

Rehabilitating pacification

Then and now, Iraq and Vietnam

Kurt Jacobsen

Kurt Jacobsen shows how pacification has been rehabilitated as a viable strategy for the US military.

‘We are not into nation-building. And we’re not into nation-building because of the way our military has to operate’. Senator John Murtha, in his outspoken criticism of the Iraq war in November 2005, quoted this statement by President Bush, made when he ran for office in 2000. As Senator Murtha went on to point out, the logic of the American military meant that ‘We’ve got to go in and level the place, destroy a place’. Yet, as he also argued, ‘when we destroy a place, we lose the very thing that’s absolutely essential to winning the insurgency’.

Murtha here exposes the contradictions of ‘pacification’ - a policy that was a key part of the US armoury in the Vietnam war. Pacification was responsible for the killing of hundreds of thousands of civilians as well as combatants, and it was, of course, entirely unsuccessful. For Vietnam era beholders especially, the term is simply a euphemism for vicious military suppression of popular resistance during interventions abroad. Yet, as this article documents, this is the strategy that is currently being rehabilitated and brought back into service as the war in Iraq continues.

According to the OED, ‘pacification’ denotes ‘the condition of being pacified, appeasement, conciliation’. A helpful example given is an ‘ordinance

or decree enacted by a prince or state to put an end to strife or discontent'. The verb 'to pacify' means 'to allay the anger, excitement, or agitation (of a person); to calm; quiet; to appease', but more ominously its meaning also includes 'to reduce to peaceful submission', as when Hobbes writes: 'Counts ... were left to govern and defend places conquered and pacified'. Who today fails to recognise the rueful ancient quotation regarding Roman retributive techniques: 'they make a desert and call it peace'?

The term pacification, in its contemporary use, has been around as long as the ugly services it comprises have been required by irked occupiers. In its contemporary usage it could be read as including the meanings both of appeasement and coercion, carrot and stick. This is useful for those proposing it as a strategy. And any useful procedure in a governing elite's repertoire is bound to make a strong comeback when events seem to require it, even if it may take on a new, PR-prompted, verbal guise. So, one US government response to reverses in Iraq has been to resurrect the counterinsurgency programmes of yesteryear. These have been duly reinterpreted by right-wing scholars as a parade of proud successes - even including the military fiasco that was Vietnam. According to these starry-eyed analysts, counterinsurgency, suitably refined, will suppress crazed Iraqi resistance. Accordingly, as early as 2004, some \$3 billion of the Iraq appropriation budget in the US was already slated for covert military and paramilitary operations. And you don't need a military genius to tell you that these operations will target not only armed Iraqi 'rebels' - as the Pentagon calls them - but also any nationalist opponent of the US occupation, including nonviolent ones.

Counterinsurgency operations in the 1960s referred to such programmes as civic action and pacification, and these can be loosely defined as the employment of military resources for purposes other than conventional warfare. An infamous example of this was the Phoenix programme in Vietnam, which was designed to 'neutralise' (through assassination, kidnapping and torture) South Vietnamese civilian resistance. One manically optimistic take on the failures of such a strategy in Vietnam was that the Marines (or CIA or Army special forces, in different takes) had acquired a counterinsurgency stock of wisdom built over time but that it had not been wisely tapped and brought to bear as it ought to have been

in Vietnam.¹ Here is an impregnable belief that violent techniques will work, regardless of the local context, or of the parameters imposed by the reigning political coalition.

As former CIA counter-terrorism chief Robert Dreyfuss recently observed of Iraq (*American Prospect*, January 2004), 'They're clearly cooking up joint teams to do Phoenix-like things, like they did in Vietnam'. The aim is to create an indigenous security force that will carry out counter-insurgency tactics against local resistance. The CIA presence in Iraq is augmented by elite military units such as Delta Force and the Navy SEALs, whose ultimate objective is to establish an Iraqi security force loyal to the US. Local militiamen have mostly been drawn from Iraqi exile groups who have plenty of long-nursed grudges to settle, but US forces have not been too proud or bashful to work with select former members of Saddam Hussein's secret police. Under Defence Secretary Rumsfeld, secret commando units were given a free hand globally to strike at suspected terrorists, even though authorities admit that poor intelligence often results in the wrong victims being fingered. Apparently, such small mishaps hardly count, even as 'collateral damage'. The local people are not supposed to mind.

