



**Director of
Central
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National Intelligence Estimate

Iraqi Military Capabilities Through 1999

*This National Intelligence Estimate represents
the views of the Director of Central Intelligence
with the advice and assistance of the
US Intelligence Community.*

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*Prepared under the auspices of MG John Landry,
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July 1994

Key Judgments

Iraqi Military Capabilities Through 1999

Despite an impressive military reconstitution effort under difficult circumstances since Desert Storm, Iraq's armed forces retain critical weaknesses. Baghdad will be unwilling and probably unable to engage in significant military operations outside the country as long as UN sanctions remain in place and working; Iraq's leadership perceives a strong US military capability and commitment to maintaining regional stability; and Iraqi forces are occupied with internal security duties—including countering the Kurds, suppressing the Shia, and protecting Saddam's regime. (Pages 12-16.)

Nevertheless, Iraq will remain a source of immediate concern and a potential long-term threat to U.S. strategic interests in the Persian Gulf for the rest of this decade. Saddam—or for that matter, any likely successor—will hold to the objectives of reasserting Baghdad's authority over all of Iraq, regaining domination of Kuwait, and achieving regional supremacy. A strong military is critical to all these goals. (Pages 1-2.)

The Current Situation

The Iraqi military today comprises fewer units, personnel, and equipment and has generally older and more badly worn weapons systems than before 1991. It also is less able to sustain itself and is more limited in its ability to redeploy large numbers of divisions rapidly. Moreover, Iraq's military continues to suffer from shortfalls in logistics, leadership, doctrine, flexibility, and command and control. (Page 15.)

These shortfalls reduce but do not eliminate Iraq's potential as a regional threat. The current force is capable of overwhelming internal opposition, and it can effectively repel any potential regional aggressor. Iraq probably could also launch a division-sized force in a short-duration, limited-objective raid to destroy or damage oil and water

Working Premises

Iraq will remain united and led by Saddam or a like-minded successor. Iraq's leadership will not alter its basic policy goals.

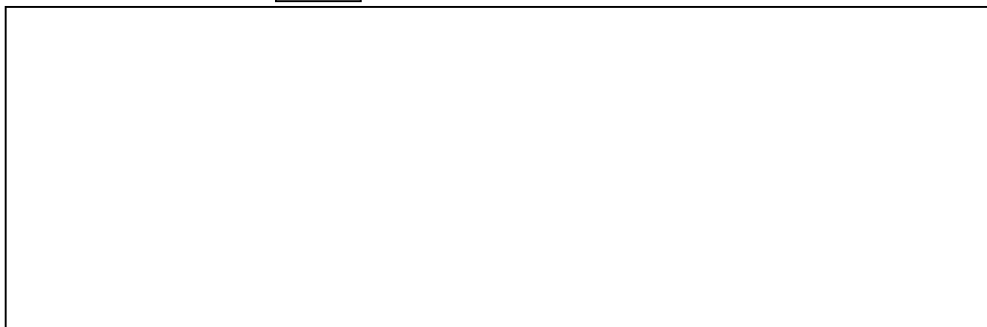
Iran will remain united and stable. Iran and Iraq will remain strategic rivals and an overall military parity will exist between them. They will not engage in another major war with each other. Iran will not assist Iraq during any regional conflict.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia will remain stable. In the event of an Iraqi attack on Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states will remain committed to a coalition to thwart Iraqi aggression, and accepting of US operations in the region.

World oil prices will remain relatively stable.

facilities in Kuwait. Moreover, without significant and timely opposition from Western forces, Iraq's military could overwhelm Kuwait in a corps-level assault. (Page 15.)

If Iraq were able to secure Kuwait, it could launch a *division-sized* punitive raid into northeastern Saudi Arabia. Overall, however, we judge Iraqi ground forces to be incapable today, even if opposed only by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) forces, of quickly extending *corps-level* operations far enough into Saudi Arabia to threaten most Saudi oil facilities. (Page 16.)



Iraq's Future Capabilities—Key Variables

Relaxing UN Trade Sanctions. The minimum requirement for real improvement in Iraqi military capability for the rest of this decade is the modification or removal of the ban on Iraqi imports and exports—particularly exports of oil. If these trade sanctions were lifted, Iraqi defense spending would increase, and force readiness and sustainment would improve. However, as long as the arms embargo remained in place, Baghdad's offensive capabilities would only **marginally** increase. From Iraq's perspective, this would probably represent a **constrained** force development scenario. Despite some improvement, Iraq's armed forces would continue to suffer from systemic weaknesses and doctrinal shortcomings. (Pages 17-18.)

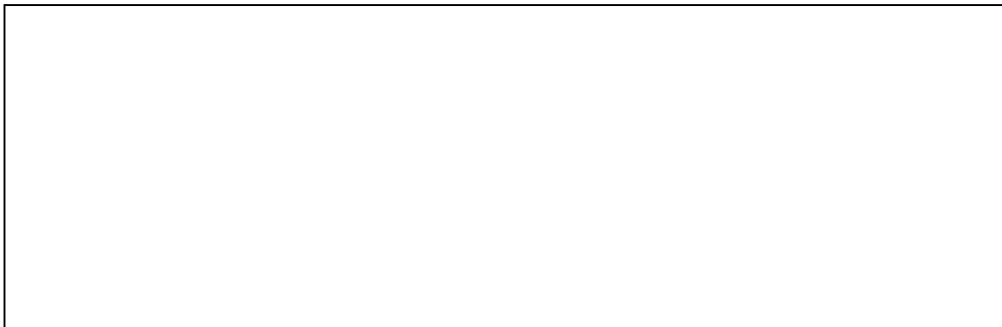
Circumventing the UN Arms Embargo. The removal of trade sanctions would be the first step toward de facto elimination of the UN arms embargo. Once trade sanctions were lifted, the arms embargo probably would unravel gradually and would likely become completely ineffective—for conventional weaponry—no later than 1999.¹ (Page 19.)

If Iraq were able to circumvent existing arms sanctions early enough (by 1997), it could substantially modernize its conventional weapons by 1999. In this relatively **unconstrained** force development scenario, Baghdad's acquisition priorities—in order of importance—probably would be: ground-based air defenses, ground forces armor and fire support, modern aircraft, and naval antiship capabilities. Actual acquisitions would depend on Iraq's economic status, and the availability of specific arms in the international market. (Pages 19-22.)

A modernized Iraqi military would be able to seize and hold Kuwait and would have a fair chance of extending an attack to critical oil and water facilities in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, if opposed only by the GCC. However, even this improved force would not be as large and is not likely to be as capable overall as the forces that took

¹ However, even in this scenario, it is likely that the UN monitoring and inspection of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs would continue and limit Iraqi progress in WMD.

Kuwait in 1990. Moreover, it would continue to suffer from critical shortcomings—in air warfare, leadership, doctrine, flexibility, and command and control—that would limit its effectiveness against Western forces. [] (Pages 26-27.)



The Bottom Line

Although Saddam is looking for opportunities to exact revenge on Kuwait and principal members of the Desert Storm coalition, he is unlikely to replay a Desert Storm scenario with a force much less capable than the one that took Kuwait in 1990. The dynamics that Saddam would consider before undertaking a future invasion of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia would include:

- ***The size and visibility of US military forces in the region.*** Baghdad would evaluate the size of US forces in the region before attacking any GCC states, but more important would be its perception of the US commitment to move additional forces quickly to the area to protect the Gulf states. []
- ***The status of the UN sanctions and arms embargo.*** Saddam is unlikely to embark on any external military campaigns as long as he is pursuing a conciliatory campaign to get UN restrictions lifted. If sanctions were lifted or Saddam gave up hope that sanctions would be lifted, chances of new military initiatives would increase.
- ***Resolution of the Kurdish situation.*** Almost two-thirds of the Iraqi military is now deployed in the north. Baghdad could deploy most of these forces to its southern border if the Kurdish provinces were returned to its control or if it changed its strategy in the north to only protecting northern Iraqi cities.

- ***The status of Iraq's military forces.*** Receipt of newer generation equipment would increase Iraq's military capability, but its current military shortfalls are not likely to be fully overcome. For the rest of the decade, Iraq's overall military capability is likely to remain well below pre-Desert Storm levels. (Pages 34-35.)

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Discussion

Iraq: Weakened. . . But Still Dangerous

Three years after the Gulf war, Saddam Hussein remains besieged and vulnerable, but retains considerable capacity to withstand the pressures confronting his regime. He is threatened by internal intrigue and insurgency, economically impoverished and isolated, and stripped of an ability to significantly reconstitute his military by the array of UN sanctions (see inset). He appears, however, to have sufficient resources and skill to survive the next year, and his prospects for staying in power for much longer would increase if sanctions were eased.¹

Iraq remains an immediate source of concern and a long-term threat to US strategic interests in the Persian Gulf. Saddam is implacably opposed to US influence in the region, and determined to avenge the Gulf war defeat, to restore his authority over all of Iraq, to restore Iraq's domination over Kuwait, and eventually, to achieve regional supremacy.

Even if Saddam is ousted, the successor regime, which probably would be a product of the same broad political culture, would likely pursue similar policies. Over the longer term a more moderate Iraqi leadership could emerge seeking rapprochement with the Arab mainstream and the United States. However, there is a good chance that through the period of this

¹ See NIE 93-42 *Prospects for Iraq: Saddam and Beyond* (CNF), published December 1993, for a detailed discussion of Saddam's political prospects and Iraq's economic and internal security situation.

Estimate, Iraq will remain openly hostile and confrontational toward the United States, beset with internal problems, isolated, and bent on rearmament.

Near-Term Objectives and Policies

Saddam's capabilities to pursue his objectives are constrained at present by UN sanctions, continuing domestic insurgency, a crippled economy, an enormous debt, and the imposition of operational constraints such as the no-fly zones. Thus, Iraq's most immediate goals are to obtain relief from economic sanctions—with as few residual conditions as possible—and to reassert complete control over Iraqi territory. Saddam's strategy to achieve these objectives has been persistent and direct including:

- Offering inducements to several states to gain their support for easing, lifting, or circumventing sanctions.
- Establishing the means to rapidly import industrial and military goods once economic and arms sanctions are lifted.
- Reconstituting key elements of Iraq's production base.
- Isolating and grinding down the insurgents.
- Portraying Iraq as an essential counterweight to the growing strength of Iran and of militant Islam to win sympathy for easing international sanctions.

Selected UN Resolutions on Iraq

The UN sanctions and monitoring efforts that most constrain Iraqi military reconstitution are set out in UN Resolutions 687, 707, and 715. ☐

Resolution 687 (3 April 1991) contains three basic elements: a ban on the import of commodities and products from Iraq (including oil); a ban on the sale or supply to Iraq of commodities or products; and a ban on the transfer of arms and related material to Iraq. Resolution 687 also stipulates that before any of these restrictions are lifted, the UN Security Council must agree that Iraq has accepted the destruction, removal, or rendering harmless of all:

- Nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, and stocks of agents.
- Related research, development, support, manufacturing, production, or repair facilities.
- Ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometers. ☐

Resolution 707 (15 August 1991) requires Iraq to:

- Provide full, final, and complete disclosure of all aspects of its nuclear, chemical, and

biological weapons and ballistic missile programs and related facilities.

- Allow UN inspectors unconditional and unrestricted access to all areas, facilities, equipment, records and means of transportation that they may wish to inspect.
- Cease immediately any attempt to conceal, or any movement or destruction of, any material or equipment relating to these programs.
- Halt all nuclear activities of any kind, except the use of isotopes for medical, agricultural, or industrial purposes. ☐

Resolution 715 (11 October 1991) requires Iraq to accept obligations under the UN plan for the ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with Resolutions 687 and 707. Monitoring and verification is to be accomplished through inspections, aerial overflights, and the provision of information by Iraq. The UN plan calls for the creation of a mechanism by which Iraq and its trade partners would provide advance notice of the sale or supply of dual-use items to Iraq. ☐

Saddam's ability to pursue his aims requires a strong military. For that reason, he has given priority to rebuilding both the armed forces and the defense industrial base. ☐

Rebuilding the Iraqi Military

Iraq's initial military reconstitution efforts centered on redistributing equipment and repositioning military units to suppress widespread

uprisings, including some rebellions in regular Army units. Only after these internal conflicts had been contained, in late 1991 and early 1992, could Saddam begin an orderly program of military reconstitution. []

First Priority—A Reliable Force. Saddam's immediate step after the war was to restore a loyal military that would help protect his regime, while remaining firmly under his control. He shuffled critical ministers, most general officers, and many midgrade officers. Reliance on the Republican Guard was intensified and Guard cadres were dispatched to those regular Army units that needed shoring up. Finally, Saddam deactivated the independent Kurdish National Defense Brigades, presumably because of their uncertain loyalty, and reduced the Ba'th Party militia. []

Despite these moves, Saddam has not achieved a totally reliable and loyal force. [] [] report that recurrent coup attempts, some involving Special Republican Guard and regular Army officers, have been foiled in the past two years. Moreover, while morale is better in elite units, most of Saddam's regular forces suffer low morale and a desertion problem. Because regime survival remains his predominant goal, we expect Saddam to continue to emphasize personal loyalty over military competence. []

Weapons of Mass Destruction—Salvage Operations. UN inspections have seriously damaged Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs. However, Baghdad has preserved some key equipment and retains much of the technology infrastructure to continue the development of these programs. []

Iraq has been required to surrender equipment and materials associated with its two most advanced uranium enrichment programs and

has given up a key facility that was to be used for nuclear weapons development and fabrication. UN inspectors have destroyed some 30,000 chemical munitions and approximately 2.5 million liters of CW agents and precursor chemicals surrendered by Iraq. They have also largely dismantled the main CW facility at Samarra'. UN inspectors also have confirmed the destruction of nearly 140 Scud or Scud-type missiles and have dismantled key parts of Iraq's solid-propellant missile program. In our assessment, only Iraq's BW program has escaped serious damage. []

These setbacks notwithstanding, Saddam is determined to rebuild at least portions of Iraq's special weapons programs. We estimate that, during the 1980s, Iraq spent billions of dollars on WMD programs. Iraq's extended-range Scuds and chemical munitions served it well in its war with Iran. Despite improved cooperation with UN inspectors recently, [] [] report that Saddam is ignoring Iraq's special-weapons-related obligations under UN Resolution 687 and continues to conceal weapons-related components and technologies for future use. The Iraqis, for example, removed nuclear-related equipment and documents associated with Iraq's gas centrifuge uranium enrichment program from a major engineering and design facility before it could be visited by UN teams. In our judgment, with concealed components of its special weapons programs in place, and the largest scientific and technical base in the Middle East (outside of Israel), Baghdad could revitalize its WMD programs and even begin limited production of chemical and biological agents and perhaps short-range ballistic missiles almost immediately after UN sanctions, inspections, and monitoring efforts were ended. []

- **Missiles.** [redacted] report that Iraq maintains a residual inventory of Scud or Scud-variant missiles. These reports lack specificity on the number and location of Iraq's hidden Scuds, but, taken as a whole, they point to an Iraqi effort to conceal Scud missiles. We judge that Iraq has been able to hide some—perhaps several dozen—Scud-type ballistic missiles, along with a small number of homemade mobile launchers, some warheads, propellant stocks, and support equipment. Iraq probably has some chemical warheads and may have biological warheads as well. Iraq could probably launch a small number of the concealed Scud-variants on short notice, but additional launches would be limited by the lack of available mobile launchers, propellant supplies, and other logistical constraints. [redacted]

