

Humanitarian Responses to War in Iraq

Report and Policy Options from a forum held in Ottawa, March 18, 2003 organized by the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee and the Centre for Security and Defence Studies at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University

April 2, 2003

Acknowledgments

Forum session reporting was done by Vanessa Sima and Michelle Knight of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, and this report written and edited by Patricia Poirier.

We would like to thank Gerry Barr, Canadian Council on International Co-operation; David B. Carment, Centre for Security and Defence Studies, Carleton University; Fergus Watt of the World Federalists of Canada; human rights specialist Corey Levine; Steve Mason, United Nations Association in Canada and Kathy Vandergrift, World Vision Canada for their roles in introducing, moderating and closing proceedings, and to David Lord, Tara Ashtakala and Mejlina Modanu for assisting in the organization of the forum.

For their financial and logistical support we are grateful to the Centre for Security and Defence Studies, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University; Physicians for Global Survival and the Canadian Council for International Co-operation.

About the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee

The Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC) is a network of Canadian non-governmental organizations and institutions, academics and other individuals from a wide range of sectors, including humanitarian assistance, development, conflict resolution, peace, faith communities, and human rights. CPCC has been working since 1994 to formulate policy and operational directions for Canadian NGOs involved in peacebuilding, in collaboration with other relevant actors. The network is engaged in a process of dialogue with DFAIT, CIDA and a broad range of NGOs to articulate Canadian directions in the area of peacebuilding, and to strengthen NGO and civil society input into peacebuilding policy and program development.

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About The Centre for Security and Defence Studies

The Centre for Security and Defence Studies (CSDS) at The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (NPSIA), Carleton University, is internationally recognized for its advanced research; conference, workshop and guest lecture programs; graduate and undergraduate education; and public outreach programs on security and defence issues in the Ottawa community and across Canada.

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Background

On March 18, 2003, one day after US President George Bush delivered his ultimatum against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, a panel of non-governmental and academic experts met in Ottawa to publicly debate and articulate policy options to help inform and guide civil society and the Canadian government in their humanitarian and political responses to the war in Iraq.

Panel Members

Gerry Barr, Canadian Council for International Co-operation
Pierre Beaudet, Alternatives
John Bryden, Liberal MP for Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot
David Carment, Centre for Security and Defence Studies, Carleton University
Debbie Grisdale, Physicians for Global Survival

William Janzen, Mennonite Central Committee
Susan Johnson, Canadian Red Cross
Maj. David Last, Royal Military College
Lai-Ling Lee, Médecins Sans Frontières
Peggy Mason, Group of 78
Sarmad Saeedy, analyst and journalist
Paul Seshadri, CARE Canada

The Policy Options outlined below are derived from Forum presentations and discussions. They do not represent the policies or positions of the organizations represented by participants.

Policy Options

- 1. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has stated unequivocally that without specific Security Council authorization a war against Iraq would be contrary to the UN Charter. Authorization was not forthcoming and the Government of Canada rightly decided not to participate in the war on Iraq. This decision reflects the vital importance of the UN as the cornerstone of a rules-based international system and as the key vehicle for the pursuit of Canada's global security objectives. The Government of Canada must, therefore, continue to uphold the application of international law at all levels and confirm the illegality of the war against Iraq.**
- 2. Canada must continue to promote and foster the involvement of the UN and its agencies in seeking ways to respond to the war and post-war humanitarian needs. To that end, Canada must press the US to allow free and unfettered access to humanitarian organizations to come to the aid of the Iraqi population, which was already in the throes of a humanitarian crisis prior to the US-led invasion.**

- 3. Drawing on the existing pool of technical expertise and recent experience applicable to humanitarian efforts in Iraq, the Canadian government should urgently convene and help establish a coordination mechanism linking Canadian non-governmental organizations and all relevant government departments and agencies.**
- 4. It is absolutely essential that emergency assistance target the most vulnerable segments of the Iraqi population and be linked to longer-term local empowerment and capacity building.**
- 5. The Government of Canada should establish programs to take in refugees from Iraq, if necessary, and resources should be provided to select and develop peacebuilding teams from that refugee population to assist with reconstruction.**
- 6. There is a new awareness among Canadians of the requirements for ensuring international peace and security -- the importance of multilateralism, diplomacy, international law and democracy. It is, therefore, recommended that the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee join with other members of civil society to help develop proposals aimed at strengthening this awareness as well as mitigating the negative impacts of this war and its possible consequences beyond Iraq.**

Introduction

The Iraq Forum, convened by the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC) and the Centre for Security and Defence Studies (CSDS) of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University, was attended by approximately 40 participants, including representatives of non-governmental organizations, academics, students, officials and members of the public.

