

POTENTIAL OF IRAQI LOCAL COUNCILS  
TO FACILITATE IRAQI NATIONAL UNITY

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE  
General Studies

by

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## ABSTRACT

POTENTIAL OF IRAQI LOCAL COUNCILS TO FACILITATE IRAQI NATIONAL UNITY, by Major Brian M. Ducote, 153 pages.

U.S. military, Department of State, and Iraqi officials face many challenges moving a unified Iraq forward. This paper attempts to answer a critical question: Can local Iraqi grassroots councils facilitate a strategic endstate like achieving national unity? Although a lot of scholars mention the potential of a grassroots approach, very few identify such entities as means to achieve such elusive ends. As a part of the methodology, the paper uses ten principles presented by Kenneth M. Pollack in his most recent book *A Path Out of the Desert*. Using Pollack's tenets, this paper creates an analytical framework to then assess local councils and their utility in achieving national unity. Using interviews and surveys from Iraqi local nationals and U.S. officials, the paper seeks to not only define the grassroots entities from multiple perspectives, but then assess the data using Pollack's guiding concepts. In conclusion, the reader will denote the capability of grassroots councils and determine whether such entities present a possible means to achieve a strategic endstate like national unity in Iraq.

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## ACRONYMS

|       |                                                                    |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AQIZ  | Al Qaeda in Iraq                                                   |
| CF    | Coalition Forces                                                   |
| CGSC  | Command and General Staff College                                  |
| DAC   | District Area Chairman                                             |
| EJK   | Extra Judicial Killing                                             |
| GOI   | Government of Iraq                                                 |
| IBCT  | Infantry Brigade Combat Team                                       |
| IDP   | Internally Displaced Person                                        |
| IFCNR | Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation |
| ISF   | Iraqi Security Force                                               |
| JAM   | Jaysh Al Mahadi                                                    |
| LC    | Local (Grassroots) Councils                                        |
| NAC   | Neighborhood Area Chairman                                         |
| SOI   | Sons of Iraq (Guard Program)                                       |
| TF    | Task Force                                                         |
| U.S.  | United States                                                      |

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Military action is absolutely necessary but it is not sufficient.

— GEN David Petraeus

The best victory is when the opponent surrenders of its own accord before there are any actual hostilities. . . . It is best to win without fighting.

— Sun Tzu

Many Americans, pundits, and politicians alike give credit for the current progress in Iraq to the surge of U.S. forces in 2007. Retired General Jack Keane, a primary architect of the concept that increased the number of U.S. forces on the ground in Iraq, stated in an interview that the surge created a “stunning turnaround [that] people will study...for years because it's unparalleled in counterinsurgency practice.”<sup>1</sup> In addition, President Barak Obama, one of the most hostile critics of the war in Iraq conceded in September of 2008 “that the surge has succeeded in ways that nobody anticipated.”<sup>2</sup>

Although the impact of the surge cannot be minimalized, the concept falls short of providing a roadmap for the future; the strategy fixed a problem but does not lend itself as a permanent solution. The American people, especially the military, understand that sustaining the current number of personnel on the ground will break the U.S. armed forces. Suicide rates, disciplinary issues, and reported cases of post traumatic stress disorder have amplified since the increase of forces in Iraq. Thomas Insel, Director of

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew Kaminski, “Why the Surge Worked: Jack Keane,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 30, 2008, A13.

<sup>2</sup>Senator Barak H. Obama, Interview by Bill O'Reilly, *O'Reilly Factor: No Spin Zone*, September 4, 2008.

the National Institute of Mental Health, said this year that “it's quite possible that the suicides and psychiatric mortality of this war could trump the combat deaths”<sup>3</sup> at the current rate.

The surge worked, but what now? Experts from the Center for American Progress wrote it best in a recent report: “Now that the last surge brigades are gone, Iraq’s government is demanding a strict timeline for the departure of U.S. troops, and U.S. policy in Iraq is moving toward an *inevitable transition* [emphasis added].”<sup>4</sup> Although the surge approach was exceptionally worthwhile and successful in all operational regards, the U.S. military is now moving beyond the surge strategy and attempting to maintain gains amidst changing and realistic circumstances. Under the new U.S. presidential administration, the United States will reduce the number of U.S. forces securing Iraq. As a result, U.S. military and Department of State leaders are now relying heavily on a comprehensive strategy dubbed “national unity” to capitalize on the current success and preserve the peace.

General David Petraeus, the former Multi-National Forces-Iraq Commander, aptly stated in early 2006, “Tribal engagement and local reconciliation work . . . encourage it.”<sup>5</sup> His simple yet effective directive was derived from recent successes in halting spiraling violence throughout Iraq. Although increasing the number of troops was absolutely

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<sup>3</sup>Avram Goldstein, “Post-War Suicides May Exceed Combat Deaths,” Bloomberg.com, October 5, 2008, [http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=a2\\_71Klo2vig](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=a2_71Klo2vig) (accessed October 15, 2008).

<sup>4</sup>Peter Juul, Brian Katulis, and Marc Lynch, *Iraq's Political Transition After the Surge: Five Enduring Tensions and Ten Key Challenges* (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2008), 2.

<sup>5</sup>Linda Robinson, “He Came, He Cut Deals, He (May) Conquer,” *Washington Post*, September 14, 2008, B1.

necessary, the surge was in reality a catalyst for greater, more prevailing concepts that truly caused the current progress in the region. The concept of reconciliation emerged from the surge and allowed Iraqis to take command of their future and subsequently propelled the nation towards peace. The concept resulted in several national level programs that stimulated cooperation and progression. The Awakening Group, the Sons of Iraq (SOI) program, project initiatives, detainee releases, microgrants, internally displaced person (IDP) resettlement, and local reconciliation councils are a few examples of such initiatives. Through reconciliation and the aforementioned programs, U.S. military and State Department leaders were able to at least temporarily mitigate deep seeded sectarian differences between the Sunni and Shia. By the summer of 2007 when compared to pre-surge conditions, some of Iraq's most contentious regions witnessed a reduction in violence by "over 80 percent and counting"<sup>6</sup> according to U.S. military officials. By late summer of 2007 in Hayy Aamel, Baghdad, an area once notorious for violent sectarian attacks, one company commander stated that "extra-judicial killings (EJK) were drastically decreased."<sup>7</sup>

The concept of reconciliation not only halted sectarian violence, but also provided insights on how to harmonize the relationship between American and Arab cultures. While operating in West Rasheed, Baghdad in the Task Force 1-28 area of operations, LTC Patrick Frank "witnessed a significant increase in intelligence reports and cooperation among the local national populace"<sup>8</sup> after the task force actively pursued

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<sup>6</sup>LTC Patrick D. Frank, Interview by author, October 15, 2008, Fort Riley, Kansas.

<sup>7</sup>CPT Sean P. Lyons, Telephonic interview by author, February 20, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> Frank.

reconciliation. Furthermore, the infamous casualty toll produced monthly by the Department of Defense spoke for itself. Highlighting the progress in a press conference in late 2007, President Bush declared that violence in Iraq was “down to its lowest level since the spring of 2004 [and we began] our third consecutive month with reduced violence levels holding steady.”<sup>9</sup>

Some aspects of reconciliation can potentially provide U.S. military and State Department leaders a template of what worked in Iraq. In an area of the world where many Americans often feel like a fish out of water, a culturally attuned and successful solution is extremely important. Based on the significant number of transferred programs from U.S-driven reconciliation efforts to the Iraqi-driven strategy known as national unity, one could assume U.S. officials have analyzed the successes of reconciliation, gleaned critical features, and applied such facets to support future endeavors. To ensure a common understanding of the similarities, differences, and associated programs between reconciliation and national unity the following definitions will be used throughout this paper:

Reconciliation--the initial strategy executed by primarily U.S. military personnel to halt sectarian bloodshed between warring parties. Reconciliation was achieved in many cases with the assistance of local grassroots councils. Depending on the area, warring parties are defined as Al Qaeda versus local nationals or Sunni versus Shia. Reconciliation sought to achieve and reinforce peace through programs like detainee release initiatives, micro-grants, project initiatives, and local guard programs. The Awakening Group (Sunni) and the Concerned Local Citizens (Shia) were later commonly referred to as Sons of Iraq (SOI). These programs are analogous to the local guard programs under reconciliation.

Local Councils--unofficially or officially incorporated by U.S. forces in the strategy of reconciliation. They are grassroots councils that provided Iraqi local

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<sup>9</sup>CNN.com/world, “Iraq war still unpopular even as U.S. deaths plummet,” July 31, 2008, <http://edition.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/meast/07/31/bush.iraq/index.html> (accessed April 10, 2009).

leader oversight and involvement in the reconciliation process. Depending on the area, local leaders formed homogeneous (Sunni or Shia) or mixed (Sunni and Shia) councils to liaison with Coalition Forces about reconciliation activities. Some local councils were more formalized than others and many were focused initially around the guard programs. Local councils often expanded their involvement as reconciliation grew to include other programs like detainee release initiatives, microgrants, and IDP resettlement that served to empower these local leaders and ultimately facilitated the peace process. Of note, these local councils sometimes included officially elected Iraqi governmental representatives but generally consisted of non-elected personnel.

National Unity--a subsequent strategy adopted by the Iraqi government using the reconciliation template. This strategy is often interchanged with reconciliation due to their similar nature and ultimate objectives. Under national unity, many reconciliation programs have been transferred to the government, including detainee release initiatives and numerous local projects. Furthermore, the Iraqi government, under U.S. military and State Department guidance, has transferred many guard programs to legitimate Iraqi Army and/or police under the auspices of national unity. National unity has recognized local grassroots councils and has even created an office for national reconciliation. However, there is little interaction between the national reconciliation board and local grassroots councils.

Current literature on the topic of Iraq's future often uses the concepts of reconciliation and national unity interchangeably. However, subtle differences exist between the two critical notions. For this paper, reconciliation represents immediate forgiveness for grievances and a willingness to move forward in the moment. The U.S. military largely advocated and nurtured reconciliation through several key programs and agreements. The Awakening Group, the Sons of Iraq program, project initiatives, detainee release plans, microgrants, and reconciliation councils are a few examples of such initiatives. National unity, born of reconciliation, goes beyond that definition and provides a strategic roadmap for achieving long term peace. Although similar to reconciliation in terms of policy and programs, the sustainment of national unity is incumbent upon Iraqis rather than Americans. One Iraqi governmental official in

Baghdad, Abu Mendou, suggests that “Iraq must learn to stop her bleeding from within.”<sup>10</sup> If reconciliation stopped the bloodshed initially, then Iraqi leaders must undertake national unity to ensure acts of violence of such proportions do not occur again in the future.

The concept of national unity has left many American and Iraqi politicians and civilians disappointed. "It's not like they're going to be reconciled--it's just that they have to learn how not to kill each other,"<sup>11</sup> said James Miller of the Center for New American Security in Washington. Although achieving national unity is admittedly a daunting task, one must realize that it can facilitate greatly a long term peace in Iraq. In designing and implementing a strategy of national unity, the U.S. military, the Department of State, and Iraqi governmental leaders should continue to capitalize on reconciliatory values and programs. U.S. military and civilian leaders have skillfully guided Iraqi officials to integrate tenets of reconciliation into the more dominant, long term strategy of national unity. According to the official MNF-I website, U.S. forces are “working increasingly in tandem with [Iraqis] to solidify security relationships [and take advantage of] a window [that] has opened for local leadership to push forward business development and infrastructure repair and forge political relationships across sects and neighborhoods.”<sup>12</sup>

In guiding the Iraqi population towards national unity, almost every program originated under reconciliation has progressed and evolved under the new strategy. For

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<sup>10</sup> Abu Mendou, Electronic interview by author, October 20, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Anna Mulrine, “Taking Stock of Iraq,” *U.S. News and World Report* (December 13, 2007): 3.

<sup>12</sup> Official Website of Multi-National Force-Iraq, “Reconciliation takes center stage across Multi-National Division – Center,” [http://www.mnf-iraq.com/index.php?Itemid=128&id=15649&option=com\\_content&task=view](http://www.mnf-iraq.com/index.php?Itemid=128&id=15649&option=com_content&task=view), December 5, 2007 (accessed January 25, 2009).

example, according to one infantry battalion commander in Baghdad, a large portion of both the Sunni and Shia guard programs in Hayy Jihad have been “converted to official Iraqi government capacities including the national police and Iraqi Army.”<sup>13</sup> In addition, the Iraqi government has grown increasingly involved in releasing detainees, a task which used to be handled exclusively by U.S. forces. In an attempt to increase national unity and ease tensions during one particular release in late 2008, the “government of Iraq saw it fit that [certain detainees] were given [a] chance at rehabilitation”<sup>14</sup> to ensure the “tide of stability continue[s].”<sup>15</sup> Based on the similarities of both strategic endstates and the current challenges associated with national unity, the question that begs to be addressed is “what’s missing?”

Assuming reconciliation has been largely successful at the grassroots level, then why has transitioning to national unity been such a difficult challenge? It would seem that national unity is merely an extension of reconciliation at the Iraqi national level. Since reconciliation was “bottom driven,” it also seems that U.S. military leaders have addressed the majority of challenges associated with initiating this policy; the framework has already been completed. In addition, as indicated by the decline in violence, a massive number of Iraqi citizens could potentially support this policy of peace. Furat Awne, a former Iraqi Army Major, adamantly stated that “most Iraqis want peace like an

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<sup>13</sup> Frank.

<sup>14</sup>Official Website of Multi-National Force-Iraq, “Detainees Rehabilitated, Released Back to Families, Communities,” [http://www.cjtf7.army.mil/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=23664&Itemid=110](http://www.cjtf7.army.mil/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=23664&Itemid=110), November 14, 2008 (accessed January 25, 2009).

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.



animal thirsts for water.”<sup>16</sup> Despite operating in a mistrusting society like Iraq, U.S. military leaders met openly with local leaders of various sects, religions, and backgrounds during the surge of U.S. forces. In light of such progress and cooperation at the grassroots level, why then has national unity among the Iraqis been such a difficult policy to achieve? To determine the shortfall at the national level, one must reevaluate the initial model of reconciliation and the characteristics which led to success.

An analysis of the components of reconciliation reveals a concept not applied to the national unity approach. Most programs that reconciliation fostered are found within the approach to increase national unity. Detainee release initiatives, guard programs, IDP resettlement, and critical projects dominate the national unity agenda. However, one particular aspect is clearly neglected. In many areas throughout Iraq, a critical facet of reconciliation is working with the local grassroots councils. This organization of local leaders in both homogeneous and mixed sectarian regions provides a funnel for all reconciliation activities. Manifested in the forms of the Great Awakening and Reconciliation Councils, these grassroots organizations provide a forum for U.S. military and Iraqi leaders to discuss all aspects of reconciliation. Some of these local councils are formalized in a charter and provide an official and essential link between the Iraqi masses and the U.S. military leaders of an area. Furthermore, these grassroots councils play an integral role in gathering intelligence and detaining criminals. While Iraqi governmental leaders have continued to support Sunni and Shia guard programs, the detainee release initiatives, and the local projects to date, the initial grassroots councils have been largely ignored under the more comprehensive and Iraqi-driven strategy of national unity.

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<sup>16</sup>Furat Awne, Interview by author, December 26, 2008.

In a period of time when U.S. military, Department of State, and Iraqi officials are experiencing tremendous pressure to move a unified Iraq forward, this paper attempts to answer a critical question: Can local grassroots councils facilitate an Iraqi national unity strategy? After exploring the existing literature on the topic, this paper will attempt to address an academic gap which remains under-explored. Next, this paper will present the methodology, defining terms, and analytical framework that will be used to answer the primary research question. In the analysis portion of the paper, interviews and surveys from Iraqi local nationals and U.S. officials will define the grassroots entities from multiple perspectives. Most importantly, the data collected will then be analyzed using the outlined framework to assess the overall potential and effectiveness of local grassroots councils. Collectively, this approach will facilitate answering the paper's aforementioned primary research question.

Local councils are grassroots entities that represent fundamental principles within the Arab world and could potentially facilitate national unity if employed correctly. At a minimum, one must understand fully the nature of the grassroots councils and analyze their potential to achieve future goals. Recognizing that a silver bullet to solve Iraq's complex problems does not exist, U.S. military leaders and State Department officials should consider encouraging their Iraqi government counterparts to expand the use of these local grassroots councils to facilitate a strategic endstate of national unity.

#### Primary Research Question

The primary focus of this research paper will be to determine if local grassroots councils can facilitate the strategic endstate of national unity in Iraq.

### Secondary Research Questions

The secondary research questions reflect the tenets of the analytical framework used in this paper to determine the effectiveness of the grassroots entities. As individuals provide input to these questions, the local councils can then be deemed as an appropriate or inappropriate means to achieve a strategic endstate like national unity. The following questions will assist in answering if local grassroots councils could be leveraged to achieve national unity:

1. What is a local or grassroots council and how did your organization use them?
2. What members comprised local councils? How were they selected and who selected them?
3. How did U.S. forces and local councils differ in their approach to achieving reform in regard to the "tempo?"
4. Did the local councils want to initiate immediate programs to benefit the people or were they more focused on long term initiatives?
5. Did the local councils have any connection with the official Iraqi government?
6. Were the local councils flexible in terms of goals in your opinion?
7. Did local councils attempt to address a wide variety of issues or stay focused on only a few objectives?
8. What did U.S. forces provide to the local councils that enabled their success?
9. Was the end state of the local councils always what you expected? If not, what was generally your reaction?
10. Did the councils ever over promise things to the people?
11. How patient does one have to be to deal with the local councils?

## 12. What made the local councils effective or ineffective?

### Significance

Military leaders still contend the situation in Iraq is delicate and could easily retrogress, thus negating the accomplishments of the surge. U.S. military and State Department leaders can still glean from reconciliation positive attributes to achieve the long term strategic endstate of national unity. Given the recent challenges, this paper attempts to assess the grassroots local councils to determine their contribution and assess their potential to facilitate national unity. Whether local grassroots councils provide a benefit or not to stability, a failure to evolve and refine the current methods to achieve the strategic endstate of national unity in Iraq could have devastating results including a recession back into violence.

### Assumptions

This paper assumes that the selected group of principles from Kenneth Pollack's book, *A Path Out of the Desert*, is an appropriate tool to assess an engine of reform or means to achieve U.S. ends such as national unity in Iraq. Furthermore, Pollack's principles, though presented in reference to the greater Arab world, can also apply at a more micro level such as for the purpose of this paper. This paper assumes that the relationship between the local grassroots councils and the Iraqi government remains tenuous and will deteriorate over time without U.S. intervention. This paper also assumes that the long term policy of facilitating national unity remains a strategic endstate of both the U.S. and Iraqi governments. Finally, this paper assumes that U.S. forces will be able to coach and guide the Iraqi government in a direct capacity to achieve

strategic endstates in the distant future. Although this paper does not assume U.S. forces will remain in Iraq, this paper does assume U.S. influence will go beyond typical diplomatic and embassy related relationships.

### Limitations

This paper will explore the purpose, underlining characteristics, effectiveness, and ineffectiveness of local councils in order to determine if they can facilitate achieving national unity in Iraq. However, whether the local councils are effective or ineffective, the Iraqi government has decided to neglect them and this paper will not focus on why this is the case. In addition, despite attempts to diversify both U.S. and Iraqi respondents in gathering research, one is limited due to the situation in Iraq. All Iraqi personnel have provided incomplete and less known names in order to protect their identities. In addition, the majority of surveys administered to Iraqis were completed via second-hand contacts. The author is also limited by not being able to provide extensive backgrounds of Iraqi interviewees who retain experience working for, in, and around Iraqi grassroots councils and other supporting capacities. Along the same lines, the author has personal experience in Iraq, which may create bias in collecting and analyzing data. At least eight of the Iraqi survey respondents and all the Iraqi personnel interviewed are acquaintances of the author. Furthermore, the author personally knows all the U.S. interviewees in some capacity. This paper attempts to mitigate such biases through multiple means explained later.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Study the past if you would divine the future.

— Confucius

In the ongoing Iraq conflict, there is a growing realization among mainstream newsmen that they have failed the American public.<sup>17</sup>

— Christopher Bollyn

In Chapter 1, this paper provided basic background information on the topics of reconciliation, national unity, and the local grassroots councils which were often utilized to reduce violence and insurgent activity during the surge of U.S. forces in 2007. Furthermore, Chapter 1 introduced the primary research question of this paper: whether local grassroots councils can facilitate Iraqi national unity. This chapter explores both the academic and scholarly efforts made thus far to define local councils and whether such grassroots entities have been considered by scholars and experts as a means to possibly facilitate any strategic endstates in Iraq. Throughout Chapter 2, the reader should note that existing media coverage provides very detailed information about current events in Iraq and an excellent description of many programs associated with national unity. Governmental and independent reports illustrate numerous challenges associated with achieving national unity and provide recommendations that exhibit similar qualities found in local grassroots councils. Finally, the reader will be briefly introduced to Kenneth Pollack's guiding principles, which are used later to analyze local councils. After Chapter 2, one will be able to conclude whether scholars and journalists have fully

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<sup>17</sup>Christopher Bollyn, "Media Coverage of Iraq Called 'Shameful' by Peers," April 11, 2004, [http://www.axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/article\\_6406.shtml](http://www.axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/article_6406.shtml) (accessed April 15, 2009).

identified local grassroots councils as a means to potentially facilitate national unity in Iraq. Furthermore, one will have a greater understanding of the analytical framework used later in this paper to determine the utility of such councils.

Chapter 2 reviews literature and information from three major sources: (1) periodicals, newspapers, and magazines; (2) commissioned governmental reports and independent think tank observations; and (3) the book *A Path Out of the Desert* by Kenneth M. Pollack. Upon reading about Iraq, national unity, and local councils, one can find a lot of similar information and concepts throughout all three major categories. For example a well-known contributor of a non-scholarly opinion editorial will often comment or even make similar recommendations as an author contributing to an independent think tank. However, although topics may appear similar, the amount of analysis, background information, and thoroughness of recommendations differ among all the sources. Each of the three sources offers a unique perspective which one can then use to gauge consensus or overarching conclusions. In light of all the information available, this chapter will subcategorize each of the aforementioned broad sources in order to more accurately classify, organize, and depict the existing information on the topics of local councils and national unity.

One can find many articles and essays in scholarly journals and magazines that cover the subjects of Iraqi national unity and the use of local grassroots councils. Most literature can be sub-divided into three categories in regard to national unity. The first subcategory suggests the situation in Iraq is irreparable and U.S. forces are paying the consequences for a deeply flawed initial strategy. For example, Mr. Leon Sigal, director of the Northeast Asia Cooperative Security Project and prolific author, suggests that the

Bush administration sent an irreversible “you are on your own”<sup>18</sup> message to the Iraqi people by prematurely declaring victory despite escalating violence trends. The author concludes that this action caused the Iraqi people to seek protection from “friendly militias”<sup>19</sup> thus forever altering the politics in Iraq. Lawrence J. Korb, the former Director of National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, suggests U.S. policy makers have “merely papered over fundamental differences on power-sharing agreements”<sup>20</sup> which indefinitely prevent long term national unity objectives.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, Korb and Sean Duggan, a frequent contributor to the Center for American Progress, stated in early 2008 the “current policy is built on a failure to understand the long-term problems” and the only way forward “will be a full accounting of the strategic costs.”<sup>22</sup> Sigal, Korb, and Duggan discuss the inability to achieve national unity due to initial U.S. strategic failures.

The second subcategory of periodicals, magazines, and journals indicates that the deep divisions among the various Iraqi sects and factions will permanently prevent national unity. Stephen Zunes, an author for the National Catholic Reporter, outlines the reality of these insurmountable historical differences and states that in September of 2007 “the U.S. Senate voted 75-23 in support of a [non-binding] resolution that calls for a

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<sup>18</sup>Leon V. Sigal, “A War Without End.” *World Policy Journal* (September 2007): 4.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>20</sup>Sean Duggan, Peter Juul, Brian Katulis, Lawrence J. Korb, “How Does This End: Strategic Failures Overshadow Tactical Gains in Iraq,” *Center for American Progress* (April 2008): 2

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*



‘federal’ solution to the internal conflicts in Iraq.”<sup>23</sup> In fact, prior to the publication of the Iraq Study Group’s report, speculation about federalizing Iraq into three autonomous regions was rampant. According to authors who favor such an approach, the federalization of Iraq would allow the world to acknowledge the differences among the Iraqi people and prevent future violence. In an article entitled “Is the Surge Going to Fizzle” from *The Economist*, an anonymous author suggests the government of national unity in Iraq “is no such thing” and “inching”<sup>24</sup> towards failure already. Dawn Brancati, a contributor to *The Washington Quarterly*, suggested in 2005 that without a “form of federalism an Iraq rife with internal conflict . . . is more likely to emerge, undermining U.S. efforts.”<sup>25</sup> Authors advocating federalizing or dividing Iraq along various boundaries highlight several problems with national unity including inter and intra conflicts among Sunni, Shia, and Kurdish entities.

Third, authors suggest national unity can only be achieved through a long term U.S. commitment or total withdrawal from Iraq. The most in depth and academically oriented literature falls into the former classification. Authors like Stephen Biddle and Michael O’Hanlon, who are nationally renowned international affairs and defense experts, encourage long term presence to stabilize Iraq. In the article “How to Leave a Stable Iraq,” the authors contend that the U.S. “is playing an important role in sustaining the fragile hope and security”<sup>26</sup> of the Iraqi people. The authors further conclude that if

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<sup>23</sup>Stephen Zunes, “A Dangerous Division.” *National Catholic Reporter* (November 2007): 1.

<sup>24</sup>“Is the Surge Going to Fizzle?” *The Economist* (June 23, 2007): 3-4.

<sup>25</sup>Dawn Brancati, “Can Federalism Stabilize Iraq?” *The Washington Quarterly* (Spring 2004): 9.

<sup>26</sup>Steven Biddle, Michael E. O’Hanlon, and Kenneth M Pollack, “How to Leave a Stable Iraq,” *Foreign Affairs* (September 2008): 11.

the U.S. military can remain a force in Iraq for the next few years, there exists “a credible basis for believing that major drawdowns after that can be enabled by success rather than mandated by failure.”<sup>27</sup> Thomas Carothers, the vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, advocated even prior to the Iraq war that a Middle East policy “defined by incremental gains, long-term commitment, and willingness to keep the post-September 11 security imperatives in perspective . . . [is the] best way to ensure that the war on terrorism complements rather than contradicts worldwide democracy.”<sup>28</sup> Authors like Biddle, O’Hanlon, and Carothers seem to suggest a gradual and long term approach in Iraq.

On the other hand, authors like Dr. Marc Lynch, associate professor at Williams College, and Brian Katulis, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, suggest that the United States is continuing to coddle Iraqi leaders through a U.S. military presence which ultimately hampers progress. Lynch contends that “as long as the U.S. military protects Iraqi leaders from the consequences of their choices,”<sup>29</sup> Iraq will never be able to move forward on its own. Ali A. Allawi, a long time critic of Saddam Hussein and major proponent for Operation Iraqi Freedom, suggested in an interview that a U.S. troop pullout “may be an essential precondition”<sup>30</sup> to establishing a peace among the major players in Iraq. Also advocating immediate troop withdrawals, but for different reasons, writers like James P. Sturba, a senior correspondent and writer, stated in 2005

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 12.

<sup>28</sup>Tom Carothers, “Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror,” *Foreign Affairs* (January 2003): 7.

<sup>29</sup>Marc Lynch, “Politics First,” *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2008): 152.

<sup>30</sup>Juan Cole, “What’s Next in Iraq?” *Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 2007): B10.

that U.S. forces should “completely redraw from Iraq in six months or less . . . [since the U.S.] had no justification for going to war . . . on any conceivable grounds.”<sup>31</sup>

Throughout the three major subcategories of articles and essays in scholarly journals and magazines, authors provide diverse viewpoints on local councils and national unity. However, all sources essentially share two common motifs. First, achieving national unity is primarily the responsibility of the Iraqis. Second, scholars and authors tend to focus on the problems associated with national unity rather than potential solutions. Even while presenting the aforementioned perspectives of either remaining in Iraq or pulling troops out, none of the authors expound beyond overarching conclusions. In fact, beyond simplistic recommendations, like stay or go, authors do not generally provide further insight. Academics in both schools of thought quite effectively highlight challenges and adequately define the problem from their respective points of view (the *what*), but often fail to recommend concrete means to move forward (the *how*).

Beyond general similarities found within this type of literature, the authors of most articles and periodicals do explore other related topics which provide useful information. First, the writers define the programs that are characteristically associated with the strategy of national unity. Some journalists describe the detainee release initiatives, cover stories of Iraqi families re-settling into their old homes, and report on the popular guard programs like the Anbar Awakening. Although there is some focus on the local leaders of the Great Awakening Councils, which are essentially local grassroots councils in predominantly Sunni areas, writers neglect a vast majority of the other local

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<sup>31</sup>James P. Sterba, “Why the U.S. Must Immediately Withdraw from Iraq,” *International Journal for Applied Philosophy* Volume 19:1 (Spring 2005): 5-7.

grassroots councils throughout Iraq. As a result, the journalists subsequently fail to identify the potential role of these local councils in facilitating national unity. Second, authors and journalists provide the most updated information on the current and past disposition of Iraq. Although they rarely draw conclusions beyond the facts, their information has proven useful. Since the topic of this paper is extremely contemporary in nature, the writers of these articles provide critical and timely insights about the current atmospherics in Iraq and the potential impact that local grassroots councils could have on the situation. Third, various journalists have provided multiple perspectives through interviews of former and present U.S. commanders at the tactical and strategic level, Iraqi governmental leaders from the past and present, and members of the Department of State. For example, interviews with Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki, Ali A. Allawi, and retired Army GEN (R) Jack Keane provide critical insight. In general, no author specifically addresses the need for local grassroots councils in achieving national unity. However, scholars and journalists do an exceptional job defining other associated programs, depicting the current situation in Iraq, and capturing key insights from a wide spectrum of people.

Independent think tanks and commissioned government reports constitute another source of information and more closely allude to the concept of local grassroots councils with respect to national unity. The reports provide two critical insights. First, the authors acknowledge the potential of a grassroots approach in facilitating national unity. Although authors do not mention specifically how to utilize local councils, they recognize the utility of the grassroots approach and subsequently give credence to local councils' potential. Second, authors provide additional solutions, beyond a grassroots

approach, to achieve national unity. While explaining the aspects of these alternative solutions, experts reveal the conditions they feel are essential to national unity. Such insight from some of the United States' foremost experts in Middle Eastern and Arab affairs provides the impetus to later question the expanded use of local grassroots councils.

Some authors recognize the power of a grassroots approach and the need to consolidate "local-level deals . . . into a national level arrangement."<sup>32</sup> In one independent report, published in *Middle East Policy*, Colin H. Kahl, Brian Katulis, and Marc Lynch cite the need to encourage the already successful "bottom-up" or grassroots approach but do not mention the means to do so. In fact, the authors somewhat restrict the concept of local councils to merely the Sunni guard programs throughout Iraq. The authors suggest that Iraqi leaders could facilitate national unity by integrating Sunni guard elements into the Iraqi national security forces. Consequently, national unity cannot be achieved since the predominantly Shia government has continually demonstrated an inability to amalgamate the Sunni Awakening groups. In reference to the Great Awakening Councils' efforts, the authors conclude that "whatever the logic of bottom-up reconciliation, it has thus far failed to materialize."<sup>33</sup> Despite revealing an appreciation for the potential within a grassroots approach, the authors demonstrate only a superficial understanding of the local councils which provide the engine for grassroots reform.