It's an old, gory story. Iconic images of Yank soldiers burning Vietnamese villages hark back to the systematic atrocities of American forces in the Philippines in 1898-1901, and then further back to the long campaigns through which the gallant US military swept much of the North American continent clean of meddlesome natives. Pacification has always needed a potent domestic propaganda component: states depend on their power to define the situations they get into. No one knows how well this 'power to define' worked better than children who grew up playing cowboys and Indians in the celebratory post-war John Wayne movie era: the innately backward natives had their merits, too bad they got in the way of manifest destiny.

Go far enough West and you wind up in the East, and exploits here are a bit harder to explain away to a populace taught to hate imperialism (or at least the epicene European kind). In South East Asia the Americans failed spectacularly to make their definitions, or their dominance, stick. But now they are attempting

1. See, for example, Larry Cable, who posits that the lessons the Marine Corps learned from earlier pacification interventions were not properly institutionalised and diffused, in *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine in the Vietnam War*, New York University Press 1986, p96.

a similar feat in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the first year of the insurgency after the Iraq invasion it was deemed the height of sophistication for critics to dismiss Vietnam analogies as alarmist, puerile and overdrawn. But by the end of 2005 even the most pedigreed and housebroken of pundits were not so sure any more. Still, the propaganda war never ends. Many of Bush's aides today buy into the belief that pacification in Vietnam worked, so why not try it again.

Rehabilitating Vietnam strategy

The revisionist battles over Vietnam since 1975 hinge on the resuscitated view that counter-insurgency tactics succeeded. And they succeeded, proponents cheerily assert, with the most terrible irony - in that their success came at the very moment a supposedly needless American withdrawal got under way.² 'We' won, but foolishly bugged out. The implication is that the strategy was sound all along, and only required a little more time for the necessary fine-tuning to kick in to create a happy little neo-colony.

The widespread 'we won even though we scarpered' interpretation sprang up the instant the 1973 peace accords were signed, got great play among military buffs, and then resurged unrepentantly into public view in the early 1990s, with a further revival as Bush II took office. The stupendously strained assumption is that there was a way to win the war without annihilating the bulk of the population, going nuclear, or expanding the conflict into China.

To take one example: Mark Moyar's imaginative account of the Phoenix assassination programme, a book embraced by some military men (and scholarly wannabees), is laced with jaw-dropping implausibilities, contradictions and tendentious argument.³ The study is a sublime outcome of the Abu Ghraib

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2. See Fox Butterfield, 'The New Vietnam Scholarship', *The New York Times Magazine*, 13.2.83; Robert Manning, 'We Could Have Won Vietnam', *New York Times*, 12.11.89; Angelo Codevilla, 'The Bureaucrat & the War', *Commentary*, January 1990; and Harry G. Summers, Jr, 'Vietnam Reconsidered', *The New Republic* (12.7.82). Pro-war Vietnam books include Guenther Lewy, *America In Vietnam* (1978); Harry Summers, *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (1982); Hosmer, Kellner and Jenkins, *The Fall of South Vietnam* (1986); Scott Thompson and Donaldson Frizzell (eds), *The Lessons of Vietnam* (1977); and William E. Colby with James McCarger, *Lost Victory: A Firsthand Account of America's Sixteen-Year Involvement in Vietnam* (1989).
 3. Marx Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey: The CIA's Secret Campaign to Destroy the Viet Cong*, Naval Institute Press 1997. For a different view see Douglas Valentine, *The Phoenix Program: A Shattering Account of the Most Ambitious and Closely-Guarded Operation of the Vietnam War*, Morrow 1990.

methodological approach to history: torture the data until it yields exactly what the author wants to see. Mass murder can become 'an effective counterinsurgency tool' - even if you murder uninvolved people. According to Moyar, the locals will understand if well-meaning authorities snuff the wrong person every now and then, if it's all in a good cause. The fact that so shoddy a book can be seized on as 'balanced' and as bona fide evidence even in some academic circles is a rather disturbing sign.

