TO FOLLOW OR TO LEAD?
THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE AND U.S. TROOP PRESENCE IN IRAQ

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Monica Julia Anc

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ABSTRACT

Transitioning from Operation Iraqi Freedom I to Operation Iraqi Freedom II, the United States’ strategy of “the Surge” faced great challenges and achieved no clear result after its implementation. The Surge brought additional military equipment to Iraq and maximized U.S. forces’ capabilities by deploying an additional 30,000 troops in February 2007. The policy implications are stark when examining the evolution of violence in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion in March 2003. The initial years of the invasion created an insurgency, as well as the presence of Al-Qaeda operatives. By 2005, Iraq’s sectarian cleavages increased within the population, splintering society into a civil war. Threatening policy failure, the U.S. government introduced unconventional war tactics coupled with conventional war tactics, the all-encompassing component: the Surge. The focus of the Surge, which provided increased troop levels to Iraq’s most populated cities as well as counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, would prove to be an effective strategy to stabilize Iraqi society and drive out Al-Qaeda operatives.
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Introduction

When examining trends of violence in Iraq from 2003 to 2014, there is a significant rift in the number of incidents and bloodshed throughout the years. This thesis will address the relationship between the number of violent incidents and the number of troops in Iraq. The increased presence of the U.S. troops from 2006 to 2008 is associated with heightened levels of violence, followed by a tapering of incidents during 2008-2011 years in Iraq. However, withdrawal of the troops at the close of 2011 brought the stability of Iraq into question due to an addition wave of violent events. Recent reports name the year 2013 as the bloodiest year in Iraq since 2008. As violence increased, it begs to ask what impact U.S. troop presence (and size) had on the security of Iraq during the invasion in the previous decade.

The thesis question proposed sets forth a finding that is directly inconclusive; that is, an increased troop presence does not correlate to less violence. However, the findings of the thesis reaffirm previous scholarship regarding the creation of an insurgency in Iraq in addition to the necessity of practicing population-centric counterinsurgency policy to ensure effective troop strategy. With nearly as many troops present at the start of the war as during the initiation of the Surge strategy, levels of violence in these periods present opposing trends. The author concludes the following idea: the adjusted Surge strategy’s success came as a result of both unconventional and conventional tactics of war by the use of counterinsurgency operations. Coupling physical presence in numbers in addition to effectively communicating with the population, lead to cohesion and improved relations between Iraqis and Allied forces, securing the population in question.
The thesis first examines the initial stages of the Iraq War and its implications in politics today. Following this section, the thesis will review the divided literature of counterinsurgency policy and address the key determinants of violence in Iraq. Then, the thesis will examine the research data comparing the breakdown of types of violent incidents versus the level of troops by month. The rise of the insurgency is then discussed as it is an anecdotal example portrayed in the previous discussion and furthered by data presented in the annexes. Lastly, the concluding section summarizes the combination of the empirical findings and anecdotal evidence, mentioning limitations to the thesis as well as future research opportunities.

Iraq came to be a state within an “axis of evil,” just four months after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (Bush State of the Union Address, 2002). The attacks resulted in nearly 3,000 casualties and among other losses, $123 billion during the first 2-4 weeks after the World Trade Center towers collapsed in NYC (CNN: September 11 Anniversary Facts 2013, 1). These events not only shocked the United States but also impacted actors on a global scale. Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s Charter was invoked on September 12, 2001, the first time in NATO history. The Washington Treaty called for an armed attack against one or more [of them] in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all,” allowing states to exercise individual and collective rights of self defense (NATO.int 2005, 1). Less than a month after the attacks, the NATO-led intervention in Afghanistan began to combat terrorism and remove the Taliban from power.

Following several years of the conflict in Afghanistan, the United States’ foreign policy continued to shift towards predatory states in the Middle East, namely, Iraq. The United Nation’s
Security Resolution 1441 allowed the U.S. to gain support for weapons inspection in Iraq; but, after months of searching and no hard evidence, the Bush Administration turned to its Security Council members to authorize “disarmament of Iraq” for reasons spanning “threatening, bugging, and systemically deceiving U.N. weapons inspectors” for years (Bush 03.17.2002). Moreover, Bush claimed Iraq harbored terrorists, including al-Qaeda operatives, which later was revealed as a false assumption. President Bush gave Saddam Hussein and his sons forty-eight hours to leave Iraq, and advised all foreign nationals to prepare for a “military campaign” (Bush, State of the Union Address 2002). Though there was never an official declaration of war, the United States invaded Iraq on March 20, 2003 under the auspices of human rights violations and harboring weapons of mass destruction.

The launch of the Iraq War would prove to stretch U.S. capabilities thin as the “Forgotten War” in Afghanistan continued to wage. Troops on active and reserve duty would be split between both states, and the government would continue to spend trillions in the war effort. Prior to U.S. intervention, Iraq was absent of Al-Qaeda operatives in addition to the absence of an insurgency. The presence of U.S. troops created this insurgency which, as a result of troop presence, initially targeted coalition forces and then expanded its targets to Iraqi Security Forces (police, military, and government officials) suspected of siding with U.S. allies.

Proving to be a bloody endeavor, the U.S. faced bouts of alleged successes and failures, improvements in Iraqi society and security, and setbacks of terrorist-sponsored violence and surprise raids, injuring thousands of civilians and military personnel. Years following the intervention, the insurgency transitioned to what many consider an outbreak of a Civil War from
2006-2008, in which the Surge strategy was implemented to address unrest and reduce violence in Iraq’s most populated cities. War tactics of coercion took precedence in the initial stages of the invasion, but unconventional tactics used during previous wars such as the Huk Rebellion (1946-1956), Malayan Emergency (1948-1960), and the Vietnam Conflict (1964-1963) would be revisited through the guidance of Major General David Petraeus following General Odierno (Rovner 2012, 215). Though these conflicts do not mirror Iraq entirely, counterinsurgency policy can be viewed as a last resort to operations as it attempts to rebuild state institutions by winning the “hearts and minds” of the local population.