Four panels addressed the very difficult questions of humanitarian responses to war in Iraq. Although the United States, the United Kingdom and their allies had not yet attacked Iraq, President Georges Bush had delivered his 48-hour ultimatum to Saddam Hussein. Against this backdrop participants discussed: the illegality of the war, the disregard for multilateral process, the importance of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the implications for field workers, the pre-invasion humanitarian crisis in Iraq, the impacts and consequences and regional repercussions of all-out war and the state of emergency preparedness, the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the potential refugee crisis.

David Carment, Director of the Centre for Security and Defence Studies at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, opened the proceedings and discussed different scenarios related to how the war with Iraq would be fought and its regional repercussions.

He predicted a war involving intense street-fighting in the cities and a large number of casualties on both sides. Professor Carment also warned of the dire consequences of a war that will spark a major backlash in countries “on the brink of failure”, such as Indonesia, Yemen, and Kenya. Pakistan, whose government supports the US, could be the litmus test in terms of how the “Muslim world will react.” The war itself and reaction to it will increase instability in the Middle East.

Gerry Barr, Executive Director of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, welcomed Prime Minister Jean Chrétien’s refusal to join the US in the illegal war against Iraq. “It’s a vote for diplomacy in the face of American intransigence,” he said. The US has “shut down diplomacy and effective weapons inspections.”

He echoed Professor Carment’s assessment that the war will inflict a significantly higher number of casualties than the first Gulf War, which cost more than 100,000 lives, particularly in the event of urban warfare. He listed the chilling statistics: 500,000 people will require some form of medical treatment; one million refugees and displaced people; and the collapse of the food ration program, which currently sustains 13 million Iraqi children. Mr. Barr said there should be a “coalition of the willing” to repair the damage of war and to ensure the distribution of humanitarian aid.

The War and Legal Issues

Lai-Ling Lee, Médecins Sans Frontières; Susan Johnson, Canadian Red Cross; Peggy Mason, Group of 78

Moderator: Fergus Watt, World Federalists of Canada

Lai-Ling Lee

Médecins Sans Frontières is a private, medical humanitarian organization committed to providing medical aid wherever needed, regardless of race, religion, political affiliation or gender, and to raising awareness of the plight of the people they help.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is a compromise between the principle of safeguarding humanity and military necessity. It limits the methods used to wage war and protects those who do not participate in hostilities. Although civilians are not to be targeted by military operations, they are often victims of indiscriminate use of weapons, such as cluster bombs used in Afghanistan or weapons that inflict harm long after violence has ceased (land mines and other unexploded ordnance, for example). Moreover, civilians cannot be deported and must be treated humanely. There are four Geneva Conventions and two additional protocols setting out IHL.

Goods and services necessary for the survival of the population are protected (water, food, medical supplies) and cannot become targets of a military attack. Populations cannot be deprived of such goods and services and under the law, relief supplies must be accepted and relief convoys allowed, if the population suffers from a lack of such goods.

The choice of weapons and methods of war is limited: use of indiscriminate weapons is forbidden; military operations must always discriminate between military and civilian targets.

IHL is meant to ensure minimum humanitarian standards for victims of conflict: the rights of the wounded and sick to be treated at all time, in all circumstances; access of neutral relief organizations to victims: rights of humanitarian organizations to access and independently assess situations, as well as access to medicines and personnel. Medical personnel have the duty to respect medical ethics; not to have weapons; to be identified as medical staff, and to ensure that medical structures are not used in a hostile manner.

An occupying power is also obliged under IHL to provide basic human needs to populations in areas they occupy by force. However, there is still legal and legitimate space for humanitarian actors to provide independent and needs-based assistance in this context.

MSF uses IHL as a daily tool of negotiation to access and assist people suffering in a conflict. Diplomacy or shaming are other means by which to remind belligerents of their responsibilities under IHL. Attacks on humanitarian personnel are a war crime under the Statute of the International Criminal Court (in both international and internal armed conflicts).

