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(b)(3)

SENIOR EXECUTIVE INTELLIGENCE BRIEF
12 March 2003
PASS SEIB 03-058CHX

Iraq: Security Zones Enhance Command and Control

[Redacted]

(b)(3)

Saddam is prepared to implement contingency plans to divide Iraq into regional security zones and delegate command authority--probably including authorization for the use of WMD--to zone commanders. The regional security commands would be authorized to use military, security, and civil resources to confront external aggression or to preserve internal security without waiting for instructions from Baghdad.

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[Large Redacted Area]

The regime is likely to announce publicly the establishment of the zones--in the works since early last year--when Saddam perceives hostilities are imminent. Baghdad enacted a similar plan the day before coalition strikes in 1998, and the devolution of authority probably reflects lessons learned from the post-Gulf war uprisings in 1991, when spontaneous popular unrest quickly overwhelmed local security and military forces.

-- The regional security commands announced by presidential decree in December 1998 remained in effect until June 2000.

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