The Surge strategy became a reactive policy measure, reflecting necessity to adjust U.S. military strategy in Iraq. The inclusion of nearly 30,000 additional troops would allow U.S. forces to cover more ground and use the additional capabilities of troops to secure, hold, and build—the three main tenets of U.S. counterinsurgency policy. Then Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, had limited troops numbers in the early years of the war, decreasing the capability of U.S. strength, especially when widening the scope of troop presence. Refocussing tactic and strategy would become the center point of gaining stability in Iraq after 2006, but its delay came at a costly price for both Iraqis and foreign troops. The bloodshed of 2006-2008 was met by an increase in suicide bombings and insurgent attacks. It would only be until U.S. troops could impose a significant presence in Iraq that Sunni and Shia fighters would dismantle ties to Al-Qaeda and other tribal groups, siding then with U.S.-allied forces to secure villages, tribes, and cities alike.
Statement of the Problem

The “War on Terror,” coined by the Bush Administration and never again used in the Obama administration, gained both praise and scrutiny from near and afar in the world. While the mission was once welcomed, polls are now skeptical about the overall impact of military action in the Middle East. Some successes have reignited support for the mission (the capturing of Saddam Hussein, the killing of Osama Bin Laden, the advancement of U.S. control in key cities in the Al-Anbar Providence, to name a few), while other actions have questioned U.S. action abroad (the Abu Ghraib scandal, Battle of Haditha civilian deaths, torture techniques of the U.S. government abroad, government spending for the war effort, and the growing number of casualties, civilians and military personnel alike).

Questions of war, then, beg to answer who, what, when, how, and later following, why. Who is the appropriate power to decide an end to war. Who should power transition to? When is it time to pull out of a nation whose dictator has oppressed its civilians for over three decades? How long will democratic transition take, and how long should international forces be present to ensure stability? To what degree does terrorist actives “end” and how can the U.S. and its allies feel safe from non-state actors? Is the solution found fighting abroad or resorting to greater protection at home or a combination of both strategies? Because these questions will continue to plague the U.S. administration for decades to come, the growing importance of the intervention in Iraq concerns tactics and strategies to address these questions.

In such a complex scenario, it is interesting to study the confluence of conventional and unconventional tactics of war as means to campaign against “negative” ideological warfare.
through the case study of Iraq. Conventional tactics of war concerning hard power (open confrontation through increased troop deployment, known partially as the “Surge,”) strengthened tactics of unconventional warfare (counterinsurgency policy), and an examination of levels of violence which took precedence in the years leading to troop withdrawal in 2011. While tactics of counterinsurgency have been present in previous conflicts prior to the Iraq War, the success of the Surge can not wholly be attributed to an increase of American troop presence. There are contributing external factors that have influenced Iraqi society. The thesis will address the impact of the Surge coupled with counterinsurgency strategy to “win the hearts and minds” of Iraqis in an attempt to ally the local population to American pressure in Iraq.

Covering Bases: Literature Review

The literature of counterinsurgency policy is extensive and largely divided. There is also little material on the impact of troop size as it relates to violence as a parallel to the effectiveness of the strategy. COIN theorists tend to lean towards emphasizing techniques of the Surge, but the Surge has not yet been tested in any form of reference. Because of this, there is space in COIN literature to explore whether the number of troops is an indicator of increased or decreased violence. Although the number of troops cannot explicitly explain the presence or lack of violence in a society, it may be an indication of whether troop presence perpetuates violence and unrest, or if violence precedes increased troop presence. The importance of researching this topic may have significance for policy implications. While not one war mirrors another in its entirety, the future of U.S. policy is compelled to reassess its capabilities in the face of any war, especially
the “War on Terror.” Through the case study of Iraq, the thesis will answer the impact of troops as it relates to violence. Oppressive regimes and non-state actors will continue to succeed as long as their tactics supersede the rule of law and paralyzes populations.

Classic counterinsurgency literature describes war as an armed contest for public support. Counterinsurgency policy emphasizes the role of empathetic leaders, leading to government legitimacy through popular support (Galula 1964; Moyar 2010; Patraeus 2006; Rovner 2012). The key component of COIN is wooing or co-opting the population to fight for and side with the (legitimate) government (Galula 1964). Without this, there is very little chance to quell the insurgency since it depends heavily on the support of locals who are fighting within their own system. Classic COIN theory also requires military strategy to clear zones of insurgent activity to ensure security to the local population on an area by area basis. Karl Hack describes the Malayan Emergency as a success only because “the larger insurgent groups’ bases [were] disrupted” in which a “modicum of spatial dominance and security” was achieved for the population in the area (Rovner 2012, 230). Similarly, David Galula labels the responsibilities of the counterinsurgent to maintain order everywhere when the insurgent can sow disorder anywhere. The emphasis is to secure specific areas as a means of clearing insurgents, thereby protecting the population who sustains their cause. When pushing the bad guys out, area by area, the superseding security power will dissuade them from returning as territory becomes controlled by the legitimate group (Galula 1964).

Vulnerabilities of COIN strategy are only evident when the tactics simply do not work. Challenges to successfully co-opt the population, whether they are the insurgents themselves or
the alternate group seeking protection, can easily be propelled by inappropriate action or behavior. Though the figures are debated within the literature, generals and scholars alike place less emphasis on military prominence (20%) and greater emphasis on political strategy (80%). COIN policy requires only enough force and greater importance of winning “hearts and minds” to guarantee a winning strategy. A leader, therefore, will effectively guide his troops to take the role of many guises by becoming “a propagandist, a social worker, a civil engineer, a school teacher, a nurse…more useful than a machine-gun” (Galula 1964). The overuse of force may dissuade the population from seeking support, ultimately alienating the people who need to be won over. If this happens, accidental conditions occur; the population becomes a part of the insurgency or continues to fight—creating an “us vs. them” logic that is paralleled to violence during the U.S. invasion in Iraq.

Pro-COIN theorists are heavily influenced by David Galula’s “Prerequisites for a Successful Insurgency” as a means of reestablishing institutions and coordinating with multiple actors in society to impede insurgents; some of these actors include and are not limited to: civilians, government, nongovernmental organizations, and even international agencies (1964, Chapter 2). Because connecting with the local population and other exterior actors is a necessary task, the core of the policy is linked to the individual level of leaders, military personnel, and civilians alike (Rovner COIN). Connecting with the population is an essential tenet to ensure stability as areas are secured and insurgents are driven out. Because of this, Rovner is among the scholars who believe COIN policy reversed much of the bloodshed in 2006-2007 and helped establish legitimacy of the government by promoting leadership through effective individuals.
Ultimately, leadership began with the military strategists who implemented them and then transferred power to the Iraqi government.