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<sup>32</sup>Colin H. Kahl, Brian Katulis, and Marc Lynch, "Thinking Strategically about Iraq: Report from a Symposium," *Middle East Policy* (Spring 2008): 101.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

In another independent report, Brian Katulis, Marc Lynch, and Peter Juul make more concrete recommendations thus highlighting the conditions they believe necessary to move forward. Katulis, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress (CAP) and Juul, a research associate for CAP, enlisted the assistance of Dr. Lynch, an associate professor of political science at Williams College, to conduct a symposium on the situation in Iraq. They later compiled a detailed report on behalf of the Center for American Progress annotating the symposium's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. This report highlights enduring obstacles and solutions to achieving national unity. In terms of obstacles, the report suggests two critical points related to local grassroots councils: (1) the balance of power between national and local entities and (2) the continued conflict between Sunni and Shia. By fully understanding the challenges ahead, one gains a greater appreciation of what an engine of reform must be able to accomplish to facilitate national unity.

The authors of this independent report draw numerous conclusions which give insight into how local grassroots councils may be suited to address the outlined challenges. First, the authors conclude that guard programs “be formally integrated into Iraq’s security forces”<sup>34</sup> thus keeping potential insurgents off the streets. Second, the report alludes to the need for a constitutional review in order to encourage national unity and political participation.<sup>35</sup> Third, along the same lines, the report calls for provincial elections in light of a “key legislative package [that] places more power than before in the

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<sup>34</sup>Juul, Katulis, Lynch, 25.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 19.

hands of the provinces.”<sup>36</sup> Fourth, the independent report recommends U.S. forces oversee the implementation of the already passed “amnesty law that promised to release a number of [detainees] and offer a fresh start.”<sup>37</sup> Fifth, the report suggests an “evenly administered and comprehensive system for resolving disputes”<sup>38</sup> between displaced persons and squatters living in unlawfully acquisitioned property. Although the report does not specifically mention local councils, the aforementioned issues and recommendations highlight the requirements for any engine of reform, like the local councils, to achieve a strategic endstate like national unity.

In a U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report dated July 23, 2008, Mr. Gene Dodaro, who was the acting comptroller general for GAO at the time, provided an assessment of the situation in Iraq and called for an updated strategy in the region. Although mentioning security gains, the author concludes at one point that “local security forces (such as Sons of Iraq) have not reconciled with the central government.”<sup>39</sup> In another section of the report, the author explicitly outlines unofficial Iraqi entities as major contributing factors to the current peace in Iraq. Although the report also oversimplifies national unity as security force integration and the passage of a few specific laws in the Iraqi legislature, it provides a request for a revised strategy that addresses all

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 18.

<sup>39</sup>Gene L. Dodaro, *Securing, Progress Report, Stabilizing, and Rebuilding Iraq Progress Report: Some Gains Made, Updated Strategy Needed* (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2008), 3.

“that has changed in Iraq since January 2007”<sup>40</sup> before the surge of U.S. military forces. Although local councils and grassroots entities are not specifically mentioned, the author highlights the need to address shortfalls in the current strategy.

In an After Action Report dated November 2008, GEN (R) Barry McCaffrey, a former Joint Chiefs of Staff Advisor to the U.S. Secretary of State, offers key insights into the current counterinsurgency fight in Iraq. Without specifically mentioning local grassroots councils, McCaffrey states that the “Shia militia have been neutralized and the Sunni insurgents [have been] bought out by the Sons of Iraq program.”<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, McCaffrey states that “the glue that holds Iraq together is the U.S. Armed Forces, the US Embassy Team, *tribal leadership* [emphasis added], and the Iraqi Army.”<sup>42</sup> McCaffrey acknowledges the importance of grassroots leadership and even recognizes the impact such leadership had on the situation in Iraq but does not include local grassroots councils in his recommendations to sustain success.

Frederick W. Kagan, a resident scholar for the American Enterprise Institute and major contributor to the surge strategy, provides insightful remarks in a report that he wrote to encourage the approval of the surge of U.S. forces in 2007. Although he composed his document prior to even the formation and subsequent employment of local councils, the characteristics he outlines for advocating the surge are important for future analysis. Kagan offers an unparalleled understanding of Iraqi culture and pioneered concepts such as immediate incentives for areas that were “taking desired steps towards

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>41</sup>Barry R. McCaffrey, “Visit Iraq and Kuwait.” After Action Report, 2007, 5.  
[www.mccaffreyassociates.com/pages/documents/AAR-July%202008.pdf](http://www.mccaffreyassociates.com/pages/documents/AAR-July%202008.pdf) (accessed April 10, 2009).

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 6.



pacifying their country.”<sup>43</sup> In his report, Kagan outlines the need for greater political participation among the various sects, “honest brokers in mixed”<sup>44</sup> sectarian regions, establishing “legitimacy with the Iraqi population,”<sup>45</sup> and continually “maintaining contact with the local population and establishing trust.”<sup>46</sup> Like the aforementioned reports, Kagan does not directly mention grassroots councils; however, he advocates several concepts later addressed by these local grassroots entities especially in regard to providing security first and interacting with the local population.

Most of the aforementioned reports demonstrate an appreciation for grassroots approaches. Some reports highlight broad concepts such as an increased dissatisfaction with the Iraqi government and the need for security gains. In addition, some outline criteria to achieve success like encouraging economic and political reform, releasing detainees, and settling displaced persons. By further defining the challenges and potential solutions to national unity, the authors of these reports outline critical requirements and capabilities that engines of reform should demonstrate. These reports provide a solid basis to answer the paper’s primary research question: Can local grassroots councils facilitate an Iraqi national unity strategy? The reports encourage a grassroots approach but fail to identify the expansion of local councils as a concept that could potentially be utilized to achieve national unity. None of the authors explain why they do not specifically identify grassroots councils as means to achieve a strategic

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<sup>43</sup>Fredrick W. Kagan, *Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 2007), 36.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 22.

endstate like national unity. However, as research will later reveal, the local councils continue to be involved in implementing many of the same authors' recommended solutions. Perhaps in an effort to embolden legitimately elected Iraqi entities, U.S. personnel have demonstrated a tendency to neglect less traditional means such as the unofficial grassroots councils beyond achieving immediate security objectives.

Based on an earlier book written in 2002 by Kenneth M. Pollack, one could conclude that he initially supported the invasion of Iraq. However, he is largely regarded today as a critic of the Bush administration and the actual conduct of the war. In current literature, Pollack continually refers to strategic mistakes made in dealing with the Arab world and offers solutions to rectify the current U.S. image among Muslim nations. Rather than simply focusing on the nature of the problems in Iraq and other Arab nations, Pollack outlines clear and practical guidelines to achieve results in the Middle East. Based on his prescriptive approach and highly regarded reputation as an expert in Middle Eastern and Arab affairs, this paper employs one of Pollack's books as the basis for an analytical framework.

In his book *A Path Out of the Desert: A Grand Strategy for America in the Middle East*, Pollack provides eleven guiding principles for developing strategic endstates for the Arab world. Pollack does not specifically mention local grassroots councils, possibly due to his adamant support of spreading some form of democracy in the Middle East and not promulgating communal or tribal based organizations. However, he does continuously refer to the power of social networks in places like Iraq. Pollack highlights throughout his book the need for a grassroots approach in achieving an effective form of governance in Iraq and other Arab nations. This paper uses Pollack's principles for reform to

formulate an analytical framework to evaluate local grassroots councils. In an attempt to answer the paper's primary research question, one can then decide whether the local councils adequately meet the principles and therefore represent a reasonable means to achieve a strategic endstate like national unity.

Chapter 2 conducted a review of the current literature surrounding the topics of local councils and national unity. Authors of diverse sources provide useful information, guiding principles, and potential solutions to the many complex problems which U.S. military and State Department leaders face in Iraq. Although many scholars and journalists have not identified grassroots councils as potential facilitators to achieving national unity, the existing literature can still collectively contribute to answering the primary research question. In Chapter 3, the paper will fully define the methodology used to gather data and further explore the analytical framework that this paper will ultimately use to analyze local grassroots councils and determine their potential to facilitate national unity.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new order of things . . . Whenever his enemies have the ability to attack the innovator, they do so with the passion of partisans, while the others defend him sluggishly, so that the innovator and his party alike are vulnerable.

— Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1513)

This paper will continue to explore the primary research question: whether or not local grassroots councils can facilitate national unity. In the previous chapter, this paper analyzed literature on national unity, local grassroots councils, and other related topics. The review in Chapter 2 concluded that many scholars and journalists have not specifically identified local grassroots councils as a means to facilitate national unity. However, the collective efforts of academics and media personnel alike provide other key insights useful to answering this paper's primary research question. This chapter explores the methodology used throughout the paper. First, in order to fully define the analytical framework used to assess local grassroots councils later in the paper, this chapter will explore the principles presented by Kenneth Pollack in his most recent book, *A Path Out of the Desert*. Second, in order to further define local councils, this chapter will then describe the types of interviews conducted and surveys administered to U.S. military officials, civilian personnel, and Iraqi local nationals. At the end of this chapter, the reader should have an understanding of the framework used to analyze local councils, an understanding of grassroots entities from multiple perspectives, and finally an understanding of the methodology used in the evaluation to answer the primary research question.

To further clarify the overall construct of the research, one can mentally envision a common strategy formulation using ends, ways, and means. National unity represents the ends which U.S. and Iraqi officials desire to achieve. The aspiration for unification, though elusive, remains a primary goal of all parties involved with Iraq. The ways are represented via Pollack's principles. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a major assumption of this paper is that Pollack's principles represent a legitimate way to achieve ends in the Middle East. Finally, given this assumption, this paper proposes local grassroots councils as the means or available resources to ultimately achieve the strategic endstate of national unity.

In the nation building strategy outlined in the book *A Path Out of the Desert*, Pollack posits a long term approach to victory in the Middle East. At the core of his strategy, Pollack offers eleven tenets for encouraging reform:

1. Reform must principally be indigenous;
2. Reform should be a gradual process;
3. When possible, take steps that can benefit the people right away;
4. Focus on bottom-up as well as top-down reform;
5. Be flexible;
6. Push on all the tracks of reform;
7. Pursue this policy as a multilateral approach;
8. Take external security problems off the table;
9. Be tolerant of the end state;
10. Be patient; and

11. Don't overpromise.<sup>47</sup>

For the purpose of this research, the paper combined tenets six and seven to present ten tenets total used to construct an analytical framework to assess local councils. The two tenets were combined due to similarity and applicability towards the particular topic. Pollack proposes that an effective engine of reform should expand multiple tracks; in addition, one should reinforce such tracks when necessary to achieve results. Although both concepts are important to assessing local grassroots councils, both tenets were combined to avoid repetitive analysis which could potentially confuse survey and interview respondents.

The author highlights the aforementioned principles from a macro and Western perspective. However, since the tenets are so closely aligned to cultural aspects of the Iraqi people and institutions, the concepts can apply to local grassroots councils and their initiatives at the micro level as well. As a reminder, this paper assumes that the principles provide a reasonable analytical framework to assess local councils. Pollack offers these tenets to “guide American effort to encourage and enable reform.”<sup>48</sup> Since national unity is a type of reform or new idea, one can conclude that this method is culturally apropos. Using the impressions of local grassroots councils obtained through the surveys and interviews, one can then determine if local grassroots councils satisfy Pollack's principles. Based on that analysis, one can then suggest whether grassroots

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<sup>47</sup>Kenneth M. Pollack, *A Path Out of the Desert: A Grand Strategy for America in the Middle East* (New York: Random House, 2008), 298.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 290.

councils should be expanded by Iraqi and U.S. officials in order to facilitate national unity. A deeper analysis of each of Pollack's principles reveals critical insight.

### Reform Must Principally be Indigenous

Pollack suggests that any "imposed blueprint" of governance would more than likely be rejected by Arabs out of sheer "nationalism alone."<sup>49</sup> Any reforms "must be fashioned by home grown reformist . . . to fit their societies and be accepted."<sup>50</sup> Pollack continues to explain that an essential "corollary to this principle is the importance of listening to the people in the region."<sup>51</sup> One should note that Pollack defines "indigenous" from a national perspective. However, this paper will apply the concept at the micro level in reference to local Iraqi civilians in a particular area. Pollack also outlines two concerns about achieving reform through a principally indigenous means. First, one needs to be concerned about the safety of those who decide to associate with efforts to obtain indigenous support. As a solution, Pollack recommends "acting through . . . third parties."<sup>52</sup> Second, one confronts the problem of how to encourage reform indigenously without "alienating the [current] regimes of the region."<sup>53</sup> To achieve this goal, Pollack suggests top and bottom discussions focused on achieving the adaptation or change.

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 291.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 292.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 293.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

### Reform Should be a Gradual Process

Pollack suggests that one cannot expect to initiate reform ideals over night in the Arab world. In addition, when dealing with this gradual process of reform, one must somehow “elect the local councils”<sup>54</sup> to facilitate building a base for the process even if the idea runs contrary to other traditional values like democracy.

### When Possible, Take Steps That Can Benefit People Right Away

Pollack primarily defines this concept as looking for means to “defuse the pressure for change whenever possible [in order] to try to avert [conflict].”<sup>55</sup> This tenet of the analytical framework seems to contradict the gradual nature of instituting reform. However, Pollack explains that “limited fixes cannot actually get at the underlying problems but . . . they create time and space for the process of real reform.”<sup>56</sup>

### Focus on Bottom Up, As Well As Top Down, Reform

As a general rule in the Arab culture, Pollack asserts, reforms “develop best when they grow from the bottom up.”<sup>57</sup> However, this is not to assume that a top down approach to reform is unnecessary. In fact, Pollack’s suggests that “intervention at the top can actually be very helpful.”<sup>58</sup> In terms of defending broad human rights and

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 294.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 296.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 299.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 300.



protecting basic freedoms, the role of the “top” is critical. Ultimately, though, top down intervention is essentially used to “unlock bottom up reform.”<sup>59</sup>

### Be Flexible

This principle essentially reminds the reader that some initiatives or strategies may work while others do not. The key to success, however, is discontinuing efforts that don’t work and “reinforcing those ideas that do seem to be bearing fruit.”<sup>60</sup>

### Push on All Tracks of the Reform and Take a Multilateral Approach

These tenets focus on the need to reach the populace from a diplomatic, economic, and social perspective. Pollack suggests that reform “does not need to proceed uniformly from category to category.” In reality, any means to address as many tracks of reform simultaneously is much more effective.

### Take External Security Problems Off the Table

This tenet suggests that Arab leaders will often use “the fear of external threats to suppress internal threats that are far more dangerous to their continued rule.”<sup>61</sup>

Furthermore, Pollack contends that security threats “have been a constant stumbling block for homegrown reformist trying to work towards peaceful change in their societies.”<sup>62</sup> Although Pollack largely refers to external nation-state conflicts, this tenet can also apply at the local level. Specifically, Pollack outlines that some Arab leaders

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid, 305.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

“fear that unleashing potentially disruptive reforms is unwise when predatory states appear to be waiting to take advantage of any sign of weakness.”<sup>63</sup>

### Be Tolerant of the End State

In this concept, Pollack warns that one “should not insist that [their] societies replicate our own.”<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, he insightfully suggests that the primary goal should remain to dissipate the anger and frustration of places like Iraq regardless of the endstate the Iraqi people choose to achieve long term reform objectives like national unity.

### Be Patient

This particular tenet suggests that one cannot view every little “setback as proof that [a particular strategy] is failing.”<sup>65</sup> Pollack encourages long term approaches to reform and further suggests that leading by example is one of the most powerful tools in the arsenal. In the context of the Arab world, hypocrisy can make or break a policy.

### Do Not Overpromise

Pollack suggests in the final principle that “the less we promise, the less likely we will disappoint or disillusion the people”<sup>66</sup> when reform comes at a slower rate than anticipated. Pollack suggests, right or wrong, that it is one thing for an Arab to make a promise and fall short than it is for an American to make a promise and fall short.

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 306.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 308.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 310.

Having explained the analytical framework or recommended “ways” to achieve national unity, this paper will attempt to define local councils, or “means,” more clearly. Local grassroots councils were analyzed in terms of their role in achieving success during the execution of the coalition-driven reconciliation strategy in early 2007. Using Iraqi local national contacts in Iraq, surveys were administered to 30 Iraqi citizens of diverse backgrounds and eight interviews were conducted with Iraqi citizens to fully define the characteristics of local councils. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a major limitation of the research involves the fact that Iraqi respondents were not completely random. Due to security concerns and trust issues, the author was only able to interview Iraqis whom he met on previous deployments to Iraq. In addition, the author administered surveys second-hand via the aforementioned pre-existing contacts. The author could not survey the respondents directly; however, this paper assumes some risk given the circumstances in lieu of including no input from Iraqi local nationals. To mitigate bias and confusion via second-hand contacts, the research questions on the surveys administered to Iraqi contacts were greatly simplified and translated into Arabic (see appendices A and B). In addition, the author used a certified interpreter to translate results and clarify any concerns of the respondents.

Abu Mendou is an Iraqi governmental official who can provide insight into local grassroots councils from the perspective of the Iraqi government. He was not a member of a particular local council but attended many local council meetings and frequently attempted to place local personalities in contact with Iraqi national governmental leadership. Dr. Omar is a well educated doctor who is currently attempting to publish his doctoral dissertation with American institutions. He has a solid grasp of Western

democracy and was a member of a local grassroots council in Baghdad from October 2007 until March 2008. He is Sunni and lives in a mixed area inside Baghdad. Furat Awne is an Iraqi Army major who worked with local councils before being ambushed by Al Qaeda in December of 2005. Furat suffered permanent injuries and lives today in the United States with friends and family of the author. He will provide primarily a historical and cultural perspective of grassroots councils. Abu Ali is an Iraqi engineer who currently attends a university in Syria. He left Iraq in October 2007 but had extensive contact with local councils in the predominantly Sunni area of Diyala. Abu Ali worked in a prominent Joint Security Station in Diyala and has insight from senior Iraqi military and police officials about local grassroots councils. Ali Mustafa and Ali Hussein currently serve as interpreters for U.S. forces and have detailed insight into the formation and current state of local councils throughout Baghdad. They both come from humble backgrounds and provide a different class perspective of grassroots councils. Abu Jassim currently serves as an unofficial local council president in Baghdad. He works extensively with U.S. forces and during the surge he initiated contact with U.S. forces to form a multi-tribal grassroots council involving both sects. Abu Ahmed currently serves as a local contractor in Baghdad. He has worked with local councils and supported their efforts in reconstruction. Abu Ahmed offers insight into local councils from a unique third perspective.

The aforementioned eight individuals were interviewed during the research process and form the core of personnel used to administer surveys second-hand. Two of the eight individuals know each other but all individuals were contacted separately to avoid collaboration. On average, each of these individuals administered simplified and

translated surveys to three or four other Iraqi citizens (see appendices A and B). Given the difficult circumstances, the Iraqi surveys were designed to be completed quickly and without much explanation. The eight individuals were asked to avoid using family, influencing results, or allowing collaboration; however, the author could not verify compliance to those guidelines. All results were returned through the core eight contacts back to the author over the course of two months. In some cases, the interviewees completed surveys as well, but to avoid repetitive responses with their interviews, their results were not included in the analysis. Although this is not the ideal method of administering surveys, this paper attempted to inject some elements of randomness by seeking input from unknown sources.

Using surveys and face-to-face, telephonic, and electronic interviews, the following questions were formulated around the analytical framework from Pollack and were then addressed towards available Iraqi participants:

1. Do outsiders or strangers control local councils in your muhalla?
2. Do you trust the Iraqi government more than local councils?
3. Do the local council in your area work in a gradual manner?
4. What is the best organization to bring immediate benefits to the Iraqi people:  
the Iraqi government or local councils?
5. What organization has typically brought immediate benefits to the Iraqi  
people: the Iraqi government or local councils?
6. What organization retains the most influence in your muhalla: the Iraqi  
government or local councils?

7. In the future, what organization should maintain the most influence in your muhalla: the Iraqi government or local councils?
8. Do you believe the Iraqi government is more flexible than the local councils?
9. Could local council leaders provide adequate security without Iraqi security forces or U.S. support?
10. Do U.S. forces need to exercise patience when dealing with the local councils?
11. Do the local councils exercise patience with the people?
12. Does the local council in your area promise too much?

Through the results of this survey and interviews conducted primarily based on the aforementioned questions (see appendices C and D), one can gain an understanding of local councils from an Iraqi perspective. More importantly, one can then apply the responses to the selected analytical framework to determine if local councils satisfy the principles drawn from Pollack's book.

To further define local grassroots councils and assess their value to coalition forces, interviews of U.S. military commanders and civilian advisors to senior U.S. commanders were conducted as well. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the author knows all of the interviewees in some capacity. However, the author selected these individuals based on the diverse areas where they served, the varying times when they served ranging from 2005 to 2008, their generally unrelated experiences, and their very different positions while working with local councils. BG Sean MacFarland served as a brigade commander in Ramadi, Iraq and witnessed the genesis of the first local councils to work directly with coalition forces. Ms. Emma Sky served as the cultural advisor to LTG Raymond Odierno,

the current MNF-I Commander, during the initial use of local grassroots councils during the surge. COL Ricky D. Gibbs served as the commander for the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), First Infantry Division and can give an explanation of grassroots councils from a perspective of an area that controlled both homogeneous and mixed sectarian regions. LTC Patrick D. Frank and LTC Kenneth D. Adgie served as battalion commanders during the surge in different areas; both directly developed, resourced, and implemented local grassroots councils in their respective regions. LTC Everett Spain served as the aide-de-camp to GEN David Petraeus and provided a strategic viewpoint of local grassroots councils and their effectiveness. Mr. Shaun Baker is a former Army trained Human Intelligence (HUMINT) collector and interrogator who witnessed the cultivation of a local council in Arab Jaboor. In addition, MAJ Bret Hamilton and CPT Sean Lyons served as company commanders during the surge of U.S. forces. Both officers provided detailed insight from the tactical level about the formation and daily interaction with local councils.

Knowing the backgrounds of the aforementioned nine U.S. military officials and civilians and to avoid personal bias, the author used standardized questions designed around the selected analytical framework during the interviews (see appendix E). To reinforce or challenge interview responses, this paper selected more than one individual in an area to provide input. Since some of the selected personnel know each other, interviewees were contacted separately to avoid collaboration. Three sets of the interviewees served in the same area. First, COL Gibbs was the immediate supervisor to LTC Frank but the area of operations and their respective positions were diverse enough to elicit different responses. Second, LTC Adgie served as Baker's supervisor but each

retained drastically different perspectives. Finally, CPT Hamilton was replaced by CPT Lyons as company commander but then commanded another unit in a separate area with completely different atmospherics.

In interviews via email, telephone, and in person, the aforementioned U.S. military officials and civilian representatives answered questions based on Pollack's principles. In the context of this analytical framework, the individuals' replies to these questions defined local councils to then assess their potential as means to achieve the strategic endstate of national unity in Iraq. The interviews were guided by the following questions:

1. Were the local councils comprised of indigenous personnel from the muhalla or outsiders?
2. Did local councils retain a lot of influence?
3. Did the local councils work in a gradual manner?
4. Could one achieve results faster, slower, or about the same by utilizing the local councils?
5. Did the local councils want to initiate immediate programs to benefit the people or were they more focused on long term initiatives?
6. What did U.S. forces provide to the local councils that enabled their success?
7. Did the local councils have any connection with the official Iraqi government?
8. Were the local councils flexible?
9. Did local councils attempt to address a wide variety of issues or stay focused on only a few objectives?
10. What types of programs did local councils initiate or facilitate?



11. Could local councils function with security problems in the area?

12. What types of qualities must one demonstrate when working with the Iraqi people? Tolerant? Patient?

13. Did the local councils ever over promise things to the people?

In addition to interviews, a random selection of 130 U.S. officers attending the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) was used to further assess whether local councils satisfy Pollack's principles. Unlike the methods used in obtaining survey results from Iraqis, U.S. responses were gathered first hand via a certified online program known as Inquisite. The CGSC quality control office approved the survey and provided a certification tracking number for future verification (see appendices F and G). Although not all the U.S. officers had firsthand experience with the local councils, 56 respondents provided clear insight from multiple perspectives, areas of operation, and capacities. In addition, since the collection methods were more appropriate, the survey was more complex and allowed free text responses to further expound on initial answers and provide additional insight.

Throughout this chapter, this paper explained Pollack's principles that provide an analytical framework to apply to local councils. In addition, in order to further define the grassroots organizations, this chapter described the types of interviews conducted and surveys administered to U.S. military officials, civilian personnel, and Iraqi local nationals. Finally, this paper has explained throughout this chapter the methodology used to now compare local councils to Pollack's principles to answer the primary research question of whether or not local grassroots councils could facilitate national unity. In the

next chapter, this paper will conduct an analysis of the local councils using the methodology explained above.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS

That we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain--that this nation . . . shall have a new birth of freedom--and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

—Abraham Lincoln

Although we must cherish the experience thus acquired, we must also cherish the experience acquired through our own blood.

—Mao Tse-Tung

In determining whether or not local councils can facilitate national unity, one is essentially determining to what extent Iraq can have a government “by the people.” In the previous chapter, this paper explained the methodology used to answer the primary research question: whether local grassroots councils can facilitate national unity. Kenneth Pollack created principles for success when executing any strategy in the Middle East. For this paper, the concept of national unity represents the strategic endstate that U.S. and Iraqi officials have vigorously sought to achieve. Therefore, any means used to pursue the desired endstate, should follow the ways outlined in Pollack’s principles. As discussed in the previous chapter, the analytical framework created from Pollack’s principles represents the cornerstone that this paper will use to build all analysis of local councils as a possible means to achieve national unity. This chapter analyzes all the data collected from the various resources, interviews, and surveys from both Iraqi and U.S. personnel. When one compares the gathered data to the established framework, one can ultimately assess whether the local councils display the appropriate characteristics to achieve a strategic endstate like national unity.

This chapter is organized around Pollack's selected ten principles that form the basis for this paper's analytical framework. This chapter presents Iraqi survey results and then uses Iraqi interview results to expound on or address inconsistencies with survey findings. Next, this chapter presents U.S. survey results and then again uses interviews to expound on or address differences. The quantitative data derived from surveys provides the most random and unbiased input. This data is presented in the form of pie charts and is further explained using the more subjective qualitative results derived from interviews. As a reminder, the following principles from Pollack provide this paper's primary tool to assess local councils:

1. Reform must principally be indigenous;
2. Reform should be a gradual process;
3. When possible, take steps that can benefit the people right away;
4. Focus on bottom-up as well as top-down reform;
5. Be flexible;
6. Push on all the tracks of reform and Pursue this policy as a multilateral approach;
7. Take external security problems off the table;
8. Be tolerant of the end state;
9. Be patient; and
10. Don't overpromise.<sup>67</sup>

All interviews and surveys were designed to describe the Iraqi local councils in the context of this framework.

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<sup>67</sup>Pollack, 298.

### Reform Must be Principally Indigenous

According to the survey of Iraqi local nationals, 90 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed with a statement that outsiders control local affairs (see figure 1). Abu Jassim, a local reconciliation council president and respected leader in east Baghdad, reinforced the survey results in an interview by stating “anyone from the outside could never be trusted to deal with local matters.”<sup>68</sup> Abu Mendou, an official governmental representative, supported such conclusions when referring to the difficulty of influencing people “outside his tribe.”<sup>69</sup> Although Abu Mendou officially represents a diverse region as a Neighborhood Area Council (NAC) leader, he retained minimal influence beyond his own people.

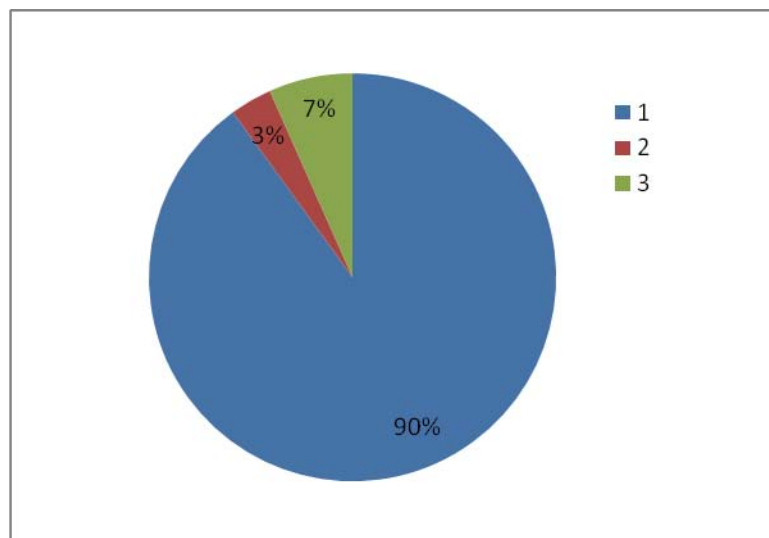


Figure 1. Iraqi perspective on whether LCs are indigenous  
Question: *People from my muhalla, not strangers or outsiders, control the local council in my area. Use a scale from 1-10. “1” means you completely agree and “10” means you completely disagree*

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<sup>68</sup>Abu Jassim, Electronic interview by author, December 15, 2008.

<sup>69</sup>Abu Mendou.

According to the survey administered to a sampling population of 30 Iraqis, the mean response to whether Iraqis trusted their government more than indigenous leaders was negative in nature (see figure 2). The preponderance of Iraqis surveyed trusted their local leaders more than governmental entities. Along the same lines, Iraqis responded on average in agreement when asked whether reform was more effective if local leaders sought to achieve it. Abu Ahmed, a prominent contractor in Baghdad, stated “we want power to remain localized so people can feel connected to the solution.”<sup>70</sup> Furat Awne, the former Iraqi Soldier, stated “change can only be brought by the Iraqi people, not the government . . . but you must not hurt the government’s pride in bringing this change.”<sup>71</sup> Like MAJ Furat, Pollack also cautions officials to encourage reform without “alienating the [current] regimes.”<sup>72</sup> When further asked if local grassroots councils could provide such a venue for reform, MAJ Furat responded, “of course, because the Iraqi people can then hold their government accountable through the local councils.”<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Abu Ahmed, Electronic interview by author, October 26, 2008.

<sup>71</sup>Furat Awne.

<sup>72</sup>Pollack, 293.

<sup>73</sup>Furat Awne.

