**'." Israel denied the claim. A *single-source, uncorroborated* report said **Iran** has a "secret" plan for mayhem in **Iraq** -- it is not just backing **Shi'ite** elements but doing whatever possible to cause total chaos. A **European** politician said the **Hurriyat** umbrella group is not the sole representative of **Kashmiris**; one cause of intransigence is that several groups seek to exclusively appropriate the cause -- "I think there are many representatives of the Kashmiri people." With the collapse of the **Islamist** forces in **Somalia**, **US** forces on land and sea sought to thoroughly neutralize them. **US** passports were found on some bodies of **Islamist** fighters, indicating the "international" nature of the group. 3,500 **Islamists** were said



to be hiding in *Mogadishu*; there was a token attack or two on Ethiopian forces. An analyst said "the Islamists' immediate priority may be to stay alive". As some fleeing Islamists arrived in Yemen, officials there said "Their presence ... creates an opportunity to seek an agreement between them and the transitional government of Somalia". In *Mogadishu* Somalis protested the presence of [hated] Ethiopian forces and at least one protestor was shot dead.

Fugitive Saddam Hussein deputy **Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri** calls also for a "surge", by *Baathist* and *Iraqi* nationalists. The *Amman*-based *Alliance of the People of Baghdad* has named **Ezzah Ibrahim al-Duri** [Saddam's former deputy] as the rightful successor to the late **Saddam** Hussein. The *Iraqi* government has closed down a *Sunni*-leaning *TV channel* owned by a London-based *Iraqi* for inciting *sectarianism* – as the channel broadcasts from **Dubai** it is not clear what impact the government's order will have. The *death toll* in *Iraq* for 2006 is reported at 16,273. Saddam's **judge** says the *execution* was *illegal* on a holiday.

In 2006, 22 **UN** peacekeepers and civilian staff were killed -- the deadliest assignment was **DR Congo** (9 killed), followed by **Lebanon** (6 killed).

Modern war strategists are looking towards "*non-lethal*" *viruses* and *bacteria* to "neutralize" cities but what scope remains within the 1972 *Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention* for the use of "*incapacitants*" remains a moot point.

2007 Jan 01

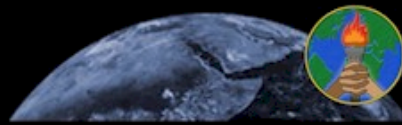
✓ The sudden collapse of the *Islamists* in **Somalia** is just as baffling as the order brought so rapidly to much of the country. Some saw the events in broader geopolitical terms, "a deeply stupid war in Africa The *Ethiopian* invasion is illegal, unjustified and deeply, deeply stupid, but it has Washington's strong support. From the same folks who brought you *Iraq*...."; another observed "it may be difficult for the government, increasingly unpopular outside *Baidoa*, to hold on to the towns the *Ethiopians* have helped them take."

Saddam Hussein was *executed* for *crimes against humanity* ... with feeling -- "One of the execution party calls: 'Long live Mohammed Bakr **Sadr**!' 'Go to hell,' Saddam seems to respond". As the 3,000th US soldier is killed in *Iraq*, *US peace groups* held a rally -- "We don't believe it's a protest. We believe it's a memorial honoring these soldiers." The "old *Iraq* strategy" is said to live on in the continuing *US Weekly Progress Report* -- the expensive 30-page Wednesday report still reflects the old much-disputed goals and measures of progress. Remarkably, **UK** forces attacked *Jamiat* police station in *Basra* [*Iraq*], killed seven, and demolished it, highlighting a murky world of *death squads* and ingrained factionalism --the police station was "the center of 'criminal enterprise' and a symbol of oppression for the city's residents".

Israel permitted (perhaps with feeling) **Egypt** to ship arms to *Fatah* in *Gaza*.