By the start of Desert Storm, Iraq had put in place much of the infrastructure required to begin the manufacture of Scud-type ballistic missiles, as well as components for longer range solid propellant missiles. Iraq has been able to conceal some of its indigenously produced and foreign-made missile components, as well as tooling and production equipment. These remain unaccounted for despite several years of inspections. Moreover, Baghdad's missile design and production engineering staffs, along with the expertise developed since the mid-1980s, remain present and available for future use. Finally, Baghdad is probably using applications derived from the development of several missiles allowed by the UN to advance manufacturing expertise for prohibited weapons programs. [redacted]

- **Chemical weapons.** Reconstituting its chemical weapons program remains a high priority for the current regime. [redacted]

[redacted] before or during the Gulf war Iraq dispersed nearly 80 percent of the reactor vessels used in its CW program, and [redacted] reports that Iraq may be concealing equipment used to produce and adapt agents for weapons use. We judge that Iraq is hiding unspecified amounts of precursor chemicals that could be used to resume CW agent production. [redacted]

[redacted] The Iraqis have removed all of the equipment from the one undamaged large-scale chemical production building at the Samarra' CW complex and have never fully accounted for this equipment. Equipment appears to be missing from several other partly damaged chemical production buildings. [redacted]

Iraq could resume production of chemical weapons agents at known facilities within months of cessation of UN intrusive inspections and monitoring efforts. Our analysis of Iraq's chemical industry suggests that Baghdad could make several hundred tons of mustard agent and, depending on the availability of precursor chemicals, a similar quantity of nerve agent within a year. [redacted]

- **Biological weapons.** The Iraqis deny they had an offensive BW program and have surrendered no such stocks to UN inspectors. Even so, we assess Iraq retains almost all of its pre-war BW research, production, and weapons development capabilities housed in vaccine and pharmaceutical facilities. UN inspectors report that one of these, a plant at Al Hakam

Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction and Iraqi Warfighting Capabilities

A key issue in assessing Iraq's warfighting capabilities against US or Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) forces is whether Iraq would use any of its remaining weapons of mass destruction to support Iraqi operations in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. The odds are very good that Iraq would launch conventionally armed Scud missiles against civilian or military targets. Iraq's Scud missile attacks during the Persian Gulf war were at least a significant distraction to coalition forces, and the Iraqis would anticipate similar success in a future war with US or GCC forces. In addition, Baghdad might judge that Iraqi aircraft would stand no better chance than they did in Desert Storm of reaching high-value civilian or military targets in Saudi Arabia, increasing the motivation to use Scuds. [redacted]

[redacted] an Iraqi war game exercise last year called for Scud "attacks" against Kuwait and Saudi Arabia during an Iraqi "incursion" into Kuwait. [redacted]

We cannot rule out Saddam's willingness to use some of Iraq's remaining chemical or biological weapons in an attack on Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. He might see a chemically armed Scud, for example, as a means of at least temporarily disrupting operations at an important facility, such as Dhahran airbase or the Al Jubayl port. Alternatively, he might see an anthrax strike as a means of scaring his opponents into a cease fire. We can envision two key factors that would influence his decision:

- ***The strength of US or coalition deterrence.*** We believe Saddam was prepared to use chemical munitions during the Persian

Gulf war but opted not to in part because of warnings by the United States and others that they would retaliate overwhelmingly to Iraq's use of such weapons. Such warnings could have a similar effect on Saddam in a future conflict. In the event that Saddam saw very little risk of provoking overwhelming retaliation, there would be at least an even chance that he would order the use of chemical or biological weapons.

- ***The likelihood of a regime-threatening defeat.*** Saddam's willingness to risk retaliation would increase if he calculated that chemical or biological weapons provided his only means to prevent a regime-threatening defeat. [redacted] for example, that Saddam considered ordering the use of chemical weapons during the late stages of the Persian Gulf war but chose not to because coalition ground forces remained far from Baghdad. [redacted] Saddam would have ordered the use of chemical weapons if coalition forces had moved into central Iraq. [redacted]

It is unlikely that Saddam would order the use of unconventional weapons to attack Iraq's neighbors outside of a general war scenario as long as UN weapons monitoring continued. Such attacks would expose Iraq's noncompliance with UN resolutions and would risk the reimposition of economic sanctions. [redacted]

that will produce nutrients for animal food, could easily be converted to produce biological warfare agents. Elsewhere, UN inspectors discovered a previously undeclared facility that the Iraqis claim will be used to produce castor oil for brake fluid. UN inspectors report, however, that the plant can produce ricin toxin, a potent BW agent. []

[] the Iraqis produced several thousand liters of anthrax spores, botulinum toxin, and *Clostridium perfringens* spores that were used to fill aerial bombs and missile warheads. In addition, []

[] report that Iraq had a program to produce stocks of plague as a BW agent. []

- **Nuclear Weapons.** The Gulf war and subsequent UN inspections have seriously damaged Iraq's nuclear weapons program. However, Iraq is determined to covertly reconstitute its nuclear program, even though a long-term monitoring system will probably be in place. In addition to retaining key nonfissile materials and equipment that could be used in this reconstitution, Iraq also retains a large technical staff with the documentation and expertise to resume its weapons effort. []

The constraining element in Iraq's nuclear weapons program is probably the acquisition of fissile material. Iraq would most likely choose the gas centrifuge route to produce highly enriched uranium (HEU). That process would take five to seven years—with significant foreign technical assistance and supply—to produce enough HEU for one bomb. Without foreign involvement, Iraq's technical personnel could ultimately succeed in this effort, but would need several additional years to accomplish the goal. However, we cannot rule out the possibility

that Iraq could purchase sufficient quantities of HEU, or even a finished weapon. Obviously, either of these developments would shorten Iraq's acquisition timeline dramatically. []

Restoring the Defense Industrial Base. By 1990, Iraq had developed a robust military industrial base capable of producing a wide range of munitions and a substantial number of weapons types. (U) (See inset.)

During the war, Iraqi managers saved some production machinery by removing it from targeted facilities. After hostilities, Saddam rebuilt damaged facilities, reinstalled machinery, and restarted production—albeit at well below prewar levels, both in quantity and quality. Since the end of Desert Storm, the military industries have probably refurbished a few hundred artillery pieces and tanks. One notable accomplishment was the delivery of a T-72 tank battalion to the Republican Guard. []

Overall, however, Iraq has probably reached the limit of its ability to return war-damaged weapons to the field. The amount of equipment in units has not increased markedly since the spring of 1992. Approximately 25 percent of Iraq's aging tanks are inoperable. Most of these are not even candidates for repair. Current production levels can meet only part of the military's needs, as evidenced by continued equipment cannibalization and Iraq's efforts to procure spare parts from foreign suppliers. []

For the near term, the depots will probably remain capable of repairing equipment already in units. However, items subject to heavy, daily use, such as tires and automotive

Iraq's Prewar Conventional Production Capability

- **Aircraft.** Development of airborne early warning aircraft and airborne warning and control aircraft; planned production of jet trainer aircraft and helicopters.
- **Air defense radars.** Production of French-designed low-altitude surveillance radars.
- **Air-delivered weapons.** Production of unguided bombs and cluster munitions; development of precision-guided bombs, air-to-air missiles, and fuel-air explosives.
- **Artillery.** Production of 122-mm towed howitzers; development of 155- and 210-mm self-propelled howitzers and Brazilian- and Yugoslav-designed multiple rocket launchers.
- **Ballistic missiles.** Conversion of Scud-B missiles for extended range; planned indigenous production of Scud-type missiles and Condor II missiles.
- **Electronics.** Production of transistors, integrated circuits, printed circuit boards, and mobile and man-portable communications equipment.
- **Explosives.** Production of TNT, RDX, dynamite, double-base propellants, and plastic explosives.
- **Mortars.** Production of 60-, 82-, 120-, and 160-mm mortars.
- **Naval weapons.** Production of naval mines; modification of Chinese-built anti-ship missiles.
- **Ordnance.** Production of artillery and tank ordnance, mortar rounds, antipersonnel mines, grenades, and small arms ammunition.
- **Small arms.** Production of assault rifles, sniper rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, and pistols.
- **Super guns.** Development of 1,000- and 350-mm long-range guns and associated projectiles.
- **Tanks.** Assembly of T-72 tanks from Polish-supplied kits; planned indigenous production of "Asad Babil" T-72 tanks.

batteries, are running out. Moreover, the loss of Western technical assistance has probably forced Iraq to suspend or curtail work on some of its most ambitious weapons programs—including the Al Faw and Al Majnoon long-range self-propelled guns, Astros-II rockets, and Brazilian-designed air-to-air missiles.

Ground Forces. Ground force restructuring has been driven in part by Iraqi recognition that great numbers of infantry divisions, lightly equipped with older weapons systems, were a military liability in the Gulf war. Those divisions consumed scarce resources, stretched Iraq's command and control unacceptably, and

could not fight a war of mobility. In 1991, 33 infantry divisions were deactivated, including four Republican Guard and 29 regular Army. An additional three infantry divisions were deactivated between January and March 1994. By the time Iraq's postwar military reorganization was completed, 37 percent of the force structure was heavy, compared to 24 percent before Desert Storm. []

Iraq maintains 27 divisions today (table 1), 40 fewer than in January 1991. Eight of those divisions are in the Republican Guard, which remains Saddam's most potent striking force. The Republican Guard draws its troops almost exclusively from the dominant and more trusted Sunni population, and is the only ground element except Saddam's large body-guard force permitted to garrison in the vicinity of Baghdad. []

The regular Army consists of 19 divisions organized in five corps. Almost two-thirds of these divisions are stationed in the north opposite the Kurds and the remainder against the Shias in the south. Immediately after the war, reserve divisions—meagerly equipped formations which fought poorly against coalition forces—were deactivated. Reserves, when mobilized, have been used almost exclusively to fill out under-strength regular Army units (see map). []

The most modern equipment in Baghdad's inventory goes to the Republican Guard. For instance, all of Iraq's 700 T-72 tanks are deployed with Guard divisions, and Guard armored and mechanized divisions are maintained at about 90-percent wartime equipment authorizations (compared to 50-60 percent for most regular Army formations). The regular Army is significantly underequipped. In addition to being short some 500 operational

tanks, over half of Iraq's ground forces equipment consists of older and badly worn Soviet and Chinese weapons: T-55 tanks, MTLB armored personnel carriers, and older 122- and 130-mm towed artillery systems. Less than 10 percent of Iraqi artillery is self-propelled. While Saddam's artillery possesses a range advantage over many regional and Western forces, Iraqi commanders have shown neither an ability to effectively integrate fire in support of maneuver operations nor to shift fire against rapidly attacking armored formations. []

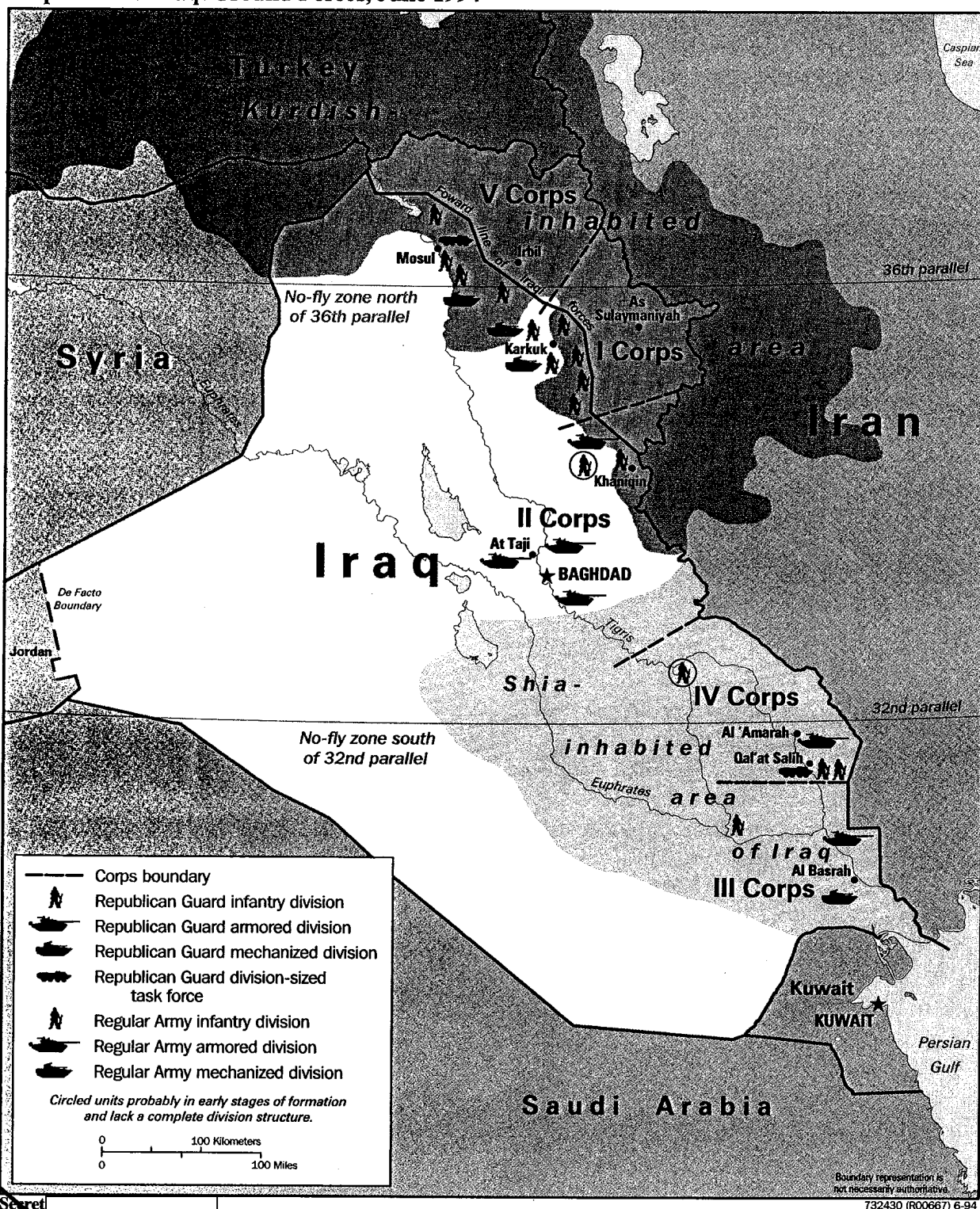
The losses of wheeled support vehicles during the war, and shortages of spare parts for remaining vehicles have strained Iraq's ability to sustain its forces in the field. Regular Army units, hindered by logistical shortages and employed in field operations almost continuously since the end of the war, have not been able to accomplish effective combined arms training. []

The Republican Guard, on the other hand, has conducted more sophisticated operations and training than the regular Army. For example, the Republican Guard staged an apparent rapid deployment exercise in the fall of 1993 that incorporated corps fire support and helicopter assault elements. This was designed to improve the Guard's ability to quickly respond to an external threat. []

Air Force. Three years after the Gulf war the Iraqi Air Force (IZAF) is still trying to recover its prewar capabilities. The current force is less than half its prewar size; the inventory consists of some 340 primarily older, less capable Soviet planes. More than

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Figure 1
Disposition of Iraqi Ground Forces, June 1994



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100 of the most modern Iraqi aircraft remain in Iran, where they flew to escape destruction during Desert Storm. []

The IZAF remained grounded until April 1992. Since then, it has been able to gradually increase sortie levels to an average of 125 per day. About 25 percent of those flights are dedicated to tactical training which, although intense, has not significantly improved overall air warfare capabilities. Iraqi air operations remain inflexible and subject to extremely centralized control. Nevertheless, the constant level of daily flying probably has allowed some Iraqi pilots to reestablish prewar levels of proficiency. []

Saddam's ability to sustain high levels of flight activity depends on the large quantities of parts bought before and during the war, continued smuggling, and ongoing domestic manufacture. With his fleet halved as a result of the Gulf war, additional spare parts are available for the remaining aircraft. However, Iraqi technicians still face problems in their efforts to keep the current force flying. []

[] Iraqi technicians are capable of conducting routine maintenance, but have limited skills and facilities for more complex operations. The Taji engine overhaul facility, for instance, is capable of performing some refurbishment of older MiG-21 and SU-22 engines, but not the engines of FULCRUM or Mirage aircraft. Iraq has also repaired the major aircraft maintenance facility at Rasheed airfield. []

The IZAF operates from nine main airbases and maintains 12 secondary airfields and 12 dispersal fields. Another 15 fields are located in the no-fly zones. Those bases are being repaired and could be made fully operational

Table 1
The Iraqi Military Before and After Desert Storm

	1 January 91	1 June 94
Manpower	1,000,000	350-400,000
Ground forces		
Tanks	5,700	2,300
APC/IFV	5,100	2,700
Artillery	3,800	1,800
Divisions	67	27
Combat aircraft	750	340
Naval missile combatants	13	1

Note: The table depicts only ground forces equipment assessed to be operational. The APC/IFV number for 1994 includes 400 or so command variants.