MSF considers IHL too important to leave to lawyers only, field workers rely on it as a daily reference and guide for their work. Ninety per cent of victims of war are civilians and 80% of those considered IHL experts are military personnel.

Susan Johnson

Funded by appeals, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, with 178 member societies, constitute the world's largest humanitarian organization. All of its work is guided by seven fundamental principles: humanity; impartiality; neutrality; independence; voluntary service; unity; and universality.

The Red Cross has been in Iraq since 1980, during the Iran-Iraq war, and then during the Gulf War. More than 200,000 POWs have been repatriated from these conflict but many more remain. On March 18th, 2003, there were 400 Red Cross personnel in Iraq involved in health, water and sanitation projects.

IHL is part and parcel of public international law and has two main areas of focus: protecting people (e.g. civilians, POWs) and to limit the means and methods of warfare. Its objectives are to distinguish between combatants and civilians; to forbid reprisal; to ensure proportionality; protection of medical personnel and the right to exchange news and information

Chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons strike indiscriminately and therefore violate the norms of IHL and are utterly repugnant.

True humanitarian action is governed by the principles of impartiality and non-partisanship and must be conducted independently of political and military objectives and consideration. This means that certain rules must be observed, including not taking sides and adopting a strictly non-discriminatory attitude vis-à-vis the victims.

Humanitarian operations are inherently non-coercive. It then follows that the military cannot adhere to these principles, given its overriding mandate to use force in self-defence or under the political instructions of states. Humanitarian agencies must be allowed to maintain their independence of decision and action, although, in certain cases, they must consult closely with the military forces at each phase and level of operations.

The commander of the American forces in the Persian Gulf, General Tommy Franks, said in February 2003 that the military would take much of the responsibility for providing food and medicine to the Iraqi people from the first day of the war. However, the Red Cross strongly holds the view that military operations should be clearly distinct from humanitarian activities, particularly at the height of hostilities, as this could cause confusion in the civilian population. The primary aim of the military operations should be to establish and maintain peace and security and to help sustain a comprehensive political settlement.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that under IHL, the occupying power has the responsibility to provide for the civilian population: food water, health care, education for children, etc. Collaboration with humanitarian agencies is important in this context. The key question is: How does the US plan to meet its obligations as an occupying power?

Ms Johnson noted that Iraq has not been the largest humanitarian crisis unfolding. In the past year, the Red Cross movement has spent more than \$1.5 billion in operations in more than 80 countries and the Iraq operation accounted for only \$23 million of these funds. As much as all eyes have been focused on Iraq, it is important that we continue to help the Canadian public to understand the nature of the conflict and suffering in other parts of the world. We must strive to

ensure that Canada and humanitarian organizations remain focused on delivering true humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed, whether in Afghanistan or West Africa.

Peggy Mason

War against Iraq is illegal without a new United Nations resolution specifically authorizing it.

Resolution 1441, unanimously adopted on November 8, 2002 by the 15 Security Council (SC) members, did not authorize the US call for war, but rather supported a resolution demanding immediate, unimpeded, unconditional and unrestricted access for UN weapons inspectors. The Council members also stated their intention to convene immediately in the event of an Iraqi failure to comply with disarmament obligations and warned of “serious consequences” of such violations.

The use of force was not authorized in Resolution 1441 – a fact acknowledged by all Council members, including the US. The resolution is devoid of any hidden or obvious triggers that could warrant the use of force.

US Ambassador to the United Nations John D. Negroponte has claimed that the US can invade Iraq in an act of self-defence and asserted that any Security Council member can “enforce relevant UN resolutions and protect world peace and security.” Neither of these assertions can withstand even minimal scrutiny, since UN Charter Article 51 states that appeals to self-defence can be made only “if an armed attack occurs.” To allow a claim of self-defence to stand in these circumstances would be to make a mockery of the prohibition against the use of force enshrined in Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. Moreover, in regards to the argument advocating military engagement to “enforce UN resolutions and protect world peace and security” would be tantamount to arguing that “force can be unilaterally used at the apparent discretion of any UN member state, to implement a resolution which does not authorize the use of force.” If this ridiculous argument were true, it would mean that any State would be entirely free to use force against Israel to force it to comply with the long list of SC resolutions in respect of which it is in breach. It would also be the case for Bulgaria (an ally of the US in this war) for its non-compliance with UN sanctions, which have been independently verified by an expert panel.