The Phoenix programme was designed to help the US military attain a gruesome 'crossover point', where dead and wounded exceeded the National Liberation Front's (NLF) ability to replenish recruits. During Nixon's first two and a half years, the State Department admitted that the CIA-run Programme murdered or abducted 35,708 Vietnamese civilians. Ex-Phoenix operatives in this 'anything goes' programme revealed that sometimes orders were given to kill South Vietnamese Army and even US military personnel who were considered security risks.⁴ Phoenix was not calculated to court hearts and minds - except insofar as 'black teams' would go out, usually dressed in enemy gear, with the ensuing assassinations then blamed on the NLF.⁵

Another rehabilitator of pacification is Zalin Grant, whose book *Facing the Phoenix*, the publisher's blurb tells us, is based on the reckonings of a South Vietnamese spy, whose plan to defeat communists by community action 'was perverted by the CIA'. According to NameBase, a rightwing website, Grant believes that: 'certain players had a good handle on how to neutralize the enemy through local political action and enlightened aid programs. Just as they were making significant progress, however, they were defeated by corruption in Saigon and by big-bang, big-bucks conventional-warfare mongers like William Westmoreland'.⁶ So, if only you had disposed of the regime you were defending, and the US military authorities who were defending it, you would have won. This reverie constitutes perfectly logical thinking in some circles. Another study attests that prudent Americans, through the sagacious Land-to-the-Tiller reforms, had won over most

4. Covert Action Information Bulletin (now Covert Action Quarterly) Summer 1982, p52.

5. Brian Toohey and William Pinwell, *Oyster: The Story of the Australian Secret Intelligence Service*, Heinemann, Victoria 1989, pp87-88.

6. Zalin Grant, *Facing the Phoenix: The CIA and the Political Defeat of the United States in Vietnam*, Norton 1991.

Vietnamese villagers by 1970 - villagers who good-naturedly forgave the Americans for innumerable mishaps, 'relocations', rough handlings, and collateral damage because they knew the nice Yanks were only protecting them and meant well. A 'can-do' spirit doubtless has its place in the military, but in scholarship and intelligence analysis it is a source of rampant distortion. But Bush's White House established an Office of Special Plans, and other disinformation units, to create just such rampant self-serving distortions in intelligence data, in order to mislead Congress and the public.

If the President or the CIA director tells you, as a direct employee, what you must find, what else can you do (except whistleblow and/or resign)? Why, however, do scholars buckle to official views? Well, for one thing, there is always remunerative work for skilful people willing to tell hard-line bosses what they want to hear. A suffocatingly managerial mentality can then come into play among ambitious scholars, who accept as their own the edicts of their nation's policy elites, yet thereafter sincerely assume that they are merely performing purely scientific tasks. One orthodox international relations studies axiom, for example, is that where mindless (always mindless) resistance arises, more than proportionate force must be deployed. And force must be seen to work, even if it really doesn't. Once these edicts are accepted, the task is to work out how to carry them out, not to question the underlying assumptions.

This was precisely the conformist mindset attributed by Noam Chomsky to the New Mandarins of the Vietnam era: devout, cold-blooded, hard-nosed, numerical and officious.⁷ They were then, and are today, ready to comply with incessant urging from the top to convert 'a pleasing hypothesis into a fact' - which, as Hannah Arendt reminds us, is a highly fecund source of official lies.⁸

For example, in the face of any revelation of systematic murder and intimidation campaigns by authorities in Vietnam, the right-wing answer always is that they (the NLF/NVA) did it too - they manage to ignore that they didn't do it a level anywhere near the US/South Vietnamese scale, and that they didn't do it to Americans who managed to stay in Detroit or Miami or LA. Lately, these rehabilitative studies have become grist to the mill for

7. Noam Chomsky, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, Pantheon, 1968.

8. Hannah Arendt, *Crises of the Republic*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1972, p42.

the purveyors of rational choice analyses - a direct heir to 1960s era systems analysis. The soft issue of social justice (because it is not measurable) cannot arise within the conceptual boundaries of rational choice theory, and therefore it does not matter.⁹