2006 Dec 25

✓ In **Somalia**, *Islamists* and troops defending the Government's only stronghold exchanged rockets and heavy weapons fire at two front-line areas; **Ethiopian** tanks started rolling forward. The **UN** warns that a swath of *Central Africa* – from **Somalia** to **Cameroon** – is on the brink of war. "This must end before it's like *Iraq*" – the *Fatah-Hamas* conflict in *Gaza* goes from hopeless to worse. A **US-NATO** air-strike has killed **Akhtar Mohammad Osmani**, head of *Taliban* in south **Afghanistan** -- "for a while there is going to be a loss of capability." *Iraqi* insurgents are starving *Baghdad* of *electricity* -- "... insurgents have effectively won their battle to bring down critical high-voltage lines and cut off the capital from the major power plants to the north, south and west." On 20061220, 76 bodies turned up in *Baghdad*, the highest yet for a 24-hour period. *Shi'ites* are effectively performing "*ethnic cleansing*" in *Baghdad* by ejecting *Sunni* residents. The Chair in Strategy at the *Center for Strategic and International Studies* [US] says the US has "less than 50-50



2006 Dec 18

chance” of “winning” in **Iraq**. US General David **Petraeus** says in an interview with *Der Spiegel* "We have to raise our sights beyond the range of an M-16".

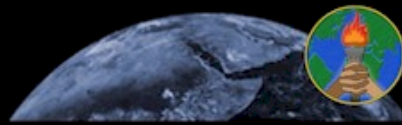
- From the **US** point of view, developments in **Somalia** are all bad; the **US** says *al-Qaeda* elements are running the Somali *Islamist* movement. But despite the view from the West, the new regime in **Somalia** is offering the best chance in years to restart a life; long-term exiles are returning -- "*There's been a great change here. I was out late last night and the streets were busy. No guns, no checkpoints, no fear at all. It felt safer than London.*" It's official: the **Taliban** have told *Reuters* by sat-phone from a secret location they receive no aid and comfort from **Pakistan** -- "We neither have any links with Pakistan nor is the country helping the Taliban.". Speaking also from a "secret location" by sat-phone, a **Taliban** spokesman says the Taliban will not join *tribal jirgas* as long as *foreign soldiers* remain in **Afghanistan**. **Pakistan** is trying to find a new position more helpful position on **Kashmir** -- "*First, Pakistan does not claim Kashmir. The dispute is about the aspirations of the Kashmiris.*" Some report that despite earlier denials the **Saudis** are saying that they will arm **Sunni** insurgents in **Iraq** -- the possibility of a US-Saudi *proxy war* against **Iran** in Iraq is now confirmed. The **Saudis** seem to be planning to 'clean up' *al-Qaeda* in **Iraq's Anbar province** -- "*Saudi intelligence has already laid out extensive networks in Anbar province, where a Sunni insurgency has gained a stronghold.*" A commentator on **US Iraq** policy (Realpolitik) says "*Those who advocate total victory over the insurgency by military means must be listed in the column of recklessly dangerous bordering on criminal.*" **Iraqi** ministries are spending as little as 15% of their budgets immobilized by fear of *corruption* investigations. Former Secretary of State Colin L. **Powell** has made a rare statement of his views on **Iraq**, including the view that overstretched US forces are “losing” in Iraq. The **Iraqi** Prime Minister has called on *Baathist* officers (without blood on their hands) to return to the *army* -- "Those who do not come back will be given pensions." Government and rebel accounts are entirely contradictory on the outcome of battles in eastern **Chad**. A conference on **Africa's Great Lakes** region started in **Kenya** -- "If we can stabilize and bring about development here, we can help to build a stronger Africa".