The cease-fire resolution argument does not hold either. The US has claimed that Saddam Hussein’s refusal to disarm and the subsequent breach of the terms of the cease-fire resolution (Security Council Resolution 687) nullifies the resolution and brings back into force Resolution 678, which authorizes the use of force against Iraq. This reasoning is faulty, as a minority of the UN Security Council cannot declare the cease-fire resolution null and void. Even if it could, it would mean that the authorization to use force would come back into effect under SCR 678, which relates to Kuwait’s sovereignty and ousting Saddam Hussein from Kuwaiti territory. The authorization does not allow for use of force for régime change, as George Bush is attempting to do. Washington’s thinking seems to be that “there are rules for the rest of the world, but not for the mighty.”

Discussion

Ms Mason stressed that Canada’s Foreign Affairs Minister, Bill Graham, should have clearly stated that the war is illegal in order to reinforce the rule of law. The Security Council has to act in accordance with the UN Charter, and narrow, parochial interests cannot reign supreme.

Current Conditions within Iraq

William Janzen, Mennonite Central Committee; Debbie Grisdale, Physicians for Global Survival

Moderator: Corey Levine

William Janzen

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has had a program in Iraq since 1997, though it provided some relief assistance at other times since the 1991 Gulf War. (It also did some relief work in Iraq decades ago.) Currently, MCC works in Iraq with several partners, including Islamic organizations and the Iraqi Red Crescent Society. In early March, the MCC trucked six containers of relief supplies into Iraq, -- a “drop in the bucket”, considering the humanitarian crisis unfolding.

Displaced persons and refugees will be a major issue since people will want to escape the fighting. A key question is whether they will flee to neighbouring countries or to safe areas inside Iraq, perhaps to areas controlled by the invading armies. There are some preparations, with UN assistance, in neighbouring countries, at least in Jordan, Syria, Iran, and Kuwait, but Turkey is indicating that refugees from Iraq will not be welcome, in part because of the concerns relating to the Kurds. Jordan is relatively hospitable to organizations so a number of the larger international NGOs (CARE, Oxfam, World Vision, World Council of Churches, Red Cross) as well as the key UN bodies (WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF etc.) have opened offices there. The UN is assuming coordination responsibilities. In addition, an Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance has been set up in the US Defense Department. This office seems to be counting strongly on helping people within Iraq in areas controlled by the invading military, rather than outside Iraq.

The condition of the Iraqi people is certainly not as good as it was in 1990 but it is somewhat better than it was in the mid-1990s, thanks to the Oil For Food (OFF) program that started bringing more goods into Iraq in 1997. Nevertheless, it is widely believed that 60% of the people are entirely dependent on the government's ration system, which, in turn, depends heavily on food imported under the OFF program. Reportedly, the in-flow of OFF goods has already been stopped because war was imminent; also, the centralized nature of the ration system adds to its vulnerability. Fighting will almost certainly disrupt the distribution system and people's food supplies will be cut off. There are reports that people have tried to stock up on food supplies. Many families are said to have a month's supply on hand. Also, water pumping stations are said to have electric generators on hand for use when the power supply is cut off and local authorities have encouraged people to dig neighbourhood wells. Further, clinics are said to have tried to stock up on basic medicines. These preparations will help; still, the people are very vulnerable. Only 60% have access to clean water, half a million children are malnourished, and the death rate for children under five is two and a half times what it was in 1990. If the invading armies encircle a city, be it Baghdad or Basra they might consider two options: starving it out or bombing it heavily. Both would have extremely serious humanitarian consequences. The world has not prepared itself for this but the extensive publicity on Iraq will likely lead to increased aid flows when the needs become obvious.

Debbie Grisdale

Founded in 1980, Physicians for Global Survival (PGS), is a peace and disarmament organization and does not deliver humanitarian aid. Its 100 active members and 5,000 supporting members are committed to global health, the abolition of nuclear weapons, the prevention of war, and the promotion of non-violent means of conflict resolution and social justice.