This table is ~~Secret~~ []

quickly if no-fly restrictions were lifted. Three hundred and seventy-five of Iraq's 595 hardened aircraft shelters were either damaged or destroyed during the Gulf war. Although most have been repaired, these shelters remain vulnerable to the same weapons that were employed against them during the Gulf war. []

Iraqi Air Defenses. Iraq has probably restored enough of its prewar air defense system to provide early warning and monitoring of aircraft at medium-to-high altitude over most of the country. Thousands of antiaircraft guns and point-defense surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems would pose a significant threat to aircraft operating at low altitudes during daylight over cities and military targets. However, Iraqi air defenses would still have great difficulty engaging modern Western air forces backed by comprehensive countermeasures support. []

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Figure 2
Iraqi Air Force Order of Battle, June 1994



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Reconstruction of the Iraqi air defense system has proceeded at a fairly fast pace: all four of the pre-Desert Storm Sector Operations Centers are now operational; 10 of 13 prewar Interceptor Operations Centers have been restored; and Iraq currently has 58 radar sites operational (compared to 114 deployed during the war). Iraq has also rebuilt much of its automated air defense command and control system and is trying to address the issue of detection of low-observable, or stealth, aircraft by modifying its SPOON REST and FAN SONG radars with French-built components. []

Since the Gulf war, Iraq has been undertaking a number of other measures to improve the survivability and effectiveness of its air defense force. For instance:

- The Iraqis may have been emphasizing electro-optical tracking of aircraft as an alternative to radar tracking for SAM engagements. This has two potential advantages: it delays the warning pilots receive that a SAM has been fired, and it minimizes the time Iraqi radars are emitting, thereby limiting chances for effective use of antiradiation missiles.

-
- SAM units have prepared alternate positions and have practiced rapid redeployment to increase their survivability against a modern air force. However, strategic SAMs like the SA-2 and SA-3 were not designed to be moved frequently and will suffer numerous mechanical problems if this practice continues.
 - The Iraqis are adding armor to radar vans at missile sites to improve their protection against antiradar missiles and bombs. []

Despite these sustained efforts at improvement, the Iraqi air defense system remains plagued with problems. It could not down coalition aircraft in the southern no-fly zone in early 1993 and could not effectively defend against coalition attacks on air defense sites.

[]

Navy. Iraq's Navy was devastated during the war; approximately 80 percent of the naval inventory was damaged or destroyed, and only one of its 13 missile boats survived. What remains consists primarily of a cadre of small patrol boats whose primary mission is law enforcement. The Navy has been (and will remain) the lowest priority in Iraqi postwar reconstitution efforts. []

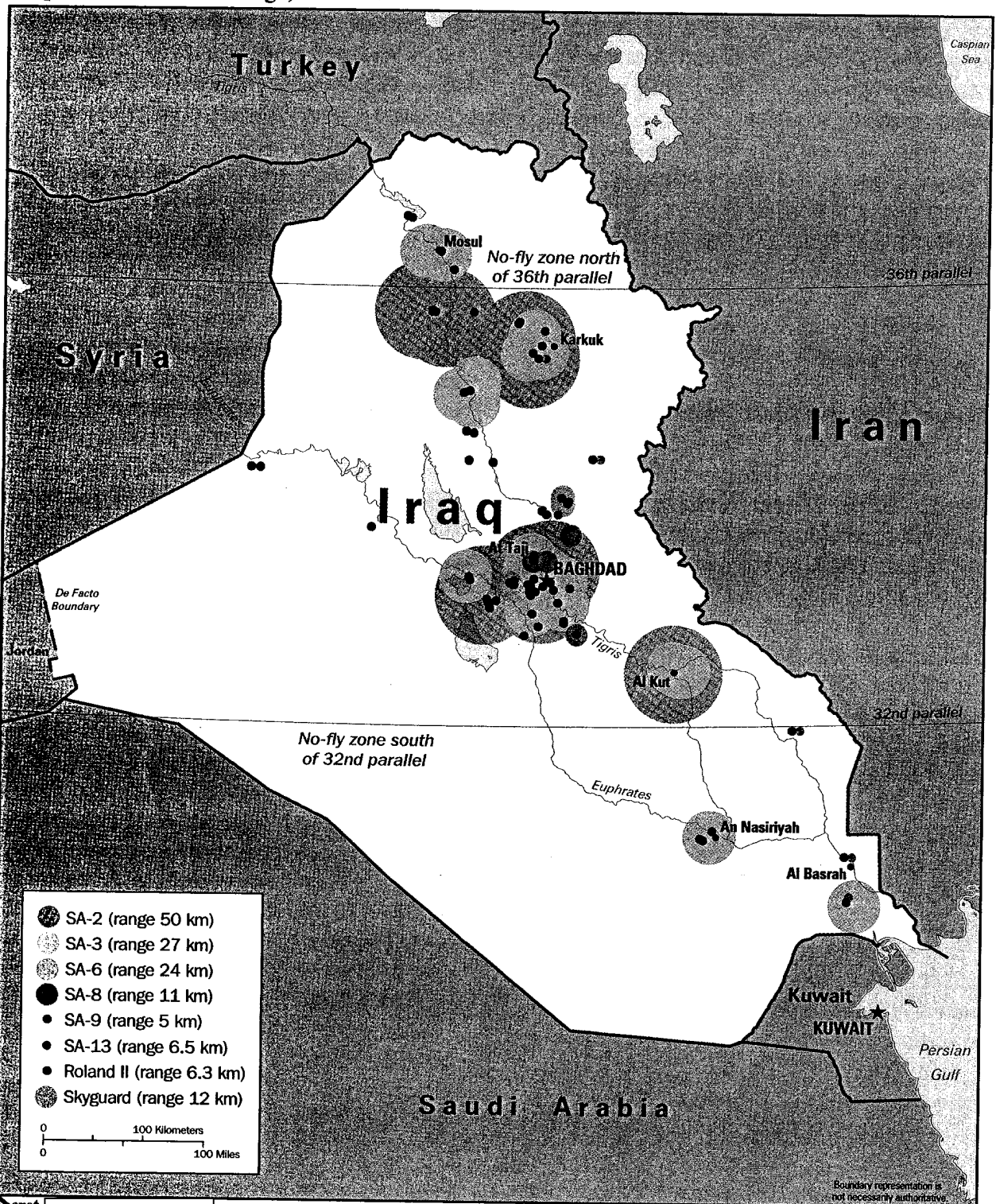
The loss of its most capable minelayers reduces Iraq's ability to lay large fields of mines. However, since mines can be deployed by a wide variety of surface platforms, Iraq can still sow mines in small numbers to disrupt shipping lanes or hinder enemy naval action in the northern Gulf. Iraq's SEERSUCKER antiship cruise missiles and its three-to-five associated launchers provide an additional threat to ships within 52 nautical miles of Iraq's coast. []

Enduring Weaknesses. Overall, despite some areas of improvement, Iraq's military establishment continues to suffer from systemic weaknesses that would far outweigh its strengths in a significant conflict with Western forces. Although these shortfalls vary from service to service, in general all of Iraq's armed forces retain certain common deficiencies:

- **Poor morale and desertions.** One of the most acute problems facing the Iraqi military, particularly in the regular Army, is poor morale

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Figure 3
Iraqi Air Defense Coverage, June 1994



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and the high desertion rate that it generates. Morale problems have turned one of the pre-war strengths of the military—combat experience—into war weariness. Many conscripts have been in the military much longer than the compulsory two-to-three year stint, with no idea when they will be released. Soldiers have been deployed, many in semipermanent facilities, for three years fighting insurgents, while receiving substandard rations, medical care, and uniforms, and employing fragile vehicles and faulty ammunition. Meanwhile, their families struggle to cope in the collapsing economy. []

Resentment among conscripts over these conditions, Saddam's disastrous adventures, jealousy among regular Army soldiers about the special treatment accorded members of the Republican Guard, and continuing rivalries between Shia and Sunni personnel further undermine morale. In some poorer infantry units as many as two-thirds of the soldiers have deserted, though the norm is probably not as severe. In late March 1993, III Corps reported that more than 6,000 enlisted men, the equivalent of more than two full-strength infantry brigades, were missing from the corps sector, including 2,000 who had deserted two or more times. In an extreme case, 289 of 344 personnel assigned to a commando battalion in southern Iraq had deserted. []

The regime is not oblivious to the problem and has taken various measures to stem the desertions. For instance, Baghdad has reportedly increased some salaries, vowed to release conscripts at the end of their terms of service, and regularly sends "moral guidance officers" to visit Iraqi units to bolster morale. However, these efforts have had only mixed results. []

- ***Politicization of the officer corps.*** [] reports that loyalty to Saddam rather than military competence continues to be the yardstick by which senior officers are measured. Saddam's heavy-handed efforts to ensure loyalty—including the videotaping of officer executions and the replaying of those tapes to intimidate officers—maintain a climate of fear, which stifles independent action, risk taking, and candor.
- ***Intelligence.*** The inability of Iraq's intelligence system to provide timely, reliable information on threat force status, options, and intentions was a major shortfall during the Gulf war. We have virtually no evidence of Iraqi efforts to improve intelligence collection, analysis, and reporting capabilities and believe this will remain a major weakness in future operations.
- ***Transportation.*** One of the areas hit hardest by the UN sanctions is the transportation fleet. Combat vehicles suffer little wear and tear in their current static posture. However, the daily use of other wheeled vehicles has taken a heavy toll. Automotive parts with civilian applications, already in short supply, are probably siphoned off to be sold on the black market. Judging primarily from the number of missing tires, only about 400 of the remaining 1,000 or so heavy equipment transports are assessed to be operational. Units often must request trucks from higher headquarters to move armored vehicles and large shipments of ammunition. The military has turned increasingly to the national railroads which are now also showing the impact of sanctions. One positive result is that ground forces have gotten a lot of practice in rail loading.

- **No reliable source of supply.** In our judgment, Iraq's inability to deliver supplies would become a major operational constraint in large or intensive operations lasting longer than three days. Economic sanctions and the arms embargo have cut Iraq off from its pre-war arms suppliers, creating widespread shortages of many classes of supplies. We believe Baghdad smuggles in a limited amount of critical parts and equipment in contravention of UN sanctions, but such deliveries are not sufficient to meet military needs. Even in their relatively static configuration, units are apparently having trouble providing for their soldiers. Deployed border forces and infantry units frequently run out of rations.
- **Inadequate doctrine and operational capabilities.** In addition to the systemic shortfalls outlined above, Iraq still lacks both the doctrine and operational capability to control and execute maneuver warfare at the scale, pace, and intensity demonstrated by US and allied forces during the Gulf war.

Current Force Capabilities Assessment

The Gulf war and the postwar array of UN sanctions have severely diminished, but have not completely destroyed Iraq's military capability. Saddam's military reconstitution has made significant progress under difficult circumstances. In that regard, the armed forces are probably well positioned for expansion and improvement if the UN sanctions are lifted. In the meantime, the military's ability to weather the Desert Storm defeat, put down the Shia and Kurdish rebellions, and survive UN sanctions—while being reorganized and reduced—is a testimony to its resiliency as an institution. The force that has emerged from

this three year process is still potent in a local and regional context:

- Iraq's armed forces—particularly the Republican Guard—remain the central guarantor of regime security. They are capable of overwhelming the Shia in the south, could retake the north from Kurdish elements, and could probably defend Iraq from any neighbor except Turkey. Iraq could also probably launch a division-sized force in a short-duration, limited-objective raid to destroy or damage selected oil and water facilities in Kuwait.
- The Iraqi military remains one of the region's largest (see table 2) and most capable, despite its relative decline as a result of the Gulf war, postwar sanctions,

On balance, however, Iraqi military shortfalls are severe. The current force comprises fewer units, personnel, and equipment, and has generally older and more badly worn weapons systems than before 1991. It also is less able to sustain itself, and is more limited in its ability to redeploy large numbers of divisions rapidly. Moreover, Iraq's armed forces continue to suffer from a number of other shortfalls—in logistics, leadership, doctrine, flexibility, and command and control. These enduring

weaknesses would limit Iraq's warfighting effectiveness in operations outside Iraq, against stronger regional opponents, or against Western forces:

- If the Western forces present in the region today were involved from the outset, Iraq could retake Kuwait only if Iraqi forces were ready to absorb losses inflicted by Western air power while maintaining the attack. Based on historical precedent, as long as the current low state of morale in the Iraqi military remains unchanged, an Iraqi offensive is likely to grind to a halt when serious opposition is encountered.
- We judge that Iraq is incapable today of quickly extending a corps-level operation beyond Kuwait deep enough to threaten most Saudi Arabian oil facilities. As part of a larger operation involving the invasion and successful occupation of Kuwait, we believe Iraq would have the capacity to undertake a division-sized, short-duration punitive raid into northeastern Saudi Arabia with the objective of destroying oil facilities. It is conceivable, but highly unlikely, that Saddam would order

such an attack without first securing Kuwait. Such an operation would be generally contrary to Iraqi practice and would likely fail. The attacking force and scarce heavy-lift assets would be significantly attrited by a combination of maintenance problems and GCC and Western resistance before reaching Saudi Arabia.

Overall, in our judgment, Iraq will be unwilling and probably unable to engage in significant military operations outside the country as long as:

- UN sanctions remain in place and working (see inset).
- Baghdad perceives a strong US military capability and commitment to maintaining regional stability.
- Iraqi forces are occupied with internal security duties—including countering the Kurds, suppressing the Shia, and protecting Saddam's regime.