2006 Dec 11

- ✓ A fierce continuation of the conflict in western **Sudan** has spread to eastern **Chad**. *Islamist* forces in **Somalia** have already had battles with **Ethiopian** troops and both sides seem preparing for full-scale war. With *roads* again passable for military vehicles in about two weeks, war seems inevitable. **Morocco** says it has come up with an autonomy arrangement that meets demands of **Western Sahara's Polisario** independence movement in one of the longest-standing and least-reported of world conflicts. In **Lebanon**, **France** deployed *UAVs* -- the French in UNIFIL hope UAV surveillance will obviate the need for Israel's flights over Lebanon, and some say it is also to show their UAVs are better than Israel's. In **Iraq**, now 22,000 **US** troops have been injured -- "*The insurgents in Iraq have not lost any of their capabilities to inflict relatively low but significant and continuing levels of attrition on U.S. forces.*" The **Iraq Study Group** (ISG) yielded the unsurprising but authoritative conclusion that the Iraq situation is "grave and deteriorating"; a cornerstone of their recommendations is full political and diplomatic engagement with **Syria** and **Iran**. The **White House** was quick to say it will not accept all ISG proposals and was particularly clear there would be no engagement with the key Sunni and Shi'ite neighbors who hold the key. **Iraq** and **Syria** raised flags on reopened embassies and will exchange ambassadors within days. **Pakistan** announced it would give up its claim on **Kashmir** if India accepts [a] four-point solution, which includes demilitarization and "self-governance with joint supervision mechanism". In **Afghanistan**, the war nears a “tipping point” and the West is yet closer to clutching defeat from the jaws of victory; even optimists admit "*government support is flagging, NATO is split on strategy, and Taliban fighters are revitalized.*"

2006 Dec 04

- ✓ Secretary-General Annan says **Iraq's** unrest is “worse than civil war” -- "some Iraqis were right to think that they were worse off than under former President Saddam



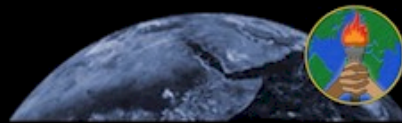
Hussein." More material is confirming the possibility of a **Sunni-Shia proxy war** in Iraq between **Saudi** (and **US**) interests and **Iran**. **Iraqi Special Forces** (and advisors) report capturing a cell responsible for **IED** attacks around **Baghdad**. **Bombs** in three parked cars in a **Shi'ite** area kill 51, one of the most lethal single events in Iraq's daily not-a-civil-war. In Iraq, **corruption** is the 'second insurgency' costing \$4bn a year -- **oil smuggling** is rampant; one third of **rebuilding** contracts under criminal investigation. As **Iraq** deteriorates, Iraqis are getting more of the blame. [*We break it: You own it?*] A classified **Marine Corps** intelligence report says the **US** and **Iraqi** troops "are no longer capable of militarily defeating the insurgency in **al-Anbar**". **Iraq** seeks to formalize arrangements with the **UN Security Council** for foreign troops in Iraq, and calls again for dipping into Iraq's oil revenue to cease. In **Afghanistan**, the nexus of **opium** growing and **Taliban** insurgency makes it impossible to attack one without encouraging the other. An **Afghan** district has made its own deal with the **Taliban** -- another elder said: "*For four months we had fighting in Musa Qala and now we have peace. What is wrong with it, if we have peace?*" **Pakistan** advises that the **Taliban** are winning in **Afghanistan**, **NATO** is bound to fail; don't send more troops; negotiate to form a new coalition. [This comment was later denied; but it seems it was put about in a deniable manner.] The **Afghan** National Army's 201st Corps, a 600-man battalion, has become the nation's first **commando** unit. **Islamists** in **Somalia** ambush an **Ethiopian** convoy with a remote **IED** -- war-like exchanges bring war closer. The **Egyptian** Intelligence chief Omar **Suleiman** is mediating a solution to the **Israeli hostage** standoff in **Gaza** -- "The process will come to a conclusion very soon".