War in Iraq will not only cause mass casualties and disease, but it will bring hardships for generations to come, incite more hostility in the region and fuel terrorism. War is a huge public health catastrophe. The Iraqi population after 12 years of sanctions has fallen into a far greater state of poverty than existed previously. In fact, Iraq has suffered the most rapid recorded decline, according to the UN development statistics used for the Human Development Index. The population is extremely vulnerable and the comprehensive economic sanctions have left them weaker mentally and physically and, therefore, less able to withstand new assaults on their health and find the strength to recover.

It has been conclusively shown that by far the biggest consequence of the humanitarian disaster that occurred after the 1991 war was not from the direct effects of the bombing but from the bombing of electricity generating plants, which incapacitated the electrical and sanitation systems. Iraqis who live in urban areas were used to getting clean water from the tap, but suddenly the water was contaminated, causing a huge increase in diarrhea, which children, in particular, could not survive. This will happen again.

The largest food distribution scheme in the world, the Oil-For-Food program, has not been the technical fix to economic destitution and has failed to protect the innocent. There have been 1.5 million excess deaths since the imposition of sanctions and there is a threat of famine if war is declared, as the food distribution system will breakdown. Over 60% of civilians – 16 million people – depend solely on the monthly food ration for their subsistence. Even now, with a near ideal administration for food distribution through 46,000 storefronts, 22% of Iraqi children are malnourished and 6.3% are acutely starving.

US President George Bush has threatened to use nuclear weapons in Iraq in the event that Saddam Hussein employs chemical and or biological weapons. If used on Baghdad, the death toll alone from the blast, firestorm and radioactive fallout could be as high as 3.5 million people, followed by long-term suffering and environmental degradation. There have been no reliable studies on the long-term health and environmental impact of the use of weapons containing depleted uranium during the first Gulf War. The World Health Organization (WHO) should be pressed to look into the question, which now takes on new urgency.

If there is a war, it must be stopped immediately. We need to urge the Canadian Government to join a coalition to seek to halt war. Nuclear disarmament is a must. If the US has nuclear weapons, other states will simply want them too.

Discussion

Tough, sweeping sanctions have hurt Iraq and hurt innocent people. There were attempts by some to tackle the problem by revising wording related to “dual-use” goods, by which the US has been able to block imports of vast quantities of goods. Some former senior US military commanders – Generals Anthony Zinni and Norman Schwarzkopf -- had argued for “smart”, more targeted, sanctions to increase their effectiveness. In response to a question, Debbie Grisdale said that residents of Baghdad may be able to survive four to six weeks, if their rations have been doubled

prior to the beginning of the war. However, the Kurds may only have rations to keep them going for five days.

Warfare: Impacts and Consequences, Regional Repercussions

Maj. David Last, Royal Military College; Sarmad Saeedy, analyst and journalist; John Bryden, MP

Moderator: Steve Mason, United Nations Association in Canada

Member of Parliament John Bryden, author of the 1989 book *Deadly Allies*, a history of the Allied effort to develop chemical and biological weapons during World War II, noted that the agents that may be used in Iraq have been developed for years. The ability to significantly effect military results with them, however, has largely evaporated. National governments and armies now have sufficient counter-measures at their disposal to protect themselves against such attacks. Chemical and biological agents are difficult to harness and it is uncertain if they could have major effects or inflict collateral damage on a large-scale if used conventionally.

This is where war has fundamentally changed, however. While chemical and biological munitions have become less effective on the battlefield, the risk of their potential use by terrorist organizations as an unconventional weapon has increased significantly. Biological agents may be developed that are self-spreading, significantly affecting the civilian population. Perhaps most frighteningly, the message that a war in Iraq may send to terrorist groups, in particular smaller, disorganized groups who have access to the information and equipment required to launch this form of attack, is that this form of warfare is one of the only ways to fight back. In this realm, the Internet has been huge in its capacity to spread information widely and rapidly. Also, the cost of producing chemical and biological agents is so low that almost anyone could theoretically produce biological or chemical agents in their basic forms. For that reason, our best deterrence against individuals and groups using low-cost biological dispersal weapons is moral disapprobation. When we give terrorist groups the moral right to use these weapons, we will have lost the war.