General Major David Petraeus oversaw the U.S. Army’s first-ever doctrine devoted exclusively to COIN operations, known as the Department of the Army’s Field Manual (FM 3-24) in December 2006. Military experts including Nagl (an expert on counterinsurgency, as stated in his writing, “Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife”) along with other military scholars, wrote the FM 3-24 as a guide for officers to “drive a wedge between the civilian population and insurgents who lived among them.” Having served in Anbar province during a tour in 2003, he returned to the United States with ideas for a different strategy to take control of Iraq’s violence. FM 3-24 serves as a guide for soft policy in Iraq. It discusses a “mix of offensive, defensive, and stability operations conducted along multiple lines of operations,” encompassing both military and nonmilitary strategies (Petraeus 2006, 2). The doctrine emphasizes the benefit of COIN operations to “learn and adapt” as a method of irregular warfare, yet outlines immediate challenges as the course of strategy can change at any moment in a campaign.

Challenges to counterinsurgency policy include the use of force, even though some scholars describe this as a necessary component of its success (Hack 2011, Hazelton 2012, Rovner 2012, Samabnis 2012). Too much force may be interpreted negatively, in which the population who is to be won over continues to be an enemy, the insurgent. David Kilkullen (2005) attributes this to a “feeling of anger becoming part of an accidental condition,” perpetuating the insurgency (600). Though the literature does not focus on the appropriate use of
force or when counterinsurgency can turn awry, it would be compelling research for further
study.

Rovner (2012) believes there is a sequence to coercion and conciliation as a means of
establishing political order, depending on the circumstances of any conflict, but fails to identify
what these circumstances are and to what capacity this sequence should occur. Tim Hoyt
contends there is no “checklist” for counterinsurgency as each situation is unique. Hoyt attributes
the rising insurgency in Iraq as a conventional response to U.S. invasion (2010). When cultural
and social norms were ignored, the first few years of the invasion created additional enemies
than those who were enemies at the initial start of the war.

General George Casey Jr., who served as Commander of Iraq’s Multi-National Force, was
skeptical of COIN operations because he believes it trapped the U.S. by draining its capabilities.
Wearily, he viewed the local population to take advantage of “a large and active U.S. presence to
shirk their own responsibilities as resentment to outsiders grew” (Kaplan 2013, 6). Casey’s
statement is supported by the behavior of a growing insurgency when he served from 2003-2007.

Paul Staniland, an academic at Stanford University, contributes to the literature by
introducing state formation as an intrinsic component of coercion and dominance. Though a
strong state can be “[won] with hearts and minds, he is skeptical about the ability for locals to
promote the control of legitimate governments, especially when security becomes the
responsibility of the locals instead of the combined effort of both U.S. and Iraqi forces. Michael
Boyle has related claims by similar scholars who attribute state formation as a key component of
COIN operations when he stated Obama’s action to withdraw troops from Iraq compromised the mission (2009).

The middle ground of COIN literature is viewed as a strategy to preempt or prevent the formation of insurgencies (Anderson 2011, 216). The population is an unstable collective of future allies or enemies, and therefore, can be switched as certain behaviors are incentivizing or deterring. Anderson’s focus of psychological operations (PSYOPS) examines when insurgents “appear and disappear within a population, who are fought amongst a population and for the control of a population.” Stephen Biddle’s “Testing the Surge” (2012) theorizes whether or not the Surge can be attributed to mere reinforced troop presence or if its success is matched by the synergy thesis. His conclusions show a mixed verdict: some areas were stabilized by the number of troops, whereas others were stabilized by the presence of a spillover of the Awakening movement (36). Analogous to similar claims, COIN is not definitively achieved, but is rather a continuous effort as clear-hold-build is successful.

Michael Boyle (2010) attempts to draw differences from counterterrorism strategy and counterinsurgency strategy, but ultimately decides both of its central tenets are shared: to “pull the population away from the insurgency and towards the government” (343). Though these strategies are not mutually exclusive, he argues they are entirely reinforcing and emphasizes appropriating legitimacy without exhausting U.S. resources: financially, militarily, and even morally (352). His chief criticism to U.S. policy in Iraq is drifting towards a COIN policy becomes an over-extension of foreign conflicts, when a more limited counter-terrorism response would be more beneficial.
Specific to Iraq, scholars and academics alike have attributed certain successes and failures to the Surge policy in Iraq. Patrick Cockburn believes the reduction in violence is not attributed to U.S. military success, but rather as a direct result of “ethnic cleansing by the Shia-led Iraqi government and Shia militias against the Sunnis.” This statement is widely contested and shared by different scholars; but generally stating, Cockburn is a pessimist regarding U.S. success abroad and believes U.S. invasion became a catalyst to growing instability in Iraq. Nicholas Sambanis’ literature (2012; Anderson 2011) focuses on parochialism as a mechanism which “activates ethnic and sectarian cleavages, undermining institutions that cultivate a common national identity” (807). Through parochialism, human behavior is shaped through the competition of resources and survival; as a result, he concluded some successes of U.S. intervention through counterinsurgency, but ultimately places the responsibility of clear-hold-build in the hands of Iraqis, especially when considering the Sunni “Awakening.”

There is a burgeoning literature available with differing viewpoints about the nature of counterinsurgency policy, especially in regards to the Iraq experience. COIN theorists focus on the benefits and drawbacks and attribute a variety of variables to its success, some of which include presence of troops, the leaders ability to persuade, and the combination of hard and soft power to win the hearts and minds of local populations. However, there also exists a lack of literature to describe the way in which troop levels have influenced the decline of violence in Iraq and vice-versa. While the following sections of this thesis will show the findings from testing the troop Surge against levels of violence in Iraq, it will also explore the question of whether violence was the precursor to reinforced troop presence or whether troop presence
perpetuated the violence during the Surge. This is an area the Surge literature does not explore. Thus, this will be the addressed in this thesis. Examining tactics of quelling an insurgency suggests coming policy implications when future conflicts are on a path of spiraling out of control.

**Fueling the Fire: Examining Key Determinants of Violence in Iraq**

In brief, the invasion of Iraq began when the United States falsely confirmed the presence of nuclear and chemical weapons, a clear violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 687. This resolution stated that Iraq “shall unconditionally accept, under international supervision, the destruction, removal, or rendering harmless of its weapons of mass destruction…system of monitoring and verification of compliance” (Resolution 687 1991, [UN.org](http://www.un.org)). In the wake of immense pressure and the auspices of appearing to harbor terrorists, the United States entered Iraq on March 30, 2003.