2006 Nov 27

✓ Bombs kill 115 in **Baghdad** -- "... one of most devastating such attacks since the U.S. invasion nearly four years ago." **Iraqi** civilian **deaths** reach new high of 3,709 in October 2006 -- also more than 2 million people have **fled their homes** since the US-led invasion of 2003. Unattributed, the US military says: "Up to 100 **foreign fighters** cross into **Iraq** from **Syria** every month." A report on **financing** of the **Iraqi** insurgency "offers little hope that much can be done, at least soon, to choke off insurgent revenues." **Shi'ites** stone the **Iraqi** Prime Minister; **Jordan** hosts a summit fearing three civil wars; **Iran** will help if the **US** withdraws. **Training camps** east of **Baghdad** are said to be turning out well-disciplined units willing to fight US forces in set-piece battles. **Iraq** and **Syria** will restore **diplomatic ties**, ending a 25 year break. Before the **Baker** report hits the streets, a **Pentagon** panels sees three options in **Iraq** - *Go Home, Go Big, "Go Longer"* **South Korea** will send 400 troops to **Lebanon** for UN peacekeeping, 270 Special Forces as well as 130 medics, transportation, and administrative soldiers. **French** peace-keepers now have formal permission to shoot down **Israeli** aircraft operating unlawfully over Lebanon -- "UNIFIL has the right to take all necessary action to protect UN personnel in self-defense." The **EU** counsels against the **US** imposing a "peace support" operation on **Somalia** as it would seem to be a cover for broader military operation against the **Islamic Courts**. Formation of the **Afghanistan National Auxiliary Police** is a well grounded idea but dangerous -- "We know that we are probably training some of the bad guys."

2006 Nov 20

✓ **Afghanistan**
 Five million hearts and minds in Afghanistan need aid -- **UN World Food Program** says it has received only a third of the donations it needs to feed the Afghans. **Pakistan** says no less than a **Marshall Plan** is necessary in Afghanistan. **NATO** says aid and reconstruction is central to winning Afghanistan -- "there is a clear consensus



we cannot win this purely militarily." The new police chief in southern Afghanistan has a theory -- "First of all, we must establish our *law*. The *Taliban* are very few, so if there is law ... there will be no support for them."

Iraq

It's now official -- Henry **Kissinger** says "Military victory is no longer possible in Iraq". War is not Iraq's only problem -- "Iraq's engineers, doctors and scholars are fleeing the country in large numbers" -- a *brain-drain* that will long outlast the conflict. **Syria** offers Iraq support to curb violence -- with its own variant of the *Baathist* movement, it is in a unique position to make a positive contribution in Iraq. President **Bush** is cool the idea of asking **Iran, Syria** to help on Iraq. [*Interpretation*: Real *Neocons* don't negotiate.] **Syria** says it will use 'all available means' to regain *Golan Heights* just as the Powers turn to Syria with help on **Iraq**. Iraqi authorities ordered the arrest Harith al-Dari, head of the *Muslim Clerics Association* and an outspoken defender of the *Sunni* minority. **Turkey** warns against Iraq breaking apart -- there will be "a 'New Era of Darkness' if Iraq is allowed to split apart."

[*Interpretation*: This is reference to the spectre of an independent *Kurdistan*.]

Palestine

The **Organization of Islamic Conference** has determined to "break the **Israeli**-imposed siege" on *Gaza*, and has called for war crimes action against Israel. Prime Minister **Blair** is correct on the central place of the *Israel-Palestine* issue in Mideast politics, but it is not the whole story -- there is still **Syria** and *Golan*, and *factionalism* for which Palestine is at present a *unifying* issue in the *Arab* world.

Chad has declared a *State of Emergency* in response to **Sudanese** killings in eastern regions of *Ouaddai, Wadi Fira* and *Salamat*.

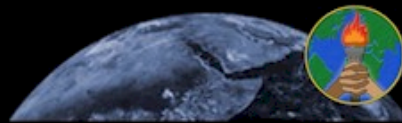
India reiterates its rejection of **China**'s claim to a disputed border area -- although NOT going to war is the current fashion, the India-China border dispute is no less intransigent. [*Interpretation*: China needs a clearway to **Pakistan**, India needs one to *Central Asia*.]

The number of *UN peacekeepers* is at a record high -- at the end of October 2006 there were nearly 81,000 military and police and 15,000 civilians, the highest number ever.