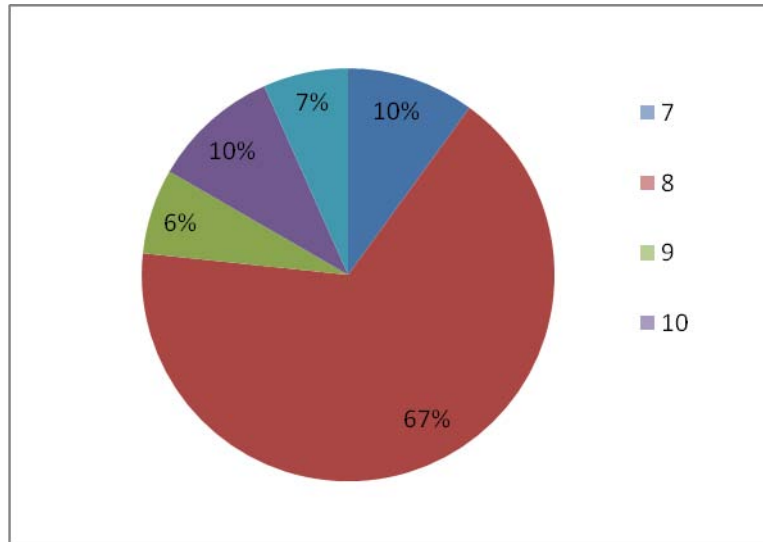


Figure 2. Iraqi perspective on whether Iraqis trust indigenous LCs  
 Question: *Do you trust local the Iraqi government more than local councils? Use a scale from 1-10. "1" means you completely agree and "10" means you completely disagree*

When U.S. officials were asked whether the local councils were comprised of local personnel from the area as opposed to strangers capitalizing on the chaotic situation, 87.5 percent of the respondents stated the councils were comprised of locals (see figure 3). According to LTC Ken Adgie, a former battalion commander of TF 1-30, 2 BCT, 3 ID during the surge in the Arab Jabour district of Iraq, “we used the local council all the time to get results . . . they knew the people and the problems better than anyone.”<sup>74</sup> This statement essentially summarizes the sentiments of U.S. officials interviewed and surveyed. In addition, when asked if the local councils retained a lot of influence in a region, 83.33 percent of U.S. officials surveyed agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (see figure 4). In fact, one U.S. official quipped, “[the local councils] were not

<sup>74</sup> LTC Kenneth Adgie, Telephonic interview by author, February 7, 2009.

just effective in our area; they were the only thing effective.”<sup>75</sup> Emma Sky, the current advisor to the Multi-National Forces Iraq (MNF-I) Commander, LTG Raymond T. Odierno, stated “the units that ‘get it’ understand that reform has to be indigenous because the Iraqi people don’t quite fully trust what they can’t see directly . . . and that’s O.K.”<sup>76</sup> LTC Pat Frank, a former battalion commander during the surge, added “the councils provided a voice to the people.”<sup>77</sup> Such a statement highlights the role of the local councils and the importance of listening to the people in the region.

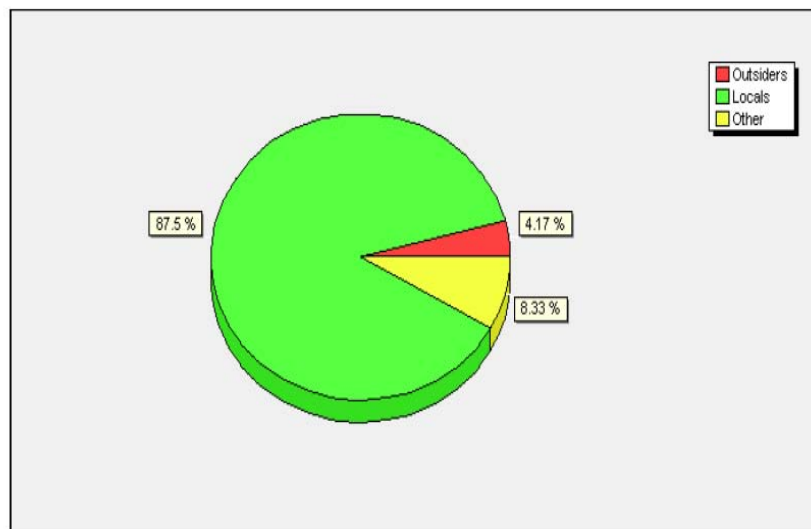


Figure 3. U.S. perspective on whether LCs are indigenous  
Question: *Was the council comprised of outsiders or people from within the local area?*

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<sup>75</sup>Survey comment, March 15, 2009.

<sup>76</sup>Ms. Emma Sky, Conversation with author, December 12, 2007, Jihad, Baghdad, Iraq.

<sup>77</sup>Frank.



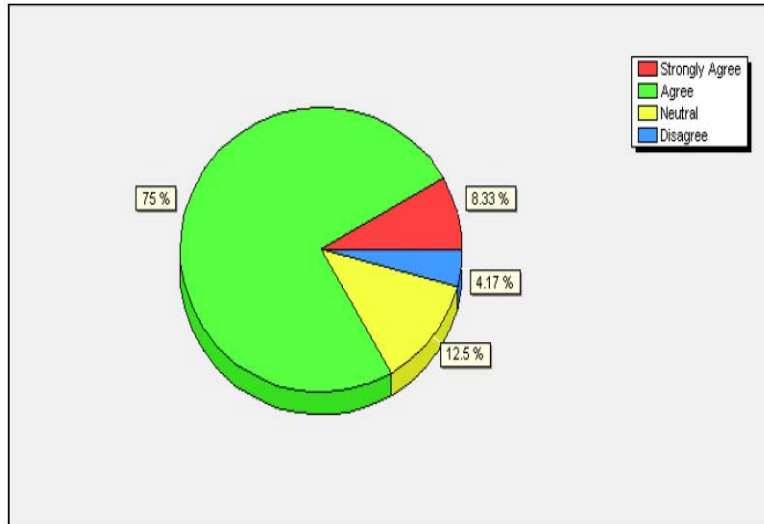


Figure 4. U.S. perspective on degree of influence LCs exhibit  
 Question: *The local council retained a lot of influence in the area I worked with.*

As a corollary to the tenet that reform must be principally indigenous, Pollack also suggests using third parties to bring change. Although local grassroots councils are not typically considered an outside entity, the councils do retain a unique perspective apart from Iraqi governmental representatives and U.S. officials. Abu Jassim contended that, “we [the local councils] are the ones on the front lines and just want [the government] to hear our cries.”<sup>78</sup> In this light, the local grassroots councils do seem to represent a home-based third party that U.S. officials in fact used to achieve peace during the surge in 2007. Based on the survey results and interviews from both Iraqi and U.S. officials, one can assess local councils as indigenous entities. Local councils provide a means to ensure reform is “principally indigenous” thus satisfying the first tenet.

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<sup>78</sup> Abu Jassim.

### Reform Should be a Gradual Process

In a survey of over 130 U.S. officers from the Command and General Staff College, 100 percent suggested that local councils achieved results in a gradual manner thus supporting Pollack's next tenet (see figure 5). U.S. officials interviewed provided more insight as to why U.S. respondents felt overwhelmingly that local councils achieved progress in a gradual manner. A U.S. company commander who served in Iraq expressed a common frustration, "how long it takes to get things done in the Iraqi culture."<sup>79</sup> MAJ Bret Hamilton, a company commander in Baghdad, suggested that "[U.S. forces] are rotating in and out of [Iraq] continually so we don't want to work gradually . . . we want to achieve certain objectives."<sup>80</sup> However, since the local councils live and breathe in their respective communities, "they are in no hurry to achieve certain results in a manner that could put them and their families at risk."<sup>81</sup> LTC Spain, the former aide-to-camp for the MNF-I Commander during the surge, stated that "on average US forces want[ed] to start programs and get results much quicker than Iraqis" potentially due to the rotation timeline and U.S. forces' "desire to finish what they start."<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Lyons.

<sup>80</sup>MAJ Bret Hamilton, Interview by author, March 11, 2009, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>LTC Everett Spain, Electronic interview by author, February 2, 2009.

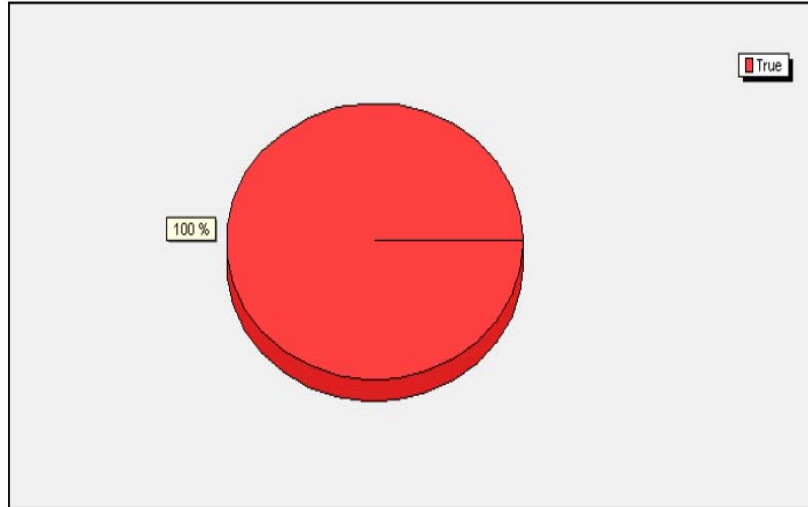


Figure 5. U.S. perspective of whether LCs function in a gradual manner  
Question: *The local council achieved results in a gradual manner*

In another portion of the survey administered to U.S. officials, half the respondents felt working with the local councils could achieve results faster or the same as working without the organizations (see figure 6). Further explaining these survey results, LTC Kenneth Adgie suggested that his forces “were definitely on the local leaders’ timeline because the Iraqis had to do a candid analysis of whether they would live through the experience.”<sup>83</sup> In fact, when LTC Adgie’s forces were ready to begin securing a particular area, the local leaders simply replied “not yet” until one day they “had 80 volunteers ready to protect their neighborhood.”<sup>84</sup> This paper’s analytical framework suggests that reform should occur at a gradual pace. Therefore, from an American perspective based on the data collected, one can reasonably conclude that the

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<sup>83</sup>Adgie.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

local councils do in fact provide a means to accomplish goals over a long period of time even if U.S. forces can accomplish such objectives faster.

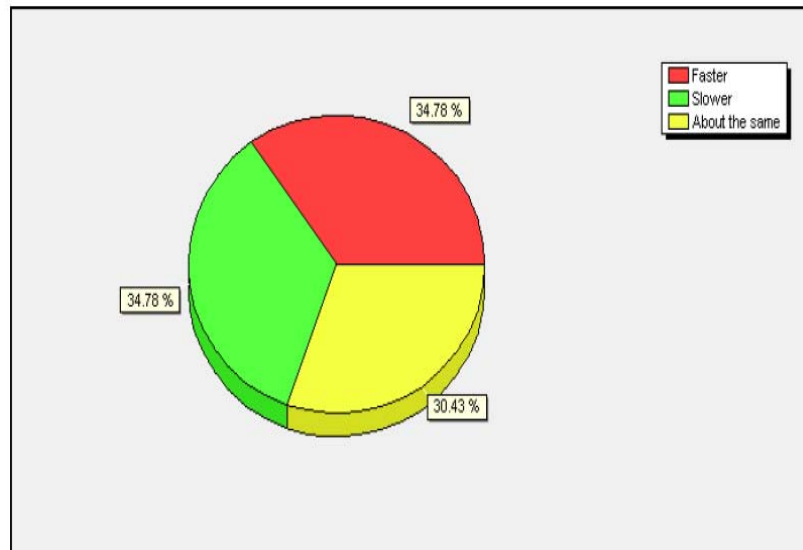


Figure 6. U.S. perspective on the rate that CF could accomplish goals using LCs  
Question: *When working with local councils, you achieved results faster, slower, or about the same?*

On average, 76 percent of the Iraqis surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that their local councils worked in a gradual manner (see figure 7). However, during the interviews conducted, many Iraqis insisted that the local councils often worked “too slow” because of inadequate funding. Iraqi civilians and leaders also suggested that they are well aware of how their gradual approach to reform can often frustrate their U.S. counterparts. The same Iraqis expressed great appreciation for U.S. efforts to bring reform quickly but also highlighted the fact that Americans “can go home at night on a safe base while we sleep with people who may want to hurt us for wanting change and peace.”<sup>85</sup> LTC Adgie

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<sup>85</sup>Sheik Hyder, Electronic interview by author, December 15, 2008.

related a similar experience when his own personal security detachment “was used to protect a local leader’s house due to a credible threat.”<sup>86</sup> MAJ Furat Awne, an Iraqi Army officer living in the United States, suggested that Iraqi time is “measured in heartbeats rather than minutes.”<sup>87</sup> When asked to explain why local councils take a gradual approach as opposed to a more direct one, he offered this insight:

When an Iraqi agrees to something, he knows that his entire family and muhalla will know what he has agreed to. Imagine if every decision you made had to be announced in public. An Iraqi who has decided on something knows that his life and the security of his family are at risk. This is the reality we live with. New ideas are often rejected by ignorant people as Western poison. Even if the idea is for the benefit of the people, ignorant men will not see it that way. Local leaders have to make the idea seem like it comes from the people and gradually make changes. This process takes time.<sup>88</sup>

Furat Awne depicted the immense pressure that local leaders retain on their shoulders. Since they must balance their safety with reform, one must empathize with their gradual approach.

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<sup>86</sup> Adgie.

<sup>87</sup> Furat Awne.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

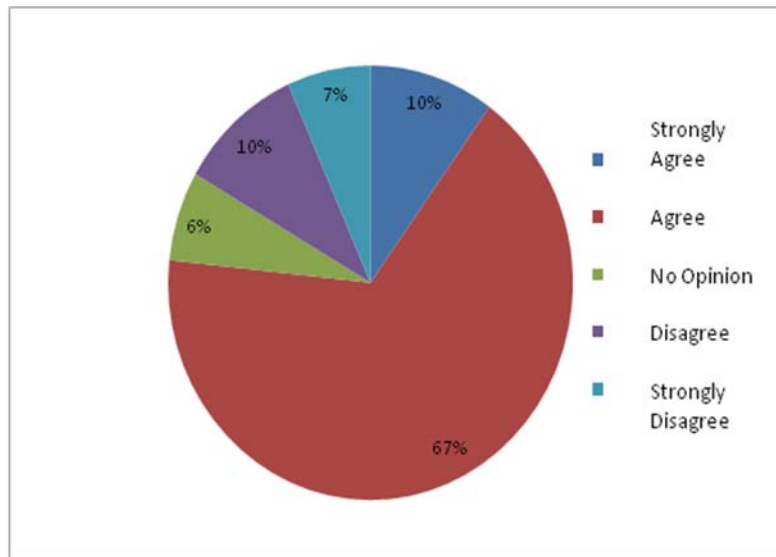


Figure 7. Iraqi perspective of whether LCs worked in a gradual manner  
 Question: *The local council in my area works in a gradual manner. Choose your answer from strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, or strongly disagree*

Along the same lines, one Iraqi security official stated that reform must come gradually “because many people who must be changed are ignorant.”<sup>89</sup> MAJ Mohsen continued, “the Iraqi people have been mentally abused by Saddam for years and do not understand change like Americans. You know freedom. We are just meeting it.”<sup>90</sup> Abu Jassim further expounded on the subject and said that reform “must come gradually or people won’t understand and appreciate it . . . reform cannot be measured by American [deployment rotations] but through the Iraqi people’s growth.”<sup>91</sup> As a precondition to a gradual reform approach, Pollack suggested that one “elect[s] the local councils”<sup>92</sup> to

<sup>89</sup>Mohsen, Electronic interview by author, October 20, 2008.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>Abu Jassim.

<sup>92</sup>Pollack, 294.

bring gradual reform. According to the data derived from both U.S. officials and Iraqi civilians, the local grassroots councils represent an entity that functions in a gradual manner and therefore support this tenet of the framework.

#### When Possible Take Steps That Can Benefit People Right Away

According to the survey of 130 U.S. officers, only 8.33 percent of the sampling population felt local councils were more focused on long term objectives rather than short term initiatives (see figure 8). Although 58.33 percent of the U.S. officers felt local councils facilitated both long and short term objectives, over 66.67 percent of that majority felt the grassroots organizations desired to accomplish more immediate objectives benefiting the people over long term initiatives (see figure 9). When asked why local councils appeared to focus more on immediate goals for the people, LTC Adgie responded simply, “survival.”<sup>93</sup> According to this former battalion commander in Arab Jabour, one local council leader understood that “he had to win over the people immediately.”<sup>94</sup> Although the population in Arab Jabour “had enough with Al Qaeda,”<sup>95</sup> the local leader understood that through temporary fixes, he could gain popularity, power, and influence.

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<sup>93</sup>Adgie.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.

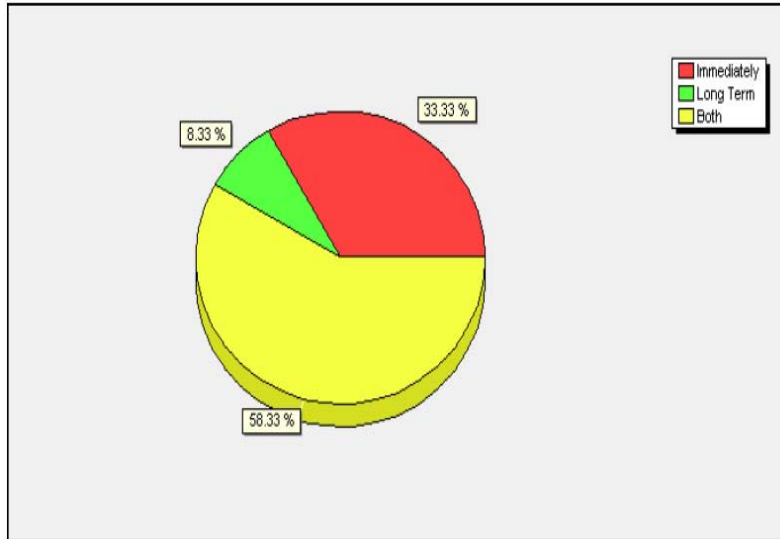


Figure 8. U.S. perspective of whether LCs seek immediate or long term benefits  
 Question: *Did the local council you worked with request initiatives that would benefit the people immediately or over a long term?*

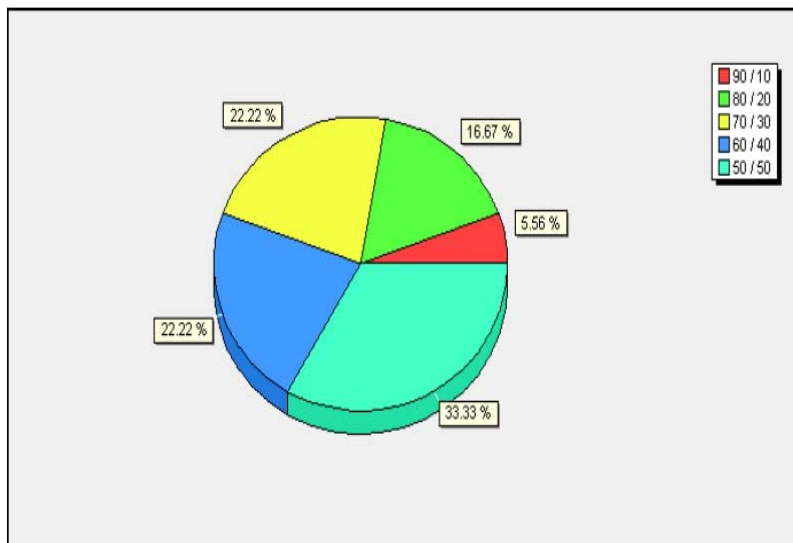


Figure 9. U.S. perspective on immediate versus long term benefits sought by LCs  
 Question: *If both [reference Figure 8], what was the percentage of requests for immediate / long term initiatives?*

Conveying a similar experience, LTC Pat Frank stated that “one of the most powerful opportunities that coalition forces could give local councils was the ability to



‘buy’ time to introduce long term reform.”<sup>96</sup> In addition, almost half the U.S. officers surveyed responded that “money” for short term projects was the single greatest enabler to the local Iraqi councils (see figure 10).

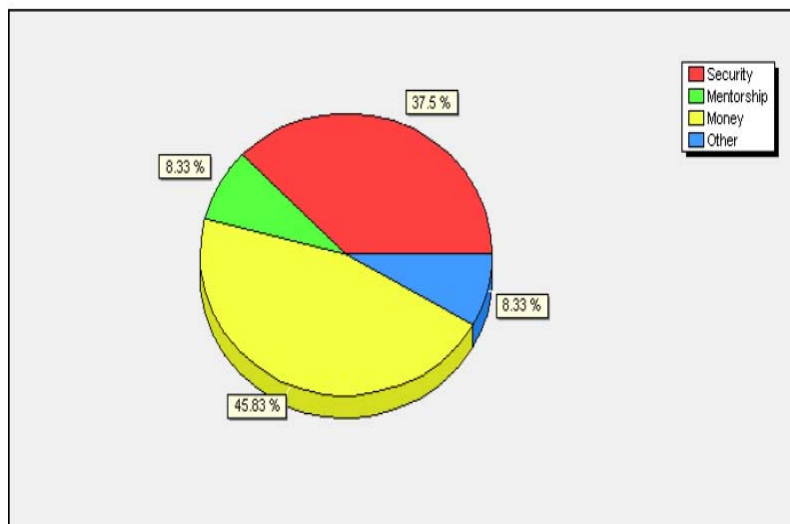


Figure 10. U.S. perspective of the greatest enabler of LCs  
Question: *What was the greatest enabler U.S. forces provided to the councils allowing them to operate?*

Further expounding on the ability of local councils to take steps immediately benefiting the people, COL Ricky D. Gibbs, a former brigade commander of the 4th IBCT, First Infantry Division, suggested that “local councils want it now where as in many cases [U.S. forces] focused on a long term process.”<sup>97</sup> Understanding the importance of taking steps to benefit the people immediately, COL Gibbs started numerous “quick win” initiatives through the local councils. This concept essentially

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<sup>96</sup>Frank.

<sup>97</sup>COL Ricky D. Gibbs, Electronic interview by author, February 12, 2009.

trades space for time and allows the host nation populace to receive immediate benefits for demonstrating progress in the right direction. Although “quick win” projects are limited in nature and will admittedly not achieve long term reconstruction results, the concept earns the trust of the people and rewards good behavior. LTC Pat Frank reinforced this concept through several initiatives like area beautification contracts that allowed people “to take more pride in their community and help them return to a state of normalcy.”<sup>98</sup> In accordance with GEN Petraeus’ maxim that “money is ammunition” during the counterinsurgency fight, U.S. military officials “were able to access funding for quick win initiatives during the surge.”<sup>99</sup>

Emma Sky stated that “most [grassroots] councils did not have the capacity or resources for long term initiatives,” but in some areas short term projects “played a key role in restoring the social fabric that had come undone through the sectarian violence.”<sup>100</sup> Based on an analysis of the data collected, one can conclude the majority of U.S. personnel interviewed and surveyed provided responses that local councils support Pollack’s principle. However, through a further analysis, one can identify conflicting interests between Iraqis and Americans. Iraqi local council leaders universally desired short term initiatives to build power and credibility with the local people. However, although U.S. officials recognized a need for immediate programs, they truly desired long term initiatives to fix problems.

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<sup>98</sup>Frank.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

<sup>100</sup>Ms. Emma Sky, Electronic interview by author, February 14, 2009.

BG Sean MacFarland, the current Joint Task Force North Commander and former brigade commander in Anbar Province, offered another example of how local councils guided U.S. efforts in regard to taking steps to immediately benefit the people:

When I first met the local leaders, I couldn't even get them to talk about reconstruction. They were wondering why we were even trying to build schools or make things better. They wanted to figure out how to get security first. That was more of an immediate benefit to them than any reconstruction efforts.<sup>101</sup>

BG MacFarland illustrated one example of how local councils demonstrated a more refined understanding and ability to achieve immediate benchmarks over long term goals within the Iraqi society.

In the survey of Iraqi local nationals, 93.33 percent selected grassroots councils over the official Iraqi government as the typical means to provide immediate benefits to the Iraqi people (see figure 11). Furthermore, 73.66 percent selected local councils as the best means to provide immediate benefits to the Iraqi people (see figure 12). Ali Hussein, an interpreter for U.S. forces in Diyala, further expounded on his support of the local councils providing immediate benefits by stating “the money that was used to start a store or clean up an area may have seemed like a waste but it was not . . . it saved the lives of innocent people and allowed time to let peace come to the area. Our sheiks did this for us.”<sup>102</sup> Ali Hussein’s statement fully supports Pollack’s description of this tenet: “limited fixes cannot actually get at the underlying problems but . . . they create space and time for the process of real reform.”<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, Abu Jassim, a local council

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<sup>101</sup>BG Sean MacFarland, Telephonic interview by author, February 19, 2009.

<sup>102</sup>Ali Hussein, Electronic interview by author, December 26, 2008.

<sup>103</sup>Pollack, 296.

leader, stated that he used the “quick win” initiatives to “gain power and build confidence in the people that [reform] would finally come.”<sup>104</sup> Dr. Omar, an anesthesiologist and local council member, responded in a similar manner when asked how local councils could benefit the people immediately. He stated that local councils needed the “resources to convince people to have hope in their future but sometimes the best way to benefit the people was to visit the families and talk to them.”<sup>105</sup> Furat Awne jokingly stated that the “Iraqi people will wait a lifetime for something if you meet them daily to tell them ‘wait until tomorrow.’”<sup>106</sup>

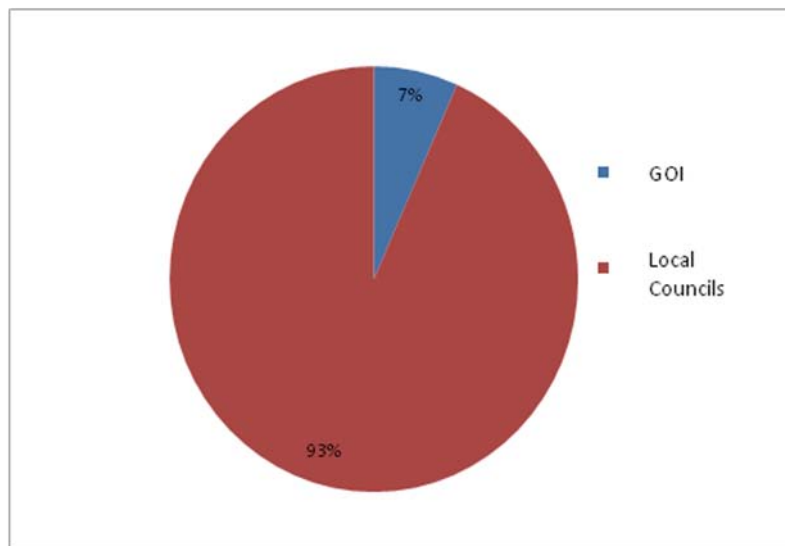


Figure 11. Iraqi perspective of the typical organization to provide benefits to the Iraqi people  
Question: *What organization typically provides benefits to the people? Select the GOI or local councils*

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<sup>104</sup> Abu Jassim.

<sup>105</sup> Dr. Omar, Electronic interview by author, January 20, 2009.

<sup>106</sup> Furat Awne.

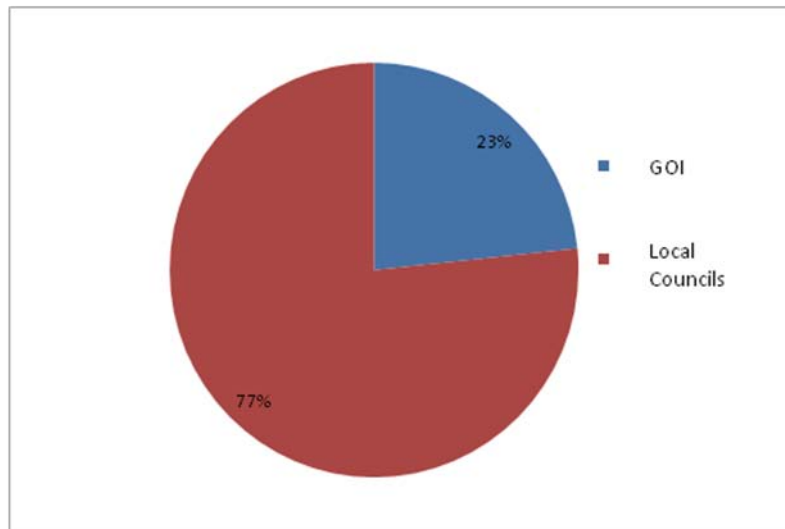


Figure 12. Iraqi perspective of the best organization to provide benefits to the Iraqi people  
Question: *What is the best organization to provide benefits to the people? Select the GOI or local councils*

Based on the data received, both Iraqi civilians and U.S. officials, concluded that short term initiatives that benefit the people immediately can placate the populace long enough to introduce long term reform. Furthermore, most U.S. officials and Iraqi nationals interviewed and surveyed indicated that local grassroots councils served as the primary means to implement short term fixes that would ultimately decrease violence, allow peace to settle in their respective areas, and further empower the local leadership. Based on the data collected, local councils satisfy the requirement within the analytical framework that engines of reform should be able to take steps to benefit the people right away.

#### Focus on Bottom Up, As Well as Top Down Reform

U.S. personnel and Iraqis interviewed and surveyed agreed that Iraqi local councils could facilitate a “bottom up” process of reform. However, research also

suggested that the most salient part of this tenet lies within the perceived ability of the “top” to accept the “bottom” as a partner in the overall reform process. Of the U.S. officials surveyed, 41.67 percent stated there was no connection between their unofficial local council and the official Iraqi government (see figure 13). However, based on an analysis of the text replies from the survey and interviews conducted, one could detect a discrepancy in the responses. Most U.S. officers thought the question on the survey asked if official councils, like the Neighborhood Area Council (NAC) and District Area Council (DAC), were connected to the government. Despite the misinterpretation, many U.S. officers highlighted the lack of cooperation between the grassroots entities and their official government representatives. Although the conflict tainted survey results regarding this tenet, interview responses were used to gain a better understanding of the conflict between the two groups.

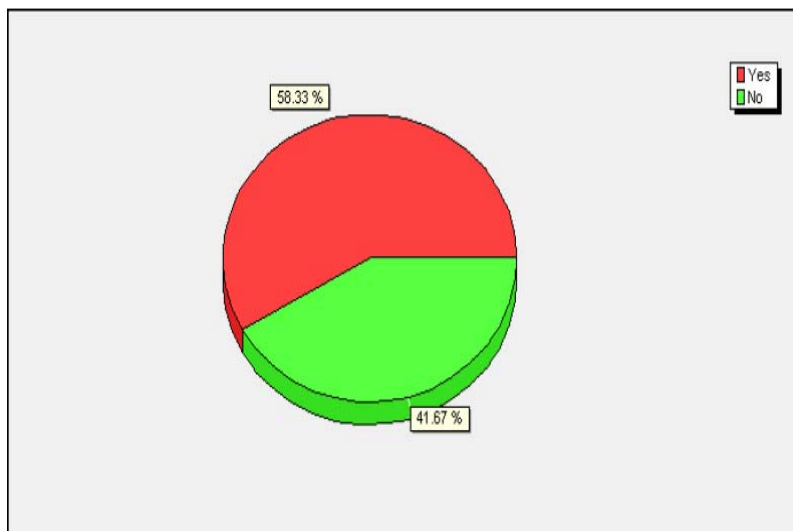


Figure 13. U.S. perspective of connection between Iraqi government and LCs  
Question: *Were the councils connected to any official entity of the Iraq government?*

During several interviews with former commanders throughout Iraq, U.S. leaders recounted intense exchanges between Iraqi local council leaders and official Iraqi government entities. CPT Sean Lyons, a company commander in Hay Aamel, stated that he “feared for the lives of some government representatives when they would address grassroots leaders in his sector . . . there was a tremendous amount of animosity.”<sup>107</sup> In referring to separate sectors of Iraq, both LTC Adgie and LTC Frank recalled at least one incident when an Iraqi local council leader reprimanded a governmental official for “forcing the Iraqi people to turn to Americans for help instead of their own brothers.”<sup>108</sup> All nine of the U.S. military officers and civilians interviewed stated that the Iraqi government at least recognized the importance of the local councils and often conducted visits to areas in an attempt to meet local leaders. Even in the early days of utilizing local councils, BG MacFarland, who served as a brigade commander in Ramadi, recalled that “there was some connection [with the Iraqi government] which we actively encouraged,”<sup>109</sup> but the relationship remained tenuous at best.