Several years after the invasion, the Bush Administration came under fire for obscuring international rules of law and entering a sovereign country after the media began reporting about the intelligence used to steer U.S. and British governments to enter Iraq. A former Iraqi chemical engineer in Germany, codenamed “Curveball” (Rafid Ahmed Alwan al-Janabi), claimed to have knowledge of Saddam’s illicit weapons program, which produced nearly 100 reports of German intelligence to the CIA (Wall Street Journal 2008, 1). Although both governments deny relying on al-Janabi’s “intelligence” as partial justification to enter Iraq, Curveball publicly admitted his lies and revealed he was content to “do something for his country.” When asked if he would
change his actions given the opportunity again, he mentioned he would do anything he could to topple Saddam’s regime (Chulov 2011, 1). The fabrication of human intelligence (HUMINT) stands as a common criticism of the U.S. government’s invasion of Iraq.

With nearly 175,000 troops at the start of the invasion, Washington strategized a “light footprint” during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The strategy consisted of scattering U.S. bases on the periphery of Iraq and positioned greater numbers of troops in hubs or heavily populated cities where Al-Qaeda operatives were considered to exist. The initial days of the invasion consisted of a multitude of bombings in Iraq, which the government hoped would paralyze Saddam and possibly even kill him. As weeks and months of similar warfare waged on, media pundits coined this campaign “Shock and Awe.” Though it cannot be considered as the single determinant of the behavior of Iraqi forces and civilians following the invasion of U.S. troops, it cannot be ignored as a factor contributing to hostile relations between Iraqis and American soldiers. The attacks had demoralizing results, in which the population sought security from individuals who they might originally not, catalyzing the creation of an insurgency in the early years of the invasion.

After the fall of Baghdad, the power struggle in Iraq is arguably defined as two contrasting characterizations: Shia cooperation or Shia resistance. After capturing Saddam Hussein in ad-Dawr, Iraq, the U.S. government continued to follow Bush’s strategy in Iraq, whose aims were reiterated publicly in his “We Will Preserve” speech. The goals of the U.S. government included handing over authority to a sovereign Iraqi government, establishing security, continuing to rebuild Iraqi’s infrastructure; and, encouraging more international support to create free and fair national elections empowered by the Iraqi people (Bush 2004, 3).
Although the policies would appear to empower local Iraqis, the initial strategy of de-Baathification would only challenge these efforts. De-Baathification barred any member who held the top four levels of office in the Baath party from holding any government job. Additionally, under the Coalition Provisional Authority, the United States disbanded the Iraqi army and security forces, of which many coalition enemies (mainly Sunni) were created. These policies (known as CPA I and CPA II) are said to have sparked sectarian violence in Iraq with tens of thousands of workers displaced, turning to arms for protection and political support. The dynamic of Shia-Sunni relations are not a new phenomenon to the Middle East with its first conflicts originating as early as 632. With this, a Shia majority and Sunni minority add to the challenges of a stable, representative society, especially after the fall of Saddam. Cleavages within society were only further after the CPA policies and inability to protect Iraqis.

Among additional challenges of security and violence in Iraq, include the topic of terrorist cells. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an Arab of Jordanian descent, fled to northern Iraq after commanding volunteers in Herat, Afghanistan (Laub 2014, 1). Before the invasion, the United States insisted al-Zarqawi had ties to Osama bin Laden, but experts believe al-Zarqawi vowed allegiance to bin Laden over a year later, in October 2004. Exploiting unrest of the population in Iraq, Zarqawi is believed to have strengthened the terrorist cell, al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), before his death in 2006. However, terrorism in Iraq continued to exist when his confidant, Abu Ayyub al-Masri would adopt an alternative name, the Islamic State of Iraq (ISIS), continuing al-Qaeda’s activities.
Out on a Limb: U.S. Troop Levels and Violence in Iraq

This section will explore quantitative data and evaluate the trend of violence as it relates to the troop numbers in Iraq from 2003 to 2011. While these implications are not conclusive of general behaviors of violence, it does support previous research by contributing to preexisting literature in the field. Then, the qualitative discussion of violence as a precursor to the troop levels will follow. The complex issue of whether increasing violence leads to an increased numbers of troops or whether the quantity of troops influences the proclivity of violence will be addressed through the Iraq case study, with greater examination of the Al-Anbar Awakening.

The data sets for this study were created from the IraqBodyCount.org (IBC), a project whose figures are cross-checked from multiple media sources for the most up-to-date and accurate information. The IraqBodyCount project focusses on documenting solely violent, civilian (non-combatant) deaths sourced from the integration of commercial media, NGO reports and official records provided by the hospital and morgue data (IBC 2014, About IBC). The source is widely referenced from scholars around the world, and analyses are a considerable contribution to the website.

For the purpose of the study, the figures regarding violent attacks are obtained using the database and selecting proper constraints for the variables. One can use the data to show who the perpetrators are (U.S. led coalition, Iraqi State Forces, Unknown Actors, Anti-Government/Occupation Forces) and can also refine the datasets by selecting where the attacks occurred (in either 18 cities or all of Iraq) and further restrict the data by choosing how many individuals were killed (1 or more, between 1 and 5, etc). When examining the data, one may notice that the
individual incidents seem to fall out of the total number of incidents during a given time. IBC acknowledges the difficulty in “coding” deaths and even, perpetrators.

Annex A is an example of this in discrepancy unacknowledged on the website. The author reached out to the founder, Hamit Dardagan, and was informed that there are overlapping categories, not exclusive ones. This explanation attests that the data also includes ‘cross-fire’ incidents, where both parties (such as anti-government/coalition forces) may have been involved, and so, these numbers may be double counted. The charts below examine the number of violent incidents, not number of deaths. The author chose to identify the number of recorded incidents rather than the number of deaths because it is an indication of an attack. The number of civilians deaths, though high during some years in Iraq, is not a clear indication of greater violence because it could relate to a single incident with many casualties among the civilians, therefore being a more effective attack with greater civilian casualties. Despite these discrepancies, it is possible to observe trends and draw the conclusions.