2006 Nov 13

- Angry with **Israel** and the **US**, the **Arab League** calls for an international conference on the **Palestinian** issue. A Brigadier-General forced to resign is the second **Israeli** officer to be sacrificed over the **Lebanon** affair. **France** has protested 'hostile' action by **Israeli** jets over **Lebanon** -- "*French troops had been within 'two seconds' of shooting down the aircraft.*" The **Arab League** wants peacekeepers in *Palestine* -- "At a time the **US** objects to the dispatch of peacekeeping troops to Palestine, it is demanding the deployment of international forces in Darfur." **Israeli** [accidental] killing of 19 *Palestinians* in *Gaza* prompted *Hamas* to respond to "The cowardly act of Zionists" by calling on "all resistance factions", interpreted by some to signal possible attacks in the **US** and elsewhere. A new extremist **Israeli** cabinet minister looks to the demographic reality of a future *Arab* majority in Israel and calls for an Arab-free Israel.

Baghdad's morgues are working over-capacity -- during October [2006] 1,600 bodies were turned in at the Baghdad central morgue -- "Men fearful of an anonymous burial are tattooing their thighs with names and [relative's] phone numbers". The **Iraqi** Health Minister says there have been 150,000 deaths and 450,000 injuries in the post-occupation conflict. **UK** Prime Minister Tony **Blair** will give his views to the *Baker-Hamilton* council of the wise on **Iraq**. In wake of the mid-term election, the **Pentagon** is reevaluating "strategy and goals" in Iraq -- "The collapse of the strategy in Baghdad . . . caused a very deep introspection by the



military." According to the US chief reconstruction auditor in **Iraq** \$8-10bn will go unspent because of lack of capacity; and some will end up with insurgents. US Marines are being trained for *urban warfare* -- "...the training was especially important for the *communication* Marines since they are often individually attached to units already in combat in **Iraq** or **Afghanistan**". In a departure from the *Pentagon*'s decision not to deploy reserves for more than a cumulative 24 months in Iraq, **US Guard** units now face second tours in **Iraq**. A law the **Kurdish** regional government proposes on *petroleum* management would put the Kurds in opposition to the central government in Baghdad. A day after being sentenced to death, **Saddam Hussein** has called for reconciliation in Iraq -- "I call on all Iraqis, Arabs and Kurds, to forgive, reconcile and shake hands". Days after the death sentence on **Saddam**, informed Iraqis say fugitive *former Iraqi V-P Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri* has ordered **Sunni** and **Baathist** insurgents to cease fighting. [*Analysis*: This may be the start of a well-planned end-game by Baathists.] The **Iraqi** government announces a strategy not without risk that could see thousands of purged **Baath Party** members reinstated to their jobs.

Afghan casualties have quadrupled over last year – now an average 600 are killed each month. As well, the overall pace of economic development is "much slower" than hoped. **Taliban** support seems on the rise in **Afghanistan**, hearts and minds lost through negligence; a local says "The **Taliban**, they are causing problems for us, but the government is causing problems for us too." A pro-government *tribal* elder was killed in **Waziristan**, perhaps proving Pakistan's contention that tribals and the insurgents are distinct groups.

2006 Nov 06

!!! One **Pentagon** scenario on **Iraq** in 1999 saw the need for 400,000 troops for a take and hold operation. Signaling the emergence of a new degree of authority, **Iraqi** Prime Minister al-Maliki ordered the US to lift a siege on *Sadr City*. *Baghdad* is under siege - "**Shias** may be in a strong position within *Baghdad* but they risk their lives when they take to the roads." Many celebrated the *death sentence* on **Saddam Hussein**, but not **Sunnis** in his home town.

UNHCR [Refugee Agency] reminds the world there is grave humanitarian crisis underlying the war in **Iraq**. The **UK** has evacuated some consulate staff from *Basra*; the move reportedly infuriated the military who says it sends wrong message to **Iraqi insurgents**.

UN observers report **Israel**'s unique understanding of *cease-fire* as Israeli warplanes stage simulated attacks over *Beirut*.

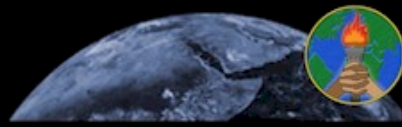
2006 Oct 30

!!! Following the **DPRK nuclear test**, the **South Korean** military conducted division-scale *landing exercises*.