According to Emma Sky, Iraqi governmental officials created an Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation (IFCNR) to encourage reconciliation at the local level focusing specifically on the Sahwa programs. IFCNR “enabled insurgents to give up violence and come back into society.”<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, IFCNR “was instrumental in helping the GOI overcome [the] fear of [dealing with] the

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<sup>107</sup>Lyons.

<sup>108</sup>Frank.

<sup>109</sup>MacFarland.

<sup>110</sup>Sky.

Sunnis”<sup>111</sup> and therefore greatly encouraged the strategic endstate of national unity.

However, despite similar goals as the local grassroots councils, IFCNR and the grassroots entities remain largely separate and distinct organizations. According to many of the local council leaders, like Abu Jassim, “this separation is disrespectful and hurtful.”<sup>112</sup>

Iraqi civilians responded most vehemently when addressing this particular tenet of the analytical framework. Sheikh Hyder, a local council director in Baghdad, stated the official governmental leaders are “preoccupied with looting and managing their own corruption without introducing vital services to the Iraqi people.”<sup>113</sup> Although this statement seems like an overgeneralization, every other Iraqi surveyed and interviewed echoed similar sentiments. Ali Hussein and Abu Ali both suggested that the gap between the Iraqi government and her people “is as wide as the largest ocean.”<sup>114</sup> Abu Ali, who worked in a joint security station in the volatile Diyala Province, suggested that top down reform was “non-existent since the Iraqi government was like a stranger to her people.”<sup>115</sup> Abu Jassim, a Baghdad resident and former government official under the Saddam regime, stated “the Iraqi government promised to empower the local councils but in the end only took credit for our hard work.”<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

<sup>112</sup>Abu Jassim.

<sup>113</sup>Sheik Hyder.

<sup>114</sup>Ali Hussein.

<sup>115</sup>Abu Ali, Conversation with author, January 26, 2008, Baghdad, Iraq.

<sup>116</sup>Abu Jassim.



According to the surveys completed by 30 Iraqi civilians, 83.33 percent of the respondents claimed that the local councils retained more influence than the government in their muhallas (see figure 14). However, the same sampling population responded overwhelmingly (90 percent) in favor of the Iraqi government retaining overall influence within their respective communities in the future (see figure 15).

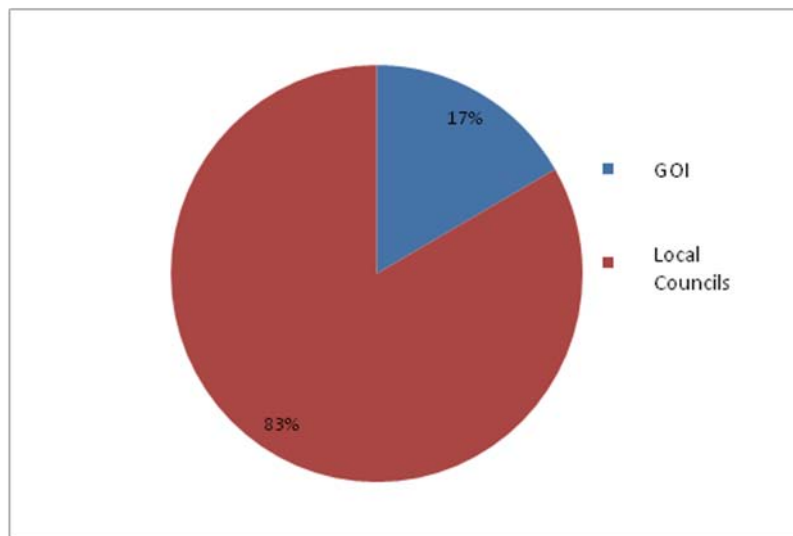


Figure 14. Iraqi perspective of LCs' influence in Iraq  
Question: *What organization retains the most influence in your muhalla? Select the GOI or local councils*

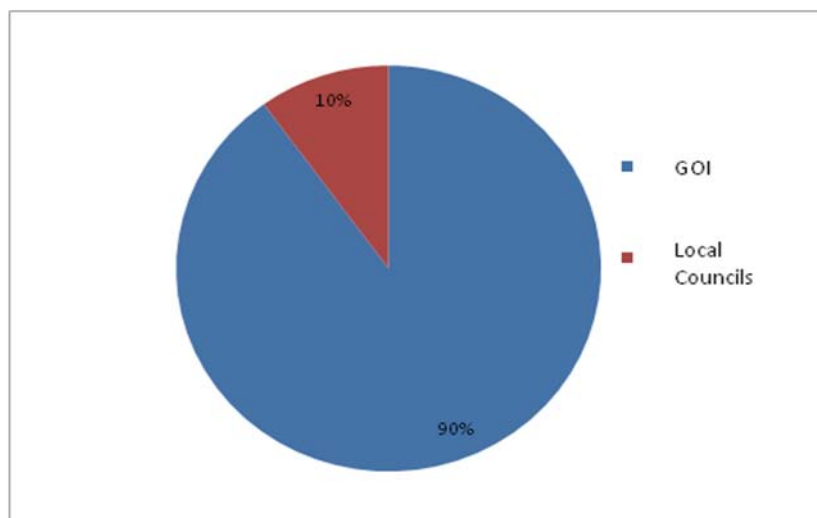


Figure 15. Iraqi perspective of the desired organization to influence people in Iraq  
 Question: *In the future, what organization should maintain the most influence in your muhalla? Select GOI or local councils?*

Reinforcing the aforementioned survey results, Iraqis interviewed responded in a positive manner when asked if the Iraqi people wanted their government to lead their country. Abu Mendou, a government official in Baghdad explained the issue with equal frustration:

I represent people from different muhallas and tribes but have very little influence. If the people do not know my family, they do not know or trust me. I can try to bring services but the local councils will always think I am stealing something from them. I have tried to help my tribe because I have the position and they will appreciate me. I have tried to help others too, though.<sup>117</sup>

Abu Mendou highlighted the basic contention between the “top” and “bottom.” When asked why most Iraqi people perceive local councils as more effective than the

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<sup>117</sup> Abu Mendou.

government, Abu Mendou stated, “I can’t even go into areas that I represent. The local councils can have contact with their people in their areas.”<sup>118</sup>

Emma Sky provided an Iraqi government or “top down” perspective which applies to this particular principle. According to the surveys and interviews conducted, most Iraqis and U.S. officials agreed that a gap does in fact exist between the Iraqi people and their government. However, although a “top down” reform process may facilitate closing such a gap, a “bottom up” approach like the local councils can be dangerous. According to Emma Sky, there “is always the issue of legitimacy – what right do these [local] councils have to exist.”<sup>119</sup> Without a proper mandate, these councils could easily transform into a shadow government that complicates the official Iraqi government’s ability to operate. Sky further contended that local councils “served a need in a particular time” and expressed hope that “some members [would] become part of the formal system.”<sup>120</sup> This particular principle in the framework requires an engine to facilitate “top down” and “bottom up” reform. Although research indicated that local councils can execute bottom up efforts, research also revealed a threat that local councils pose to the Iraqi government or top down efforts. Consequently, local councils do not fully satisfy this principle; in fact, the local councils seem to add conflict.

### Be Flexible

This tenet highlights the fact that some programs may work while others may fail. Furthermore, some programs may bring progress in some areas and the same initiatives

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<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

<sup>119</sup>Sky.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid.

will fail in other regions. 80 percent of the U.S. officers surveyed suggested U.S. forces had to remain flexible when dealing with local councils (see figure 16). One anonymous comment on the survey administered to 130 U.S. officers stated “the [Iraqi] local councils are inherently flexible since they seek programs that are tailored to their respective areas so you have to be flexible too or get lost in the shuffle”<sup>121</sup> This observation was reiterated throughout several interviews with U.S. officers as well. Although guard programs like the Sons of Iraq and the Awakening Group were commonly accepted in both homogeneous and mixed sectarian regions, other programs remained local initiatives.

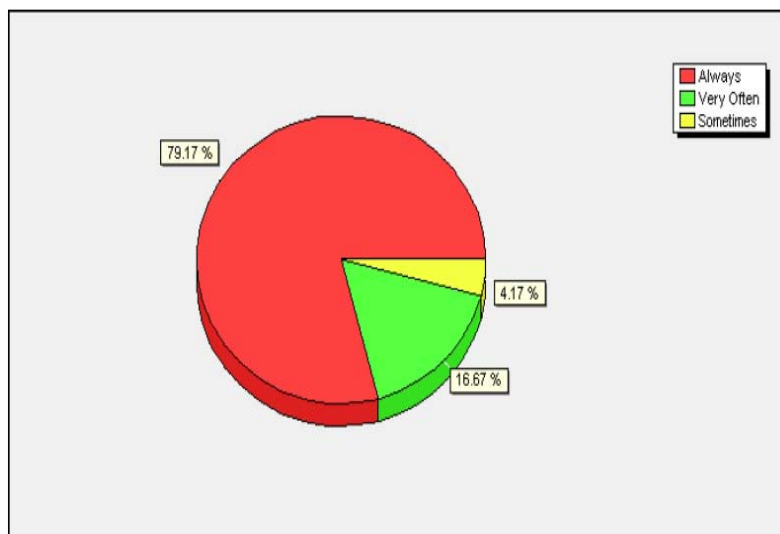


Figure 16. U.S. perspective of whether one had to be flexible in dealing with LCs  
Question: *How often must one be flexible when dealing with local councils? Explain why in the text response*

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<sup>121</sup>Survey Comment, March 15, 2009.

Shaun Baker, a former Army trained Human Intelligence (HUMINT) collector and interrogator, recalled that in Arab Jaboor “one of the most successful local program [U.S. forces] supervised was a Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCCI) cooperative that allowed grieving families to testify against Al Qaeda affiliates who hurt them.”<sup>122</sup> In the interview with COL Gibbs, the ability of local councils to demonstrate this type of flexibility became even more evident. Within a brigade sized area, this leader initiated diverse programs based on the needs outlined by the local councils who “were very flexible”<sup>123</sup> to work with in his opinion. Programs in different areas ranged from detainee release initiatives to women’s councils to farming subsidy programs. Depending on the area, local leaders identified specific needs to address so they could more effectively maintain order and influence. In fact, according to an interview with LTC Frank, “programs differed in certain areas even within battalion size battle space.”<sup>124</sup> According to Pollack, this type of flexibility is required to successfully execute a strategy in the Arab world. Pollack further explained the principle by suggesting certain concepts can be reinforced and applied universally to achieve results rapidly; the key to success is adapting quickly, reinforcing the good and halting the bad.

Of note, Pollack implied throughout his explanation of this principle that an entity capable of “reinforcing those ideas which seem to be bearing fruit”<sup>125</sup> must exist in order to spread the concept. Conversely, the same organization should be able to determine if

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<sup>122</sup>Mr. Shaun Baker, Telephonic interview by author, February 15, 2009.

<sup>123</sup>Gibbs.

<sup>124</sup>Frank.

<sup>125</sup>Pollack, 300.

the initiative should remain local or be terminated based on a negative response. The governing body, which can monitor the big picture, is critical to maintaining flexibility. Based on this research, the success of a program in one area is largely capitalized in another area through the efforts of U.S. forces. In the Anbar Province, BG Sean MacFarland was one of the first to introduce the concept of the Awakening Group and working with local leaders to halt violence in areas spiraling out of control. LTC Adgie recalled how this concept was one that could be applied universally “and was picked up by U.S. officials and spread”<sup>126</sup> to other communities like the ones in TF 1-30’s area of operations. Without U.S. efforts, one must question whether this critical grassroots concept would have withered on the vine of progress.

From an Iraqi perspective, 86.66 percent of those surveyed disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Iraqi government was more flexible than their local council (see figure 17). When asked to expound on this sentiment, Abu Ali explained that “an Iraqi measures flexibility in terms of getting things done. A lot of Iraqis only care about what programs work in their muhalla and do not know about other areas. If local leaders bring peace and money to their area, they must be more flexible than the government.”<sup>127</sup> Ali Hussein, an interpreter for U.S. forces, expressed a similar sentiment. He claimed that if a local council “could get a generator or provide fuel quicker than the government, then they must be more flexible.”<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Adgie.

<sup>127</sup> Abu Ali.

<sup>128</sup> Ali Hussein.

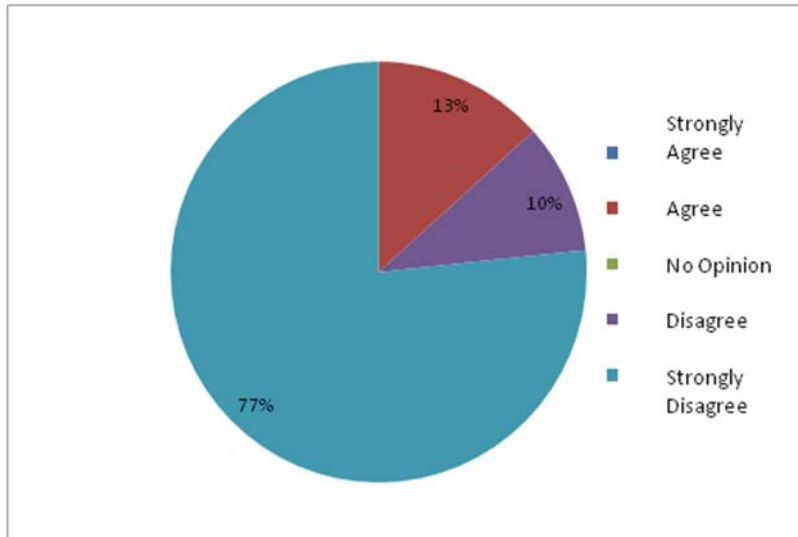


Figure 17. Iraqi perspective of whether LCs were more flexible than the GOI  
Question: *The Iraqi government is more flexible than the local council in your area? Choose your answer from strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, or strongly disagree*

Iraqi individuals interviewed brought to light significant issues and revealed discrepancies not detected through the surveys administered to U.S. and Iraqi personnel. Not only were the definitions of flexibility different among the sampling populations but the Iraqis based their definition of flexibility on a robust U.S. support node. As stated before, U.S. forces served as the overall governing body for local councils and therefore the source of their flexibility. In addition, in terms of empowering local councils to deliver on promises, U.S. forces remained the primary logistical support node for the grassroots organizations. According to Baker, the former U.S. Army HUMINT collector, the Iraqi “on the street who [could] get things done [had] tremendous power . . . so we

made sure he could get things done!”<sup>129</sup> Therefore, for the purpose of this research, Iraqi civilians were judging the flexibility of the local councils based on a U.S. support structure that was infinitely more responsive and capable than the Iraqi government.

Based on the research, both U.S. forces and Iraqi civilians viewed the local councils as flexible but for different reasons. U.S. forces defined flexibility in terms of diversification of programs while Iraqis defined flexibility through successful delivery of goods, services, or programs in a timely manner. One must draw particular conclusions about the realistic capabilities of the local councils’ to facilitate a strategic endstate like national unity if the Iraqi people define flexibility of the grassroots organizations based essentially on U.S. support. Although local councils seem to satisfy this principle of the analytical framework according to Pollack’s definition of the tenet, this paper will address the conflicting definitions of the word flexibility in Chapter 5.

#### Push on All Tracks of Reform and Take a Multilateral Approach

One may notice that this tenet relates to the principle of flexibility. However, Pollack differentiated between the two and research was tailored accordingly. While flexibility focused more on diversity of programs, the principle of reform focused on social development through such diversity. Pollack advised U.S. leaders to take a multilateral and multi-pronged approach when dealing with Arab leaders at the national level. However, these tenets apply at the local level as well. While explaining this principle, Pollack stated that many Middle Eastern nations “have a broad range of

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<sup>129</sup>Baker.



problems . . . [but this] is actually an opportunity.”<sup>130</sup> U.S. officials can select from a wide spectrum of issues to dedicate resources and time. As mentioned earlier, the local councils attempted to begin a myriad of initiatives depending on the area. The diversification of programs from region to region served as an indicator of the effectiveness of a multi-faceted approach. Pollack would contend that one “must never give up on any of [these diverse approaches]; we should continue to encourage reform across the board because it is what the region needs and what its people want.”<sup>131</sup> By pushing on all tracks of reform including diplomatic, social, and economic efforts, one can greatly increase chances of reform in the Arab world. According to the survey results and interviews conducted, local councils provided a means to introduce a wide spectrum of reform based initiatives.

Over 50 percent of the U.S. officers surveyed contended that the local councils attempted to address a wide range of issues facing their communities (see figure 18). Supporting the survey results, LTC Everett Spain, the former aide-de-camp to the MNF-I Commander during the surge, stated local councils attempted to address a wide breadth of issues “perhaps too many to accomplish.”<sup>132</sup> COL Gibbs, a former brigade commander in Iraq, appropriately commented that the local councils addressed many concerns “but of course many issues existed and needed to be fixed.”<sup>133</sup> COL Gibbs continued to state that “based on a wide problem set, [U.S. leaders] could capitalize on the most sensitive issues

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<sup>130</sup>Pollack, 302.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., 303.

<sup>132</sup>Spain.

<sup>133</sup>Gibbs.

through the local councils to achieve security goals. [U.S. forces] found what mattered to the people and leveraged it to achieve security objectives.”<sup>134</sup>

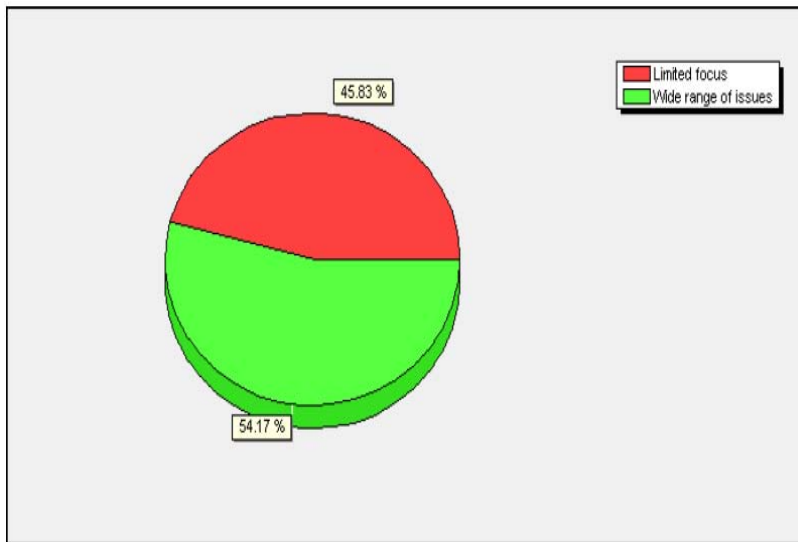


Figure 18. U.S. perspective of limited versus broad focus of issues addressed by LCs  
Question: *Did the council have a limited focus (a few objectives) or did it address a wide range of issues?*

In order to better define the issues and the diversity of the proposed responses, U.S. officers were also asked to identify broad categories of reform addressed or facilitated by local councils. Survey results indicated a diverse number of programs even though the categories were somewhat broad (see figure 19). To expound on the survey results and explain such diversification, interviewees offered critical insight into grassroots efforts spanning a wide spectrum across social and economic initiatives. First, local councils were often used to achieve social reform. For example, since the people in LTC Adgie’s sector were most impacted by Al Qaeda terrorists, an initiative dealing with

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<sup>134</sup>Ibid.

the CCCI was popular. According to Baker, a former Army HUMINT collector, the program “allowed families to build tremendous faith and confidence in the Iraqi judicial system.”<sup>135</sup> The concept of the rule of law “was mostly foreign to these people until they saw the results of their efforts.”<sup>136</sup> Another social reform initiative started in several areas dealt with women’s rights. Although each U.S. officer stated varying levels of success, local councils often approved women’s groups to handle issues with children and female Muslims. In one sector of Baghdad, local councils organized a non-profit women’s organization and a committee to resettle internally displaced Iraqis. At the same time, both grassroots organizations collected and redistributed clothing to both Sunni and Shia children in the areas furthering reconciliatory efforts between the two warring sects.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup>Baker.

<sup>136</sup>Ibid.

<sup>137</sup>Frank.

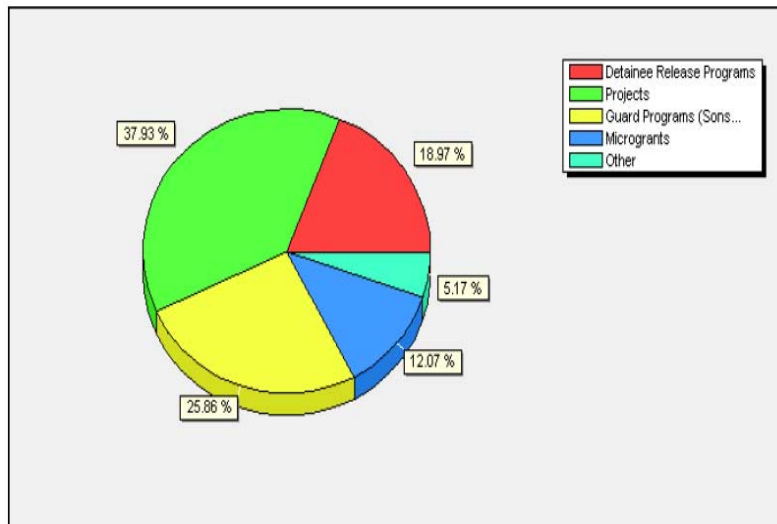


Figure 19. U.S. perspective on the types of programs facilitated by LCs  
*Question: What types of issues were addressed directly of simply facilitated by the local council?*

Second, local councils were used to achieve economic reform. Along with security, U.S. officers and Iraqi civilians cited money as the most influential tool to achieving results in Iraq. According to Abu Jassim, a current local council leader, appropriate funds “must be put in faithful people’s hands to consolidate and redistribute power.”<sup>138</sup> When asked to expound, Abu Jassim stated the following:

We [the local council] know where one thousand dinar can have the effect of a million dinar in regard to progress. Putting money in areas that remain committed to peace is the most powerful tool. If a bad area sees this, they will blame the terrorist in their area for their failure and want to change. This is why the many programs from the local councils worked.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Abu Jassim..

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

Abu Jassim suggested that money, which was more easily accessed by local councils through U.S. military channels, allowed the local grassroots leaders to influence an area on multiple levels.

Using money as a means to achieve economic reform, local councils also sought to establish legitimate businesses to generate income rather than a “militia tax” collected by thugs door to door. In Hayy Aamel, CPT Sean Lyons used a microgrant program to open businesses along the main streets. The local council facilitated an in depth application process used to ensure an equal distribution of loans among the mixed Sunni and Shia population. According the CPT Lyons, the process “allowed shops to open and returned the area to a calmer state.”<sup>140</sup> Based on requests from the local councils, U.S. leaders from this unit also created a local Shia guard force for almost exclusively economic reasons. The local council requested the security force to “give young men a job and to remove the temptation to join a militia.”<sup>141</sup> Most U.S. officers interviewed suggested that money was often spent based on the recommendations provided by the local councils. Many U.S. officials found reform through economic means quite advantageous to achieving security objectives.

Third, in addition to economic and social reform, Pollack also suggested that reformers seek political development as well. As stated before, utilizing local councils as a means to achieve political reform remains a point of contention. Emma Sky contended that “the danger of such [local] councils is that they become an alternative [or] shadow

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<sup>140</sup>Lyons.

<sup>141</sup>Frank.

government.”<sup>142</sup> Perhaps the most salient reminder of this fact is the Jaysh Al Mahdi (JAM) influence in places like Sadr City. Until recently, governmental responsibilities ranging from security to area beautification were performed by the militia. While operating in West Rashid as a part of 1-28 IN, LTC Frank recalled certain areas “that had clean streets and painted sidewalks due to the efforts of JAM.”<sup>143</sup>

Despite their apparent effectiveness and popularity among the Iraqi people, one must address the question of a local council’s legitimacy. According to generalized responses during interviews of both U.S. officers and Iraqi citizens, local council leaders were rarely elected to their positions. In an area of the world where U.S. officials are seeking political reform, the validity of a self-appointed local council remains open to question. However, research indicated that local councils have demonstrated a propensity to achieve reform across a wide spectrum. MAJ Furat Awne stated that “such achievements in the face of such horrible violence should serve as a lesson to the Iraqi government.”<sup>144</sup> Perhaps local councils can serve as a means themselves to politically reform Iraq. Although data is limited, local councils have demonstrated the means to address diverse social, economic, and political issues. Therefore, one could consider that these entities satisfy the tenet requiring an engine of reform to pursue a multilateral approach when seeking an endstate like national unity.

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<sup>142</sup>Sky.

<sup>143</sup>Frank.

<sup>144</sup>Furat Awne.

### Take External Security Threats off the Table

Pollack presented this tenet in an external context. He refers to outside nation-states influencing an Arab country's ability to address internal reforms. He specifically cited the Palestine-Israeli conflict as a major deterrent to internal progress. At first, one may think this tenet does not apply to the comparatively micro situation in Iraq. However, when one considers foreign supported militias and terror organizations as "external security threats" to the Iraqi government, then this tenet completely applies to the current state of affairs in that region. As late as May of 2008, Iraqi lawmakers confronted Iran with evidence of Iranian support for militias and the country's indirect efforts to destabilize Iraq.<sup>145</sup> Through the surge of U.S. forces in 2007, many U.S. and Iraqi leaders contended that the U.S. military removed or contained such "external security threats" thus allowing progress in the region. However, through a deeper analysis, one can discover the rather significant role that local councils actually played in removing this threat.

In addition to financial support, 37.5 percent of U.S. officers surveyed stated that security was the second greatest enabler to the Iraqi local councils (see figure 20). Shaun Baker stated, "hands down, the security which U.S. forces provided was the catalyst for all future successes."<sup>146</sup> Using Pollack's principle, the local councils, not U.S. forces, should remove the external security threat if the grassroots entities are to be used to achieve a strategic endstate like national unity. When surveyed whether or not the local

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<sup>145</sup>CNN: Iraqi Lawmakers Confront Iran with 'Evidence' of Militia Backing online at <http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/meast/05/01/iraq.main/index.html> (accessed January 15, 2009).

<sup>146</sup>Baker.

councils would adequately function in the midst of security problems, 50 percent stated no (see figure 21).

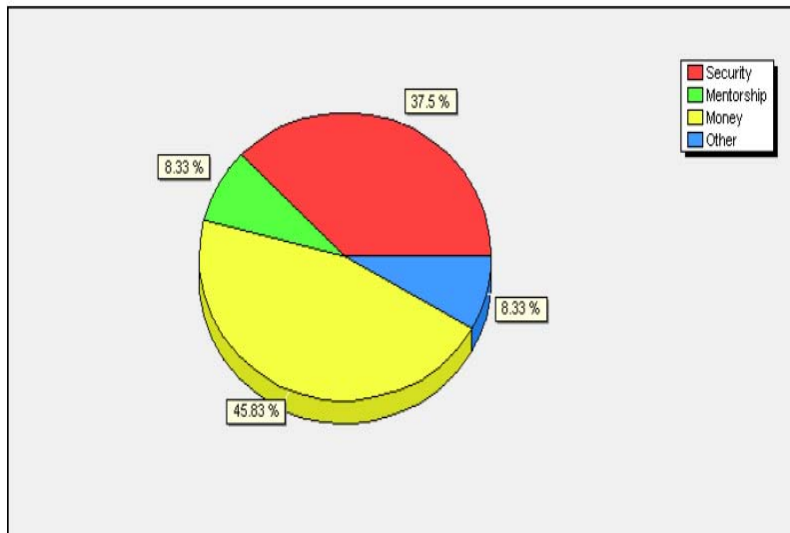


Figure 20. U.S. perspective of the greatest enabler of LCs  
Question: *What was greatest enabler U.S. forces provided to councils allowing them to operate?*

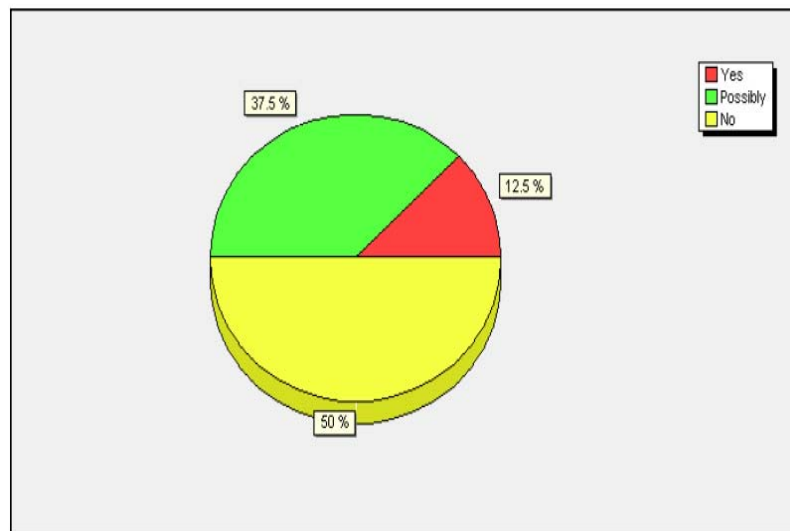


Figure 21. U.S. perspective of ability of LCs to function with security concerns  
Question: *Could the local council adequately function if security problems persisted in the area?*



However, one cannot completely ignore the role of local councils in achieving security objectives. In almost every article about the local guard forces provided by grassroots councils, authors mention how these volunteers were once part of the insurgency.<sup>147</sup> COL Gibbs, LTC Adgie, and LTC Frank all concurred with this assessment and acknowledged dealing with potential enemies. However, LTC Frank pointed out the following in an interview:

This change of heart [on behalf of insurgents] only occurred after [insurgents] realized they couldn't win. The U.S. Army crushed their hopes of establishing power and forced militia leaders to the table. They didn't just do it on their own. There certainly was a large degree of cooperation between U.S. forces and the Iraqi population, but [U.S. forces] drew a line in the sand . . . we never let a guilty insurgent 'slip by' and we certainly never compromised the security of our Forces for reconciliation. As long as the guilty were arrested and the peace was sustained, we could move forward.<sup>148</sup>

LTC Frank illustrated the amount of effort that U.S. forces exerted to dominate the battlefield against a formidable enemy. Based on his comments, one must question the ability of local grassroots councils to control such powerful enemies.