Canada has a lot of expertise in the area of chemical and biological munitions and weaponry. During the Second World War, the British urged Canadians to mass-produce chemical and biological agents, including anthrax, which was tested in the St. Lawrence at Grosse Isle. Reportedly, the Allies intended to bomb German cities and then drop anthrax on them in order to punish the citizenry and render the urban centres uninhabitable. Research at Suffield, Alberta began with field munitions trials, with the aim to develop appropriate munitions with good dispersal capabilities, first chemicals and then biologicals. These are in essence the munitions that we hear of today.

Maj. David Last¹

There is a general understanding, that while the US has the power to win a war quickly, many are skeptical that such a war will make the Middle East a more stable region in the long term.

* Maj. Last was speaking in his personal capacity. His views do not represent those of the Canadian Forces or Department of National Defence.

It is fundamental to note that the world did not change significantly after 9/11. This was a milestone in history, but it does not represent a major change. Oil and freedom of action have been points of American interest and strategic policy planning since the mid-1970s. Donald Rumsfeld, began planning this war as early as 1997, using this particular set of objectives. It is clear that the US wants long-term control of oil interests. Investment in more than 30 new bases set up after the Gulf War and infrastructure in the area show that the American military presence is part of a long-term strategy for the Middle East.

On March 18, 2003 the level of coalition forces in the Gulf region had reached 300,000. It remained uncertain whether a war would be long or short, and as demonstrated by military planning scenarios, the so-called “clean-up” and exit strategies are not explicit in this process because planning is flexible and continuously occurring. For Iraq, termination strategies will only come into play later.

UN inspectors had done a very good job of disarming Iraq after the first Gulf War. US sources claimed that over 80% of Iraqi military capacity was destroyed at that time and that the Iraqi army was severely weakened. At present, the Iraqi Army is organized into five corps and has approximately 375,000 soldiers. Due to the distribution of bases in the country and the no-fly zone over the North and South, the bases in these areas have been incapacitated, although the bases in the middle of the country less so. The missile threat may or may not turn out to be more spurious than it was in 1991 – there certainly is the potential to disrupt targets outside of Iraq and in the surrounding region, but this is more a political form of disruption than a military one. Iraq currently has only a limited ability to disperse chemical and biological weapons.

Iraq’s population is divided into a number of ethnic groups; in the North, Kurdish groups dominate, while in the South, Shia Muslims. After the first Gulf War, the Americans and allied forces were reluctant to arm and equip these groups, although they do have access to protective air power when required. There are two main Kurdish parties in the North, numbering approximately 40,000 fighters. In the south, Shia guerrillas reportedly have between 7,000 and 15,000 fighters. With the current situation in Iraq, the most pressing question the Americans and their allies will need to answer is whether they will be able to prevent the Kurds and Shias from attempting to seize control of more territory. There is considerable potential for ethnic and religious infighting after the war.

Will the Iraqis fight? There are really two possible scenarios that coalition forces could be faced with. The first would be a short and clean war. Iraqi troops and citizens would be happy to see Saddam go and therefore Republican Guards would pull back, allowing the coalition forces to move in. Kurdish and Shia allies would help the coalition troops seize oil fields before there is much environmental damage. Scenario 2, however, presents a very different picture, this time of a long and dirty war where Republican Guard troops refuse to surrender, moving into major urban centres and pursuing a strategy of “survival and national resistance” involving guerrilla warfare in urban centres. Coalition forces would have a very difficult time attempting to sort out combatants from non-combatants. Massive casualties could be inflicted on both sides.

The World Health Organization had estimated that casualties may range in number from 100,000 to 400,000. If the short-war scenario plays out, the number may be lower, but if the long and dirty war scenario proves true, casualty numbers may be significantly higher.

One of the major advantages of the Oil-For-Food program is that its entry points for food and supplies into the country will likely be secured at the beginning of the war. With the overthrow or destruction of the Iraqi regime, however, one of the greatest challenges will be recreating the

government distribution system. With so many Iraqi citizens dependent on this program, it is vital that a distribution system be created or re-established immediately.