The Effectiveness of UN Sanctions

UN sanctions. Despite some leaks, UN sanctions have been very effective at limiting Iraq's military reconstitution to pre-war levels. Sanctions hurt Iraq in three critical ways:

- *Trade sanctions deny \$12-15 billion in oil revenue each year. The lack of income demoralizes the population and the military, breeds discontent with Saddam's rule, constrains military spending, and requires Baghdad to spend other scarce resources reinforcing internal security.*
- *The UN arms embargo virtually precludes Iraq from importing the technology and equipment essential to fully rebuild the current force, or to modernize and expand the force in the future. As Iraq's prewar supply of spare parts continues to dwindle, the impact of the arms embargo becomes more acute.*
- *UN WMD sanctions have forced Baghdad to destroy most, but not all, of its WMD programs and to agree, at least temporarily, to an intrusive long-term monitoring system. As long as these sanctions are in place, the production of major weapons and missile programs will languish.*

Looking to the Future

A Constrained Force Development Environment. The minimum essential requirement for any real improvement in Iraqi military capability for the rest of this decade is the modification or removal of the ban on Iraqi

imports and exports—particularly exports of oil. The analysis that follows projects Iraqi military developments under the following conditions:

- UN trade sanctions are lifted in early 1995, with minimal restrictions placed on Iraqi use of the revenue generated by renewed oil sales.
- The UN arms embargo and the WMD monitoring and inspection regime remain in place and effective.

From Iraq's perspective, these conditions represent a relatively constrained force development environment.

Lifting Trade Sanctions. The lifting of UN sanctions on all Iraqi civilian imports and exports would affect Iraq's armed forces in three ways:

- ***Defense spending would increase.*** Oil sales would increase Iraq's overall revenues substantially. The Intelligence Community has projected future Iraqi oil revenues and defense resources under several different production capacity and world oil price scenarios (This analysis is summarized in annex B.) Even under our most restrictive budget scenario, once trade sanctions were lifted, Iraq would have significantly more money to spend on defense. Moreover, after 1997, depending on the world oil market, Iraq may be able to afford defense budgets that approached prewar spending levels.
- ***Force readiness and sustainment would improve quickly.*** The resumption of nonmilitary trade would make it very difficult for the international community to control and discipline all trade with Iraq. Under these conditions, Baghdad almost certainly would

be able to acquire—either overtly or covertly—the military spare parts and other dual-use technologies critical to restoring the sustainment base. Also, with a larger defense budget, the Iraqi military should be able to increase operational tempo (training, exercises, field deployments) and afford better pay, housing, and benefits for military personnel.

- ***The stage would be set for further improvements.*** Increases in Iraq's defense spending and nonmilitary trade would not greatly enhance Baghdad's military manufacturing capability or its capacity to acquire major military end items in the short term. However, these developments would allow Iraq to acquire the materials, equipment, and technology required for the long-term expansion of its defense production industry. Moreover, as Baghdad's oil revenues increased, and its international arms network expanded, so too would its ability to acquire dual-use equipment and technology, pure military production technologies, and other equipment currently prohibited by UN sanctions.

- ***But there would be no significant modernization or force expansion.*** As long as the arms embargo held, however, Iraq's force structure and equipment holdings could not be modernized or expanded significantly. In fact, as operational wear and tear took their toll, it would be more likely that Iraq's equipment inventory, especially aircraft, would actually decline.

The Bottom Line: Marginal Improvement Only. The removal of UN trade sanctions would allow Iraq to make modest improvements in its military capability between now and 1999. Many of the supply, maintenance, transportation, and morale problems that undermine the readiness and effectiveness of the current force could be overcome. In addition, Iraq would be able to lure more foreign technicians to work in its defense industries and military maintenance facilities. These improvements would bolster Baghdad's already adequate capabilities for internal security and defensive operations and would marginally increase Iraq's offensive capabilities.

Overall, however, even this improved force would continue to suffer from many critical shortcomings—in air warfare (particularly air defense), leadership, doctrine, flexibility, and command and control—that would diminish its effectiveness in operations outside Iraq or against Western forces.

An Unconstrained Environment. A central point in the analysis summarized above is that, even with trade sanctions removed, the international arms embargo would prevent Iraq from significantly improving its military capability for the rest of this decade. The following section challenges that premise by assuming that Iraq is able to circumvent the UN arms embargo and acquire conventional weapons on a large scale. From Iraq's perspective, this represents a relatively unconstrained conventional force development environment. However, even in this scenario, we still assume that the UN monitoring and inspection of Iraq's special weapons programs continues and precludes significant Iraqi improvement in WMD.

Relaxing the Arms Embargo. Most analysts agree that the removal of trade sanctions would be the first step toward de facto elimination of the arms embargo. Clearly, if trade sanctions were lifted and Iraqi oil revenues increased, Baghdad's potential for securing major covert arms deals would rise accordingly. International arms producers would be keen to get a jump on the lucrative Iraqi arms market and the temptation (and opportunity) to violate the embargo would be great. []

Also, as time went on, many countries participating in arms sanctions monitoring would likely grow weary of continued vigilance and become less diligent toward enforcement. Iraq would encourage that trend and push the international community to relax the arms embargo. Baghdad has already argued that the expanding military capabilities of its rivals—particularly Israel and Iran—constitute growing threats, and has demanded more flexibility in the trade and import of defense manufacturing equipment and military technology. []

There are a number of states— []

that have been hurt by the arms embargo against Iraq and would be anxious to revive Iraqi arms sales. []

In our judgment, once trade sanctions were lifted, the arms embargo would unravel gradually, and would probably become completely ineffective for conventional weaponry no later than 1999. However, for analytical purposes

in this unconstrained case, we have assumed Iraq is able to circumvent the arms embargo beginning in 1997. []

The Iraqi Shopping List. Baghdad's recent war experiences—against Iran, coalition forces, and internal opponents—have probably given the Iraqi military a good sense of its most important conventional force shortcomings. Although we have very little direct evidence, we believe Iraq probably prioritizes those shortcomings as follows: ground-based air defenses, ground forces armor and fire support, modern (third and fourth generation) aircraft, and naval antiship capabilities. []

In our judgment, however, Iraq would not feel compelled to address each priority sequentially. Rather, it would try to overcome its most glaring deficiencies in each force area. Moreover, Iraq would probably not be able to both afford and acquire everything it wanted, at least in the early years of its rebuilding program, and would be forced to decide how best to spread limited resources among competing priorities, while taking advantage of the best opportunities available in the arms market. []

If Iraq were able to acquire additional arms in large quantities, it would also have to decide whether it wanted to simply modernize its current force structure, or expand it as well. Although we have some inkling of Iraqi intentions in this regard—for instance, official statements and several other sources suggesting that Iraq would rather maintain smaller, but more modern forces—our lack of definitive evidence leads us to analyze both options. []

- ***Air defense.*** In an unconstrained acquisition environment, Iraq would probably seek up to two battalions (6 to 18 SAMs per battalion) of strategic SAMs—like the Russian SA-10 with its sophisticated electronic warfare and anti-ballistic missile capabilities—and six to eight battalions of tactical SAMs like the Russian SA-11/15/17. The SA-10 battalions, and at least two of the tactical battalions, would be

deployed to protect key strategic sites in central Iraq. The remaining tactical SAMs would probably be deployed with the ground forces—one per corps. Iraq could also be expected to acquire hundreds of modern manportable SAMs (like the Russian SA-18) to upgrade its current force of mostly older SA-7s. Finally, Iraq would also be likely to upgrade its air defense command network, and to acquire or

produce radars with better low-level, long-range detection capabilities, in an effort to provide Baghdad with more effectiveness against stealth aircraft.

- **Ground forces.** Iraq would want to upgrade its current fleet of mostly T-55 tanks and armored personnel carriers with the acquisition of T-72 tanks and BMP infantry fighting vehicles. Although not state-of-the-art systems, these are available in large quantities, affordable, and are potent by regional standards. Iraq also may seek small numbers of T-80 tanks for the Presidential Guard. Beyond that, Iraq would like to modernize fire support capabilities by acquiring self-propelled artillery and multiple rocket launchers. If Iraq chose to expand, it could probably add two heavy divisions to its current force structure by 1999 (assuming the arms embargo was ineffective beginning in 1997).
- **Air forces.** Iraq learned during the Gulf war that it had no hope of matching Western air forces. Hence, the relative priority Iraq accords upgrading its ground-based air defenses. Also, Iraq has a limited capacity to organize, train, and integrate large numbers of new aircraft and squadrons into the current force. It took Baghdad several years to fully integrate the Mirage F-1s and MiG-29s during the 1980s—and even then, the aircraft were not used to their fullest capacity. These realities, and the high unit purchase and operating costs of modern aircraft, will likely limit total purchases, even in an unconstrained arms acquisition environment. Nevertheless, in order to ensure a capability to meet regional threats, Iraq would want to replace some of the inventory lost during the Gulf war, including the aircraft flown to Iran, by purchasing at least

two additional squadrons (24 aircraft each) of modern aircraft. This acquisition objective represents a low Iraqi estimate of future regional force levels and capabilities. As Iraq acquired these additional aircraft, it would have to decide whether it wanted to simply replace older airframes on a one-for-one basis, or use the new acquisitions to form new squadrons.

- **Naval forces.** The Navy will remain Iraq's lowest military priority. However, if Iraq did seek to upgrade its naval capabilities, it would probably opt for longer range antiship cruise missiles (most likely of Chinese origin), and a small number of coastal patrol boats. It would also take measures to improve the size and sophistication of its mine inventory, which it could do at relatively little cost.

The Bottom Line: A Much Improved Force.

If Iraq were able to acquire in quantity the systems discussed above it could significantly improve its military capability by 1999. Based on our perception of Iraq's military priorities, and the oil revenue and defense budget analysis summarized in annex B, we projected Iraq's 1999 force structure and equipment holdings under two unconstrained scenarios—one we have termed “modernized only” and the other “modernized and expanded.” The table compares those projections with the current Iraqi military, and with the 1999 force we projected Iraq would have in our constrained force development scenario in which only economic sanctions were removed.

Baghdad probably would not be able to afford to both modernize and expand its force to the maximum extent shown in table 3, except

Table 3
The Iraqi Military Today and in 1999

	1994	Constrained 1999	Unconstrained Modernized Only	1999 Modernized ^a and Expanded
Ground forces				
Divisions	27	27	27	29
Heavy	10	10	10	12
Infantry	17	17	17	17
Tanks	2,300	2,300	2,800	3,200
T-72	700	700	1,200	1,600
APC/IFV ^b	2,700	2,700	3,000	3,400
IFV	900	900	1,200	1,600
Artillery (total)	1,800	1,800	2,200	2,500
Self-propelled	100	100	300	500
Air Force				
Combat aircraft	340	340	340	390
Modern	75	75 (-)	125	125
Squadrons	14-15	14-15	14-15	16-17
Air defense forces				
Strategic/national-level SAM operational batteries (3-5 launchers each)	39	39	42	45
Corps/division-level SAM operational battalions (8-12 launchers each)	10	10	16	18
Naval forces				
Missile combatants	1	1	1	2-3
Coastal defense missile batteries	1	1	2-3	2-3

^a Iraq is unlikely to be able to afford everything in this column. It will probably opt for the maximum in air defense and less than that in other categories. Each service will have to prioritize acquisitions.

^bThe APC/IFC figure includes 400 or so command variants.

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under our most optimistic (for Iraq) economic projections. However, under our midpoint economic projections, Baghdad could probably afford the force depicted in the "modernized only" column. Given Baghdad's priorities, Iraq would probably tend toward the maximum in the air defense category, but as a consequence would purchase somewhat less than the maximum in the ground, air, and naval categories.

The Future Threat to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia

Through the rest of the decade, Iraq will maintain a number of options for striking Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. These range in scale and complexity from limited missile and air-strikes against selected targets (see annex C), to limited-objective raids and full invasion.



A Limited Attack. In our judgment, the worst Iraq could do in a limited attack would be to conduct a brief division-level raid to damage or destroy selected oil and water facilities in Kuwait. This, however, would be a high-risk operation that is generally contrary to Iraqi doctrine. []

Iraq has several options for launching a limited division-sized raid into Kuwait. Baghdad could conduct a raid with little or no warning, using the 6th Armored Division, which is already deployed near the Kuwaiti border. Other options, which would give Western forces varying degrees of warning, include using Regular Army or Republican Guard forces garrisoned farther north near Qal'at Salih, or Republican Guard forces garrisoned in the Baghdad area. []

If armored forces were used, combat vehicles only with their basic loads of supplies could be moved by heavy equipment transports under cover of darkness into positions along the Kuwaiti border. There they would form into battle groups and launch the raid during morning hours. Alternately, the heavy brigade of the Republican Guard Infantry Division at Qal'at Salih could move in a similar fashion. The infantry brigades of this division could be employed as saboteurs of Kuwaiti oilfield equipment. []

If, on the other hand, one of the heavy Republican Guard divisions near Baghdad were used, it would probably deploy months prior to the raid, ostensibly for lines of communication security or counterinsurgency operations, in order to reduce suspicion. The division could then move to the Ar Remaylah oilfield area to conduct "exercises" as a prelude to the raid. []

The only significant opposition Iraqi forces would likely encounter in a raid of this type would be US air forces deployed in theater. Under the right conditions—surprise, speed, and short duration—an Iraqi raid could inflict considerable damage on selected oil and water facilities in Kuwait. []

A Representative Invasion Scenario. Should Saddam order another full invasion despite expected Western opposition, Iraq would plan to commit at least 10 to 15 divisions in order to seize and hold Kuwait, and at least another three divisions if it planned to extend the attack into Saudi Arabia. However, in line with Iraq's desire to minimize Western warning, the attack on Kuwait could begin as soon as the main strike element—probably three Republican Guard armored divisions located near Baghdad, and perhaps the infantry division and one or two regular Army heavy divisions from the Al Basrah area—were in place. Significant additional preparations, such as the mobilization of follow-on forces, could occur concurrent with the offensive (as was the case in 1990). []

We see three situations which could lead Baghdad to conclude that its forces were ready to carry out operations of this scale and complexity:

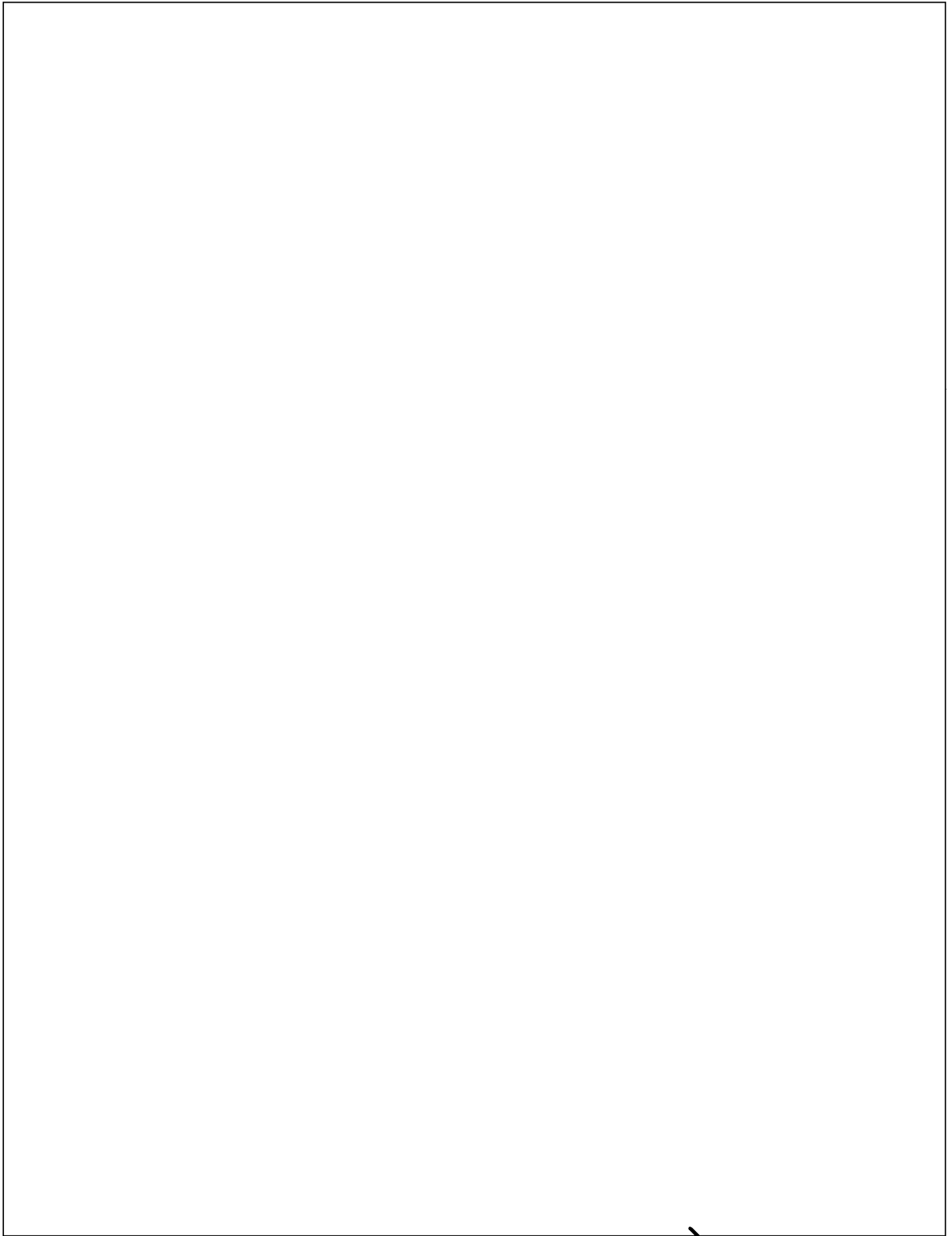
- Iraq substantially improves its logistics capabilities, which currently would be hard pressed to support even eight divisions in battle beyond its borders.
- Baghdad convinces itself that only token Western opposition would be mounted, so that much of its force would avoid heavy combat (and the heavy logistics drain such combat entails).

- Saddam is willing to move much of his force with little beyond the supplies that maneuver units can themselves carry. This would be a combat gamble unprecedented for him.

Force Preparation and Movement. Insufficient rail capacity is presently a major force movement constraint for Iraq because the line from Baghdad to the Al Basrah area is single track with bypasses. If divisions moved entirely by rail—and as is their practice, with full logistics support—we estimate it would take each one approximately nine days. Since only one division could move at a time, the three Republican Guard divisions would require 27 days to move from Baghdad to Al Basrah. However, in the likely event that heavy equipment transports were used (to move a single division), movement time would be reduced by about a third, to 18 days. Regular Army units in the Al Basrah area would have to move to assembly areas under their own power, increasing the rate of breakdowns.

For an invasion of Saudi Arabia, Iraq would also want to add at least the Republican Guard division task force and the 10th Armored Division from the Al' Amarah area. Assuming heavy equipment transports were used to move these divisions, force preparation and movement timelines could increase by as much as five to seven days.

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extremely difficult to overcome in just five years. In addition, key materiel shortfalls would include:

- The logistics system, though improved, would be strained to support an offensive far from Iraqi territory. Iraq would still lack the transport assets, mobility, and the battlefield repair capabilities required to replenish losses and sustain combat in a high-intensity environment.
- Iraqi air defense forces would remain incapable—primarily because they would have few modern, mobile SAMs and radars—of protecting troops, lines of communication, and key strategic and supply facilities from sustained attacks by Western air forces. Losses would be devastating—particularly to the thin-skinned vehicles critical to Iraqi sustainment.
- Iraqi ground forces would still be about half their prewar size and would retain primarily older, less-effective Soviet armor systems. They would be overmatched if confronted by Western ground and air forces. []

Iraq's Capabilities To Carry Out the Invasion Threat

The Constrained Force. If economic sanctions were lifted in 1995, and Iraq were able to overcome some of its shortfalls in logistics, readiness, and morale, these improvements would likely offset planned GCC force developments []. As a result, by 1999, if opposed by GCC forces alone, an invading Iraqi force would still be able to overwhelm Kuwait and could probably extend the offensive farther south, perhaps enough to threaten some northern Saudi oil ports and facilities. The critical variables in this assessment are the degree of GCC resistance, particularly its capabilities to interdict Iraqi logistics and armored forces with air power, and the extent of Iraq's logistics reconstitution. []

However, even with the improvements Iraq could make after economic sanctions were lifted, Iraq's military would continue to suffer from critical shortcomings that would limit its effectiveness against Western forces. Key weaknesses—in leadership, doctrine, flexibility, and command and control—would be

The Unconstrained Force. Assuming Iraq was able to build a force similar to that depicted in our “unconstrained-modernized-only” force development scenario, its prospects for seizing and holding Kuwait, particularly against GCC forces alone, would improve. Moreover, in our judgment, Iraq would have a fair chance of extending the attack to critical Saudi oil and water facilities in the Eastern Province if opposed only by the GCC. However, even in this scenario, we judge Iraq's prospects for success in the face of Western opposition to be poor. []

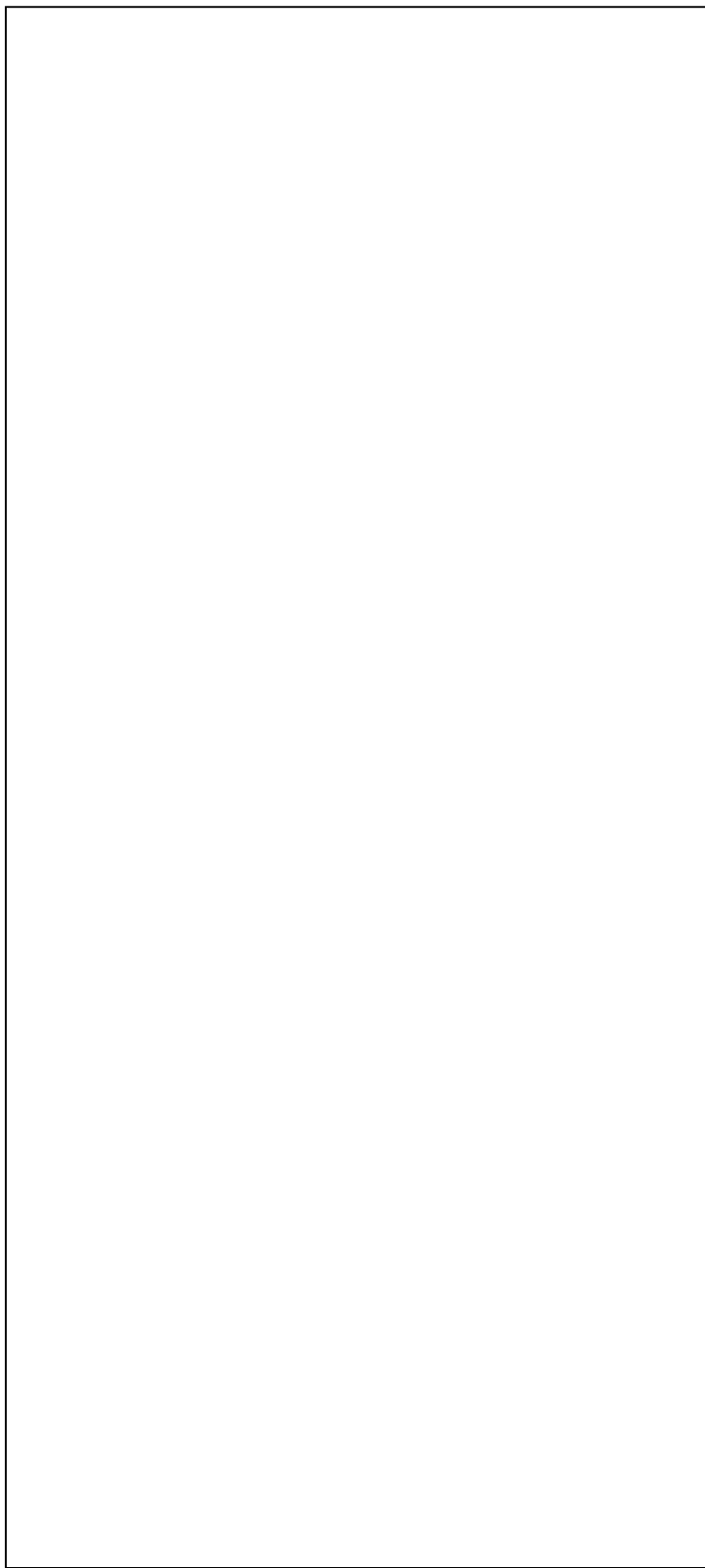
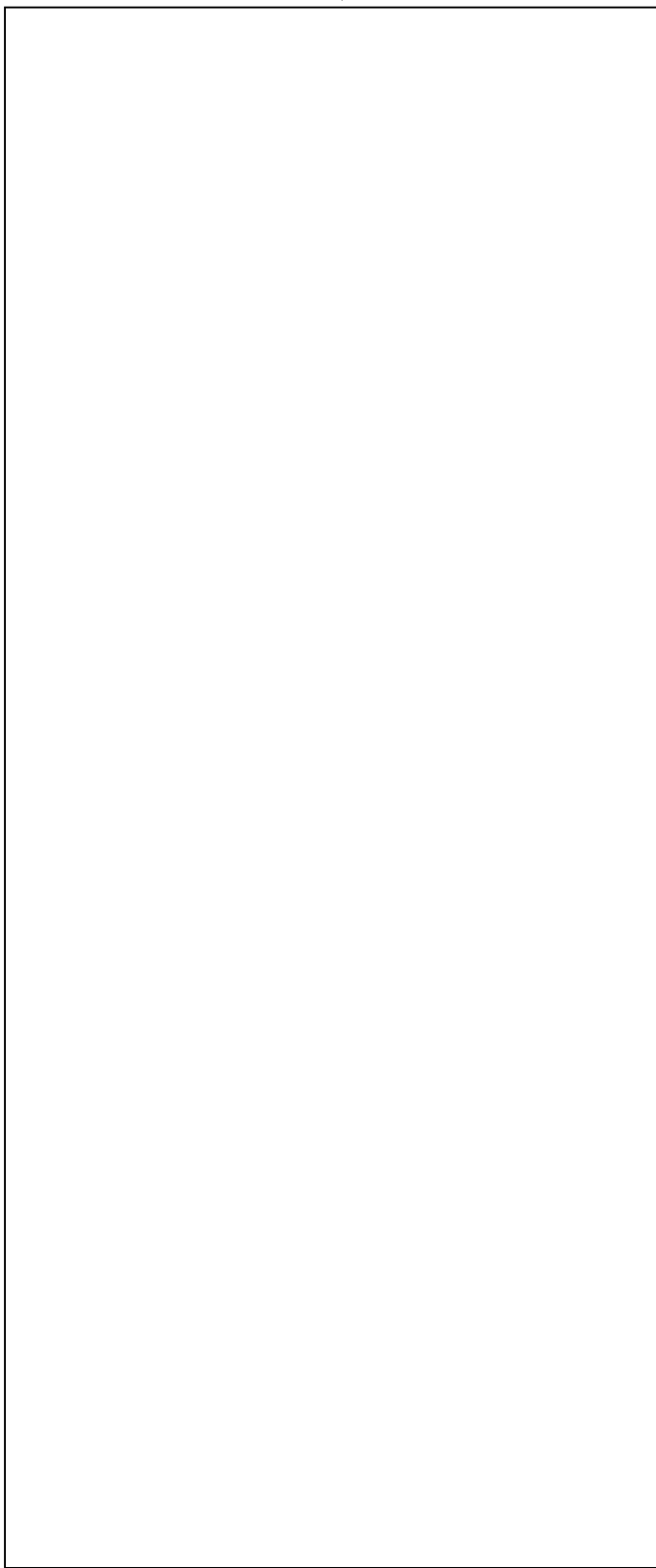
Although the fielding of more advanced tactical air defenses, both with maneuver forces and along lines of communication, would increase Iraq's capabilities to move and support large forces deep into Saudi Arabia, these developments would not have a decisive impact on the effectiveness of the Western air campaign because Iraq would still have training and command and control problems. Also, based on past experience, by 1999, Iraq would probably not have had sufficient time to acquire and assimilate large quantities of sophisticated new equipment into its armed forces. Other areas of concern for Iraq would include:

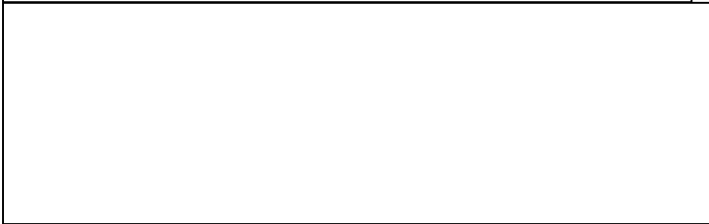
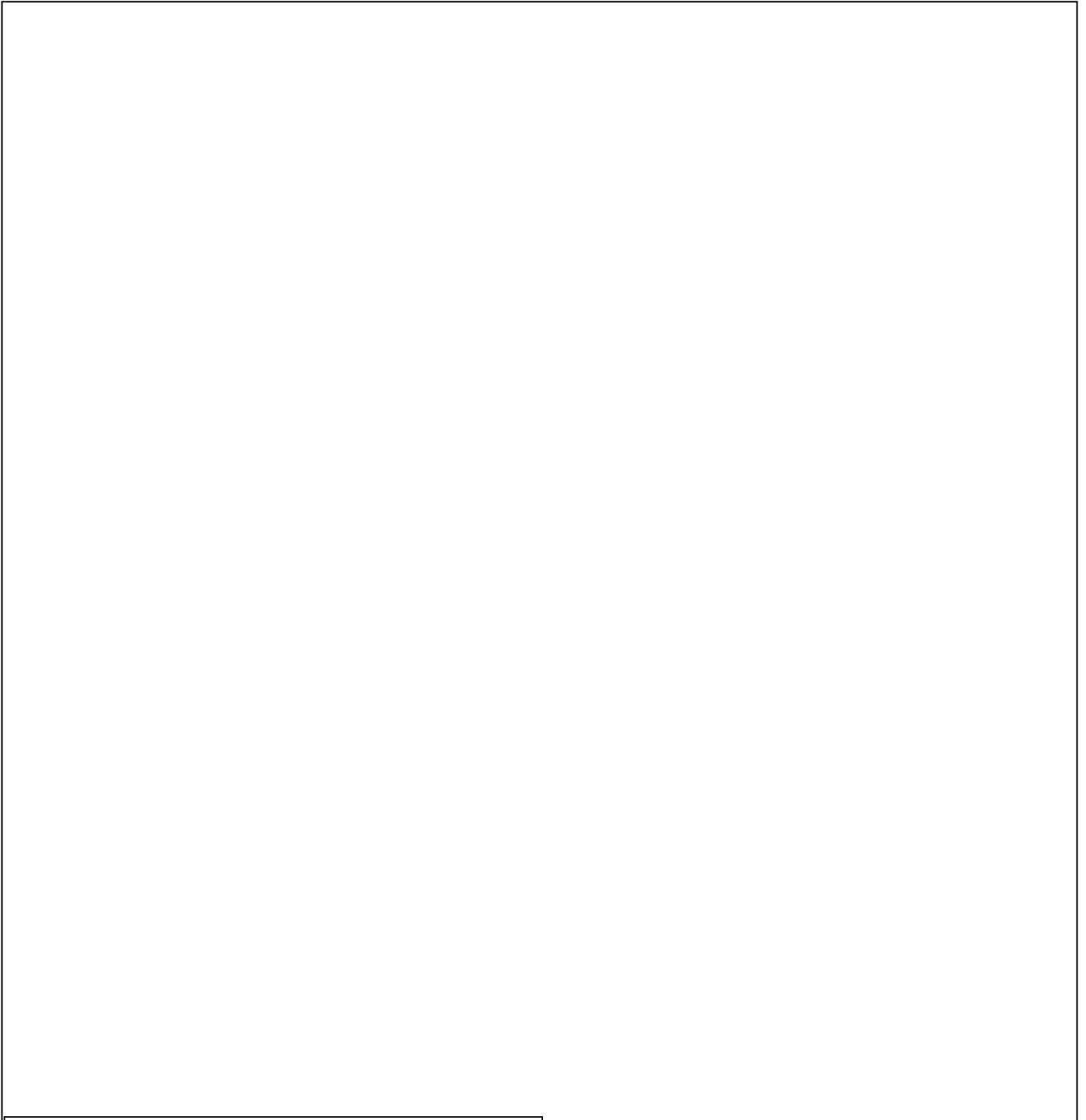
- An unproven ability to establish a forward logistics staging area to move some 150-200 miles beyond the Kuwaiti border.
- An inability to provide comprehensive air defense cover of maneuver forces and logistics elements over extended lines of communication.
- Inadequate training, doctrine, and leadership necessary to conduct deep mobile warfare.

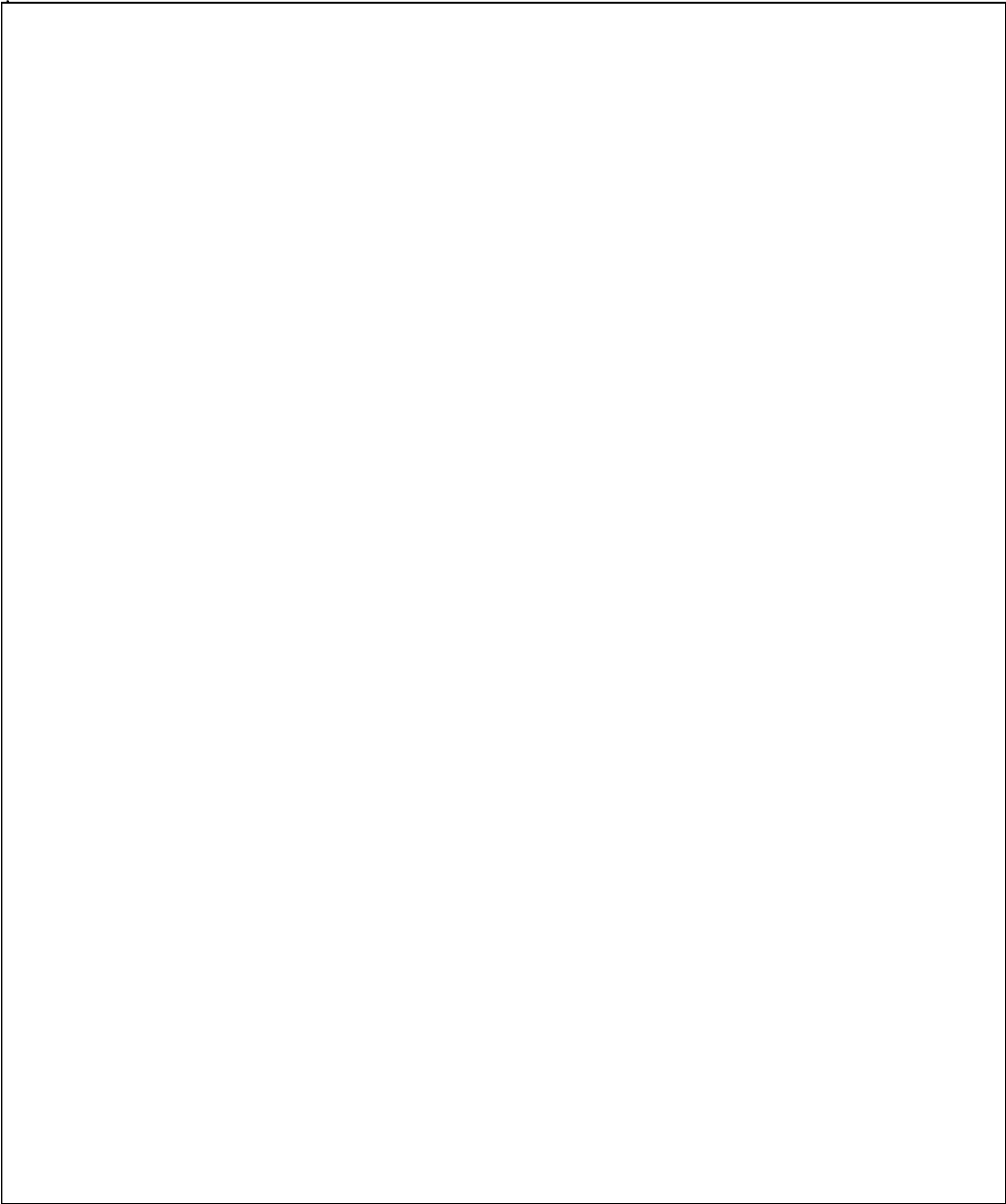
On this latter point, we have no indications, and find it improbable, that Iraq will have improved its tactics, doctrine, command and control, and weapons crew skills to the point where they could successfully engage in an intense, extended, highly mobile campaign against Western forces. For Iraq's politicized military leadership to transform the country's military forces into a professional fighting machine (by Western standards) in just five years would be unprecedented. The training we have observed in the last year provides no hint that such a transformation has begun.

***The US Central Command
(USCENTCOM) View***

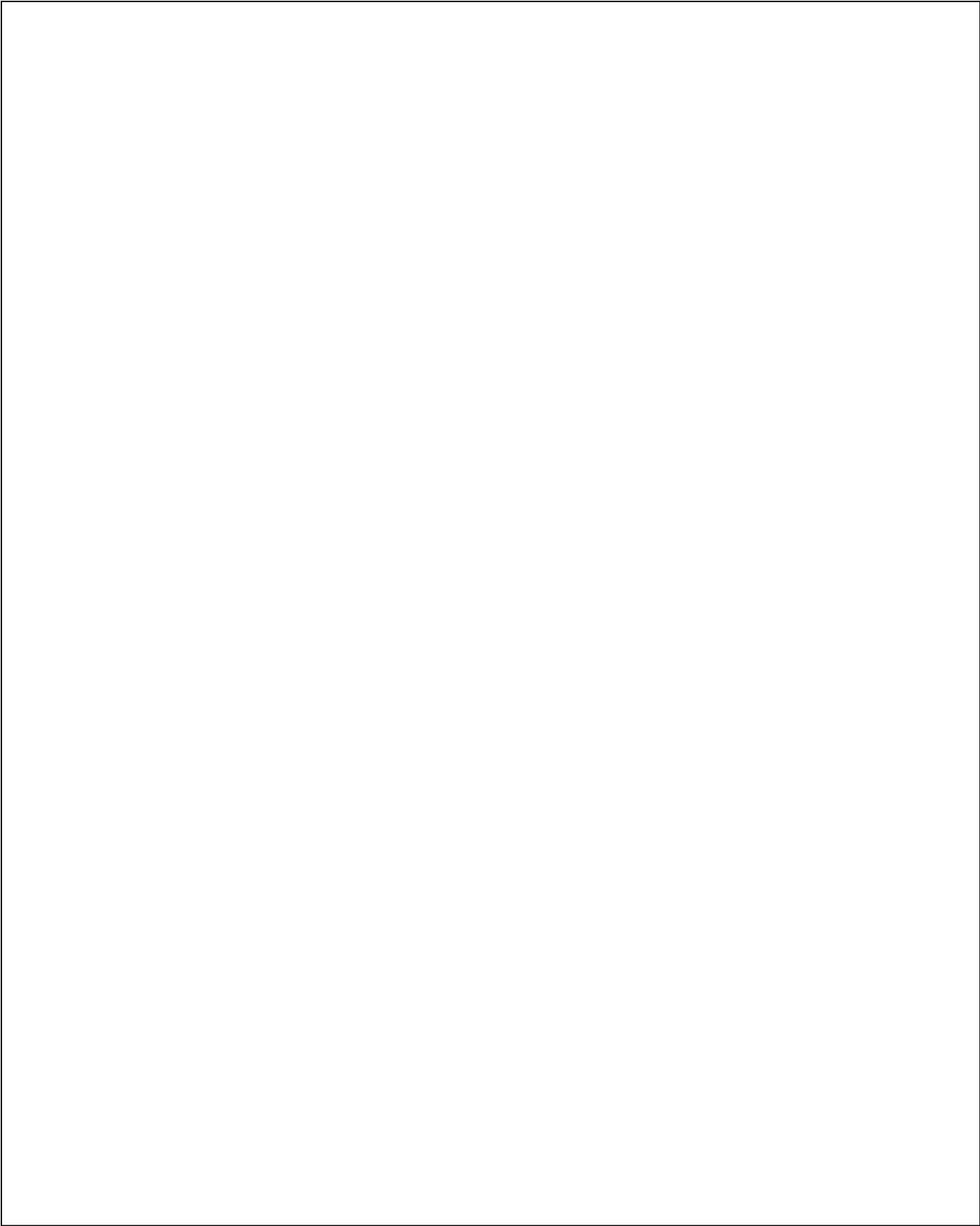
In contrast to the US Intelligence Community, USCENTCOM believes that Iraq currently has the potential capability to project a corps-sized offensive into northeastern Saudi Arabia to threaten the major Saudi oilfields, despite its limitations. Once the arms embargo and trade sanctions were lifted, Iraq would have a much better than fair chance of seizing Saudi oilfields







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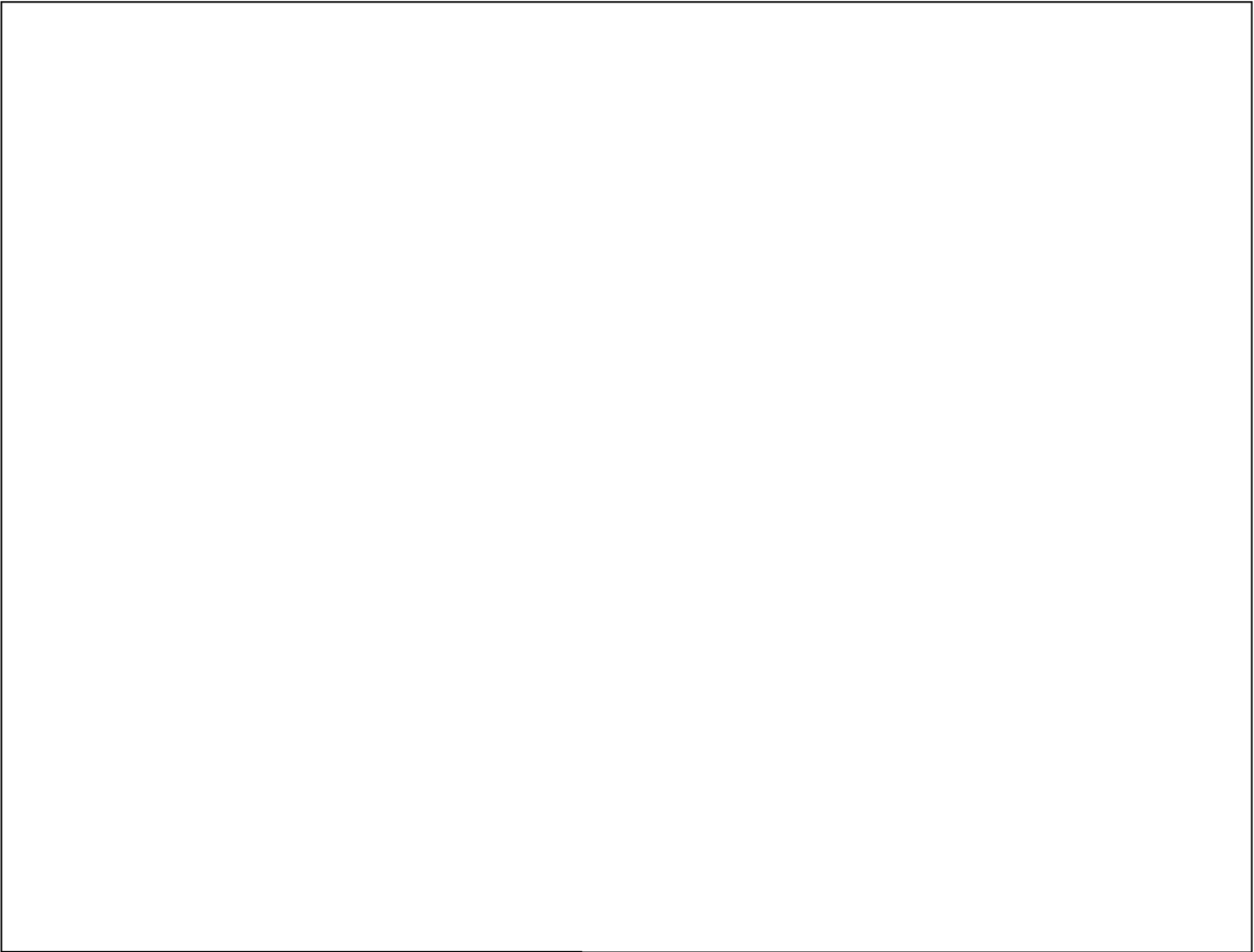
Conclusion

Despite an impressive reconstitution effort under difficult circumstances, Iraq's current military force retains critical weaknesses in readiness, sustainment, morale, leadership, command and control, doctrine, and operational capability. These shortfalls reduce but do not eliminate its potential as a regional threat. Without significant and timely opposition from Western forces, Iraq still has the capability to overwhelm Kuwait. However, we judge Iraqi ground forces to be incapable today, even if opposed only by GCC forces, of quickly extending corps-level operations beyond Kuwait into Saudi Arabia deep enough to threaten most Saudi oil facilities.