When asked about the role of councils in achieving security objectives on the ground, CPT Lyons stated that "the local councils served as a liaison between U.S. forces and militia affiliated individuals . . . once the bad guys witnessed who wielded the power, they listened to the local councils."<sup>149</sup> LTC Adgie added that local leaders "could facilitate an understanding of where a person fell on the insurgent spectrum . . . whether

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<sup>147</sup>Steve Simon, "The Price of the Surge: How U.S. Strategy is Hastening Iraq's Demise," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2008): 64.

<sup>148</sup>Frank.

<sup>149</sup>Lyons.

he was salvageable or whether he just needed to go away for a long time.”<sup>150</sup> Emma Sky noted that local councils were often used “to reach out to Sadrist groups,”<sup>151</sup> thus providing an alternative to violence. MAJ Furat Awne, a former Iraqi Army intelligence officer, offered additional logic for the use of local councils:

If an Iraqi [security] officer could earn the trust of the local people in an area, his intelligence would be like gold. The local leaders have all the intelligence to fix Iraq in a week but they do not have the bullets or muscle. When I was a bodyguard for Saddam Hussein, I saw how he used these local leaders. If something bad happened in an area, he called a meeting with the local council. He would threaten them with their children and wives and within days the problem would be solved. Saddam would also pay certain [local] leaders [unbeknownst] to others. This would guarantee precise intelligence about an area.<sup>152</sup>

Despite his barbaric and manipulative methods to control his own people, even Saddam Hussein realized the potential of these grassroots entities to provide security. When analyzing local councils as exclusive means to remove external threats, these organizations fell drastically short. However, as seen throughout the surge of forces in 2007 and even in the past regime, the local councils do retain certain merit to both U.S. and Iraqi security forces.

Through a survey administered to Iraqi citizens, most seemed skeptical of their local leaders’ abilities to fight the external security threats facing Iraq. 83.33 percent of the Iraqis interviewed stated that local councils could not provide adequate security without Iraqi or U.S. military support (see figure 22). Further expounding on survey results, even local council leaders like Sheik Hyder broke from their grassroots origins

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<sup>150</sup>Adgie.

<sup>151</sup>Sky.

<sup>152</sup>Furat Awne.

and rejected the concept of local entities controlling security “for a long period of time.”<sup>153</sup> Abu Ahmed adamantly claimed “[a permanent local security force] is too far . . . the Iraqi people want her sons to provide security under the Iraqi government.”<sup>154</sup> Ali Hussein, an interpreter for U.S. forces, suggested that “legitimacy under an American badge is only good as long as Americans are here. We need an Iraqi legitimacy.”<sup>155</sup>

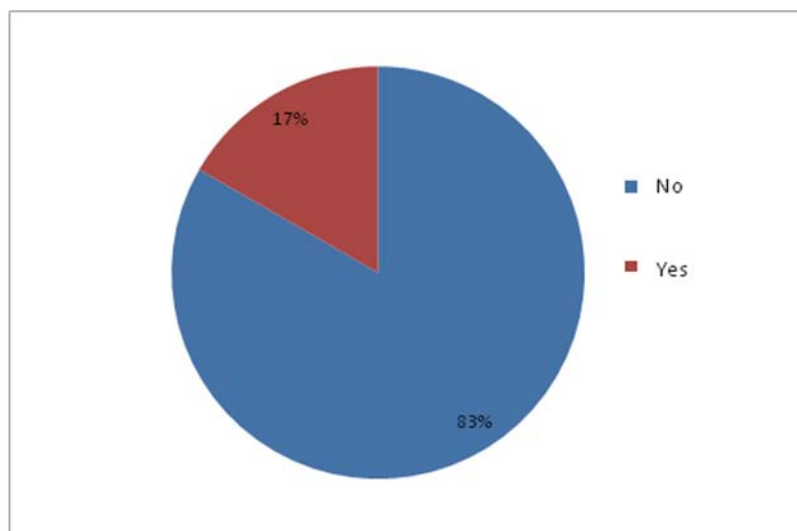


Figure 22. Iraqi perspective whether LCs could provide security  
Question: *Could local councils provide security without ISF or U.S. support? Select yes or no*

Although most Iraqi citizens acknowledged that the security situation has improved drastically, they generally contended only with the “assistance of U.S. forces

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<sup>153</sup>Sheik Hyder.

<sup>154</sup>Abu Ahmed.

<sup>155</sup>Ali Hussein.

can the Iraqi government maintain order.”<sup>156</sup> Dr. Omar stated that “the Iraqi security forces need continued American protection and support.”<sup>157</sup> Furthermore, he contended that “American mentorship in the ways of law and order are critical to Iraq’s future.”<sup>158</sup> Abu Mendou, a neighborhood area chairman who belongs to a suspected Iranian sympathetic political party, claimed that “without U.S. security forces, Iraq would be like a piece of meat to Iran and Syria . . . ready to be devoured or carved.”<sup>159</sup> Despite overwhelming Iraqi support for the presence of U.S. forces and their role in achieving security, one must consider how local councils facilitated U.S. efforts. Furthermore, one must also reflect on how Iraqi security forces can capitalize on these local councils in the future to remove external security threats. Despite the differences of comparing U.S. cooperation with local councils to achieve results and Iraqi cooperation with local leaders to achieve similar security objectives, the grassroots entities do represent a means to take external security threats off the table. Based on an analysis of the data, the local councils alone do not satisfy this particular tenet of the analytical framework; however, their demonstrated potential in the realm of removing external security threats remains a precious commodity.

#### Be Tolerant of the End State

T.E. Lawrence, a British officer and renowned liaison with the Arab community during the tumultuous Arab Revolt following World War I, stated: “Better the Arabs do

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<sup>156</sup>Ibid.

<sup>157</sup>Dr. Omar.

<sup>158</sup>Ibid.

<sup>159</sup>Abu Mendou.

it tolerably than that you do it perfectly.”<sup>160</sup> Unlike the previous tenets, the principle of tolerance applied more exclusively to U.S. forces rather than local councils themselves. However, even though grassroots councils are comprised of Iraqi citizens, the members must still exercise tolerance with their Arab brethren during the reform process. Survey results indicate that 82 percent of U.S. officers felt that one must always or very often exercise tolerance when dealing with local grassroots councils (see figure 23).

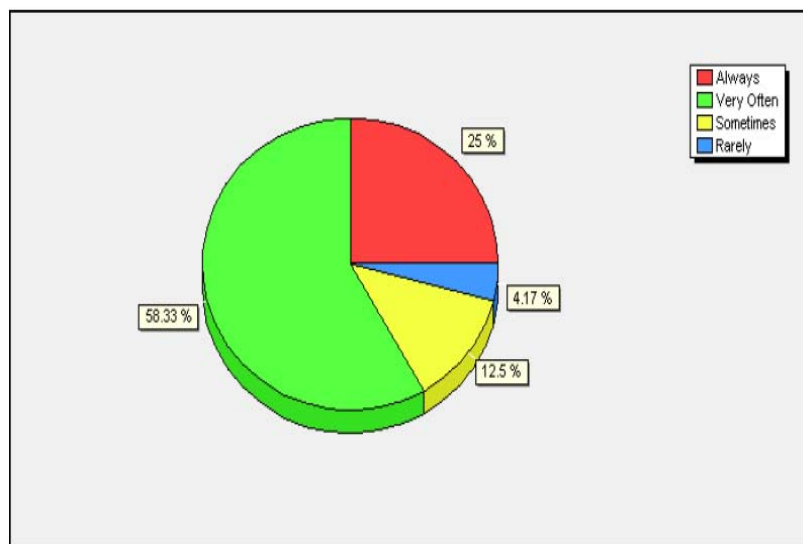


Figure 23. U.S. perspective of whether one had to be tolerant in dealing with LCs  
Question: *How often must one be tolerant when dealing with local councils? Explain why in the text response*

Interviews with U.S. military officers and civilians further supported this particular mindset and reinforced that tolerance remains a critical attribute for U.S. forces when dealing with local councils. LTC Adgie agreed that “most U.S. Soldiers understand

<sup>160</sup>T.E. Lawrence, “The 27 Articles of T.E. Lawrence,” Arab Bulletin, August 20, 1917.

that Iraqis are different and are going to accomplish goals differently.”<sup>161</sup> Baker also concurred stating that sometimes “an Iraqi permanent solution is better than an American temporary one.”<sup>162</sup> However, in exploring local councils in light of this tenet, one realizes that the grassroots entities themselves expand the breadth of U.S. tolerance politically, socially, and even morally.

Pollack warned that U.S. officials “should not insist that [Iraqi society] replicates our own.”<sup>163</sup> With this current understanding of Iraqi culture in mind, one must question the existing political structure of the Iraqi government at the local and provincial levels. Based on interviews with U.S. officers, the existing structure seems loosely modeled after a U.S. concept. Despite efforts to find the local Iraqi government structure in writing, this paper relies heavily on Iraqis’ interpretation of the laws and U.S. officers’ experiences. According to Abu Mendou, a current Neighborhood Area Chairman (NAC), his position is a six month responsibility rotated among a small council of individuals who are elected or appointed by the Iraqi government.<sup>164</sup> The current structure is similar to a U.S. congressional district drawn without regard to local politics. In this system, one individual represents multiple groups within an area. As mentioned earlier, an Iraqi NAC serves a large area of diverse constituents with minimal effectiveness due to the various tribal, sectarian, and muhalla loyalties.

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<sup>161</sup>Adgie.

<sup>162</sup>Baker.

<sup>163</sup>Pollack, 306.

<sup>164</sup>Abu Mendou.

According to two battalion commanders from Baghdad, their respective NAC chairmen served in the capacity for the duration of 12-15 month tours despite a supposed six month term limit of service imposed on the NAC position. The same battalion commanders also admitted to primarily using local councils to achieve results since the NAC seemed entangled with political, sectarian, and tribal obstacles. According to LTC Spain, governmental entities, like the NAC, “were easily eclipsed in importance or became local [grassroots] councils providing space for Iraqis to come together.”<sup>165</sup> In analyzing what made official government leaders successful, all U.S. military officials interviewed generally concurred with LTC Spain that the NAC “had to be . . . tied to the local tribes to be effective.”<sup>166</sup> Being tolerant of the political endstate often included the morphing of some official government councils into larger, more effective, and *informal* local grassroots councils with no official mandate.

In addition to tolerance of political structures, the research also revealed that U.S. military commanders and civilians had to demonstrate tolerance in the security realm as well. The use of local councils especially in providing security initially came under scrutiny. According to BG Sean MacFarland, one of the first officers to employ the Anbar Awakening Group, this concept took some getting accustomed to for all involved. He relayed the following story:

In the counterinsurgency fight, you need a legitimate indigenous force to provide security. Although the Iraqi Army was [in the area], they were mostly Shia soldiers in a predominantly Sunni region. ‘Legitimacy’ is really in the eyes of the people. Due to sectarian differences at the time, the Iraqi Army wasn’t legitimate to the people so we had to develop a

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<sup>165</sup>Spain.

<sup>166</sup>Ibid.

nontraditional indigenous force to provide security. The idea was to transition the unofficial guards into official security forces but that wasn't going to happen right away. We would have liked for the Iraqi Army to provide security, but we just had to tolerate the best course of action until things improved.<sup>167</sup>

BG MacFarland described a typical example of a dilemma that many U.S. military officials still face in regard to tolerance. Without crossing ethical boundaries, one must understand that Iraqis have addressed security related issues differently for ages.

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of tolerance for U.S. forces involves moral dilemmas resulting from deep seeded cultural differences. BG MacFarland conveyed another account:

I remember one time moving around the AO and stopping by one of the local police stations. We got out and noticed there were some detainees bound and blindfolded. My initial thought was that they were only being held for the day prior to release or transfer to the official [Iraqi Police] jail. When we inquired about them, we discovered [the detainees] were awaiting transport to another private prison of a local sheik. Surprised, we immediately went to the sheik's house to investigate and recommit any 'detainees' he had back into the official system. When questioned about his private prison, the Sheikh said, 'of course, would you like to see it?' We had to do the morally right thing and transfer custody of the detainees back into the proper authorities, but there is something to be said about tolerance. We are not there to change their culture or traditions. However, we had to understand that was the way they had done business for thousands of years before we ever got there.<sup>168</sup>

As a former commander in Ramadi prior to the surge, BG MacFarland empowered, within moral reason, local councils. However, as demonstrated from his comments, his forces had to remain tolerant of grassroots methods. Being tolerant of the endstate primarily applies to U.S. forces in Pollack's framework. However, according to the

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<sup>167</sup>MacFarland.

<sup>168</sup>Ibid.



research, local councils and their activities often provided U.S. leaders with an opportunity to exercise such tolerance without compromising their own moral standards.

### Be Patient

Pollack suggested that one must exhibit patience while interacting with organizations used to bring reform. This principle of the analytical framework more appropriately applies to U.S. personnel rather than the local councils. Over 80 percent of the surveyed U.S. officers selected patience as the number one indispensable quality that an individual must exhibit when interacting with grassroots entities. In addition, 100 percent of the same population selected patience as one of the top two qualities (see figure 24). Further supporting survey results, when six U.S. interviewees were asked, “What are three qualities an individual must exhibit when dealing with the local councils,” all six personnel responded “patience” as one of their responses.

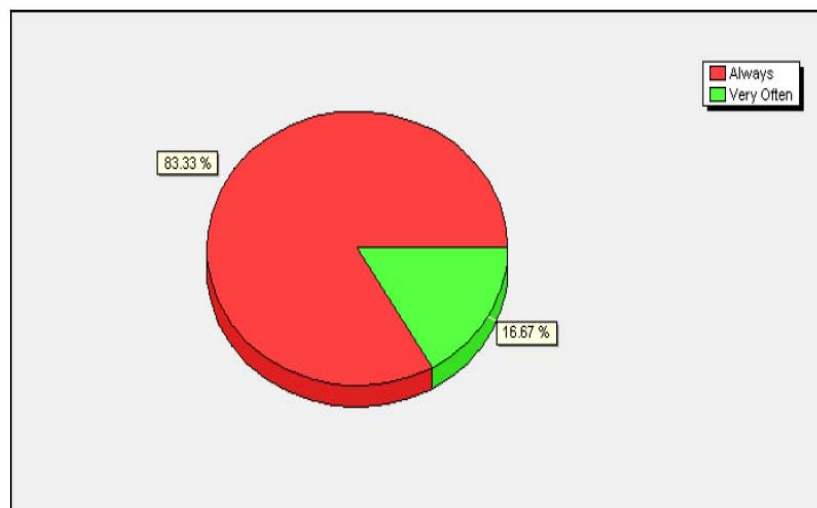


Figure 24. U.S. perspective of whether one had to be patient in dealing with LCs  
Question: *How often must one be patient when dealing with local councils? Explain why in the text response*

COL Ricky D. Gibbs, a former brigade commander of an area with large Sunni and Shia populations, stated in regard to patience, “the [counterinsurgency] fight is a marathon, not a sprint.”<sup>169</sup> LTC Spain echoed similar comments by stating that “taking the time to seriously interact and mentor the local councils is like teaching someone to fish, versus just fishing for them . . . teaching lasts longer and is more effective, but fishing for the Iraqis typically proved less stressful and more likely to produce short-term positive results.”<sup>170</sup> Emma Sky insightfully added the following piece of advice, “local councils need to go at their own pace, and develop their own way of working if they are to achieve results. This requires a great deal of patience on behalf of U.S. forces who are always looking for outputs, and do not necessarily see the process as an outcome in itself.”<sup>171</sup> Shaun Baker made another comment revealing the depth of understanding exhibited by U.S. forces regarding patience:

Patience is absolutely key and most understand that fact. Whether you are pulling security on a rooftop during a five hour meeting or conducting the meeting yourself, patience is critical. Here is another aspect, we have to remember. There is only one of you but a lot of them on a local council. Although [U.S.] leaders may get frustrated about being bombarded by Iraqis with issues, the opportunity for a particular Iraqi to actually speak to a [coalition forces] leader may be his *only* opportunity in months. Based on security conditions, timing, your patrol schedule, the environment, etcetera . . . that is his only shot. We should treat it that way. Patience ensures he is effectively communicating with someone he obviously trusts . . . in the end, what he says might matter for both him and us.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>169</sup>Gibbs.

<sup>170</sup>Spain.

<sup>171</sup>Sky.

<sup>172</sup>Baker.

Baker outlined the efforts U.S. military leaders take to ensure patience on behalf of U.S. forces. Furthermore, he explained in detail why leaders must demonstrate this virtue as often as possible. Comments of U.S. officers from the online survey and interview responses generally contended that U.S. forces must demonstrate patience when interacting with local councils due to cultural differences and mentorship responsibilities.

However, Iraqis interpreted the survey questions about patience slightly differently citing primarily Iraqi educational deficiencies and a lack of leadership within local councils as the primary reasons why U.S. personnel should remain patient.

Although many Iraqi civilians agreed U.S. forces must demonstrate patience, some Iraqi civilians used the essay responses on the survey to further explain their opinion. Of the 30 Iraqis surveyed, most agreed with the statement questioning whether U.S. forces demonstrate patience when dealing with local councils (see figure 25).

One anonymous contributor wrote, “American patience for our people must not be forgotten. They have understood the complicated.”<sup>173</sup> MAJ Mohsen, an Iraqi security official, stated that “a simple person in an Iraqi muhalla can have a lot of influence due to his family, not his understanding of leadership, and Americans must slowly teach them about leadership.”<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>173</sup>Iraqi Survey Comment, March 22, 2009.

<sup>174</sup>Mohsen.

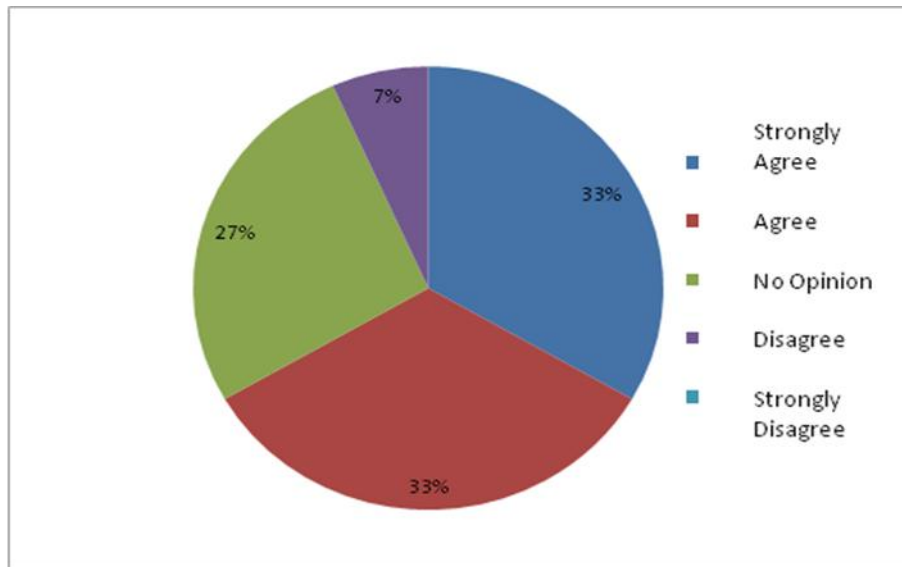


Figure 25. Iraqi perspective whether U.S. forces demonstrate patience towards LCs  
 Question: *U.S. forces exercise patience when dealing with local councils. Choose your answer from strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, or strongly disagree*

In a presentation to a section of U.S. field grade officers attending the Command and General Staff College in September of 2008, MAJ Furat Awne echoed these sentiments when he made the following simple request to U.S. officers about their efforts towards the Iraqi people: “Please do not give up. Iraqis do not have the leadership and education like you. People in my country have never heard of freedom. This is all new to them.”<sup>175</sup> Sheik Hyder, the local council leader, stated “only the most educated leaders should be allowed on the [local] councils but since we are not elected, anyone [ignorant] can join and hurt progress.”<sup>176</sup> Dr. Omar, a local council leader, stated that “uneducated and weak leaders will spoil the progress of local councils” if the U.S. does not “carefully

<sup>175</sup>Furat Awne, Interview by author, September 9, 2008, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

<sup>176</sup>Sheik Hyder.

monitor the positions.”<sup>177</sup> Ali Hussein, an interpreter since 2005 serving with U.S. forces in multiple areas throughout Iraq, claimed that “Americans must have patience when dealing with the councils and make sure the right people serve on them.”<sup>178</sup> In a society where U.S. military and State Department officials are attempting to transition long term responsibilities, research derived from Iraqi civilians questions whether these local councils can survive without U.S. assistance and patience to coach and guide them.

### Don’t Overpromise

Pollack’s warning to not promise too much is the framework’s final principle. From both U.S. and Iraqi perspectives, all methods of research only slightly indicate that local councils satisfy this tenet. While U.S. forces demonstrated an understanding of this concept, they also realized a tendency for the local councils to ignore the tenet at times. In the survey of 130 officers attending the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 87.5 percent of the respondents felt that the local councils would sometimes or usually promise more than they could deliver (see figure 26).

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<sup>177</sup>Dr. Omar.

<sup>178</sup>Ali Hussein.

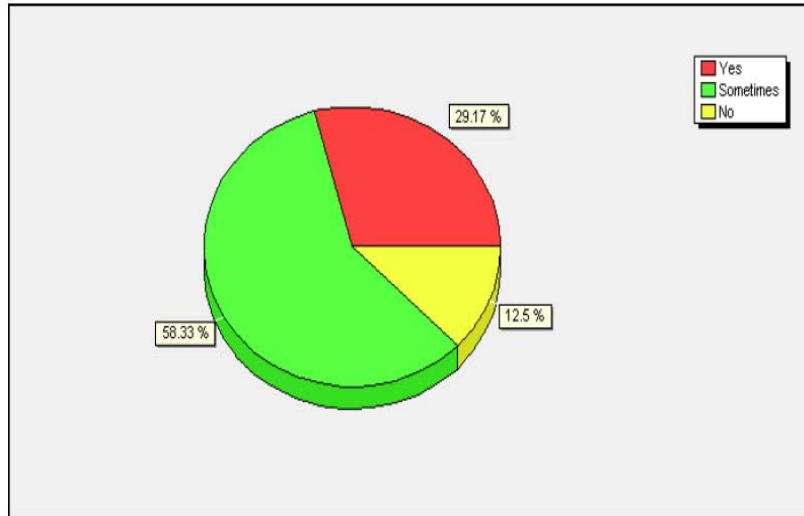


Figure 26. U.S. perspective of whether LCs overpromise to Iraqi people  
 Question: *Did the local councils promise the people more than they could deliver?*

In concert with most the survey responses, COL Gibbs stated that “it all depended on who you were dealing with in each muhalla, but [overpromises] did happen from time to time.”<sup>179</sup> Shaun Baker offered additional insight into survey results by stating that “anyone’s desire to survive or protect his family may cause him to promise more than he can actually deliver.”<sup>180</sup> LTC Spain further contended that many “leaders over promise things to their constituents”<sup>181</sup> or face not being able to serve in that particular capacity in the future. Most U.S. officers interviewed and surveyed expressed similar thoughts in regard to local councils and the promises these grassroots entities made.

However, research revealed that Iraqis maintained a different opinion. Of the Iraqis surveyed, 76.66 percent felt that their local leaders generally did not overpromise

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<sup>179</sup>Gibbs.

<sup>180</sup>Baker.

<sup>181</sup>Spain.

(see figure 27). Explaining the different U.S. and Iraqi survey results, Abu Ahmed, a Western educated contractor stated that “even though a local council may promise something, their words are more like hope . . . that someday it will happen.”<sup>182</sup> Dr. Omar further expounded on the concept stating, “the local council has a face. They are one of us. If they promise something, even if it is too much, we can see in their eyes if they mean what they say.”<sup>183</sup> MAJ Furat Awne summarized these sentiments:

An Iraqi local councilman is from the people so they know if he is serious or not about a promise. If the promise does not happen, at least the people can see his face and he can visit their home to explain why. The Iraqi people need this type of explanation. They deserve this type of support after Saddam. This is the problem with the [Iraqi] government. They have no face. They could be working all day but if the people can’t see a face of someone to explain why electricity is bad or why water has stooped, then [the Iraqi government] may as well just not even work.<sup>184</sup>

Like Furat Awne, Dr. Omar made similar observations when commenting about promises made by local leaders as opposed to government officials. The local councils have the ability to “visit families and hold meetings regularly to give correct and good information”<sup>185</sup> about commitments.

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<sup>182</sup> Abu Ahmed.

<sup>183</sup> Dr. Omar.

<sup>184</sup> Furat Awne.

<sup>185</sup> Dr. Omar.

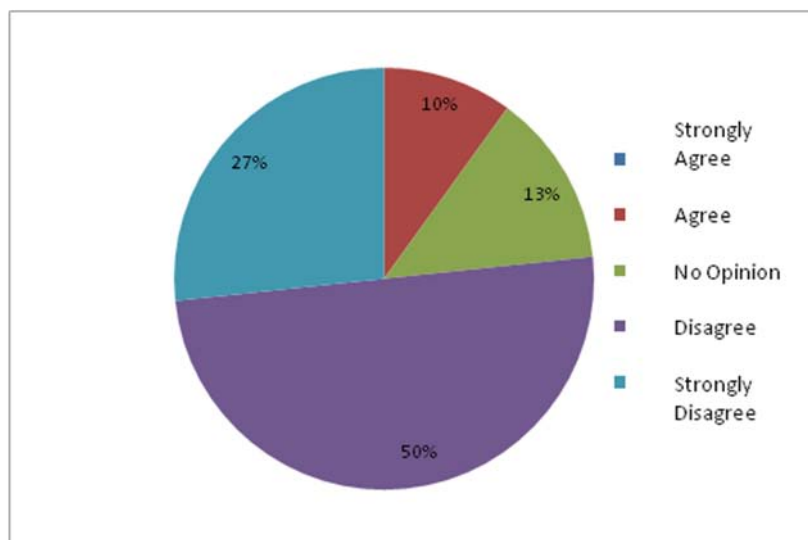


Figure 27. Iraqi perspective whether LCs overpromise to the Iraqi people  
 Question: *The local council in your area promises too much. Choose your answer from strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, or strongly disagree*

Abu Mendou, an official government representative in Baghdad, offered a more skeptical but very valid reason for why local councils could over promise. In an interview, this NAC chairman stated, “If a local council member makes a promise, then he can always blame Americans if it does not come true. The Americans can make the promise come true quicker and better than the Iraqi government. If I make a promise, I depend on the Iraqi government to help me.”<sup>186</sup> When asked why the Iraqi people felt local councils did not generally overpromise, he responded because “they are from the same community.”<sup>187</sup> Based on such comments, one must question whether local councils could overpromise without U.S. forces as a scapegoat for broken commitments.

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<sup>186</sup> Abu Mendou.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.



Furthermore, an analysis of the research calls into question the role of U.S. logistical support in shaping Iraqi opinion.

Emma Sky reiterated in an interview that without an official mandate, “there is always a temptation to stray into other areas”<sup>188</sup> and overpromise things without consequence. Sky and many Iraqis suggested that local grassroots councils could publicly hold U.S. forces accountable for promises while local government officials could not do the same with the Iraqi government. For both security and cultural reasons, government officials could not chide their own government for overpromising without consequence. When analyzing local councils in regard to this principle, one can again identify the recurring motif that tied the success of the local councils directly to U.S. forces. As a result, one would have to consider if local councils would retain the same effectiveness without U.S. backing. In this case, one must question whether local councils could overpromise without U.S. support or if the grassroots entities would find themselves in the same situation as the elected government officials.

This chapter analyzed all the data collected from the various resources, interviews, and surveys administered to selected populations of both U.S. and Iraqi civilians and military personnel. By comparing the data to the analytical framework provided by Kenneth Pollack, this paper has sought to create an appreciation for the limitations and capabilities of local grassroots councils. Uniting a fractured country includes bringing the government of Iraq and her people in line with each other on common ground. In the search for methods to facilitate this strategic endstate of national unity, one should now be able to draw some conclusions regarding the potential for local

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<sup>188</sup>Sky.

councils to help accomplish this critical requirement. The next chapter will offer final conclusions using the aforementioned analysis and present recommended courses of action for the future.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.

—Aristotle

When one door closes, another opens. But we often look so regretfully upon the closed door that we don't see the one which has opened for us.

—Mao Tse-Tung

As U.S. forces execute a new national policy in Iraq and begin redeployment, the effort to leave another stabilized country in the Middle East confronts a myriad of challenges facing the Iraqi government and her people. To some, a rapid draw down of U.S. forces may appear premature. To others, the action is long overdue. Regardless, U.S. troops are leaving Iraq and a proverbial door of opportunity is closing. Given the current state of affairs and new directives, U.S. leaders seek ways to encourage stabilization and ultimately achieve the strategic endstate of national unity. The previous chapter assessed Iraqi grassroots councils as a means to facilitate national unification ends. The paper analyzed data collected from interviews and surveys obtained from various sources and compared the data to Kenneth Pollack's principles to ultimately determine whether local grassroots councils are an appropriate means to achieve reform. This chapter will ultimately highlight local grassroots councils as a possible means to facilitate national unity; furthermore, this paper will draw conclusions and make recommendations for the future.

Given the rapid and pronounced draw-down of U.S. forces in Iraq, the lack of national unity poses an even greater threat to stabilization. As late as March 2009, official Iraqi security forces clashed with local entities controlled by grassroots councils

killing two Iraqi civilians, wounding 13 others, and resulting in the kidnapping of five Iraqi Army Soldiers.<sup>189</sup> Without a change in strategy, the potential for increased violence and chaos as U.S. forces depart remains more likely. This paper proposes local grassroots councils as a possible means to bridge the gap between the increasingly more divided Iraqi people and the Iraqi government. Given Pollack's principles (or ways) for achieving a strategic endstate, such as increasing national unity in Iraq, local grassroots councils seem consistent with certain tenets and therefore represent a possible means to move forward.

According to the primary assumptions listed in Chapter 1, Pollack's principles provide an adequate framework to assess engines of strategic reform. Operating under this assumption, this paper conducted an analysis that compared the research data with the analytical framework created from Pollack's principles. This analysis showed that local councils demonstrate some potential to facilitate national unity in Iraq. Specifically, a sample of Iraqi and U.S. personnel suggested in surveys and interviews that local councils satisfy the following of Pollack's principles:

1. Reform Must Be Indigenous
2. Reform Should Be a Gradual Process
3. When Possible Take Steps to Benefit the People Right Away and
4. Push on All Tracks of Reform and Take a Multilateral Approach.

Research also suggested local councils adequately met the following principles but require further research especially in light of a reduced U.S. presence:

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<sup>189</sup>CNN.com/world, "Awakening Council, Iraqi Security Exchange Gunfire," March 29, 2009, <http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/meast/03/29/iraq.main/> (accessed April 10, 2009).

1. Be Tolerant of the Endstate
2. Be Flexible
3. Be Patient and
4. Do not Overpromise.

While local councils addressed the majority of Pollack's principles adequately, research also revealed shortcomings of the grassroots entities vis-à-vis the following principles:

1. Focus on Top Down and Bottom Up Reform and
2. Take External Security Threats Off the Table.

An analysis of the research identified two underlying concerns about expanding the use of local councils to facilitate national unity: illegitimacy of the local organizations and misperceived capabilities of the grassroots entities. First, the local councils represent a tribal form of authority that contradicts the very essence of a democratically elected government. The local council leaders leveraged by U.S. forces during the surge and up to today, although effective in some capacities, are not elected officials. Rather, these grassroots entities are often self-selected based on "wasta" or informal power and prestige of an individual in a region. In an area of the world with so many dictators, human rights violations, and civil liberties transgressions, one must question whether or not the United States should support a tribal or grassroots entity. Some would contend that the United States should not give credence to archaic forms of governance but rather support only the Iraqi central government in order to bring reform.