In Annex B, the Number of Incidents in Iraq by Year and Type is shown. In this analysis, the unknown actors take the lead in number of related incidents and the anti-government/coalition forces are a close second. The data also shows the most violent years for Iraq, namely 2006, 2007, and 2008, when troop levels were highest. In 2008 and 2009, the number of violent attacks from unknown actors decreases sharply, but is seen to increase slowly since the drawdown of troops in 2010-2011. The U.S. led coalitions, without Iraqi Forces seem to be the main actors involved in violent attacks, with the only significant contributions from Iraqi State Forces until the end of the Surge in 2008.
To analyze the impact of the number of troops on violence in Iraq, the variables were restricted to show that number of troops are independent to the number of incidents in Iraq. General comments about the conclusions of data include that U.S. troops and total troops as a dependent variable generally showed the same trend. Examining the impact of foreign troops against violence is unnecessary because the presence of foreign troops was not a determinant of allied success in Iraq. Foreign troop sizes accounted for a lesser portion of the armed effort and significantly decreased after August 2005-2009 when the last troops were withdrawn. U.S. troops size was consistently greater than foreign troops, and therefore would be a more reliable variable to testing the question of the thesis. Additionally, a monthly time frame was selected to have a clearer understanding of any correlation. The following paragraphs will examine these charts in thorough detail.

Annex C shows the relationship between the number of incidents per month and number of the troops. These two factors are not directly correlated. However, the behavior of the data suggests few interesting aspects of potential significance. First, the backwards “L” shape shows the highest levels of violent incidents were when troop levels were between 150,000 to 175,000 troops. However, the highest levels of violence did not occur when the greatest amount of troops were present in Iraq. Secondly, because there is only some relatively small concentration below the 250 mark for the number of incidents within the highest troop range, it convincingly shows that violence is not always directly related to troop presence. If this was the case, the shape of the graph would show an ascending/descending level of violence, or would provide a threshold between the amount of violence as its depends on the amount of troops in Iraq. Thus, external
factors, not just the number of troops, have a noticeable impact as well. While these factors are undefined and not explored in the thesis, it would be an opportunity for further study. One could consider indicators such as troop morale, enemy behavior, in addition to variances to counterterrorism and counterinsurgency strategy as contributing factors to increased or decreased levels of violence.

Further evidence, supplemental data sets are provided in Annex D-G. Although the behavior of the data shows similar trend with respect to the time frame, one can observe that unknown factors appear to be the primary causes of the violent events. These sets are far limited than Annex C because they break down the type of violent incidents as it relates to troop size. Annexes D-G show a similar backwards “L” shape, indicating that the separate actors are not an indication of increasing violence because of troop size, either. A limitation to this finding is that the data collected may be double counted, indicating that the backwards L-shape cannot indicate who causes more violence. It does indicate the most prominent actors coded for violent incidents according to IBC because of the range of the independent variable. Unknown actors are by far more involved in violent incidents; anti-government and U.S.-led coalition forces with and without Iraqi forces follow after. The magnitude of unknown actors is nearly sixfold the allied forces (U.S. troops and Iraqi Coalition Forces), showing that these are the most prominent actors in the conflict and continuing to be in the conflict after the drawdown of the Surge, leading to the eventual troop withdrawal.

Alternatively, when examining the trend of incidents coded for Iraqi State Forces versus the number of troops (Annex H), the backward L-shape is not as prominent. Levels of violence
are significantly lower, with only one month’s number of incidents acting as an outlier to the dataset, at 42 incidents in March 2008. The remainder of the incidents involving Iraqi State Forces average below 15 a month (April 2008-November 2011) during the entire period of troop presence. One may question why Iraqi State Forces were involved in less violent incidents than U.S.-led forces. A variety of reasons may accompany this answer: One reason may pertain to the limitations in coding when IBC collected and analyzed date. Some incidents may have been coded to other categories, instead of fitting strictly to ISF forces. It is also important to note that the Iraqi State Forces went through periods of dissolving and cohesion, by joining Multi-National Security Transition Commands and other U.S. units. In an attempt to rebuild Iraq’s military forces, the U.S. military attempted to train and transfer the status of power in the course of a decade after the invasion. General statements of criticism of Iraq’s forces are that they are an “awkward mix of real military forces and police forces with a very limited ability to defend against foreign threats and were very much in transition to a largely US-designed force structure,” conflicting with Iraq’s previous structures: part military and part culture (Cordesman 2013, 4).

Because the invasion brought an unwelcome, emerging presence to Iraq, the development of the insurgency is seen as an expected result of the invasion. The U.S. military took control of state operations, limiting the ISF’s role regarding combat and defense. Many Iraqis who joined parts of the army such as the Sons of Iraq relied on US capital assistance, an appropriated pay of nearly $300 USD a month; although, this payment was not made immediate to tribes taking arms up with American forces. It was necessary to incentivize security forces with co-optation. ISF
may have been relied on more to secure neighborhoods by assisting with checkpoints and other necessary counterterrorism techniques. Among other theories, a lack of checks and balances system within Iraqi’s national forces has been brought into question; the instability of the Iraqi government, as well as the U.S. forces’ effectiveness to counterinsurgency operations.

Increasing levels of violence after troop withdrawal continue to be examined as violence in Iraq increases to comparable levels in 2008.

Annex I shows a line graph detailing the number of incidents by the total number and the individual actors in Iraq by year. The shape shows the extreme levels of violence committed by unknown actors, which consists of the highest peak of violent incidents overall. In addition to this, U.S. Led-Coalition data shows its highest conflicts were in 2005 and 2007, with incidents tapering off since 2008. However, there is an increase in the number of incidents involving unknown actors as well as anti-coalition groups beginning in 2010. U.S. troops were steadily withdrawn in early 2009, with the remaining troops returning home by early 2012. Examining the trend lines carefully from 2011 to 2012, one can see an increase in the number of incidents involving unknown actors and anti-government forces, while the number of incidents involving U.S.-Led forces decreases. News reports from this decade share that there is an increase in conflict in Iraq since U.S. troop withdrawal, with some reports calling into question the success of U.S. training and efficacy of rebuilding Iraq.
First Come, First Serve: Violence Before Troops

Divided among scholars and analysts alike, a grandiose of literature debates whether Iraq’s pre-war situation would or would not have eventually resulted in the growing insurgency that plagued Iraq during the first few years of the war. Some suggest the Saddam’s Baathist Party was largely secular, while others contend there was a known divide within Iraqi society before U.S. invasion. While not all insurgencies operate alike, a common behavior is that they spring up when a government is in transition; when individuals come to power and are not representative of all groups in a state; or are the result of a new presence in the state (such as an invasion).