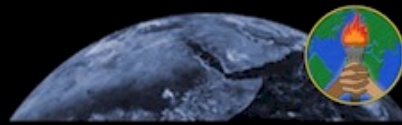
Sudan accused of bombing towns in **Chad** near the border; Sudan denied the accusation. Amid rumors that **Sudan** is arming rebels in **Chad**, the BBC reported tanks had been moved to key areas in the Chadian capital N'Djamena.

Following President **Musharraf**'s example, **Afghan** President Hamid **Karzai** wrote to influential ethnic **Pashtun** politicians in **Pakistan** asking for their support to stem a growing **Taliban** insurgency. As many as 100 allegedly "innocent civilians" were killed in a **NATO airstrike** in **Afghanistan**. Deadly fighting between rival **Pashtun** and **Tajik** militias in western **Afghanistan** highlighted the layers of complexity in the conflict throughout the country.

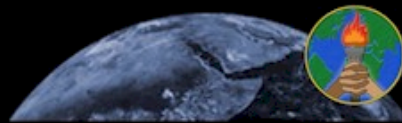
The **US** has had a month of "second thoughts" on **Iraq** -- "In October, even many stalwarts have begun to question US policy." Some observers said **Iraq** is already "worse than civil war", experiencing at least four internal conflicts that risk spiraling further out of control. **Iraqi** President Jalal **Talabani** is insisted that the **Kurds** contribute more to the reconciliation process in the country. **UPI** reported that the **US**



	<p>was fomenting a <i>coup</i> against Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki – there were no follow-up reports. The US Administration sought to recraft what “<i>stay the course</i>” meant for Iraq, accusing critics of misinterpreting the meaning.</p>
2006 Oct 23	<p>!!! Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge, the former head of UK armed forces, said “we” are courting defeat in Afghanistan; “I sense we’ve lost the ability to think strategically”. A UK special forces chief was scathing about simple logistics in Afghanistan; on occasions his men had been down to <i>belt rations</i>. A Canadian backgrounder suggested the Taliban may prove to be best allies against <i>al Qaida</i> to be had in Afghanistan.</p> <p>Mixed messages from the US Administration seemed to confirm the US can’t lose in Iraq, but also that it probably can’t win either; “Redeploy and Contain” may be a policy alternative to ‘stay the course’ or ‘cut and run’. President Bush acknowledged there may be some parallels between Iraq and Vietnam; his staff said there were not. [If <i>Tet</i> is seen not as a military event but an event in <i>public opinion</i>, the parallels may be there.] In moves attempting to stop the internecine violence the generals in charge of Iraq’s <i>Special Police Commandos</i> and its <i>Public Order Brigade</i> have been relieved of their posts.</p>
2006 Oct 16	<p>↓ President Musharraf says of the agreement with tribal Waziris that General David Richards, NATO commander in Afghanistan “absolutely agrees with the environment and my analysis and he is asking for our help to do the same thing.” There have been 336 US deaths in Afghanistan or in support in the operation since late 2001. <i>Reconstruction</i> is a weapon against the Taliban -- NATO again warns “<i>reconstruction</i> must move forward during the next six months if the alliance is to maintain the support of the Afghan public”.</p> <p>Iraq, particularly around Baghdad, has fallen into a daily pattern of <i>sectarian vendetta</i>. The Pentagon says troop levels in Iraq could hold steady to 2010, but “This is not a prediction that things are going poorly or better.” Iraqi Interior Minister Jawad Bolani’s has no militia links which may be a disadvantage at present as senior <i>police</i> are reshuffled in face of <i>sectarian violence</i>. The British in Iraq say “There can’t be a military solution to what is happening in Iraq. ... We are now just another <i>tribe</i>”. Iran and Iraq are moving slowly forward with “agreement to strengthen security and intelligence cooperation”. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health makes a statistical estimate of 392,979 - 942,636 war-caused deaths in Iraq but this was rejected by the US President.</p> <p>Head of Australia’s Federal Police has criticized the state of training of the <i>police</i> deployed on UN missions and their increasing use in place of troops.</p> <p>Union of Islamic Courts in Somalia say “Heavily armed Ethiopian troops have invaded Somalia”.</p> <p>Israel has handed over to the new UNIFIL force maps of <i>mine-fields</i> planted during the 22-year occupation in Lebanon.</p>
2006 Oct 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hundreds of Iraqi policemen have sickened, 11 have died, after their evening meal; the cause yet unknown -- “policemen began bleeding from the ears and nose”. Iraqi police have had 12,000 casualties in the last two years. Former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker says stay-the-course or withdraw are not the only options in Iraq - - “... a number of ideas, including one that would create a new <i>power-sharing</i> arrangement in Iraq that would give more autonomy to regional factions.” The number of U.S troops wounded in Iraq has surged to its highest level in nearly two years. The worm may be turning in Anbar [Iraq]; <i>The Guardian</i> says the tribal clans are getting “pissed off” with al Qaida and are killing them. <p>A retired Brigadier explains President Musharraf’s continuation of Jinnah’s accord with Waziri tribal groups -- “The allies in this war have to trust each other to achieve</p>