Second, the obvious popularity of the local councils when compared to the relatively dismal support for the Iraqi government is based potentially on misperceptions on behalf of the Iraqi people. Research indicated that U.S. forces often selected to use

local councils instead of the Iraqi government to achieve security and reform in an area. U.S. forces would subsequently resource and empower local grassroots councils thereby creating the conditions for a false understanding among the Iraqi people of the independent capability of the local councils. Despite a predisposition to support democratically elected officials, the reality on the ground led U.S. leaders to leverage the most effective means available, the grassroots councils, to achieve results. Even in predominantly Shia areas with Shia elected officials who were a part of the Shia dominated government, U.S. officers often selected local grassroots councils to achieve goals, rather than the official government, because of pre-existing tribal and regional conflict within even homogenous areas.

Cognizant of the limitations of the research and the need for further inquiry into the role of Iraqi local councils in facilitating national unity, this paper offers some preliminary recommendations to address the weaknesses associated with the grassroots entities. Some principles of the framework are used to organize this final chapter but not all will be represented. Some characteristics of local councils strongly support Pollack's principles; this chapter will not reiterate them. However, using the selected principles of the analytical framework, which research indicated local councils poorly or only adequately supported, Chapter 5 will present methods to improve the capacity of local councils.

#### Focus on Bottom Up and Top Down Reform

First, research indicated a deep conflict between officially elected representatives and grassroots organizations within some parts of Iraq. This paper recommends the expansion of the Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation

(IFCNR) that may not perform its intended mission of reaching out to grassroots entities and connecting these organizations in an official capacity of the Iraqi government. U.S. funding efforts should support IFCNR endeavors to provide basic facilities and nominal paid positions within the grassroots organizations. Based on recommendations from U.S. commanders on the ground, U.S. officials should also facilitate IFCNR's formation of local grassroots councils in especially built up areas where historically some of the most vicious fighting has taken place. By "legitimizing" and "recognizing" local councils, the Iraqi government could potentially get more grassroots buy in and political participation. Furthermore, such efforts may also over shadow long standing sectarian differences in the spirit of more cooperation.

Second, addressing concerns with legitimacy, this paper recommends the appointment of the democratically elected Neighborhood Area Councils (NAC) and District Area Councils (DAC)<sup>190</sup> leaders to serve also as the default heads of all local grassroots councils. Such an action will at least minimally reinforce the legitimacy of the Iraqi government, ensure the subservience of the grassroots councils to a democratically elected authority, and again open contact and dialogue among various Iraqi leaders from varying sectarian, tribal, and regional backgrounds. To further support this concept, this paper recommends a revision of Iraqi law to extend NAC and DAC service beyond the alleged six month term limit. Although NAC and DAC leaders should remain democratically elected local officials, they must retain authority for an adequate amount

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<sup>190</sup>In the Iraqi NAC and DAC system, one individual represents multiple groups within an area. Research indicated that an Iraqi NAC or DAC representative serves a large area of diverse constituents with minimal effectiveness due to the various tribal, sectarian, and muhalla loyalties. Despite such limitations, the NAC currently represents the most grassroots form of governance in Iraq.

of time in order to lead and essentially serve as liaisons between the Iraqi people and their government. As the default heads of the local grassroots councils, NAC and DAC leaders can exercise their legitimate authority in an open and well-represented forum thus increasing the overall influence of the Iraqi government.

### Take External Security Concerns Off the Table

Based on the research, the local grassroots councils do not possess the means to secure even their own areas. Furthermore, data indicated that despite the success of grassroots security initiatives, both the Iraqi government and people want to eventually transition security responsibilities to official Iraqi entities such as the Iraqi Army or National Police. Although integration can often encourage cooperation among the various security forces, this paper does not recommend the immediate integration of grassroots security forces into the Iraqi Army or police. As evidence of recent violence, certain areas simply lack the confidence in the Iraqi government to protect their families and not detain their leaders. In this sense, the Iraqi government maintains a key advantage that U.S. forces have traditionally lacked--time. The Iraqi government can demonstrate faith and confidence in the local grassroots councils not only through expanded use but also through maintaining the status quo. By not attempting to immediately integrate or dismantle the local security forces, the Iraqi government can appear at ease with the grassroots councils' ability to maintain order in certain areas. Furthermore, by providing financial support for grassroots council security forces through local leaders, the Iraqi government will send a clear message of cooperation. Such efforts will not only maintain stability but potentially encourage national unity. As



barriers of local and national mistrust erode, a united Iraq could emerge victorious in the future.

### Be Flexible

Research indicates that some in the Iraqi population lack faith in their government due to the local councils' ability to more rapidly provide resources through U.S. logistical support. U.S. leaders should immediately stop any direct funding and resourcing to local councils including the guard program and transition efforts instead to the Iraqi government. This paper recommends that U.S. officials then micro-manage financial and contractual obligations down to the grassroots councils through the Iraqi government. Despite misgivings and trust issues between the Iraqi government entities and local councils, U.S. leaders should foster a dependent relationship of the local councils to the Iraqi government. Although Iraqi government officials may just assume to take over responsibilities directly as U.S. forces redeploy, research suggests that the local councils simply retain better access and more influence currently. Furthermore, research also revealed that the Iraqi government may lack access to certain regions and would therefore lose the flexibility to employ diverse initiatives tailored to particular muhallas.

The process of guiding the Iraqi government to empower the local councils will prove over time to be an even more fruitful endeavor. U.S. forces have spent considerable time and effort in rebuilding Iraq. However, as research indicates, a lot of such financial efforts have occurred at the grassroots level directly from U.S. forces. Such a relationship has misled the Iraqi people to depend on U.S. forces rather than their government for financial and contractual assistance. Although such efforts have increased the "wasta" of the local councils and achieved subsequent security objectives,

the Iraqi people remain somewhat misled as to the actual capability of the local councils. Without U.S. backing, one could hypothesize that the local councils would not be nearly as effective. However, by transitioning financial and contractual agreements through the Iraqi government and monitoring their execution at the grassroots levels, one can denote several advantages. Not only will the Iraqi people perhaps begin to view their own government favorably, the local councils will retain the requisite influence in their areas to maintain order. Based on this recommendation to preserve the flexibility of the local councils, the seeds of cooperation between the Iraqi government and the grassroots councils can be sewed. Ideally, such seeds will blossom and ultimately contribute further to a level of national unity unseen in the past.

#### Push on All Tracks of Reform and Take a Multilateral Approach

First, by empowering the Iraqi government to manage local councils rather than directly control the muhallas from the top, the grassroots councils drive a somewhat foreign form of political reform. The people of Iraq have suffered under the most extreme form of centralized control during the reign of the former dictator Saddam Hussein. The use of the local councils through the centralized Iraqi government represents a more decentralized form of governance which empowers the Iraqi people. Through this system, one can denote a series of benefits. Research indicates that the grassroots entities by their nature encourage diversification and flexibility of programs tailored to their particular interests. By using the local councils in a decentralized manner, the Iraqi government can serve as the overall manager of programs preserving, reinforcing, spreading, and halting them as needed. Research suggested that U.S. forces currently serve in such capacity. By fostering the relationship between the Iraq

government and the local councils, the Iraqi government can finally serve as the sole authority in resourcing agendas according to their effectiveness. In addition, the Iraqi government can establish multiple reform agendas across multiple tracks and slowly guide their nation towards reform objectives. Finally, this grassroots based system will potentially usher in political reform that cultivates a trust between the Iraqi people and the government which serves them.

In addition, this paper recommends that local councils encourage political reform by eventually conducting local level elections. Although some would argue that local level elections already occur, they fail to incorporate many minorities in areas throughout Iraq. Beyond the disadvantage of increasing an already bureaucratic Iraqi government, one must also note the reconciliatory effort of this proposed system. If current Iraqi government officials were effective, U.S. leaders would not have needed to utilize unofficial local leaders to achieve security objectives during the surge. However, providing a minor political voice to such diverse entities would encourage political reform and increase political involvement throughout Iraq. For example, Sunnis in a predominantly Shia area could retain mandated positions at the local level despite a minority status. Furthermore, these Sunnis would be elected and feel connected to the Iraqi government in some capacity.

Second, through the expanded use of local councils, one could also expect economic reform. Based on the research outlined in the previous chapter, one can conclude that much of the grassroots councils' success was pinned on their ability to provide resources. In order to maintain this support for the local organizations and subsequently stabilize large areas, the Iraqi government must trust grassroots leaders with

adequate funding. In a significant breach from traditional fiscal roles of centralizing everything including funding, the Iraqi government would essentially be forced to establish adequate financial systems to manage funding to the grassroots levels. The amount of economic and fiscal reform driven by the local councils would be unsurpassed. To facilitate this goal, this paper recommends that U.S. personnel utilize U.S. dollars initially to establish financial networks through the Iraqi government to the grassroots councils. Such an action will allow U.S. leaders to more quickly and effectively demonstrate the flow of funding to the local councils and oversee economic reform. Furthermore, by utilizing U.S. dollars, U.S. officials can retain authority over the process ensuring it works and making it easier to transition immediately to Iraqi control.

#### Be Tolerant of the Endstate and Be Patient

Exercising tolerance and patience applies to both U.S. and Iraqi officials. As mentioned above, any type of reform will demand an open mind. The expanded use of local grassroots councils in achieving national unity is no exception. As research indicated, the current local level of government in some area of Iraq falls short of providing adequate representation and service to the Iraqi people at the grassroots level. Perhaps U.S. leaders have passively admitted this fact through the extensive use of local grassroots councils rather than officially elected entities to quell a spiraling out of control insurgency in 2007. What the Western mind views as more bureaucracy, the Arab mind may view as respectful to their tribal and cultural heritage. U.S. officials might need to exercise tolerance and patience for a form of democracy not typically accepted by U.S. citizens. At a minimum, U.S. leaders might need to tolerate this breach of democracy as a stop gap measure. Like so many other initiatives in Iraq, such as civilian guard forces

securing muhallas rather than official Iraqi Security Forces, U.S. leaders should consider expanding the use of local councils to buy time for greater reform. This system may not represent the exact desired long term endstate, but one cannot ignore its effectiveness. Local grassroots councils may very well represent an outdated form of tribal dominancy but research also suggested they were key to securing Iraq's people during the surge in 2007.

The Iraqi government and the local councils themselves will also require tolerance and patience during the process of expanding the grassroots entities. First, Iraqi governmental officials will more than likely not want to include their Iraqi brothers at the grassroots level in any capacity. Based on the confrontations revealed during the research process, there exists a large amount of animosity between the Iraqi government and local power brokers generally supported by U.S. officials. This paper contends that U.S. diplomatic efforts must convince Iraqi elected officials that the expanded use and coordination with local grassroots councils is an opportunity to maintain the current peace. Furthermore, the local councils should be viewed as an effective means to communicate with a growing dissatisfied population. Elected Iraqi government officials must serve as the mentors in this particular relationship especially given the different backgrounds, education levels, and experiences. As research further indicated, the Iraqi people seem to want the Iraqi government to fully assume security and even governance responsibilities in the future. However, in light of U.S. forces redeploying, this ultimate endstate may be premature and measures steeped in tolerance must be taken to prevent further violence.

In regards to the local councils, they must also demonstrate patience and tolerance. Research indicated the reputation of the local councils may depend on U.S. logistical support. In the transition from U.S. dollars to Iraqi dinars, the local councils may experience a disruption in the flow of resources and services. To mitigate the effect, this paper recommends “quick win” initiatives on behalf of the GOI to the Iraqi people via the local councils. Just as the U.S. military officials used rapid funding efforts to empower local leaders, the Iraqi government can also use express funding programs to demonstrate a sincere desire to bring long term reform. Tactical and operational information operations should identify local grassroots councils as part of the government and a cooperative partner for the future of Iraq. Local councils should then be expected to demonstrate a higher level of maturity and responsibility when discussing government related issues. The days of local grassroots leaders embarrassing officially elected personnel with spontaneous diatribes would be over. Local councils would essentially be a part of the Iraqi solution.

#### Do Not Overpromise

The Iraqi government must agree with the roles and responsibilities of the local grassroots councils in each area. The Iraqi government, as the legitimate and democratically elected entity, should do more than promise involvement at the grassroots level to their Iraqi constituents. By allowing local councils to maintain internal guard forces like the Awakening Group or to resettle IDPs or to initiate projects, the Iraqi government increases their authority and enhances the spirit of cooperation. In the same sense, whether the Iraqi government supports initiatives of local council depends on the security of an area. Just as with other initiatives, the Iraqi government should assess local

councils and determine whether to support such requests based on stability. In regard to the local councils, they will maintain an even greater burden of not overpromising things to the Iraqi people. Unlike the past, U.S. forces would no longer serve as a scapegoat for a failed initiative. The local grassroots councils will serve in a more official capacity to their people and as the eyes and ears for the Iraqi government. Local grassroots councils may naturally begin to experience the bureaucracy and frustration associated with government service.

If one believes Pollack's principles are untenable and rejects the primary assumption of this paper, then one must seek alternative means to assess local councils. However, if one accepts the analytical framework based on Pollack's principles as a reasonable way to assess local councils as an engine of reform, then any shortcomings of local councils must also be addressed to guarantee success. If an entity demonstrates a closer alignment to a given model, then such an organization or engine is ideally more able to accomplish a given endstate which the model predicts. According to the research, local grassroots councils generally satisfy the principles used as a basis to analyze local councils as engines of reform. Therefore, these grassroots entities possess at least the potential to facilitate a strategic endstate like national unity. However, as outlined in this chapter, U.S. officials must influence certain aspects of local councils to increase their capabilities and achieve success.

This paper recommends several areas for future research. First, Pollack's principles should be assessed to determine their validity and their limitations as an analytical tool. Pollack probably did not intend to create a framework to analyze "means" at such a micro level. Although the framework proved useful in understanding

certain aspects of local councils, some tenets seemed to refer more to entities that deal with local councils rather than the local councils themselves. For example, the tenets Be Patient and Be Tolerant of the Endstate refer more to external organizations interacting with the local councils. Such external organizations were not the focus of the research and seemed to detract from efforts to evaluate local councils and potentially confused survey respondents. Second, along the same lines, a model should be created and tailored to Iraq in order to assess the likelihood or probability of success for future means or engines of reform to achieve strategic endstates. Pollack's principles constitute a solid base for such a model, but require certain adjustments. Third, the local councils must be assessed using a wider sampling data of both Iraqi and U.S. military and civilian personnel free of the constraints discussed in Chapter 1. This paper suggests that the survey sampling pool of U.S. military personnel consist of company grade officers rather than field grade officers who were not as prone to work daily with local councils. Furthermore, this paper recommends administering surveys first-hand to Iraqi citizens in their country to avoid data corruption and bias. Fourth, this paper recommends further research into the role of local councils in more outlying areas and Kurdish controlled regions. This paper collected data mostly from built up areas in three major provinces. However, the data was limited in that it all originated from cities and included no Kurdish regions. Fifth, this paper recommends future research comparing how Iraqi law has structured the Neighborhood and District Area Councils versus the reality on the ground in order to more accurately assess governance at the grassroots level.

The widening gap between the Government of Iraq and her people in the face of a drastic draw down of U.S. combat forces will only serve to handicap national unity. Just



as reconciliatory compromises established during the surge of U.S. forces in 2007, U.S. and Iraqi government leaders must search for alternative means to maintain the delicate peace in Iraq. The expanded use of local grassroots councils could provide an effective stop gap measure to set the conditions for long term reform. Under the legitimacy of elected officials, the Iraqi government can earn buy in from the grassroots level, provide a voice to the currently neglected, subsequently eliminate a potential destabilization threat, and potentially achieve national unity by expanding the role of the Iraqi local councils.

## APPENDIX A

### SURVEY OF IRAQI CIVILIANS WITH DISCLAIMER (ARABIC)

الغرض من البحث أن يحدّد إن مجالس محلية سوفت كنت مدّدت أن يسهّل وحدة وطنية. أوصلت مقابلات أولاً عن طريق بريد إلكتروني، هاتف، وفي شخص يؤسّس على التوفر المستجوبات. يعالج المواضيع من مجالس محلية ووحدة وطنية مع تحديات معاصرة أنّ الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية وعراقية حكومات وجه. الغرض من هذا بيان أن يعلم المستجوبة أنّ ك سيعمل جوابات وتعليقات كنت [أبجكتيفي] أن يقيم المجالس محلية يستعمل المعتقدات يحدّب [مر.]. [كنت] دعا غيّر في كتابه ممر من الصحراء. هذا بحث استطاع زوّدت كثير تبصر داخل الإحتمال من مجالس محلية وقدرتهم ملازمة أن يشجّع أو عطلت وحدة وطنية. سيبقى كلّ بيانات يستعمل في البحث سرّية ولا ينشر في أي أخرى وثائق دون الإذن مستعجلة من المستجوبة. مشاركتك في هذا بحث بدقّة متطوعة ويتلقّى أنت الحق أن يرفض نشر من تعليقاتك يؤسّس على مراجعاتك. يحمل رفض أن يساهم ما من عقوبة وواحدة يستطيع بالتأكيد انتخبت أن عن كفّ مشاركة [أنت ني تيم]. انضّل ب إن واحدة يتلقّى أسئلة بخصوص البحث، رجاء [مج] براين [م.]. يشكر [دوكت] في [برين.دوكتوس.رم.ميل] أنت [فري موش] ل يسمحني أن يكسب تبصرك على هذا موضوع مهمّة جدّا.

دخيلات أو غريبات يضبطون مجالس محلية في [موهلاً] ك؟

أنت تتقّ العراقيّة حكومة أكثر من مجالس محلية؟

يتمّ المجلس محلية في ك منطقة عمل في طريقة تدريجية؟

ماذا يكون التنظيم جيّد أن يحضر فوائد فورية إلى الاناس عراقية: العراقيّة حكومة أو

مجالس محلية؟

ما تنظيم يتلقّى بشكل خاصّ يحضر فوائد فورية إلى الاناس عراقية: العراقيّة حكومة أو مجالس محلية؟

ما تنظيم يحتبس ال كثير تأثير في [موهلاً] ك: العراقيّة حكومة أو مجالس محلية؟

[إين ث فوتر]، ما تنظيم سوفت أبقيت ال كثير تأثير في [موهلاً] ك: العراقيّة حكومة أو مجالس محلية؟

أنت تصدق الحكومة عراقية يكون أكثر مرنة من المجالس محلية؟

استطاع محلية مجلس زعيمات زوّدت أمن كافية دون عراقية أمن قوات أو الولايات المتحدة الأمر يكيّة دعم؟

يتمّ الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية قوات يحتاجون أن يتدرّب صبر عندما يعالج مع المجالس محلية؟

المجالس محلية يتدرّبون صبر مع الاناس؟

المجلس محلية في منطقتك يعد [توو موش]؟

أنت تتلقّى أي

آخرى تعليقات خفية على هذا موضوع أنّ أنت أحببت أن يضيف؟

## APPENDIX B

### SURVEY OF IRAQI CIVILIANS WITH DISCLAIMER (ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

#### **Iraqi Survey about Local Councils**

The purpose of the research is to determine if local councils should be expanded to facilitate national unity. Surveys are primarily conducted via email to ensure randomness and to protect your identity. The topics of local councils and national unity deal with contemporary challenges that the Iraqi government faces. The purpose of this statement is to inform the survey respondent that your answers and comments will be used objectively to evaluate the local councils using the tenets outlined by Mr. Kenneth Pollack in his book called *A Path Out of the Desert*. This research could provide more insight into the potential of local councils and their inherent ability to encourage or hamper national unity. All statements used in the research will remain confidential and not published in any other documents without the express permission of the survey respondent. Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary and you have the right to refuse publication of your anonymous comments based on your review. Refusal to participate carries no penalty and one can certainly elect to discontinue participation at any time. If one has questions regarding the research, please contact MAJ Brian M. Ducote at [brian.ducote@us.army.mil](mailto:brian.ducote@us.army.mil). Thank you very much for allowing me to gain your insight on this extremely important topic.

- (1) People from my muhalla, not strangers or outsiders, control the local council in my area. Use a scale from 1-10. "1" = completely agree and "10" = you completely disagree
- (2) Do you trust the Iraqi government more than local councils? Use a scale from 1-10. "1" means you completely agree and "10" means you completely disagree
- (3) The local council in my area works in a gradual manner. Choose your answer from strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, or strong disagree
- (4) What organization typically provides benefits to the people? Select the Iraqi government or local councils
- (5) What is the best organization to provide benefits to the people? Select the Iraqi government or local councils
- (6) What organization retains the most influence in your muhalla? Select the Iraqi government or local councils
- (7) In the future, what organization should maintain the most influence in your muhalla? Select the Iraqi government or local councils
- (8) The Iraqi government is more flexible than the local council in your area. Choose your answer from strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, or strongly disagree
- (9) Could local councils provide security without ISF or U.S. support? Select yes or no
- (10) U.S. forces must exercise patience when dealing with local councils. Choose your answer from strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, or strongly disagree
- (11) The local council in your area promises too much? Choose your answer from strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, or strongly disagree
- (12) Do you have any other anonymous comments to add on this subject?

## APPENDIX C

### LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH DISCLAIMER FOR IRAQI CITIZENS

(ARABIC)

الغرض من مجلس ملحي مَدَدَت أن يسهل وحدة وطنية أوصلت طريق بري إلكتروني، وفي شخص يؤسس على التوفر المستجوبات يعالج المواضيع من مجالس محلية ووحدة وطنية مع تحديات معاصرة أن الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية وعراقية. الغرض من هذا بيان أن يعلم المستجوبة سيسعمل جوابات وتعليقات كنت [أبجكتيفلي] أن يقيم المجالس محلية يستعمل المعتقدات يحدد ب [مر]. [كنت] غير فهذا بحث استطاع زودت كثير تبصر داخل في البحث سرية ولا ينشر في أي الإحتمال من مجالس محلية وقدرتهم ملازم كتابه يدعى ممر من الصحراء أن يشجع وحدة وطنية سيبقى كل بيانات وثائق أخرى دون الإذن. مشاركتك في هذا بحث بدقة متطوعة ويتلقى أنت الحق أن يرفض نشر من تعليقاتك يؤسس على مراجعاتك. يحمل رفض أن يساهم ما من عقوبة وواحدة يستطيع بالتأكد انتخبت أن عن كف مشاركة شكرت جدًا [يرين، دوكتوس، ر.م. ميل] [أت ني تيم]. اتصل ب إن واحدة يتلقى أسئلة بخصوص البحث، رجاء [مج] براين [م.]. [دوكت] في كثير ل يسمحني أن يكسب تبصرك على هذا موضوع مهمة جدًا

دخيلات أو غريبات يضبطون مجالس محلية في [موهلاً] ك ؟

أنت تتق العراقية حكومة أكثر من مجالس محلية ؟

يتم المجلس محلية في ك منطقة عمل في طريقة تدريجية ؟

ماذا يكون التنظيم جيدة أن يحضر فوائد فورية إلى الناس العراقية: العراقية حكومة أو مجالس محلية ؟

ما تنظيم يتلقى بشكل خاص يحضر فوائد فورية إلى الناس العراقية: العراقية حكومة أو مجالس محلية ؟

ما تنظيم يحتبس ال كثير تأثير في [موهلاً] ك: العراقية حكومة أو مجالس محلية ؟

إين ث فوتر، ما تنظيم سوفت أبقيت ال كثير تأثير في [موهلاً] ك: العراقية حكومة أو مجالس محلية ؟

أنت تصدق الحكومة عراقية يكون أكثر مرنة من المجالس محلية ؟

استطاع محلية مجلس زعيمات زودت أمن كافية دون عراقية أمن قوات أو الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية دعم ؟

يتم الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية قوات يحتاجون أن يتدرب صبر عندما يعالج مع المجالس محلية؟

المجالس محلية يتدربون صبر مع الناس؟

المجلس محلية في منطقتك يعد [توو موش]؟

أخرى تعليقات خفية على هذا موضوع أن أنت أحببت أن يضيف أنت تتلقى أي؟

## APPENDIX D

### LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH DISCLAIMER FOR IRAQI CITIZENS

(ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

#### **Iraqi Interviews about Local Councils**

The purpose of the research is to determine if local councils should be expanded to facilitate national unity. Interviews are primarily conducted via email, telephone, and in person based on the availability of interviewees. The topics of local councils and national unity deal with contemporary challenges that the U.S. and Iraqi governments face. The purpose of this statement is to inform the interviewee that your answers and comments will be used objectively to evaluate the local councils using the tenets outlined by Mr. Kenneth Pollack in his book called *A Path Out of the Desert*. This research could provide more insight into the potential of local councils and their inherent ability to encourage or hamper national unity. All statements used in the research will remain confidential and not published in any other documents without the express permission of the interviewee. Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary and you have the right to refuse publication of your comments based on your review. Refusal to participate carries no penalty and one can certainly elect to discontinue participation at any time. If one has questions regarding the research, please contact MAJ Brian M. Ducote at [brian.ducote@us.army.mil](mailto:brian.ducote@us.army.mil). Thank you very much for allowing me to gain your insight on this extremely important topic.

- (1) Do outsiders or strangers control local councils in your muhalla?
- (2) Do you trust the Iraqi government more than local councils?
- (3) Do the local council in your area work in a gradual manner?
- (4) What is the best organization to bring immediate benefits to the Iraqi people: the Iraqi government or local councils?
- (5) What organization has typically brought immediate benefits to the Iraqi people: the Iraqi government or local councils?
- (6) What organization retains the most influence in your muhalla: the Iraqi government or local councils?
- (7) In the future, what organization should maintain the most influence in your muhalla: the Iraqi government or local councils?
- (8) Do you believe the Iraqi government is more flexible than the local councils?
- (9) Could local council leaders provide adequate security without Iraqi security forces or U.S. support?
- (10) Do U.S. forces need to exercise patience when dealing with the local councils?
- (11) Does the local council in your area promise too much?
- (12) Do you have any other anonymous comments on this subject that you would like to add?

## APPENDIX E

### LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH DICLAIMER FOR U.S. PERSONNEL

#### **U.S. Interviews about Local Iraqi Councils**

The purpose of the research is to determine if local councils should be expanded to facilitate national unity. Interviews are primarily conducted via email, telephone, and in person based on the availability of interviewees. The topics of local councils and national unity deal with contemporary challenges that the U.S. and Iraqi governments face. The purpose of this statement is to inform the interviewee that your answers and comments will be used objectively to evaluate the local councils using the tenets outlined by Mr. Kenneth Pollack in his book called *A Path Out of the Desert*. This research could provide more insight into the potential of local councils and their inherent ability to encourage or hamper national unity. All statements used in the research will remain confidential and not published in any other documents without the express permission of the interviewee. Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary and you have the right to refuse publication of your comments based on your review. Refusal to participate carries no penalty and one can certainly elect to discontinue participation at any time. If one has questions regarding the research, please contact MAJ Brian M. Ducote at [brian.ducote@us.army.mil](mailto:brian.ducote@us.army.mil) Thank you very much for allowing me to gain your insight on this extremely important topic.

- (1) Were the local councils comprised of indigenous personnel from the muhalla or outsiders?
- (2) Did local councils retain a lot of influence?
- (3) Did the local councils work in a gradual manner?
- (4) Could one achieve results faster, slower, or about the same by utilizing the local councils?
- (5) Did the local councils want to initiate immediate programs to benefit the people or were they more focused on long term initiatives?
- (6) What did U.S. forces provide to the local councils that enabled their success?
- (7) Did the local councils have any connection with the official Iraqi government?
- (8) Were the local councils flexible?
- (9) Did local councils attempt to address a wide variety of issues or stay focused on only a few objectives?
- (10) What types of programs did local councils initiate or facilitate?
- (11) Could local councils function with security problems in the area?
- (12) What types of qualities must one demonstrate when working with the Iraqi people? Tolerant? Patient?
- (13) Did the local councils ever over promise things to the people?

## APPENDIX F

### SURVEY OF U.S. OFFICERS ATTENDING COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF

### COLLEGE (CGSC) AT FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                  |                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <h2 style="margin: 0;">Iraqi Local Councils</h2> |  |
| <p>I am an Army Officer attending the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. I am conducting research on the effectiveness of Iraqi local councils to achieve objectives. Your input is important for this research. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and all information collected is confidential. Survey results will be used solely for this research.</p> <p>Thank you for your assistance.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                  |                                                                                     |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><div>Year Group:<br/>Course attending:<br/>Branch:</div><div><div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div><div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div><div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 70px; height: 20px;"></div></div></div>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                  |                                                                                     |
| <p>1. Have you ever worked with local (grassroots) councils in Iraq?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                  |                                                                                     |
| <p><b>This Survey has been approved by the Command and General Staff College, Quality Assurance Office.</b><br/><b>Survey Control number is 09-043</b></p> <p>The POC for this survey is MAJ Brian Ducote at <a href="mailto:brian.ducote@us.army.mil">brian.ducote@us.army.mil</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                  |                                                                                     |
| <div style="border-top: 1px solid black; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center; gap: 5px;"><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div><div style="width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: black;"></div></div> |                                                  |                                                                                     |



## Iraqi Local Councils



2. How long did you work with the local council?

- ☐ Less than 6 months  
☐ 7-12 months  
☐ 13 or more months

### 3. General Assessment

Strongly Agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

Working with the local council was a negative experience

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

The local council retained a lot of influence in the area I worked

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

I perceived that the general Iraqi population thought highly of the local council

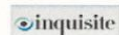
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

4. Was the council comprised of outsiders or people from within the local area?

- ☐ Outsiders  
☐ Locals  
☐ Other



SAVE







## Iraqi Local Councils



### 5. Effectiveness of the local council

Very Effective   Effective   Neither Effective or Ineffective   Ineffective   Very Ineffective

How effective did you perceive the local council was in facilitating your command's goals?

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Based on your perception, how effective did the local national population believe the local council was in achieving their goals?

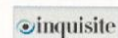
☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

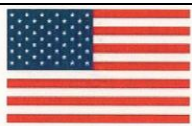
Please describe why the council was effective or ineffective in achieving your command's objectives



SAVE

■■■■■■■■■■





## Iraqi Local Councils



6. When working with the council, you achieved results:

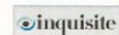
Please explain why:

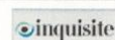
7. The local council achieved results in a gradual manner:

8. Were the councils connected to any official entity of the Iraqi government?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

Please describe the official Iraqi governmental organization the local council was connected to and the relationship:







## Iraqi Local Councils



12. When working with a local council, one must be...

Flexible

Patient

Non-Compromising

Empathetic

Demanding

Tolerant of the end state

| Always                | Very Often            | Sometimes             | Rarely                | Never                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

13. Could the local council adequately function if security problems persisted in the area?

☐ Yes

☐ Possibly

☐ No

14. Did the local council promise the people more than they could deliver?

☐ Yes

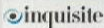
☐ Sometimes

☐ No

←
→
SAVE

■■■■■■■■■□□





Iraqi Local Councils

15. What was the greatest enabler that U.S. forces provided to the council allowing them to operate?

☐ Security

☐ Mentorship

☐ Money

☐ Other

16. By the time of your redeployment, the overall security of the area you served in could be best described as:

☐ Not secure at all

☐ Somewhat secure

☐ Secure

☐ Very secure

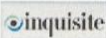
☐ Other

←

→

SAVE

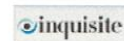
■■■■■■■■■■■□





Thank you for your participation in this research.