For the future, Iraq's overall military capabilities will not improve, and likely will decline, as long as the present array of UN sanctions

remains in place and effective. If economic sanctions were removed, Iraq could make limited improvements in the sustainability and morale of its forces, but is not likely to overcome its systemic and doctrinal weaknesses for the rest of this decade. Even if Iraq is able

to circumvent the UN arms embargo, and acquire newer equipment in significant quantities, its current military weaknesses are unlikely to be fully rectified by 1999.



United States and Saudi Arabia), he is unlikely to replay a Desert Storm scenario with a much less capable force than he had in 1990.

The dynamics that Saddam would consider before undertaking a future invasion of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia include:

In our judgment, Iraq is not likely to attempt to occupy Kuwait and seize the Saudi oilfields as long as Baghdad perceives a clear Western resolve—backed by a strong military capability—to defend the Gulf states. While Saddam is looking for opportunities to exact revenge on Kuwait and principal members of the Desert Storm coalition (for example, the

- ***The size and visibility of US military forces in the region.*** While Baghdad would evaluate the size of US forces in the region before attacking any GCC states, more important than US force numbers would be the perceived

commitment of the United States to move additional forces quickly to the area to ensure the Gulf states' sovereignty.

- ***The status of the UN sanctions and arms embargo.*** Saddam is unlikely to embark on any external military campaigns as long as he is pursuing a conciliatory policy in an attempt to get UN restrictions lifted. If sanctions are lifted or Saddam gives up hope that sanctions will be lifted, there is an increased chance of military initiatives.
- ***Resolution of the Kurdish situation.*** At present almost two-thirds of the Iraqi military is deployed in the north. Baghdad could decide to withdraw much of this force during the next five years if the Kurdish provinces were

returned to its control or if Baghdad changed its strategy there to one that only protects northern Iraqi cities from the perceived Kurdish threat. Either situation would allow Baghdad to deploy these forces to its southern border.

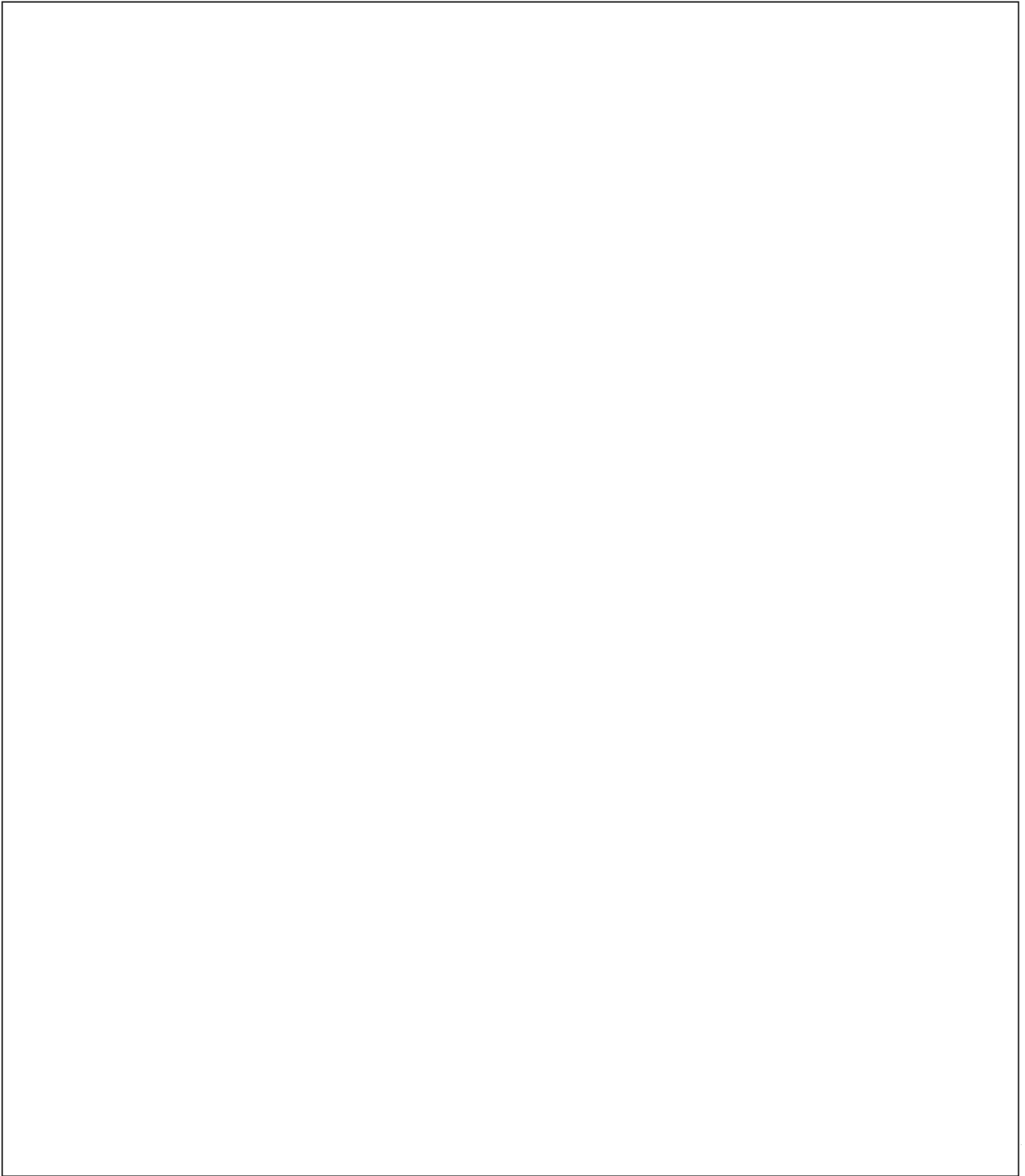
- ***The status of Iraq's military forces.*** Iraqi receipt of newer generation equipment would increase Iraq's potential military capability; however, its current military shortfalls are not likely to be fully overcome. Accordingly Iraq's military would still not match its overall pre-Desert Storm capabilities.

