

FROM WASHFAX SITE 3B

(MON) 11. 4 '02 10:48 / ST. 10:47 / NO. 3760635478 P 1

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From Office/Red Cell Disssem External

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FROM: ASSOCIATE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR INTELLIGENCE

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TRANSMIT TO:

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Director of Central Intelligence

DCI Red Cell

A Red Cell Special Memorandum

2 November 2002

~~SECRET~~ [redacted] (b)(3)

Turning Saddam's Core Personality Traits Against Him [redacted] (b)(3)

Saddam Hussein's strong conviction about the absolute correctness of his own opinions makes him vulnerable to deception operations. Similarly, Saddam's overconfidence in his singular ability to manage crises might lead to misjudgments and exploitable rashness, particularly if Saddam perceives his control of people and events to be slipping. The dictator's ruthless readiness to suppress internal challenges could be pricked to induce repressive steps that roil his inner circle and build international support for US intervention. And the Iraqi strongman's presumption that "everyone is willing to cut a deal" might lull him into a false sense of longevity and into delaying countermeasures against US military moves until it is too late. [redacted] (b)(3)

In response to the events of 11 September, the Director of Central Intelligence commissioned CIA's Deputy Director for Intelligence to create a "red cell" that would think unconventionally about the full range of relevant analytic issues. The DCI Red Cell is thus charged with taking a pronounced "out-of-the-box" approach and will periodically produce memoranda and reports intended to provoke thought rather than to provide authoritative assessment. Please direct questions or comments to the DCI Red Cell at [redacted]

[redacted] the Red Cell was asked to consider how to turn those characteristics to US advantage. [redacted] (b)(1)
(b)(3)

Exploiting Saddam's Self-Image [redacted] (b)(3)

Saddam is a resourceful thug who has nearly perfected the art of dictatorial rule. Successful application of calculated ruthlessness and a wanton disregard for anything other than himself effectively shields him from potential foes. (b)(3)

- Opportunities nevertheless abound to turn his supposed strengths against him. [redacted] (b)(1)
Saddam-watchers have identified key attributes that serve his insatiable appetite for power but that may work against him in wartime. [redacted] (b)(3)(3)

Conviction about the correctness of his own opinions, intimidation of subordinates who disagree, and unwillingness to listen to bad news or contrary views leaves Saddam vulnerable to deception operations. If facts on the ground conflict with his strongly held notions, he could be led to reject the facts, to his own detriment.

- The dogmatic convictions of Hitler about where D-Day would come and of Stalin in rejecting warnings of a German invasion are cases in point. Few Iraqi subordinates are willing to say, "No, Saddam, you are wrong," especially if they believe his mind is set. And Saddam may reject the views of those few who dare suggest alternatives.

- Saddam's propensity to operate inside the box of his own infallibility might be enhanced by disinformation or disruption operations directed at communications between Saddam and his key commands. With little, or confusing, information coming in, Saddam is even more likely to act on "what I alone know is true." [redacted] (b)(3)

Arrogance about his ability to manage crises and "come out on top" could lead to misjudgments if Saddam sees his control of people and events slipping. Belated realization that things are not going his way, either diplomatically as war looms or on the battlefield once the shooting starts, could set off an escalatory cycle of anger, impulsiveness, and poorly hatched decisions undermining Iraq's warfighting capabilities. (b)(3)

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(b)(3)

- US-led or orchestrated actions that undermined Saddam's control would exploit this vulnerability. Saddam might be especially inclined to overreact if he thought his own clans or broader elements of the Sunni elite were abandoning him, or if hated foes—Kurds, Shi'a, or Iranians—were leading a rebellious charge or otherwise diluting his ability to manage a wartime crisis. [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

A ruthless willingness to suppress internal challenges to his rule is an integral part of Saddam's confidence that he can master any crisis; pricking this sensitivity might induce new repressive actions that further divide Iraqis and justify US intervention. Selected operations "proving" that Saddam's hold is weakening might enrage the dictator and push him into exploitable blunders, including diversion of elite troops to supposedly troubled locales and away from more critical US wartime targets.