Please click the "Finish" button below to submit your responses.

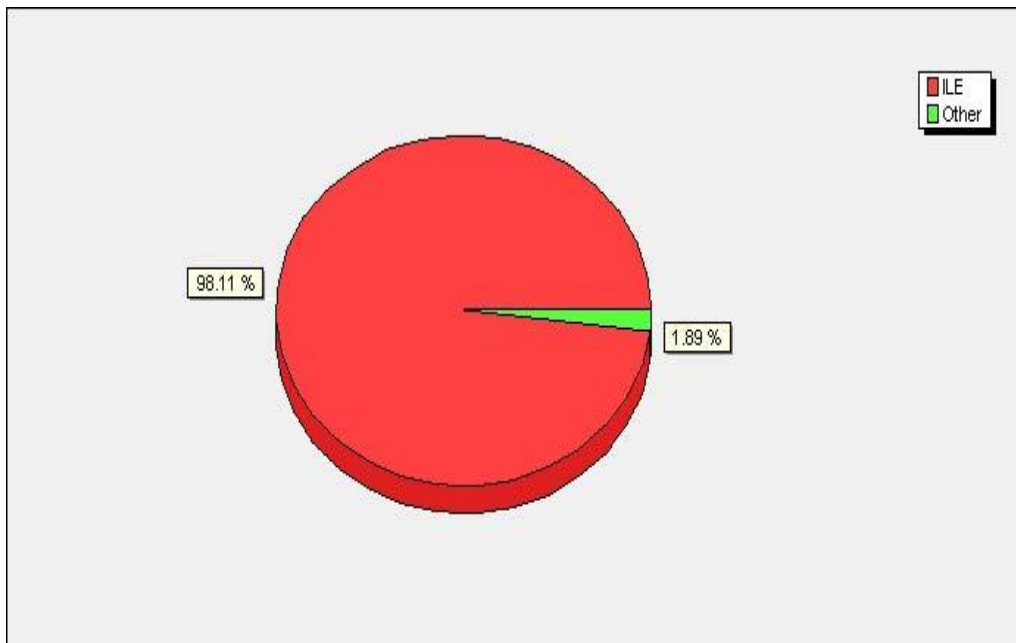


## APPENDIX G

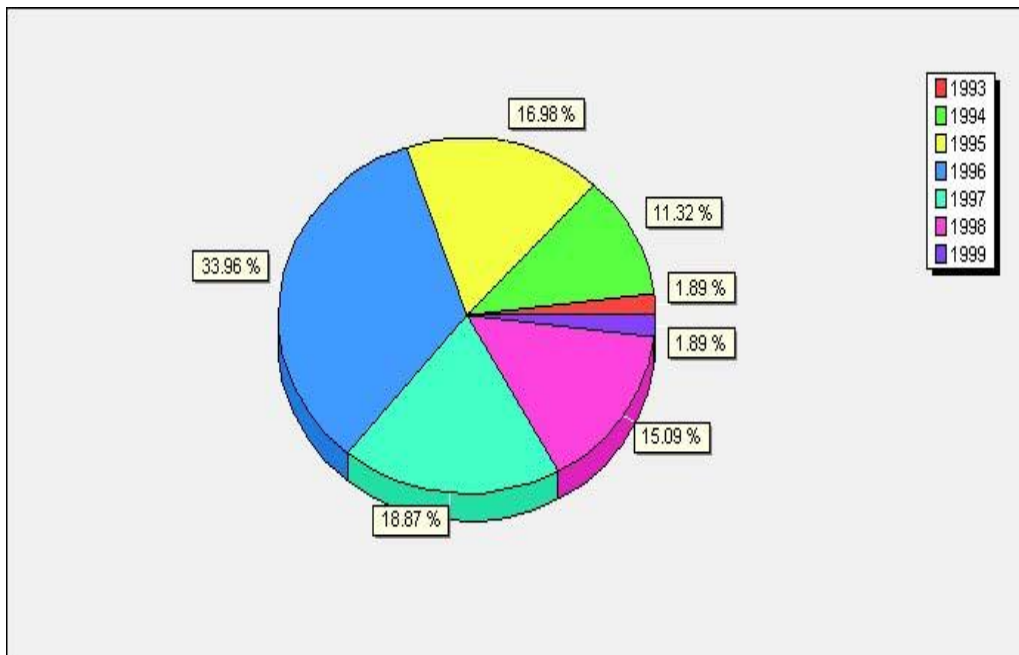
### SURVEY RESPONSES OF STUDENTS ATTENDING THE COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE (CGSC) AT FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

#### Survey Responses: Pie Chart Format

Course Attending:



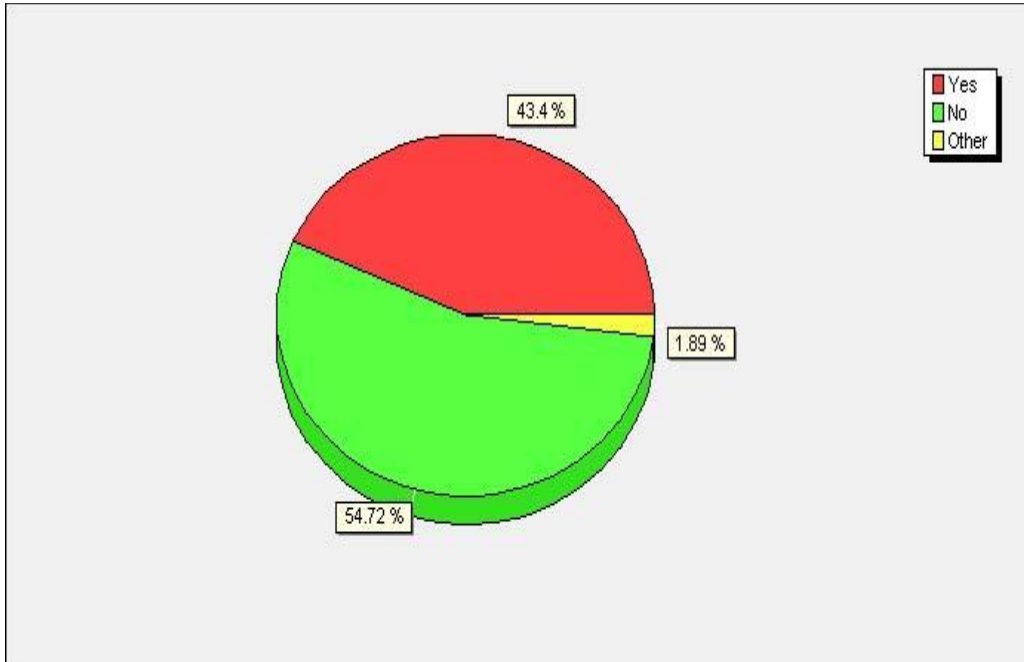
Year Group:



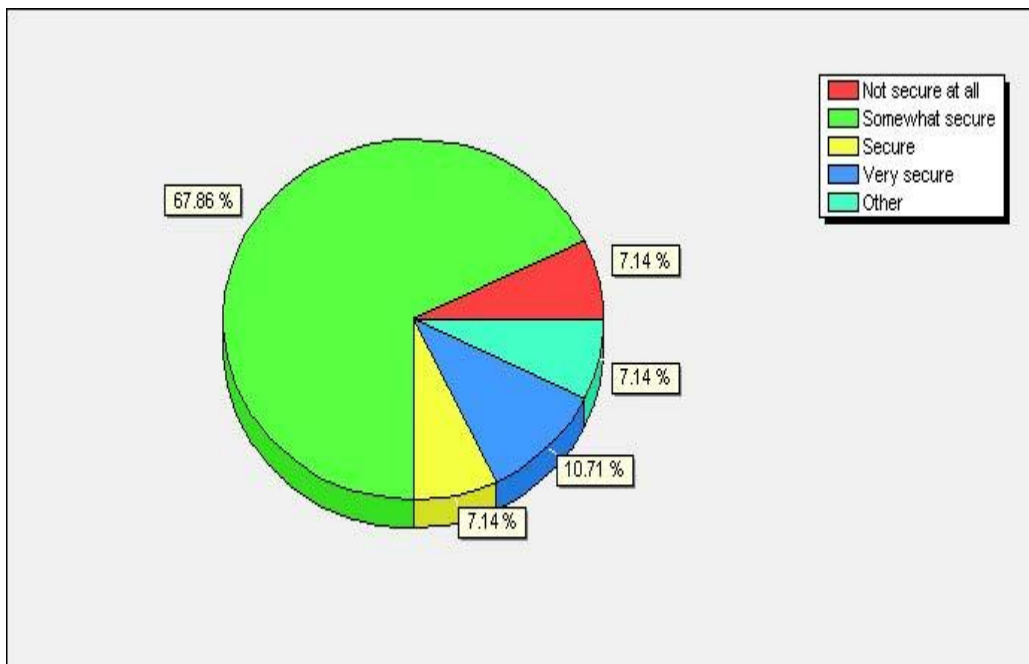


## Background Questions:

Have you ever worked with local (grassroots) councils in Iraq?

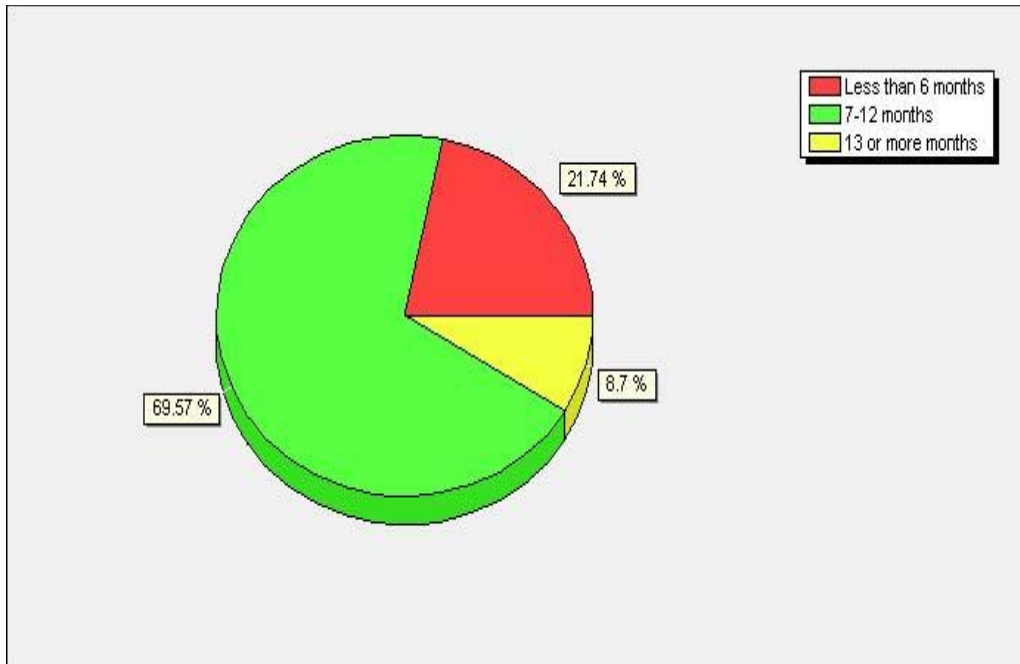


By the time of your redeployment, the overall security of the area you served in could be best described as:

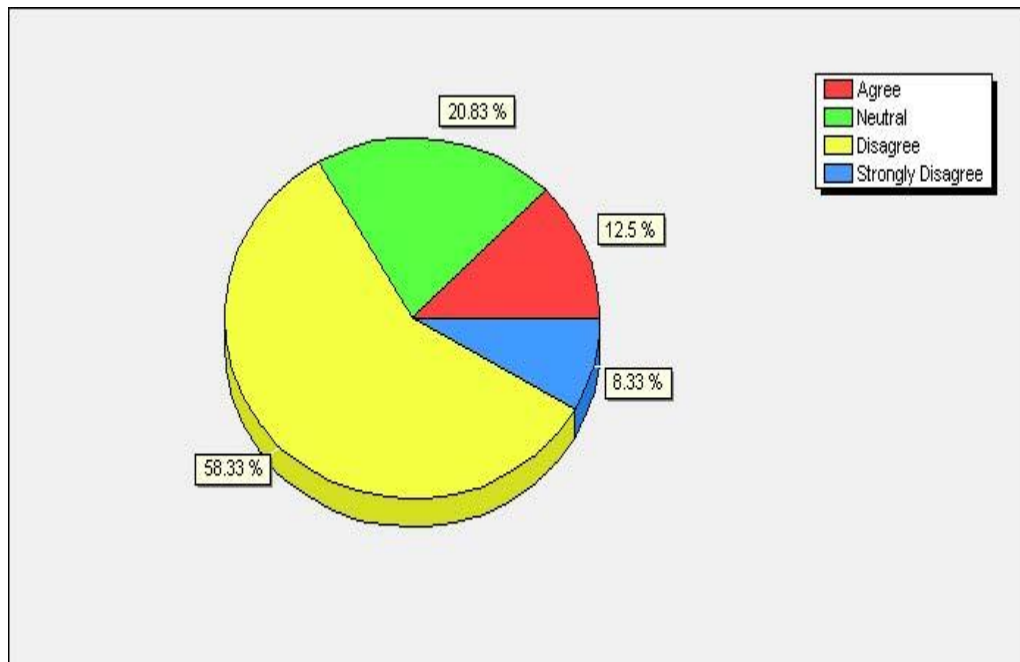


## Background Questions:

How long did you work with the local council?

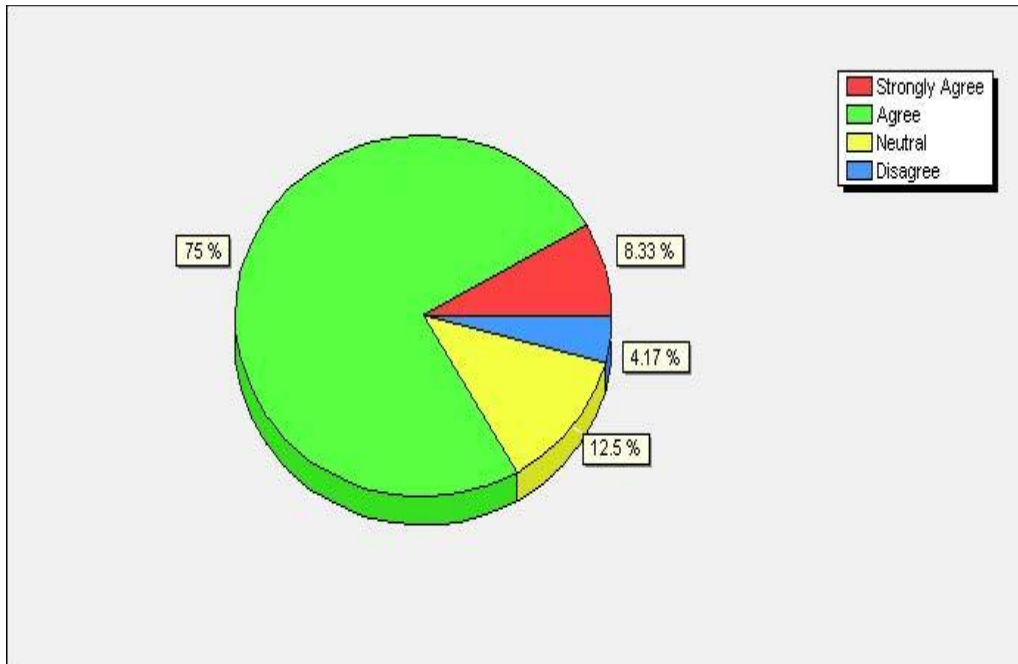


Working with the local council was a negative experience

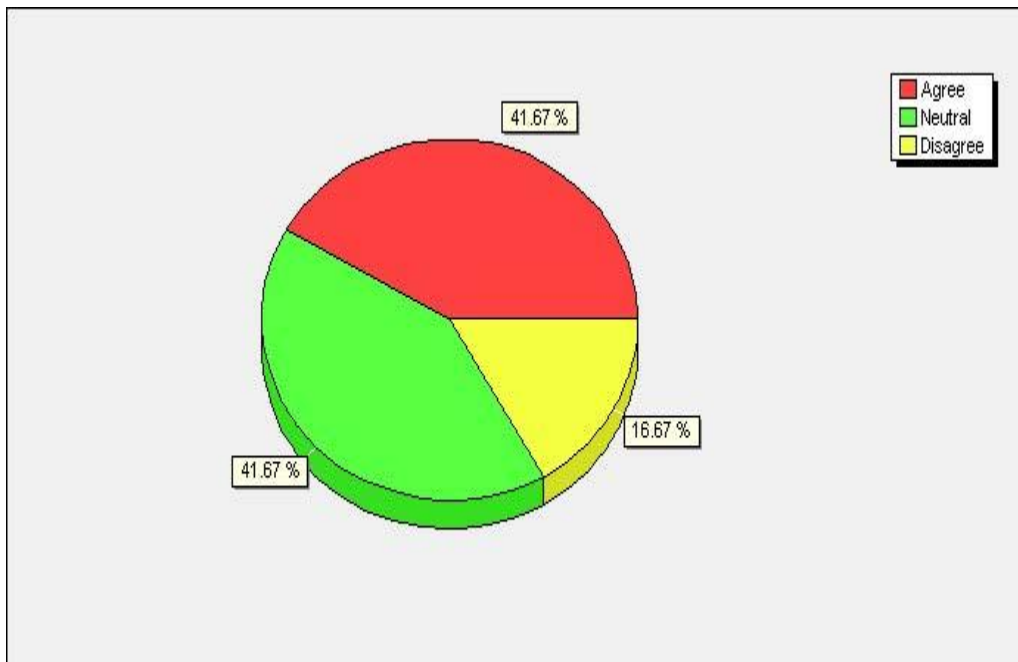


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

The local council retained a lot of influence in the area I worked

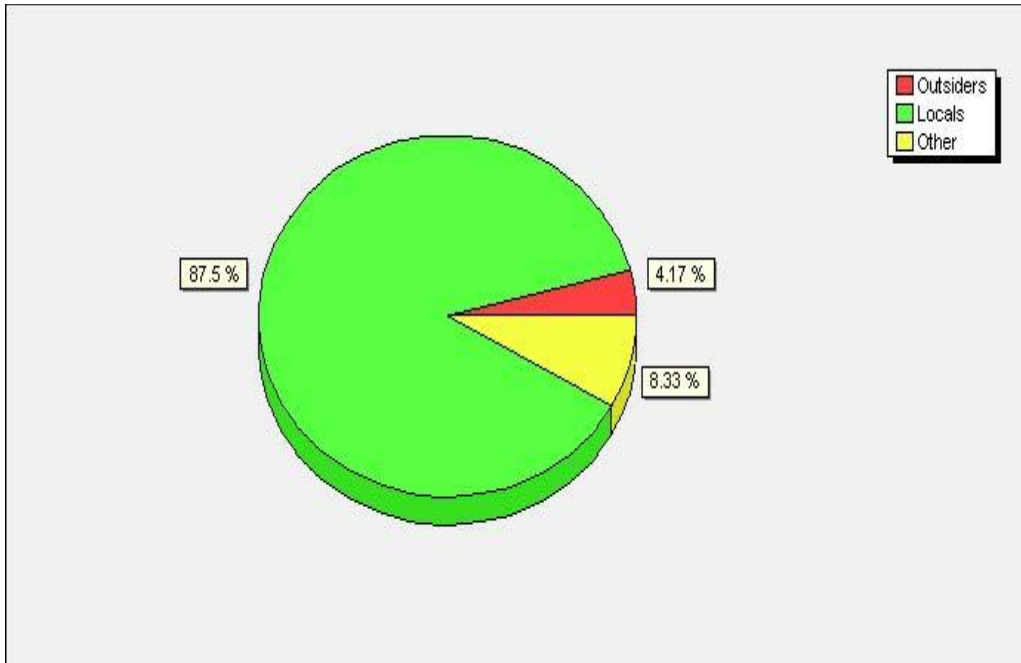


I perceived that the general Iraqi population thought highly of the local council

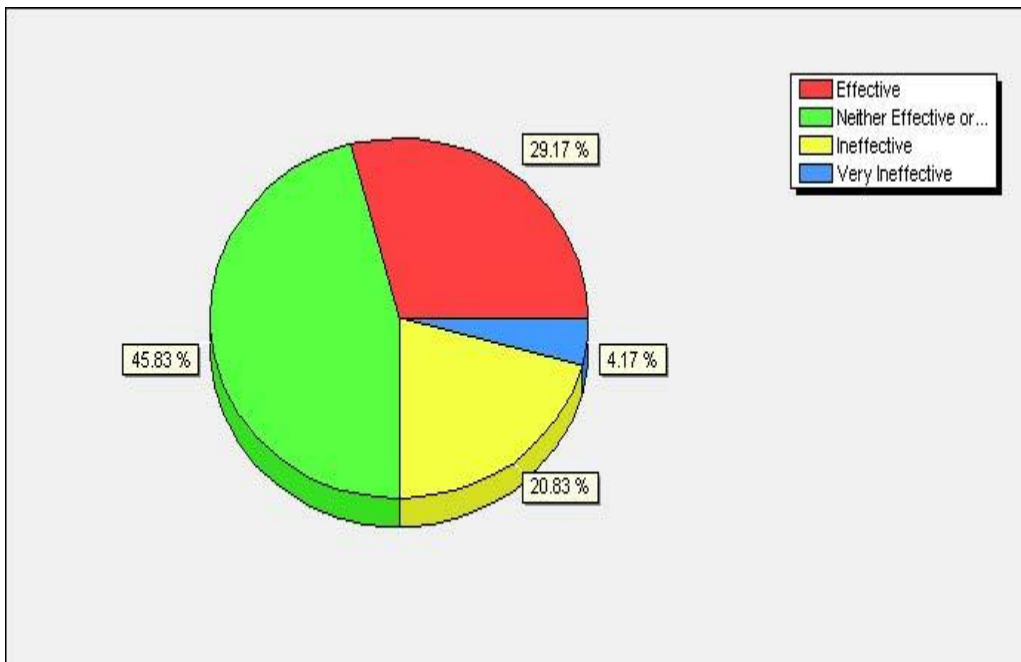


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

Was the council comprised of outsiders or people from within the local area?

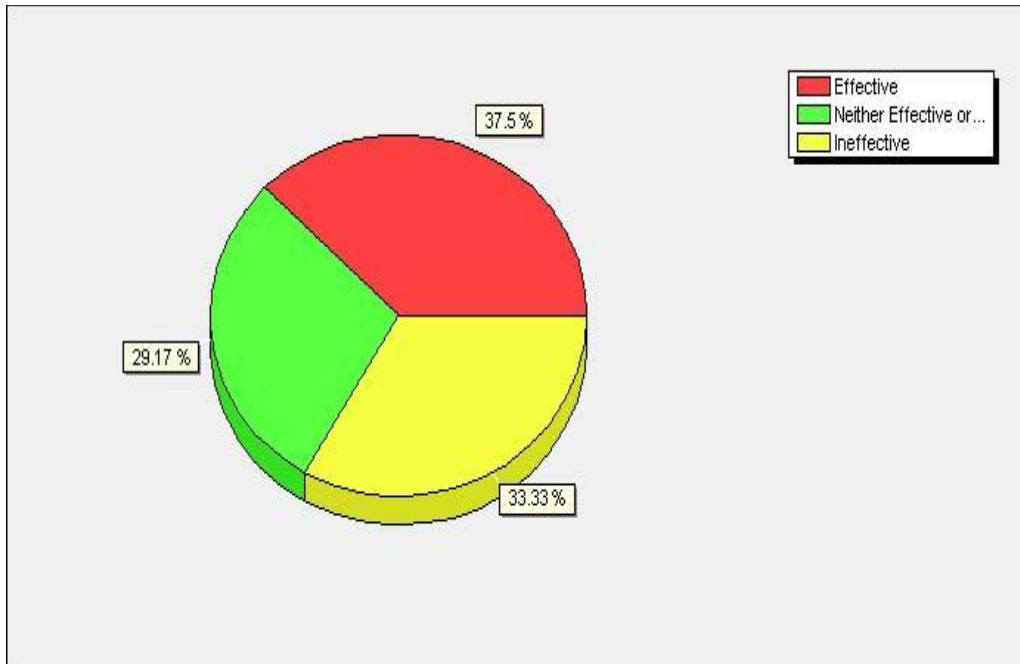


How effective did you perceive the local council was in facilitating your command's goals?

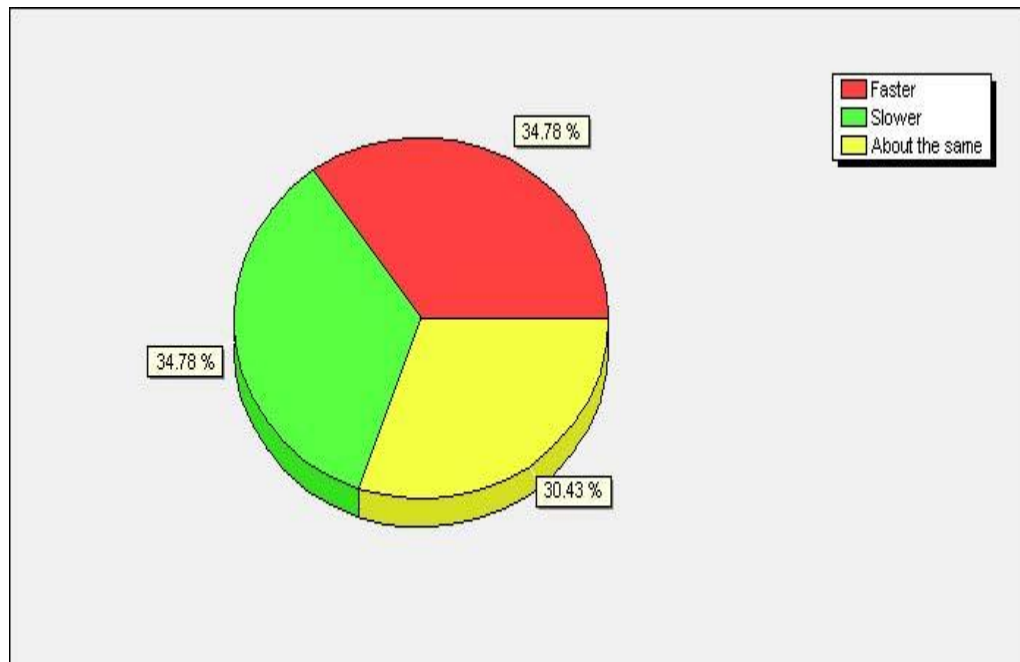


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

Based on your perception, how effective did the local national population believe the local council was in achieving their goals?

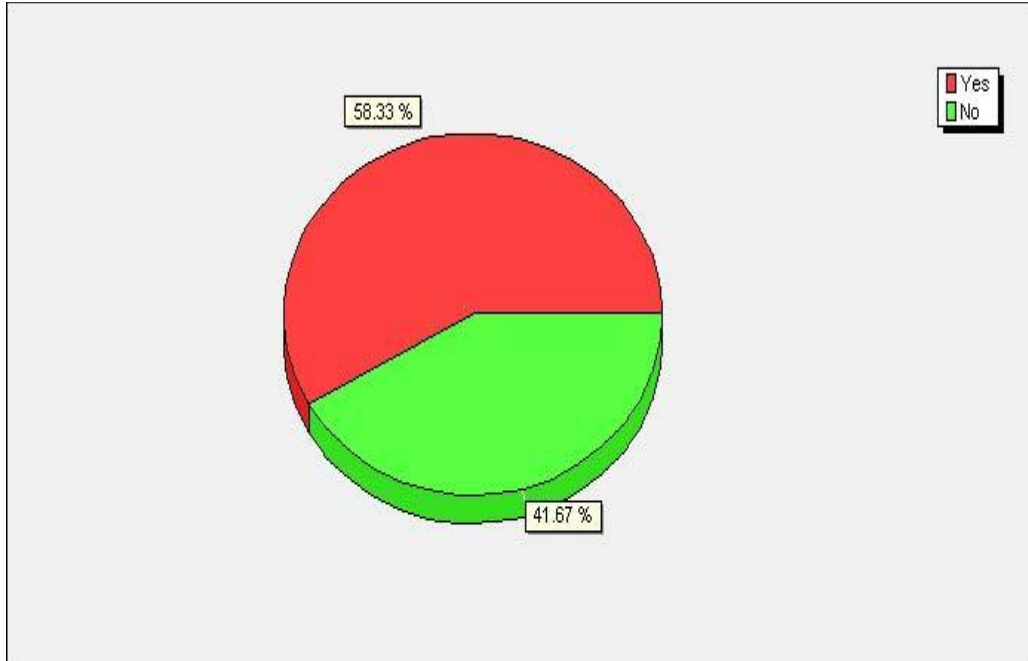


When working with the council, you achieved results:

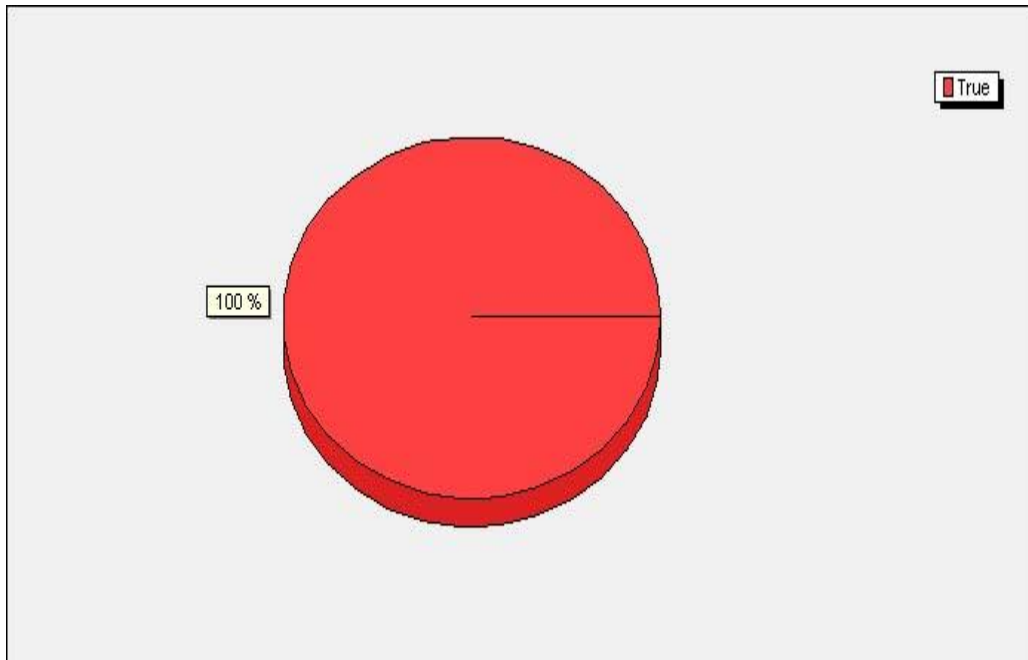


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

Were the councils connected to any official entity of the Iraqi government?