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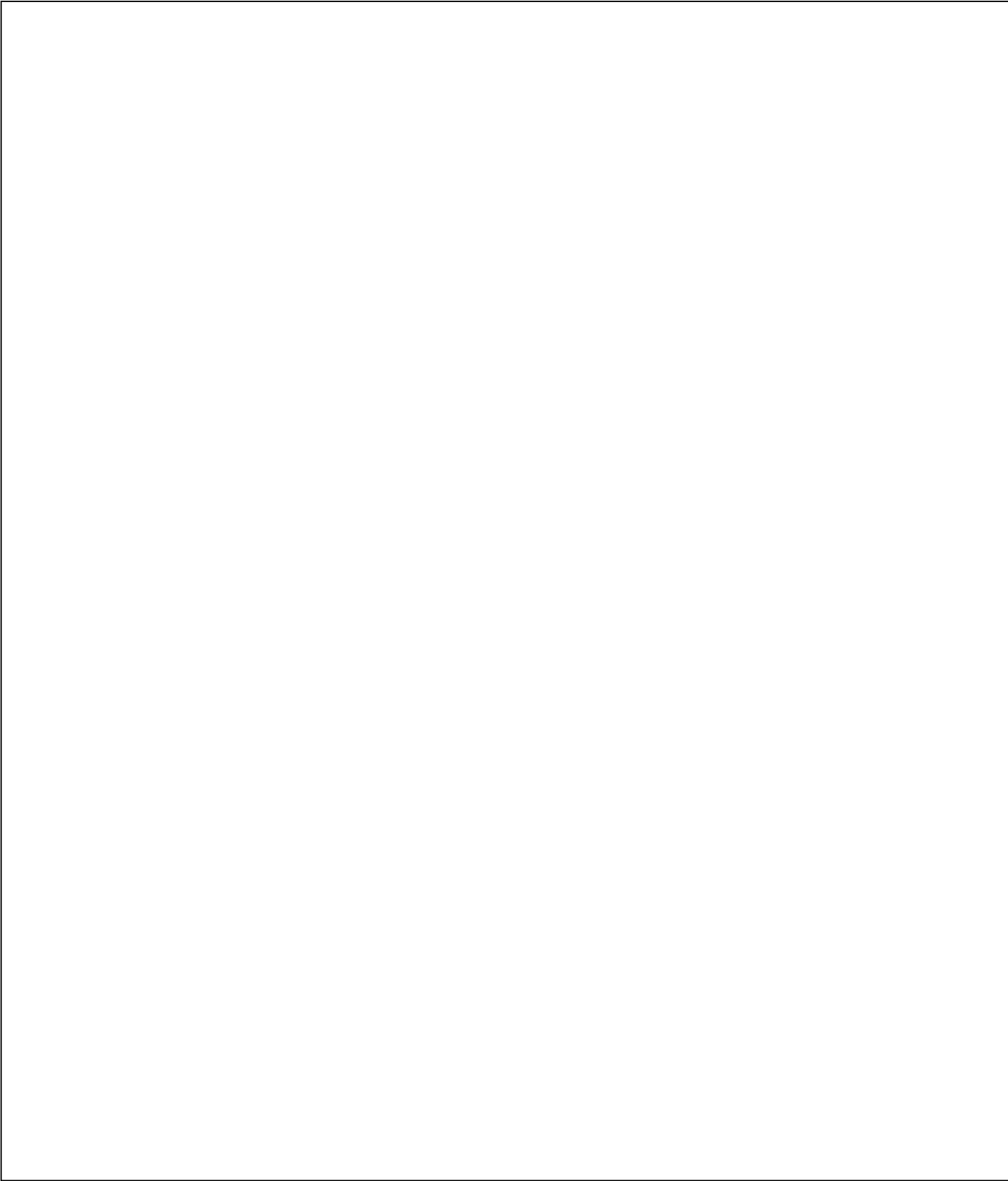
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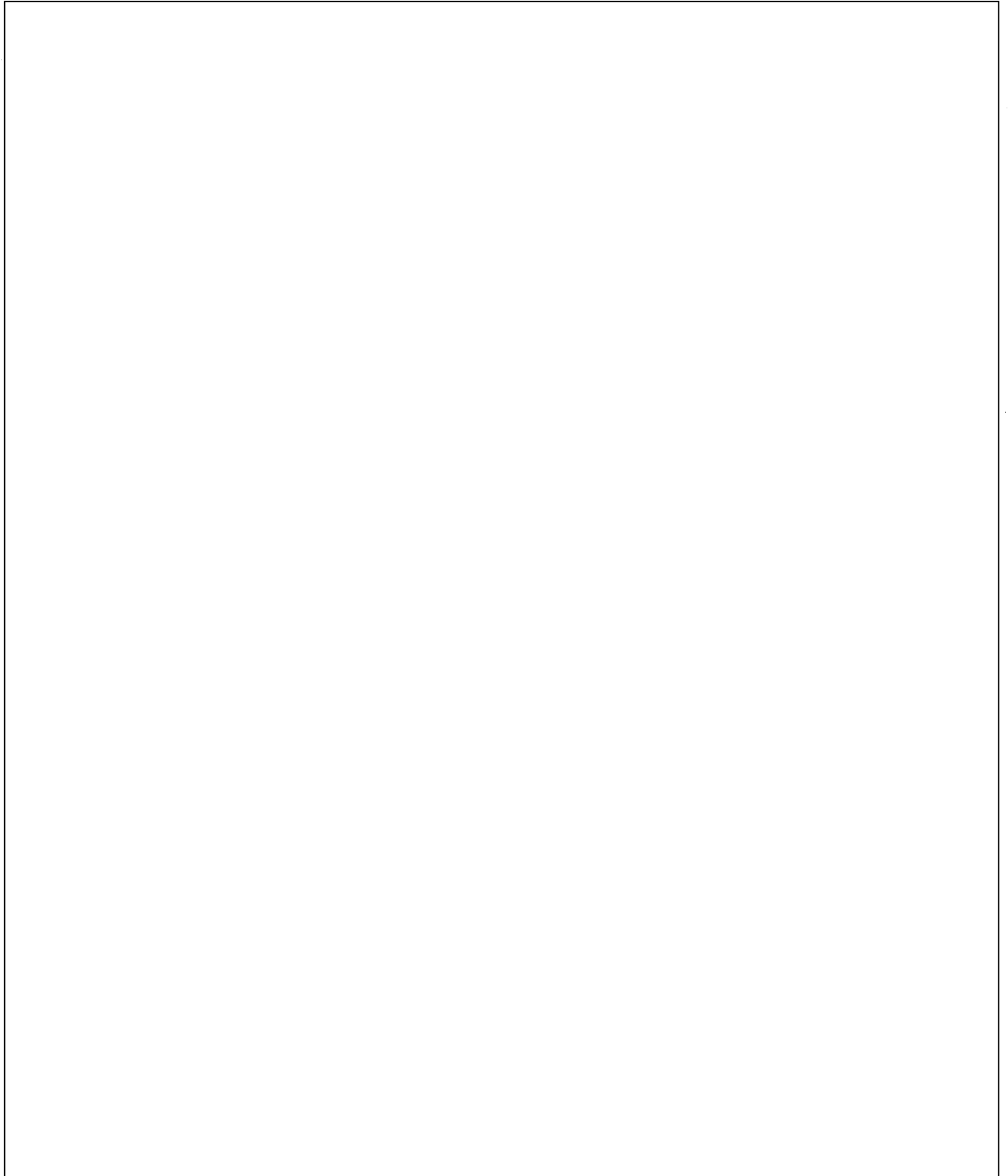
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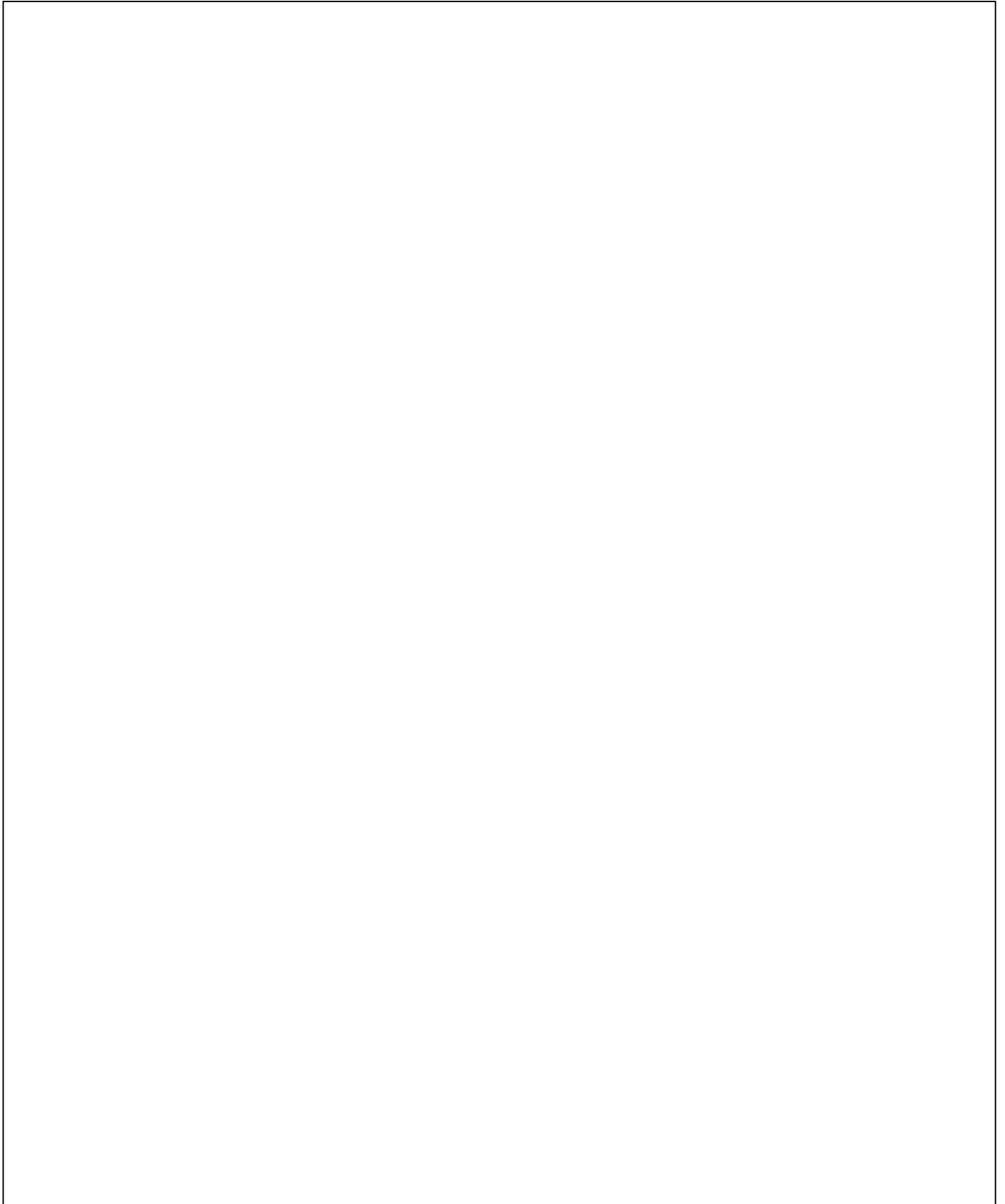
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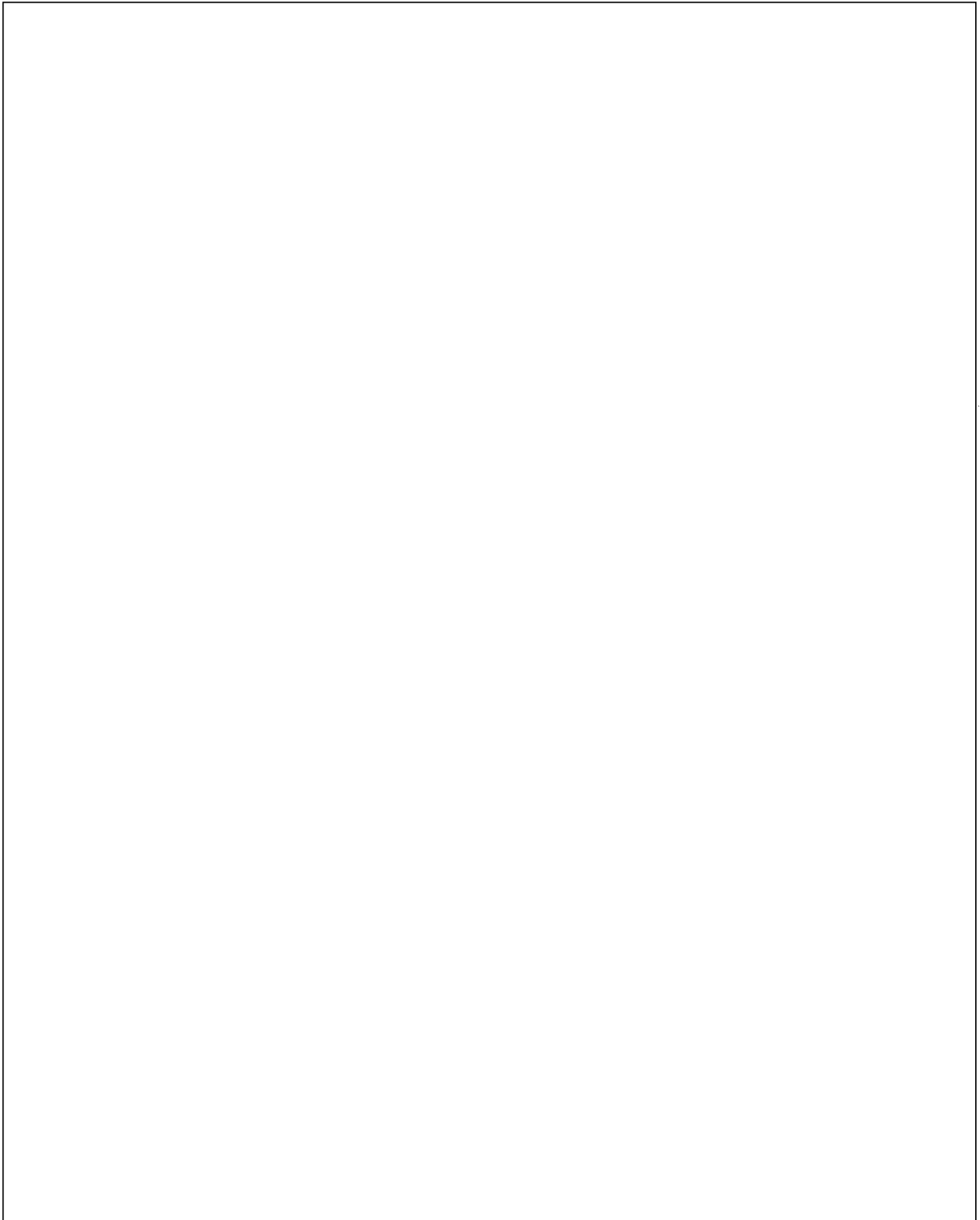
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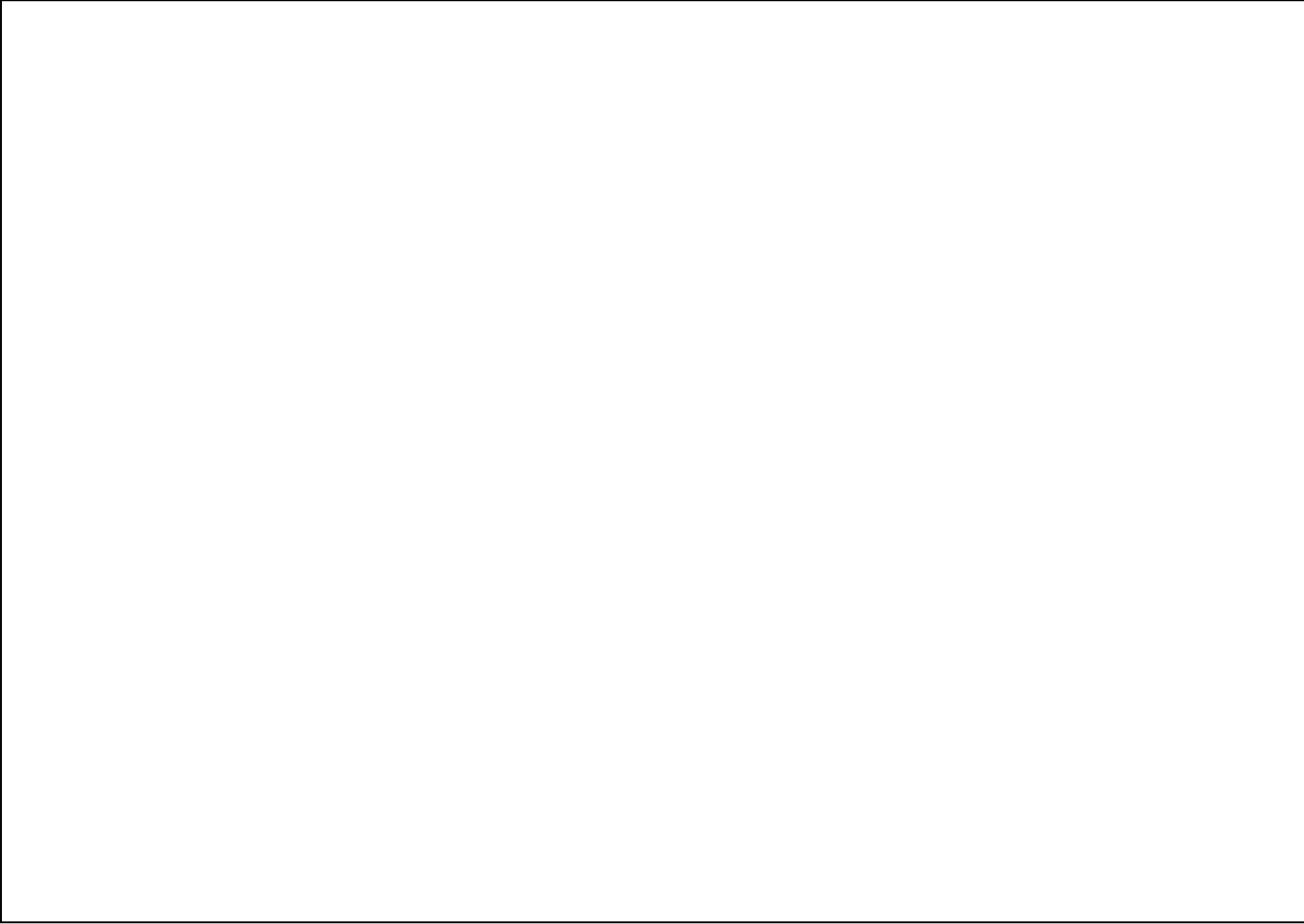
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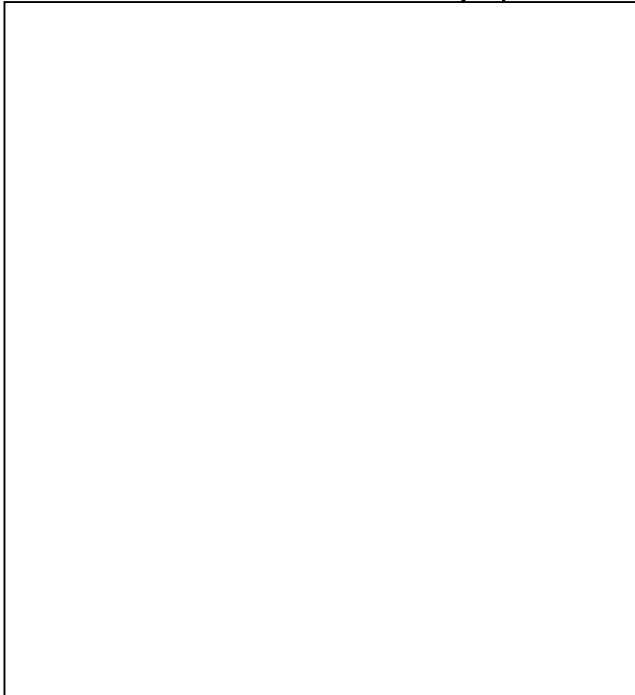
Annex C

Limited Iraqi Threats to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia

Limited Missile or Airstrikes

Iraq will maintain the capability to conduct air or missile strikes in an effort to damage or destroy key targets—perhaps oil-related facilities—in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia:

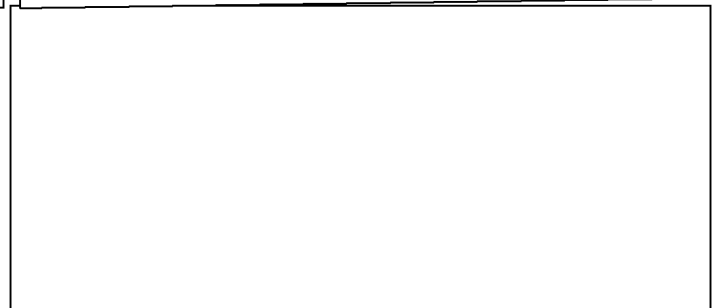
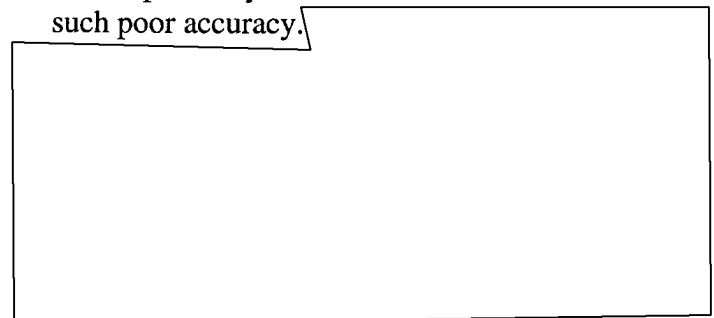
- *Airstrikes.* Iraq's air force could launch a small punitive airstrike with little preparation.



Assessment. As long as Western aircraft are enforcing the no-fly zone over southern Iraq, the Iraqi air force has little chance of successfully attacking targets in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. Even if the no-fly zone is eliminated, Iraq's prospects would improve only slightly. In either case, attrition would probably be

high, particularly against targets that were well defended by surface-to-air missiles and antiaircraft artillery, since the Iraqi air force does not routinely practice air defense suppression. Overall, given Saddam's penchant for employing his air force conservatively, he would probably conclude that the risk of taking on coalition air and air defense forces was not worth the potential gain of a difficult strike against point targets in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia.

- *Missile strikes.* A missile attack against point targets in either Kuwait or Saudi Arabia would be problematic for Iraq. Oil facilities in both countries are unlikely to suffer significant and longlasting damage from Iraqi Scuds, primarily because the missiles have such poor accuracy.



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Any of these options could be taken by the regular Army alone, although the Republican Guard would be the preferred strike element in the limited-objective invasion scenario. Force requirements would range from as little as a brigade—if the objective were simply to challenge and intimidate—to as many as eight divisions if Iraq planned to seize and occupy territory in the face of Western opposition.

Limited Ground Operations

Iraq will remain capable of conducting a number of limited ground operations against Kuwait. For instance, Iraq could:

- Challenge the Demilitarized Zone on the Iraqi side of the border by moving forces into the zone.
- Conduct a punitive raid into Kuwait with the goal of destroying or damaging an objective or carrying off property. Such in-and-out raids would likely focus on the northern oilfields, and Kuwaiti border posts and defense structures.
- Conduct a limited-objective invasion of Kuwait designed to seize and hold selected areas or facilities adjacent to the border.

Assessment. Iraq could easily move forces into the demilitarized zone and keep them there indefinitely, or until they were driven out by Western forces. Iraq could also successfully execute a punitive raid under the right conditions—surprise, limited objectives, and short duration. However, the Iraqi military would have a difficult time taking and holding Kuwaiti territory in the face of concerted Western opposition. Moreover, Iraq probably perceives that it would suffer large losses from Western air strikes in each of these scenarios.

Warning Notice

**National Security
Information**

Information available as of 30 June 1994 was used in the preparation of this National Intelligence Estimate.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this Estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency
The Defense Intelligence Agency
The National Security Agency
The Bureau of Intelligence and Research,
Department of State

also participating:

The Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence,
Department of the Army
The Director of Naval Intelligence,
Department of the Navy
The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence,
Department of the Air Force

**This Estimate was approved for publication by the
National Foreign Intelligence Board.**