Intelligence analysts warned the Bush Administration that “rogue elements of Hussein’s government could work with existing terrorist groups or act independently to wage guerrilla warfare,” suggesting an immediate backlash to troop presence and U.S. transitive policy in Iraq (Jehl 2004, 1). These concerns were widely dismissed by the administration because intelligence reports were assumed to “guess” or provide an “estimate,” discrediting the potential for an effective insurgency to grow. While the reaction of the population as a result of either occupying Iraq or the ousting of Hussein could not surely be predicted, the U.S. was struggled to respond effectively in the early years of the Iraq War.

RAND Corporation examined U.S. counterinsurgency efforts from 2003-2006 as a project sponsored by the Department of Defense. The report found funding in Iraq was primarily focused on safeguarding U.S. troops instead of protecting Iraqi citizens. Improved vehicle armor and electronic detection and jamming equipment were among the safeguards prioritized (Rand 2008, 68). Projects of reconstruction were also budgeted to improve major infrastructure, but
because security had widely deteriorated after the invasion and fall of the Baath party, these “ambitious projects achieved disappointing results.”

In addition to the United States’ focus of funding material gains, the “light-footprint” strategy in Iraq resulted in scattered bases outside of concentrated levels of violence. Lying outside the periphery of greater levels of violence limited the scope of immediate conflict and effective intervention. Eventually, U.S. troops would move into neighborhoods and live among Iraqis as a tenet of counterinsurgency policy. By moving into neighborhoods, U.S. troops were able to gather intelligence firsthand and communicate with the locals to determine the needs and concerns of Iraqis. This new approach, reinforced by General Major David Petraeus, would become a more effective strategy for reversing violence and winning the hearts and minds of Iraqis.

The insurgency in Iraq emerged for a number of reasons, but one trait is certain: local Iraqis did not feel safe in their own state, and therefore turned to individuals they otherwise might not have relied on for security. Trapped in a Faustian Bargain, locals sided with individuals who vowed to provide protection to the population in their own tribes and surrounding areas. Consisting of sectarian extremists, Iraqis suffered from “the wounds of the invasion and subsequent disenfranchisement of the Sunni political class” (Mansoor 2013, 123). The transition was all too raw for the population to accept U.S. policy to mold into Iraqi culture and politics.

Statistics in the RAND report mentioned previously show Iraqi deaths comprised 35 percent of all deaths suffered in Iraq by insurgent attacks in May 2004, but only two months later, Iraqis made up 90 percent of all insurgent-caused deaths (RAND news article cite). This
trend would continue for the following 18 months, until the tribal rebellion would ripple through tribes and cities alike. Increasing civilian deaths demoralized, scarred, and angered the local population; and, as a result, civilians sided with the actors who could provide security with power in a transitioning and unstable state.

Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), also known as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), emerged in the early years of the Iraq War. Vowing allegiance to Al-Qaeda in 2004, the loyalties of the terrorist group consisted of various insurgent groups, creating a larger network of violence which spread across the north-western region of Iraq. Considered a marriage of convenience, its power rippled within a triangle of Iraq: Beginning in the Al Anbar Province, extending east to Baghdad, and north towards Mosul. Annex J shows the area covered by AQI and other Sunni insurgent groups by the end of 2006 (Roggio 2008, 1).

However, a turning point occurred within this region, in which a tribal rebellion turned on AQI. The Awakening, as it is referred to, reflects this turnaround of insurgent behavior in which those who were originally fighting against U.S. forces vowed allegiance to join the cause against insurgents and terrorist activity in Iraq. This reversal of behavior would surprise commanders, but with violence increasing to extreme levels in 2006, it was crucial to embrace this change as an incredible opportunity on behalf of the American mission in Iraq. Reconciliation efforts of ex-insurgents and Americans would provide a stepping stone to decreasing violence in Iraq by the withdrawal period of the conflict in Iraq.

The Anbar Awakening began when local Sunni Sheiks concluded that jihadists were overstepping boundaries of violence in which their members would “forcibly [marry] their
daughters and [kill] anyone who resisted, often dumping their bodies in fields rather than giving them proper Muslim burials” (Kaplan 2013, 3). The insurgent’s ruthlessness also led to its undoing. Anyone who was caught smoking had his or her fingers chopped off and a brutal enforcement of Shari’a law on tribal culture was widely enforced (Mansoor 2013, 124). After such injustices, insurgents recognized the mission of AQI breaching cultural norms in which their morals could not align with the organization. Militiamen turned to American forces to help fight against a common, more-dangerous enemy. The creation of a common enemy would turn ex-insurgents needs to share common interests with American troops, most notably—secure, hold, and build.

The Awakening’s spillover effects became the catalyst for the success of the Surge in 2006 when the reemergence of troops matched the initial months of the invasion. These troops were concentrated in the triangular region who also inhabited Iraqi neighborhoods in an attempt to win the hearts and minds of the population. By interviewing the locals, Americans were able to gather immediate intelligence about who lived where, who their neighbors were, what concerns they had, and what behavior seemed questionable and suspicious. Major Alfred B. Connable, a senior intelligence analyst, acknowledged the lack of American understanding of al-Anbar politics, a consequence described as an “immature understanding of culture” (Mansoor 2013, 123).

Though the imperfections of understanding the culture of Iraq were astounding, U.S. forces attempted to educate each other in addition to senior advisors about the concentration of power in tribes and the authority of tribal leaders. U.S. forces then gained an understanding of
the impact of the insurgency, facilitating the process of disentangling locals’ reliance on
extremists. Protection, then, became a key necessity to the locals in the population; and so,
ensuring protection against turning on AQI and any other rogue extremists who might try to
attack a tribe, the Americans were able to gain support of the occupation among Sunnis and
Shias alike.

The challenge for Americans depended on the “clear-hold-build tenet” of COIN policy.
Met with mean levels of violence in 2006, troops were faced with challenges to drive out al-
Qaeda in all aspects of society. Many schools, mosques, and hospitals were controlled by men
affiliated with AQI and other insurgent organizations. American troops relied on information to
take down Al-Qaeda operatives and secure areas of neighborhoods and cities, pushing operatives
further out to different areas of Iraq. Persistence and coercion would amount to reducing the
number of AQ operatives and provide a securer region in northern Iraq.