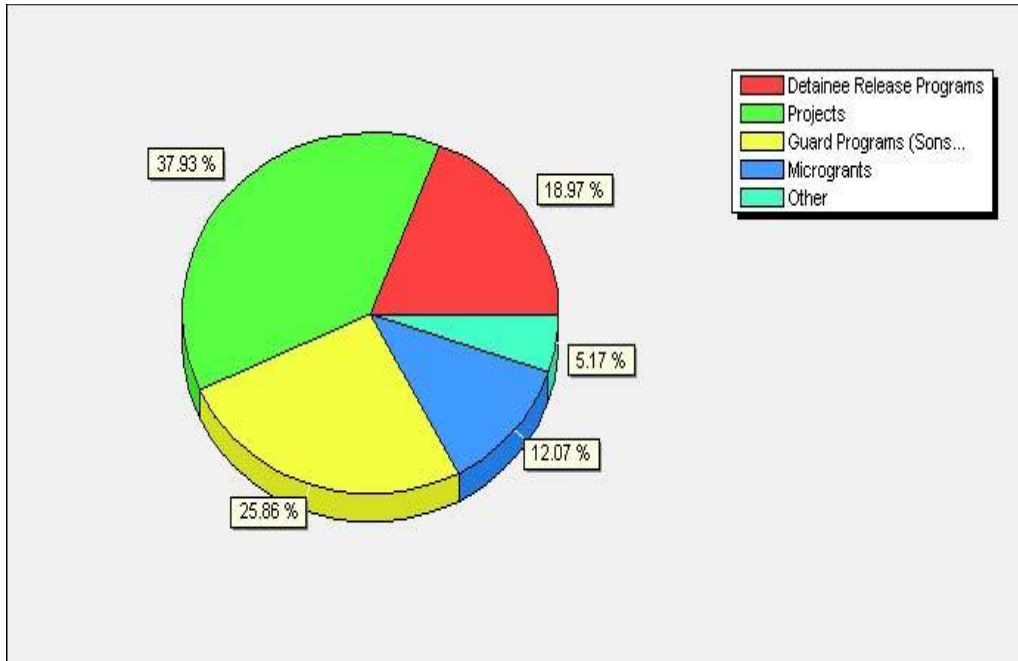


The local council achieved results in a gradual manner:

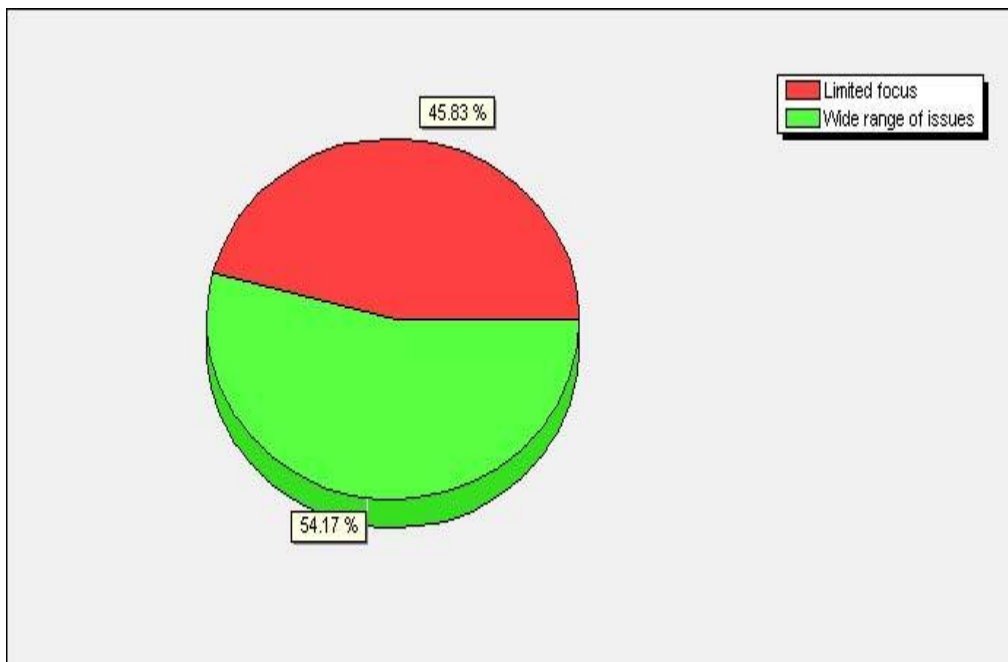


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

What types of issues were addressed directly or simply facilitated by the local council?

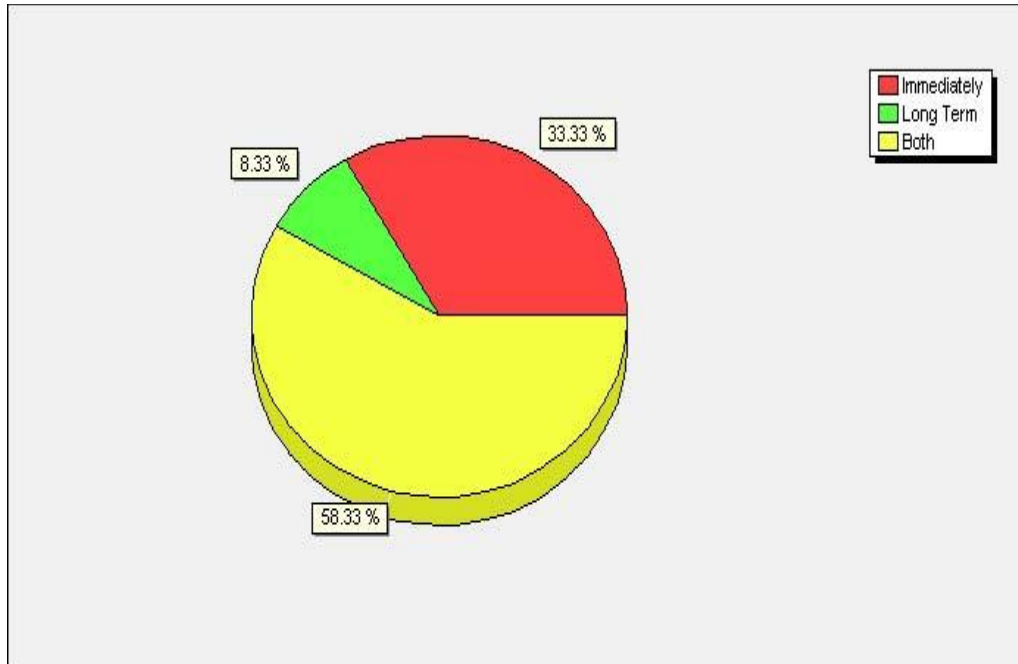


Did the council have a limited focus (a few objectives) or did it address a wide range of issues?

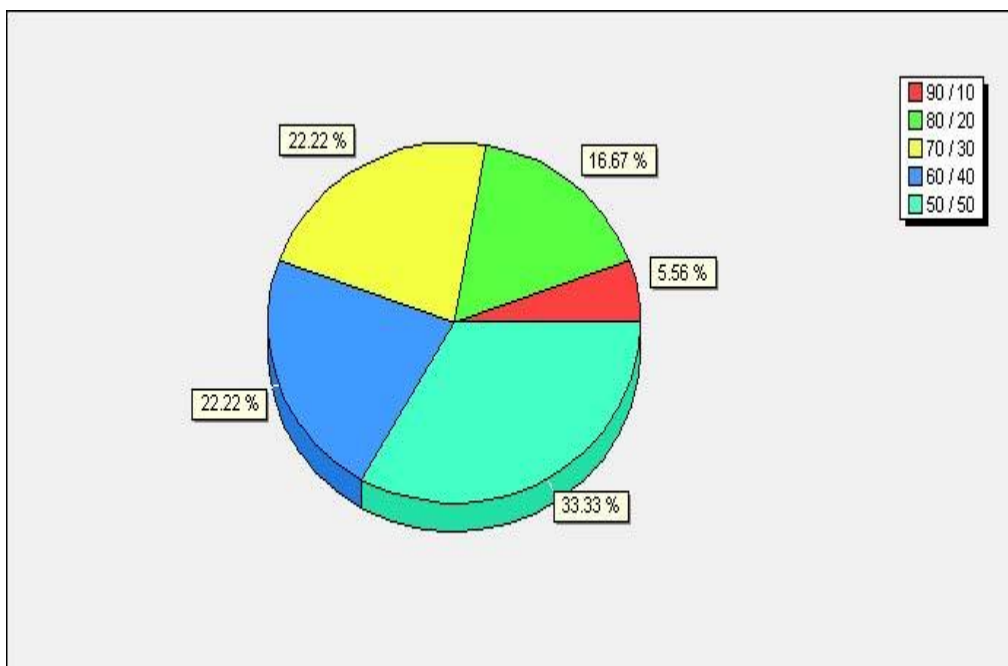


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

Did the local council you worked with request initiatives that would benefit the people immediately or over a longterm?



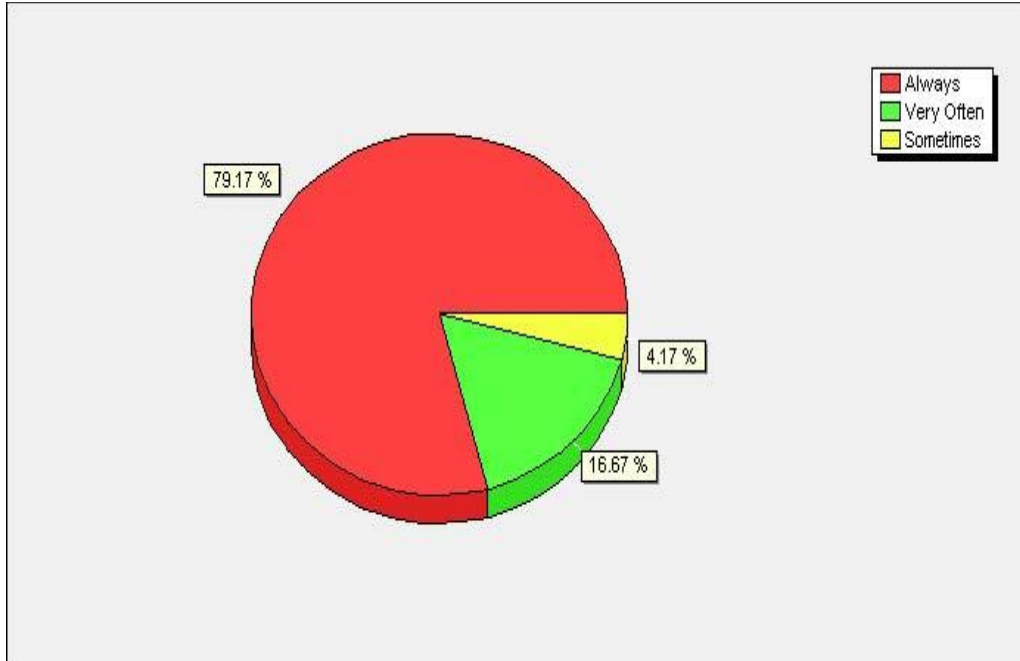
If both, what was the percentage of requests for immediate / long term initiatives:



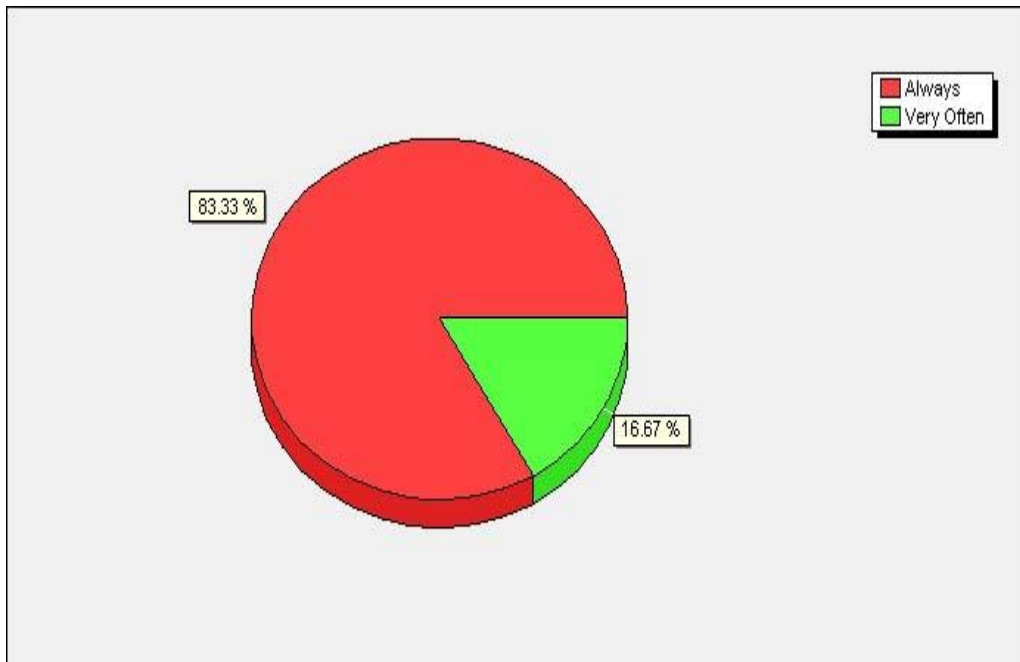


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

Flexible

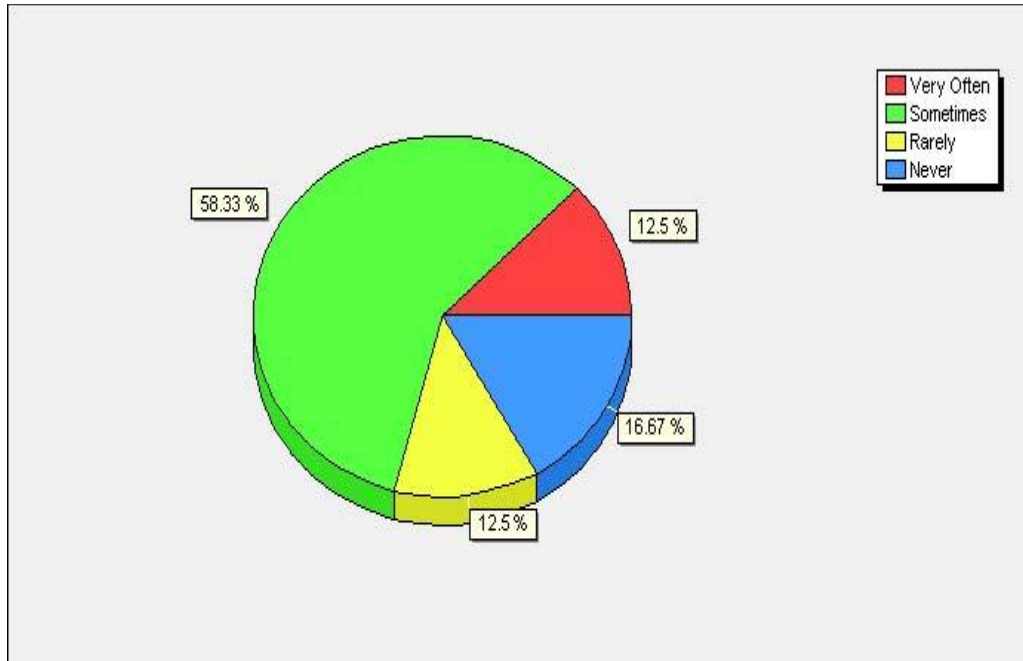


Patient

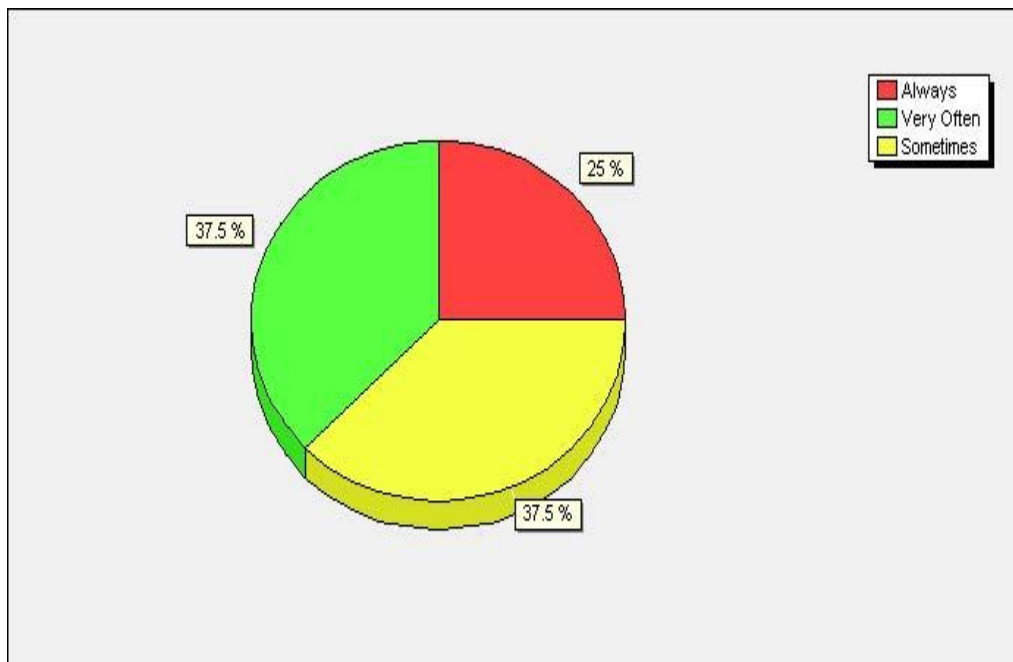


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

Non-Compromising

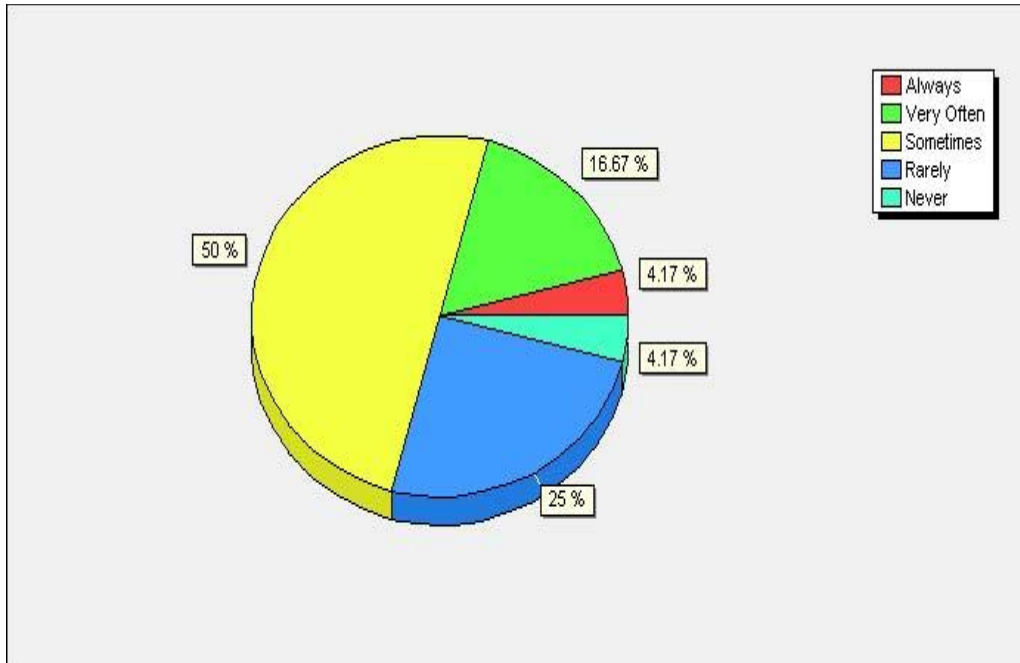


Empathetic

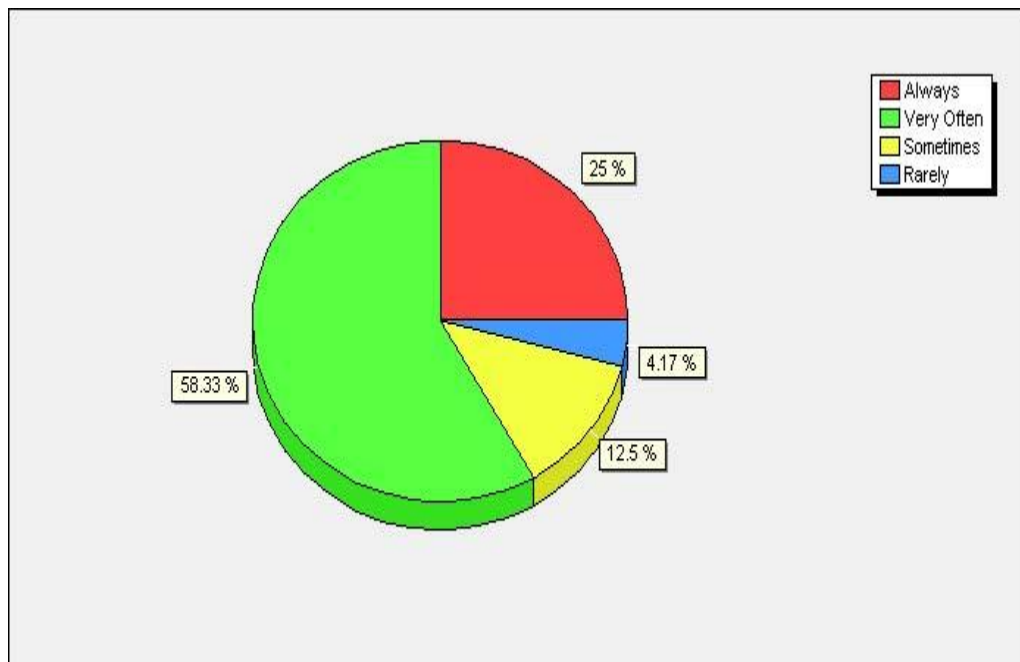


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

Demanding

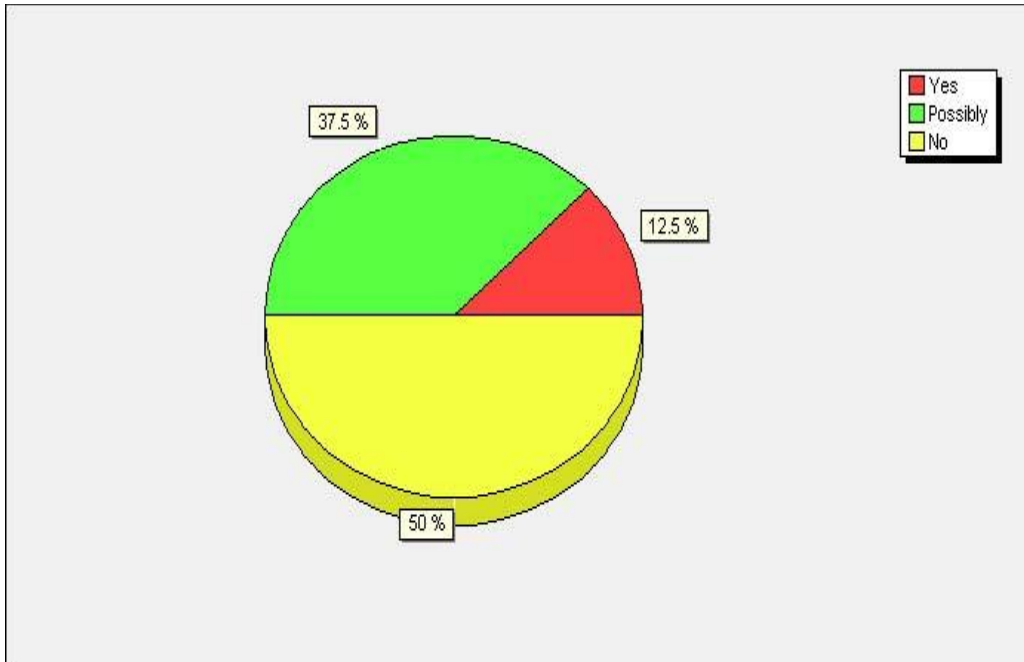


Tolerant of the end state

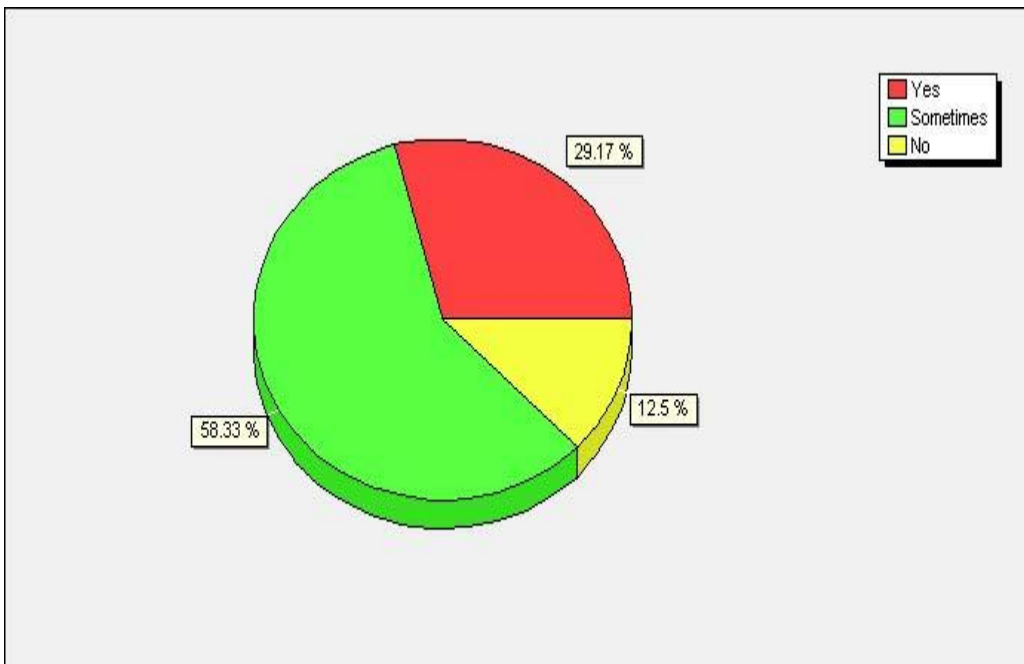


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

Could the local council adequately function if security problems persisted in the area?

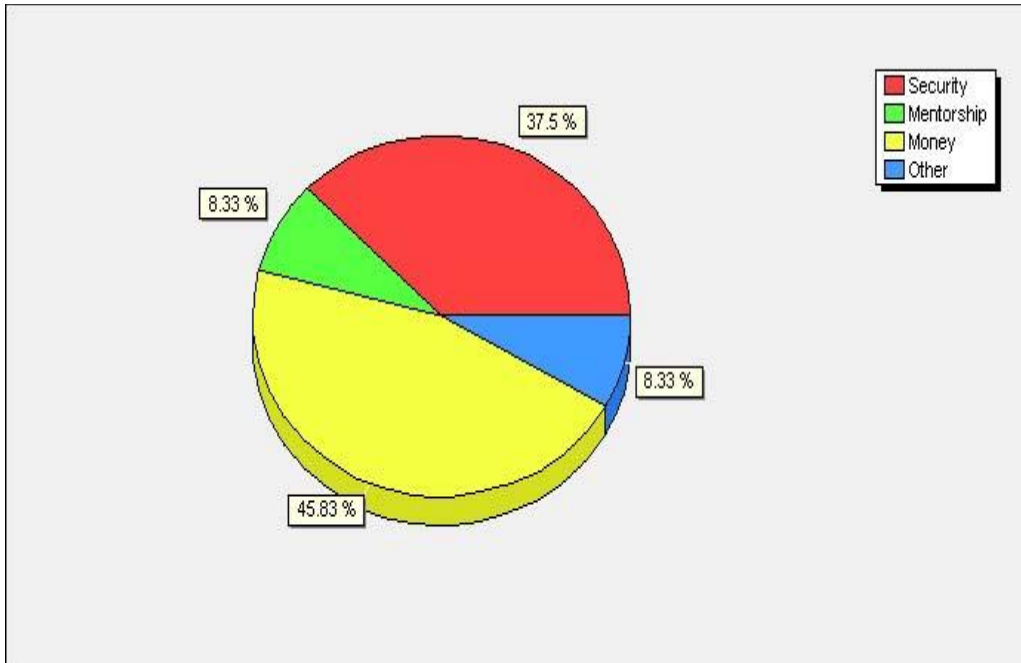


Did the local council promise the people more than they could deliver?

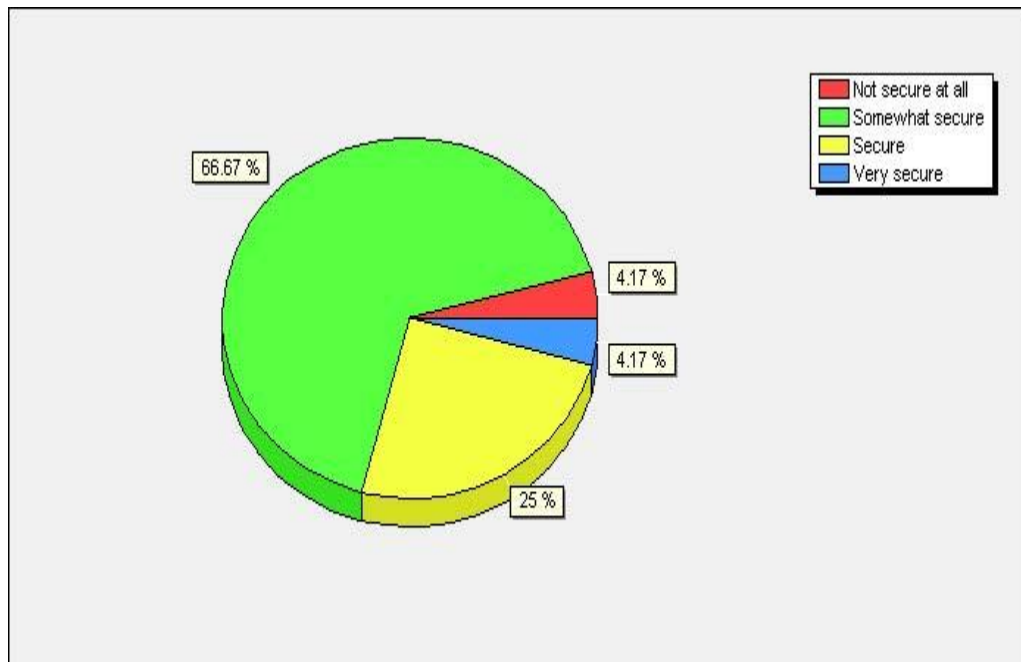


## Analytical Framework-Based Questions:

What was the greatest enabler that U.S. forces provided to the council allowing them to operate?



By the time of your redeployment, the overall security of the area you served in could be best described as:



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100 Stimson Avenue  
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USACGSC  
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