	<p>synergetic effects." NATO has assumed command in Afghanistan. <i>UN peacekeeping forces</i> currently around the world numbers almost 100,000 troops, but could jump to 140,000 within a year.</p>
2006 Oct 02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia's SAS have completed their one year deployment in Afghanistan and will not be replaced from Australia. Iraqi political groups have reached a framework agreement on <i>federalism</i> but there are certain to be difficulties as a 3-state solution would leave the <i>Sunni</i> would be left land-locked and without oil.
2006 Sep 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lebanese government forces have now been deployed along the border with Israel for the first time in decades. The US opposes the Arab League's plan to meet and redraft a new Palestine peace plan. Tribal leaders in Iraq's Anbar Province are "ready to purge the city of these infidels [i.e. foreign insurgents]" and they ask for the weapons to do it.
2006 Sep 18	<p>↓ Iraq: Some US forces say Anbar Province is lost politically and have redeployed to reinforce Baghdad; one plan is surround the capital with <i>siege trenches</i>.</p> <p>Afghanistan: Despite the effort, the <i>Taliban</i> today seem better paid, better armed, better connected than ever; 150 militants stormed a police HQ ; Kandahar is under threat; NATO calls for more troops — "from victory to bloody stalemate in five years" said one analyst. British forces mentioned civil affairs projects they are trying [in the Malay emergency tradition] – "Taliban or tractor?"</p> <p>Israel, Lebanon: Domestic blood-letting over the Lebanon campaign has started with the resignation of Israel's Commander of Northern Command — Israel says the shelling on the UN observation post may have been the result of an inaccurate map — the <i>Kifaya</i> movement in Egypt has called for the annulment of the U.S.-sponsored 1979 peace treaty with Israel. The UN is considering creation of its first military command center, modeled partly on US CENTCOM, to manage the Lebanon force.</p>
2006 Sep 11	<p>↓ The NATO commander in Afghanistan expressed surprise at the intensity of Taliban attacks and called for more troops — the Canadian defense minister said it is "<i>Impossible to defeat Taliban militarily</i>". The Government of Iraq took control of its armed forces — although <i>oil-rich</i> Iraq has a dire lack of oil refining capacity and must import <i>gasoline</i>. Qatar Airways defied Israel's blockade and resumed services to Beirut days before the blockade was finally lifted.</p>
2006 Sep 04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hizbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah regrets the violence brought on by the group's group kidnappings but tells Lebanon TV that significant breach of the cease-fire on his part is not likely—Israel's honor is at stake; it refuses to lift the Lebanon blockade causing great impediment to humanitarian assistance—indicating internal recriminations for the recent "failure" of the Lebanese adventure, the Israeli ruling party is becoming polarized over the call for an independent enquiry—after "private" negotiations Israel withdrew objections to inclusion of Indonesia, which has no diplomatic relations with Israel, in the Lebanon UN force. The <i>Pentagon</i> says that the "conditions for civil war exist in Iraq; death squads, sometimes with 'rogue elements' of U.S.-trained Iraqi security forces, are heavily involved in the sectarian violence—60 % of Americans now believe that the war in Iraq has increased the chances of a terrorist attack in the US.
2006 Aug 28	<p>↓ Israel said the UN force in Lebanon should include <i>Muslim</i> troops but not from countries without diplomatic relations; Indonesia and Malaysia responded that Israel has no veto over countries without diplomatic relations with "the Zionist regime — Israel found Hezbollah night vision viewers stamped "made in Britain" which had "no risk of being diverted for use by the Iranian military" when exported in 2003 — 63% of Israelis blame Olmert for what they see as a failed war. 51% of Americans (up 10% from June 2006) now see no connection between Iraq and the "<i>War on</i></p>