The case for counterinsurgency and land reform relies on warmed-over data, such as the US Hamlet Evaluation Survey, conducted by government agents in 1970-71 and re-evaluated recently in a massive study by David Elliot, formerly of the far from impeccable Rand Corporation.¹⁰ The extremely dicey fact that these evaluations rely on agencies ultimately catering to counterinsurgency objectives - and that information was extracted under conditions of duress - either does not register, or else is acknowledged and then never mentioned again as the analysis proceeds. Hence, in the twenty-first century one can look back and draw again on the evidence that led to the conclusion that 'every quantitative measure we have indicates that we are winning this war' (as systems analyst fanatic and Defence Secretary Robert McNamara indeed said in October 1962), to see that we should indeed have won it. According to Lewis Lapham, McNamara himself was 'was caught up in a dream of power that substituted the databases of a preferred fiction for the texts of common fact ... What was real was the image of war that appeared on the flowcharts and computer screens. What was not real was the presence of pain, suffering, mutilation, and death'.¹¹ McNamara since has done an (imperfect) penance. But fresh and unchastened McNamara mentalities continue to proliferate.¹²

Hearts and hectares

One of the main myths resuscitated by the current round of Vietnam revisionism is that the 'land to the tiller' programme of 1970 was winning hearts and minds in great numbers in the early 1970s. This ignores three things: firstly, by 1970 great swathes of South Vietnam were already largely under NLF control;

9. See Stathis N. Kalyvas and Matthew Kocher, 'Violence and Control in Civil War: An Analysis of the Hamlet Evaluation Study', paper given at University of Chicago, 2003.

10. David Elliot, *The Vietnamese War: Revolution and Social Change in the Mekong Delta, 1930-1978*, M. E. Sharpe 2003.

11. Lewis Lapham, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Verso 1997, p30.

12. See *Fog of War* and my review of it in *New Politics*, Summer 2004. See also Michael Rustin's piece in this issue.

secondly, in these areas land had already been widely redistributed; and thirdly, the Thieu reforms were not very redistributive and not very popular. The US administration believed the 'land to the tiller' programme built on previous 'land reforms' by the Southern regime, but the record belies this claim. By the 1950s, 80 per cent of peasants living in the Mekong Delta were tenants: just 1 per cent of the populace owned 44 per cent of rice land in South Vietnam overall. The land 'reforms' of the Diem government had actually restored to landlords land previously redistributed by the Vietn Minh before partition. In NLF strongholds in South Vietnam, by contrast, land was redistributed to peasants by the insurgents; for example, by 1960 the NLF had redistributed 77 per cent of arable land in the My Tho province Elliot studied. (The first visitor after American forces had secured a village, typically, would be the absentee landlord coming to collect back rent.) The 'land to the tiller' programme in actuality featured a Stolypin-like emphasis on creating a class of rich peasants. For example, the sanctioned distribution of uncultivated land in insecure areas (full of unexploded ordnance and trigger-happy patrols) required capital if the land was to be put to use, for which only usurious loans were available.¹³ The weak measures of the Thieu reforms could not compete with the real redistribution organised by the insurgents.

Elliot says the land to the tiller programme made no impact because land already had been redistributed, mostly by the enemy the government was fighting. The pacified areas were in fact largely 'nod and wink' arrangements, in that they were used by communist cadres for what amounted to R & R. 'What the Pentagon describes as "secure areas" in Vietnam', Kolko observed, 'is often a staging and economic base as secure and vital to the NLF as its explicitly identified liberated zones.' If the NLF had not been so well entrenched, where would their offensives have sprung from? At all points the South Vietnamese Government (GVN) was shot through with NLF and NVA spies and informers.

Yet punctilious US monitors claimed that US/GVN forces controlled 67 per cent of the South Vietnam population on the eve of the 1968 Tet Offensive.¹⁴ The same sources imperturbably claim that US/GVN control soared

13. Ngo Vinh Long, 'Land Reform?' *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, February 1971, p50.

14. Gabriel Kolko, 'The Political Significance of the Center for Vietnamese Studies and Programs', *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* Feb 1971, p42. Also see Kolko's *Vietnam: Anatomy of a War*, Allen & Unwin 1986.

even higher afterward. On what basis could one credit either claim? The reports the pacification enthusiasts rely upon are equivocal at best, and, often enough, contradictory. Elliot found that the Mekong Delta area was 'strongly pro-VC' in 1969-70, well after the fighting during the Tet offensive had supposedly killed off the majority of guerrilla insurgents, not to mention innumerable Phoenix forays and 9th Infantry division sweeps. Elliot also found that few locals 'defected from the war effort'. Studies by Eric Bergerud, James Trullinger, Jeffrey Pace and Jayne Werner and David Hunt likewise testify that the districts they studied were overwhelmingly in favour of the NLF in 1964-65 when the US ground troop escalation began, and remained so throughout.¹⁵