Another milestone in the period of the Awakening occurred in Ramadi with the arrival of
Colonel Sean MacFarland and Major Neil Smith of the 1st Brigade of the 1st Armored Division
attempted to shift U.S. policy to gain recruits for what became known as the Sons of Iraq (SOI).
After Sheikh Abdul Sattar al-Rishawi (also known as Abu Risha) plead for American allegiance
and support after Al-Qaeda killed his father and two brothers. In order to achieve any success,
MacFarland and Smith realized the need for local Iraqi support, creating the Anbar Salvation
Council, an alliance of Sunni groups which grew to include 40 tribes, consisting of nearly 4,500
Sunni volunteers (Pitman, Todd 2007, 2). This recruiting process reached 14,000 by mid-2007
and quickly spread along the West Bank of the Euphrates into Baghdad.
By examining the effects of engaging the local population, Americans began to incentivize allegiance with those who previous allied with AQI as a means to reinforce security and protection. In addition to security, American strategists created the Concerned Local Citizens (CLC) program as an afterward to the Awakening movement. CLC personnel were paid nearly $300 USD a month to oversee and reinforce neighborhood watch groups who patrolled communities and reported any suspicious activity to coalition and ISF forces. The model became a success as it boosted the morale of locals and American troops in the fight against a shared enemy. Identifying the locations of al-Qaeda fighters, vehicle-borne IEDs, house-borne IEDs, and deep-buried IEDs were also an important aspect to the SOI program installed in Iraq. A select portion of these individuals would then be incorporated in the state’s security forces.

Referring to Annex J, one can see the impact of counterinsurgency operations in Iraq with less of a presence of AQI fighters nearly two years later. The Anbar Awakening became the movement that fueled American support in these regions. Allying against a common enemy allowed tribal sheikhs to realign its interests with Americans and form a working relationship based on information sharing in exchange for security, protection, and assistance. Though the presence of American troops and the impact of intelligence gathering may have shifted policy to push AQI out of these regions, the levels of violence since the Surge decreased significantly. While the number of troops do not correlate to the number of violent incidents in Iraq, the boots on the ground, in a more concentrated region, were able to provide the capabilities necessary to defeat the insurgency that grew increasingly after American troop presence in early 2003.
Although the decrease in violence does not seem to sustain itself after American troop withdrawal in 2011, the implications are evident for the necessity to sustain principles of power and security in Iraq. Saddam’s army consisted of nearly 600,000 men; only 40,000 lightly armed troops, and an insignificant air force, would become the presence of patrolling borders in Iraq—significantly less and certainly detrimental to securing Iraq today (Lutz 2009). As Iraqi violence continues to grow, attention continues to attract scholars to the challenges of premature troop withdrawal and maintaining one’s own security when rogue and extremists groups are evolving and reemerging.

The growing insurgency, a result of the U.S. “Shock and Awe” campaign, among other policy failures, limited U.S. capability to maintain a “light footprint” in Iraq. Given the immense activity of violent incidents in all of Iraq, the United States had little chance to continue its policies when the local population turned on U.S. troops and newly elected Iraqis alike. Threatening even greater instability and collapse, counterinsurgency policy became the last resort to reestablish effective alliances in Iraq and combat the War on Terror.

Growing violence in Iraq would push the Bush administration to reevaluate its policy in Iraq to avoid any further violence and atrocities during the war. Introducing the counterinsurgency policy would provide troops with the ability to clear neighborhoods, maintain security, and build upon the relationships gained in exchange for protection. Though it is impossible to predict where and how violence will take place or the effectiveness of one policy, it was a crucial step in the war strategy to refocus on the local populations and improve their understanding of needs and culture.
In brief, Stephen Biddle offers a closer examination and breakdown of the impact of SOI in the Anbar province and equates success of the surge as a synergistic effort of troops, allegiance, and protection to ensure greater security and increase support for U.S. presence. If increasing violence or harming Iraqi civilians were less impactful, the urgency to reintroduce troops to levels similar to the beginning of the war would have been reduced and the conflict in Iraq would be minimized. Unfortunately, American presence and policy in Iraq at the start of the war lacked effective communication to relate and respond to local tribes appropriately. The only reasonable response led civilians to take arms with extremists among them to ensure their own protection. The struggle for power, at its heart, becomes a problem of security. With little security and available, Iraqis were dependent on actors who were present, available, and willing to protect their livelihood. The Anbar Awakening is an example of opportunity and illustrates the necessity for security, protection, and stability in a state.

Finder’s Keeper: Implications

The implications of the research methods above have outlined several conclusions and deemed the hypothesis posed in the thesis as inconclusive. While the near-decade that was the Iraq War brought bouts of positive and negative incidents to light, its history continues to be shaped today. It is premature to examine the Surge as either an American success or failure to the overall war effort because the aftermath of the war continues. The state of Iraq was left to thrive by the fine strings of its security forces, political parties, and local populations and tribes. Media sources are continuously reporting growing unrest since U.S. troop withdrawal, with levels of casualties
matching casualty levels in 2008, one of the bloodiest years of the war. Considering this trend and the datasets provided in Annex B-I, troop levels are not directly related to violence in Iraq; but, troop activity may be an area for further research.

There are five common myths associated with declining violence in Iraq: (1) “the supposed Shiite victory in the ‘civil war;’ (2) the formation of the ‘Sons of Iraq’ groups; (3) the U.S. ‘Surge’ with new tactics and extra troops; (4) the cease-fire of the Mahdi army, and (5) the role of regional actors (Gabrielson 2013, 6). The thesis attempted to extract a portion of one myth commonly referred to in counterinsurgency and Iraq War literature by providing quantitative data to disprove this notion. Individuals of different backgrounds, scholars, and policy analysts alike, have referred to the U.S. ‘Surge’ as an impact of the number of troops in Iraq, when, in practice, it also consisting of reevaluating tactics of counterinsurgency operations in Iraq’s most populated areas mired by violence.