	<p>Terror" — the USMC is now authorized to recall thousands of experienced yet reluctant troops for needs in Iraq and Afghanistan. Israel announced it will have two German-built <i>nuclear-capable submarines</i> "shortly" [probably 4 years] giving it a <i>first-strike</i> — and <i>second-strike</i> — capability — responding to Iran's provocative statements, Israel has allowed it known that it has already appointed a "campaign manager" for any war with Iran.</p>
2006 Aug 21	<p>↓ Attacks on Coalition troops are trending down, but the toll on the Iraqi people is worse than ever with 3,500 killed in July, the highest since the 2003 invasion — Israel expressed concern at Indonesia and Malaysia, which do not have diplomatic relations with Israel, contributing to the Lebanon peace-keeping force — Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan said the time may be right to seek a long-term solution in the Middle East — in an apparent breach of the cease-fire, Israel made a pre-emptive strike in the Bekaa Valley.</p>
2006 Aug 14	<p>↓ The Iraqi government expressed concern at some US tactics — the Marines announced training with a greater emphasis on civil affairs — the UN Security Council finally agreed to a cease-fire resolution on Israel-Lebanon and blame-games started in Israel over what some saw as an unsuccessful war.</p>
2006 Aug 07	<p>!!! Far from destroying an enemy, Israel's action in Lebanon seems to have prompted a new unity in the Middle East and the Islamic world and the mistake in Qana prompted the charge of "war crime" — senior US and UK insiders were more freely using "civil war" to describe Iraq.</p>
2006 Jul 31	<p>!!! Israel is surprised by Hezbollah's tenacity after days of "surgical" strikes that have leveled whole neighborhoods; Israel and the US also seem surprised at how quickly support for Israel's retaliation has dropped away. With the killing of UN observers Israel stood accused of, at minimum callous incompetence; with the bombing of a civilian shelter in Qana it stood accused of war-crimes.</p>
2006 Jul 24	<p>↓ Afghanistan and Iraq continued to look far from resolved – descending into anarchy some said; Israel's attack on Hezbollah infrastructure (and any Lebanese infrastructure nearby) added a further war front involving Islamists.</p>
2006 Jul 17	<p>↓ Hate-filled Semitic tribes unworthy of running water again sought to drag their region back to the bronze age; the conflict began with alleged Israeli shelling of a beach, or with the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers, depending on which tribe one belongs to.</p>
2006 Jul 10	<p>↓ The situations in neither Afghanistan nor Iraq improved; the deteriorating Israel-Palestine situation led to new calls from Islamic nations for UN intervention.</p>
2006 Jul 03	<p>↓ DPR Korea continues its missile standoff; Iran builds a consensus of support in the Non-Aligned Movement for its nuclear standoff; the Israel/Palestine conflict suddenly reverted to maximum acrimony; both anti-Islamists wars, in Afghanistan and Iraq, deteriorated. With the exception of DPR Korea, all developments has a West/Islam polarity, a fact lost on none of the participants.</p>

Commencement of Service

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