What was supposed to have changed such that the attitudes of villagers became favourable (rather than outwardly acquiescent) towards the US/GVN forces? The customary case made is that, after many corruption-driven fits and starts, land reform did occur and that, once property was handed over, the peasants transformed into 'middle peasants' and heart-warmingly market-oriented individualists (as Irish peasants had done under less combative conditions in the very early twentieth century). We have to ask, however, whether the analysts are forcing the data to fit their framework. Those few land reform specialists not linked to the Southern authorities found only 'a class-oriented program' ... 'no amount of wishful or ideological thinking could turn Diem, Kah, Ky or Thieu into champions of the laboring poor'.¹⁶ The hope was, according to a highly subjective definition, that one and a half hectares of land would be enough to make a loyal 'middle' peasant out of a tenant. However, the evidence seems to indicate that middle peasants were more likely to produce NLF recruits, since they had the resources and ability to participate. There was no steady erosion in communist or community ties on the part of the wealthier peasants.

Any imputed gains were illusory or else temporary. Underlying grievances were never meant to be addressed. But the census-taking attitude meant that

15. Eric Bergerud, *Dynamics of Defeat*; James Trullinger, *Village at War*, Longman, 1980; Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An*, University of California 1972; David Hunt and Jayne Werner, *The American War in Vietnam*, Cornell University Press 1993; and Ngo Vinh Long, *Before The Revolution*, MIT Press 1973.

16. Robert K Brigham and Martin J, Murray, 'Conflicting Interpretations of the Vietnam war', in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 26, 1-2 (January-June 1994), p. 117. Also see Marilyn Young, *The Vietnam Wars*, Harper 1991.

opinions were taken at face value. Ngo Vinh Long points out that, for people under a repressive regime and foreign occupation, the questions, 'Do you believe the people should be masters' and 'Do you believe in democracy' were understood as being more resonant of the NLF and the North than Saigon, but were coded to favour the latter (for reference see note 13). So far as the Southern insurgency was concerned, as even a US Major General (William DuPuy) acknowledged, 'when NLF casualties got too high ... they just backed off and waited'.¹⁷ The NLF held the initiative at all times, including the initiative to taper off when tactical exigencies warranted.

After Tet

Tet itself, according to Elliot, was as much a popular uprising as anything else; David Hunt calls it 'the greatest of the peasant revolts'. There are, however, some who attempt to argue that Tet was a victory for the US/GVN. One unchallenged cliché, for example, is that Tet was a political victory but a military defeat. But this is a short-sighted and ultimately unimportant distinction. The insurgent forces sustained very heavy losses but this did not lead to any wavering in support on the part of survivors. The US high command view was that the countryside was regained by revolutionaries as troops diverted into the cities to drive out the NLF. They acknowledged that the enemy still to a large extent controlled the countryside.¹⁸ Furthermore, the customary figures don't weigh the NLF losses against the two hundred thousand released prisoners in all the cities and jails who refilled the ranks.¹⁹ It remained possible for the NLF and NVA to continue to be able to launch equally devastating offensives after Tet, and Generals Westmoreland and Wheeler both privately acknowledged that Tet was no victory.

Hunt found that, contrary to pacification lore, 'US/GVN sweeps and mass killings seem to have pushed fence-sitters over the edge', so that many volunteered for the NLF. Blaufarb argues that the crime of Phoenix was 'ineffectiveness, indiscriminateness, and, in some areas at least, the violation

17. Robert D. Schulzinger, *A Time for War: The US and Vietnam*, Oxford University Press 1997, p200.

18. *Pentagon Papers*, Defence Department 1971.