The examination of troop numbers is irrelevant to violence in Iraq, when nearly as many troops were present at the start of the Iraq War as during the troop Surge. Through bouts of fluctuations in troops, violence continued to grow until it reached its peak in 2007. Here, the myth of the “civil war” is what contributed to greater levels of violence in Iraq before the Surge. The label of civil war to describe the period of growing insurgency is too premature since violence in Iraq did not sustain for the duration of a civil war period. Though violence was prominent between Shia and Sunnis alike, the label of an insurgency is more relevant to the conflict.
Alternatively, the newfound presence of U.S. troops may have influenced the insurgency after its creation pitting Iraqis against their own, disapproving of the war effort. Even during the Surge, a survey among Sunnis showed in August 2007 that merely 1% responded positively (by supporting) U.S. presence; 95% said U.S. presence made security worse, and 93% were in support of directly harming U.S. troops (Lynch 2007). The rift between the majority Sunni and the minority Shiite population in Iraq only widened when U.S. forces upset the balance of power by removing Saddam’s Sunni stronghold in the government. The coming elections of 2005 would be boycotted by Sunnis, and a war between Sunnis and Shiites would transpire as a result of inequalities, inefficiencies, and unrest from De-Baathification. Growing resentment of U.S. CPA policies are a contributing factors for locals to align with Iraqi extremists in the early years of the war.

To quell the insurgency, Biddle’s (2012) contribution to the literature suggests that the “synergy” thesis of counterinsurgency related to a greater indication of reduction in violence, in addition to the amount of supplemental troops in Iraq. The Sons of Iraq became a driving force to provide security to some of Iraq’s desperate cities and tribes: Anbar Province, Fallujah, Karkh, and Mansour to name a few. Biddle’s findings showed that in 24 of 38 operations of established SOI groups, “the average reduction of significant activities for all 38 areas [went from] 2.5 percent to 5.8 percent per month” (Biddle 2012, 28).

Naturally, one would expect allying with the SOI would lead to less attacks on American troops, significantly decreasing attacks against civilians as well; but, what is not tested, is how this realignment impacted incidents of violence involving unknown actors. Further examination
of Biddle’s thesis shows that overall violence was reduced in these 38 areas; strengthening efforts of allied troop effort in Iraq. It may be that the influence of local Sunnis and Shiites against actors associated with Al-Qaeda and other rogue groups, reduced violence from 2008-2010, not only as a result of the Surge of American troops.

**Limitations to the Research Design**

There are apparent limitations to the research design, which have impacted the result of the thesis. Among time constraints and access to information, the thesis question proposed greatly limited the ability to research the topic to its potential. While in process, there is always something to be learned, the limitations to the research design will outline opportunities for further research. While some of these opportunities may have already been explored if the literature review expands, it will allow the reader to look in different areas for further inquiry regarding the relationship between troop numbers and violence in Iraq.

The intended methods of the thesis attempted to show a relationship between the number of troops in Iraq and the amount of violent incidents throughout the occupation of U.S. troops. While the Annex shows trends of violence and even separates incidents as it relates to troop size, it does not give a clear correlation to the intended thesis question. It does, however, provide the reader with additional confirmation of previous theories presented in the literature review from scholars around the globe. Although the data did not correlate as hoped, the process of researching and assessing the question was completed to further the literature, even if it involved
confirming what has already been said. The analysis of the Iraq case study has also posed some challenges, which are natural when selecting a focused country or area of concentration.

In regards to the Iraq case study, there is a limitation in analyzing the events of something whose history is continuing to further itself under similar conditions of when it began. Iraq, before 2003, was a state in turmoil under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, having fought an eight year war with Iraq, invaded Kuwait, and later endured the invasion of Western troops. In only three years of majority troop withdrawal, violence in Iraq seems to be growing and the theories—the implications—are widespread throughout literature, policy analysts, and academics alike.

When using a case study, the limitations are apparent. A case study will not mean it is a parallel to another state entirely, but it may draw forth similarities or general policy implications. The use of theories is to draw on the past and attempt to provide an analysis for future instances, whether in or coming from conflict. The benefits of a case study can also be used in complex scenarios to offer insight depending at what depth the topic is discussed. The current thesis would benefit from further analysis, as will be referenced in the concluding sections.

In using the case study of Iraq, the data sets provided are limited as well. Just as IBC acknowledges, the incidents were coded as best as possible based on multiple resources whose data were cross-checked from the integration of commercial media, NGO reports and official records provided by the hospital and morgue data. The data collected does separate the incidents of violent by those who perpetrated it, specifically, but by which actors were involved. If the data were coded by who perpetrated the incident solely, it might be a cleaner picture of levels of
violence. Given that unknown actors and anti-coalition forces took the lead in incidents, one can only assume these actors are most prominent; but, it does not code for incidents between groups. This data would be useful to measure the impact groups had on one another; for example, unknown actors versus U.S.-led troops or unknown actors versus Iraqi State Forces.

Recommendations for further research would validate the necessity to explore the behavior of troops in Iraq from the start of the war and through the initial stages of the Surge. It would also be beneficial to examine the behavior of AQI in closer detail to understand what areas were more prone to violent incidents and/or extremist takeover. It is apparent the data does not sustain the intended relationship of troop size to violent incidents, but perhaps, when considering additional variables, it will provide greater insight when addressing the possibility of growing insurgencies. Although the Iraq War became a decade-long struggle of high and low points for both the Bush and Obama Administrations, the future of terrorism is limitless; and, for this reason, it is important to draw conclusions for further policy analysis. Research dedicated to troop culture, particular tribal behaviors, regions, and actors alone will enhance the literature of insurgency, Western troop invasion, terrorism, and counterinsurgency policy as well. As with any war, capabilities become tested and proven through bouts of successes and failures. The future of Iraq stands on its own ground as the U.S. retreats from the Middle East.
Works Cited


Annex A: Number of Incidents by Type, Per Year

Annex B: Number of Incidents by Type, Per Month (Chart—Short)
Annex C: Number of Incidents vs. Number of Troops (by month, 2D only)

Annex D: Number of Incidents Involving Unknown Actors
Annex E: Number of Incidents Involving Anti-Government Forces vs. Number of Troops

Annex F: Number of Incidents Involving U.S.-Led Coalition Including Iraqi Forces
Annex G: Number of Incidents Involving U.S.-Led Coalition Not Including Iraqi Forces

Annex H: Incidents Involving Iraqi State Forces
Annex I: Number of Incidents by Year (Line Graph)

- Anti-government/Coalition forces
- US-led coalition, no Iraqi forces
- US-led coalition, incl. Iraqi forces
- Iraqi state forces without coalition
- Unknown actors
Annex J: AQI In Iraq (December 2006 and June 2008)