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**The Philadelphia Inquirer**

## CIA has a bleak analysis of Iraq

A report found more civilians there are supporting the resistance. It

conflicts with upbeat public assessments.

By Jonathan S. Landay  
Inquirer Washington Bureau

**WASHINGTON** - A new, top-secret CIA report from Iraq warns that growing numbers of Iraqis are concluding the U.S.-led coalition can be defeated and are supporting the insurgents.

The report paints a bleak picture of the political and security situation in Iraq and cautions that the U.S.-led drive to rebuild the country as a democracy could collapse unless corrective actions are taken immediately.

L. Paul Bremer, leader of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, who arrived unexpectedly in Washington for strategy sessions yesterday, essentially endorsed the CIA's findings, a senior administration official said.

The report's bleak tone and Bremer's private endorsement differ sharply with the upbeat public assessments that President Bush, his chief aides, and even Bremer are giving as part of an aggressive publicity campaign aimed at countering rising anxieties over increasing U.S. casualties in Iraq.

Two senior administration officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the document is classified, described the report's findings in broad terms but did not detail any recommendations.

The report landed on the desks of senior U.S. officials on Monday. Disclosures on the report's findings suggested senior policymakers want to make sure the assessment reaches Bush.

Some senior policymakers have expressed frustration in efforts to provide Bush with more somber analyses of the situation in Iraq than the optimistic views presented by Vice President Cheney, Secretary of

### Stocks

Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, and other hard-liners.

The CIA analysis suggests U.S. policy in Iraq has reached a turning point, as the Bush administration moves to escalate the war against the guerrillas and accelerate the transfer of political power to Iraqis.

Both options are potentially risky.

An escalation of the military campaign could cause more civilian casualties and drive more Iraqis to the insurgents' side.

At the same time, the CIA assessment warns that none of the postwar Iraqi political institutions and leaders have shown an ability to govern the country or even preside over drafting a constitution or holding an election.

Upon his arrival in Washington yesterday, Bremer went directly into a White House meeting with Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, and other key officials.

The meeting focused on how to break the political logjam in Baghdad and speed planning for the nation's future.

Bremer's hurried flight to Washington caught his staff by surprise and forced him to cancel a meeting with Poland's prime minister, Leszek Miller.

Some U.S. officials believe key members of the 25-member Iraqi Governing Council are stalling their work in hopes of winning concessions from U.S. leaders under political pressure to turn over power to the Iraqis.

U.S. officials have become deeply frustrated with not only the inaction by the Iraqi council, but also with its nepotism and infighting. The U.S.-appointed body of Iraqi politicians has limited powers to govern Iraq. The council also is in charge of overseeing the drafting of a constitution.

The White House meeting also discussed moves to speed recruiting for Iraqi security forces, including a new army.

More than 118,000 Iraqis are serving in the army, police and other forces, and U.S. officials aim to raise the total to more than 220,000 in 2004.

Accelerating a restoration of Iraqi self-rule, speeding security-force recruiting, and intensifying a U.S. counterinsurgency campaign form the crux of a new U.S. strategy to crush the insurgents, consolidate the support of ordinary Iraqis for democracy-building efforts, and reduce the U.S. military presence.

The senior administration officials said the CIA assessment was composed by the CIA station chief in Baghdad, a veteran operations officer who oversees more than 275 officers.

The report is known as an AARDWOLF, a special field assessment that is usually requested by senior policymakers in Washington at important junctures in overseas crises.

The report, one official said, warned that aggressive U.S. counterinsurgency tactics could induce more Iraqis to join the guerrilla campaign that has killed at least 153 U.S. soldiers - 35 of them this month - since Bush declared an end to major combat operations on May 1.

The report also added to concerns about the governing council. The group, which is dominated by former Iraqi exiles with little popular support, has failed to convince ordinary Iraqis that the occupation is temporary and will lead to a unified, sovereign Iraq, the report said.

Bremer has been formulating ways "in which the Governing Council can evolve into a decision-making body to move the constitutional process along," a third senior U.S. official said, also on condition of anonymity.

He denied reports that the Bush administration is considering replacing the council.

One senior administration official said the report warned that the coalition's inability to crush the insurgents is convincing growing numbers of Iraqis that the occupation can be defeated, bolstering support for the insurgents.

The CIA report raised the concern that majority Shiite Muslims could begin joining minority Sunnis in turning against the occupation.

Friction between occupation authorities and the Shiites has been intensifying, fueled by events such as a U.S. soldier's killing of the mayor of Sadr City, a massive Shiite slum in Baghdad, this week.

In another finding, the CIA report said there was no way to completely seal Iraq's borders with Syria, Turkey, Iran, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to infiltration by foreign Islamic extremists bent on killing Americans.

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