19. Bruce Franklin, *Vietnam and Other American Fantasies*, University of Massachusetts 2000, p95.

of the local norms to the extent that it appeared to the villagers to be a threat to them in the peaceful performance of their daily business'. His view is that the Americans involved 'erred in not appreciating the extent to which the pathology of Vietnamese society would distort an apparently sound concept'.²⁰

The unadorned objective in My Tho province was 'to destroy rather than "pacify" the rural communities'. The bombing, pillaging, refugee flight, the GVN and NLF drafts, cadres killed, and cumulative hardships all led to a retreat. Even so, the six villages of one official Hamlet Evaluation Study remained 'nearly completely controlled by the revolution as much in January 1968 as a year before'. This unexpected result, for certain analysts, can be comprehended only in the terms of a game of rival gang warfare. There is no room for the ideas of nationalism or solidarity, only for self-regarding groups who compel obedience; this, though, cannot explain why the NLF were vastly more successful than the US/GVN, despite taking unbelievable punishment. For if rational choice were the NLF's operating code, the war would have been over in quick order.

Pacification was a flop from the start. Carrot and stick, at the first sign of sustained resistance, becomes all stick. Disembedded press members, such as David Halberstam and Peter Arnett, saw the Strategic Hamlet Programme disintegrating before their very eyes as early as 1965, despite happy talk reports to the contrary.²¹ But the tradition of 'doctoring' reports goes back at least as far as the RAF 'revision' of its use of phosphorous bombs, chemical weapons and gas upon villages in the Middle East in the 1920s, stretching through the Nixon administration's secret bombing of Cambodia and Laos to initial denials of use of phosphorous bombs in Iraq today. As Henry Cabot Lodge told McNamara: 'If you think these people are going to tell you or say in front of [General] Harkin what they really think unless it is what Harkin thinks, you just don't know the army' (Prochnau, p438).

In the 1960s and early 1970s, government agencies were divided in their views on the effectiveness of pacification, depending to a large extent on whether or not they understood the Vietnamese conception of protracted war.

20. Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present*, Free Press 1977, p276.

21. William Prochnau, *Once Upon a Distant War*, Vintage 1996, p 419.

Chalmers Johnson told an interviewer later that: ‘many senior analysts were passionately opposed to President Johnson and Richard Nixon’s policies, and after the Pentagon Papers had been made public many of the analysts were quietly exultant that their pessimistic estimates of whether the US could win the war were now in an official part of the public record.’²²

And in spite of all the work to revise the history of pacification, it is clear, as Senator John Murtha’s recent controversial speeches indicate, that the Pentagon today is also pessimistic - or at least seriously divided - about the prospects for pacification in Iraq. Even without a leak of Pentagon Papers proportions, rationales for the Iraq intervention are unravelling.

Conclusion

Could the sorely expensive Iraqi occupation, under any imaginable circumstances, have succeeded? The quaint delusion is widespread, even among liberal pundits, that Bush might have avoided an intractable insurgency if only he had made a shrewder move here or there. Maybe if the Army had been kept intact, things would have worked out. Maybe if Saddam loyalists had been kept behind their desks, things would have worked out. Maybe if the impulsive US had waited to amass a military force twice its size (as many Military commanders urged) before invading, things would have worked. Maybe if honest contractors had gotten electricity and water running again, things would have worked out. Maybe if the US rulers wouldn’t privatise everything in sight to sell it off to cronies, things would work out.

So goes the mournful litany - with verses added almost daily. Presumably, then, if all the conditions above were met, Iraqis of all stripes would sit perfectly still with hands folded while the West siphoned away their resources. (The British military’s conceit that they possessed a magic formula for conducting a ‘decent’ occupation finally has also crumbled under scrutiny.²³) Farfetched scenarios indeed. As Glenn Perusek has shown, the Coalition Provisional Authority has established a parallel government structure of Commissioners and inspectors-general, who, elections notwithstanding, will

22. Chalmers Johnson, ‘The CIA and Me,’ *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 29, 1 (Jan-March 1997), p36.

23. Robert Fisk, ‘Turning a Blind Eye to Murder and Abuse in Basra,’ *Counterpunch/The Independent* 24/25 September 2005.

control Iraq's chief ministries for the next five years. As he argues, they mean to stick around, no matter what.²⁴ Yes, one might concede that it all might have worked out if a US government of a radically different character had invaded - except that such a government would have read intelligence data honestly and therefore opted not to invade.

Given the running sore of Iraq, the highly apparent duplicity at the top, the growing uproar over leaks and corruption, and a sluggish economy, Bush's supreme problem now seems likely to be how to 'pacify' his own restive citizenry.

24. Glenn Perusek, 'The US Occupation and Resistance in Iraq', *New Politics*, winter 2005.

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