- If Saddam thought major Shi'a or Kurdish moves against him were in the offing despite his increased efforts to deter them, he might move him to suppress them preemptively, which would strengthen the case for prompt US intervention on humanitarian grounds. Saddam might reject the lure and contain his instincts, allowing opposition groups to gain important ground. Saddam, in his infallible wisdom, might also be convinced of "a deal" between Iran, the US, and the Shi'a and fall into mistakes.
- Credible indications of plots against the Iraqi dictator from within the regime might incite purges and push a worried crony to get Saddam before Saddam gets him. For example, the rivalry between Saddam's sons, Qusay and Uday, opens the door to stories designed to sow distrust between the sons and between father and sons. Or noticeably dropping Tariq Aziz or other prominent leaders from the published list of potential war criminals—perhaps following a foreign trip—might lead Saddam to infer collaboration with the US.
- Saddam is mindful of the fate of Romania's Ceaucescu and Serbia's Milosevic—one murdered by the mob, the other turned over to a war crimes tribunal. Information warfare claiming that fissures inside Iraq will lead Saddam to such an end might induce paranoid mistakes and miscalculations. [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

The Iraqi strongman's **belief that, at the end of the day, everyone is willing to cut a deal** might lull him into a false sense that, even as fighting begins, he can put something together with Washington. This sense might lead to delays in critical decisions or "too little, too late" responses to US military moves. Thinking he is supremely able to navigate a world of options—even war leaves some options open—might induce him to delay military or terrorist strikes until US countermeasures are ready.

- For example, Saddam might believe whispered messages from Russia or Syria indicating a US willingness to cut a deal on inspections rather than risk a war without sufficient UNSC support, or to let Saddam survive a war as long as he does not use WMD against the US.
- Saddam might even see the prospect of US troops at the gates of Baghdad as providing scope for a deal if the US or the right foreign government hints that a prolonged but "humane" siege is likely, in lieu of a destructive assault. [REDACTED]

(b)(3)

Even if Turkey cannot be restrained from implementing its contingency plans to occupy parts of the north, the US might be able to make use of this as part of a mind game. Saddam probably assumes invading Turks would have their hands full with the Kurds, and that both Turks and Kurds would bargain with Baghdad to avoid clashing with Iraqi forces.

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- If it appeared, however, that the Kurds and Turks had made their own deal to keep their knives away from each other's throats, Saddam's sense of controlling the battlefield might be shaken in ways that cause him to disperse reliable troops or take provocative actions that solidify international support for US military action. [REDACTED] (b)(3)

Saddam is a classic victimizer, turning his subordinates and the Iraqi people into perversely loyal drones filled with repressed anger and resentment. While it is difficult to liberate victims from obedient paralysis, Saddam might one day push a close associate too far, cathartically releasing a lethal response. Although suspicious of everyone and, like a mob boss, quick to kill at the merest whiff of betrayal, Saddam might miss a plot concocted by a toady he has browbeaten for years.

- An information war offensive that plays to the theme of Saddam's inner circle pushed over the edge by his idiosyncratic tyranny—in effect playing back on Saddam the Sadat scenario of assassination by his own security people—might exploit the dictator's paranoia and provoke a purge, to US advantage.
- As the pressures of war increase and associates see Saddam willing to sacrifice everyone else on a heretofore-unimagined scale, stories that subordinates will ditch Saddam to save themselves become more credible. [REDACTED] (b)(3)

If Saddam has a "values compass," its magnetic needle points only at Saddam himself. Playing off of his goals and values—all nicely rational and coherent in his own mind—is another tack for influencing behavior. Power, prestige, and idolatry are Saddam's food, air, and water. Depriving him of this sustenance could throw him off stride.

- Destroying his symbols of omnipotence—palaces, statues, monuments, and images—and inducing Arabs states, France, and Russia—in whose respect Saddam finds aspects of his self-image—to show instead scorn, contempt, and slight regard might frustrate and distract him.
- Anti-Saddam agitations from the vaunted "Arab Street" sprawling across Arab media outlets—especially popular satellite channels on which Saddam counts to get his propaganda out to the world—would undercut his pretensions as exemplary "hero of all Arabs." [REDACTED] (b)(3)

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