Canada's theoretical military peacebuilding model was built on its experiences in Haiti and the former Yugoslavia. Peacebuilding most fundamentally involves the building of indigenous capacity to handle potential or future conflict. When Canadians are involved in peacebuilding, a familiar pattern is followed. First, peace is established through coercive means and the situation is stabilized within a country. Indigenous institutions are then "built-up" or strengthened to allow the preservation of order and good governance. Proper government mechanisms are then established and public officials and elected government representatives become accountable for their actions. This is a model of movement from imposed peace through to functioning government with a manageable level of social conflict and eventual re-entry into the international community. But neither Canada nor the international community at large has a lot of successful experience in this line of work

Iraq presents peacebuilders with more cross-cultural challenges than any other post-conflict situation has. Indeed, in a religiously oriented society, community-level problems need to be addressed using largely different methods than would be used in a secular society. There will need to build local level indigenous capacities and avoid the establishment of a colonial style administration in order to achieve success in the long-term.

Canada has something unique to offer in this situation. As a multicultural country with immigrant communities and society largely accepting of refugees, Canada can help Iraq in many ways, including by accepting the best and the brightest into our country and helping them prepare to return to Iraq to rebuild it with Canadian support. Ottawa has saved a lot on defense spending, and should be considering what kinds of refugee and peacebuilding support it can supply in the long term.

Sarmad Saeedy

An attack against Iraq will have very destabilizing economic and political implications in the Middle East and lead to social unrest in many countries. Several countries in the region have a stake in the conflict.

Saudi Arabia has provided the US with air and army bases since the first Gulf War in 1991. While the Saudi royal family has indirectly supported the US for many years, it is having difficulty in continuing to do so because it has much to lose in the event of a war. As the largest oil exporter in the world, (70% of its economy is based on the industry) it fears that the OPEC structure will be permanently damaged by a war. While the political situation in the country appears from the outside to be stable, the royal family is quite apprehensive of US involvement in the region and fears that a forced regime change in Iraq may spread South and West to the Arabian Peninsula.

Syria, traditional enemy of both Israel and Iraq, is also very worried about a US attack in Iraq. After the 1991 Gulf War, Syria sought international backing for the first time in many years. In exchange, it was granted a bigger portion of the Oil for Food Program and has wound up importing close to 200,000 barrels of Iraqi oil every day. Syria fears, however, that once the US is in Iraq, its preferential trading agreement will change. For some time, Syria has been accused of doing illegal business deals with Iraq, including black market smuggling of oil.

Turkey would benefit greatly in an economic sense from a war in Iraq. Even with a proposed multi-billion dollar aid package, however, Turkish citizens have turned out en masse to protest against Turkish involvement in the war, in particular the use of their territory by American troops.

Jordan, an important US ally in the war, has political and financial worries. After the first Gulf War, Jordan accrued a loss of US \$32 billion in trade and tourism. It fears the financial losses would be greater this time around. Given that over 60% of the Jordanian population is of Palestinian origin and strongly against a war on Iraq, Jordan also fears a backlash in terms of public agitation. Furthermore, Jordanians fear the consequences of any new peace proposal between Israel and Palestinians whereby Israel may try to force as many Palestinians as possible out of their territory before concluding an accord. Jordan will have to bear yet another influx of refugees.

There is also a real fear that once Iraq is toppled, Iran, a member of the so-called *axis of evil*, will be next. Although the Iranians are opposed to Saddam and Iraq in general, they are also opposed to an increased US presence in the region.

In terms of South Asian effects of the war on Iraq, India presents an interesting case study. With its strong ties to Israel, it was assumed that India would be in favour of American attacks on Iraq. But Iraq is also supporting India's war in Kashmir and the two countries have strong economic and business ties. Oil is a key factor in this relationship and India fears that its economic losses would amount to approximately 1% of its total GDP if Iraq is attacked.

Pakistan also presents an interesting case. If the Taliban regime can be toppled in Afghanistan and Hussein defeated in Iraq, could Pervez Musharraf's régime in Pakistan be next? War in Iraq presents Pakistan with a very difficult situation. Externally, its relationship with India over Kashmir needs to be clarified and confirmed once and for all. Given, however, that Pakistan's only international ally at present is the US, it may be a very dangerous time to attempt to clarify its relations with India.

These issues are but some of the many problems facing the US, including the fact that social unrest is very likely to follow on the heels of political and economic unrest. Religious marginalization and a series of conflicting emotions are arising throughout the world as strong religious groups emerge and begin protesting against the West, in particular the US. Hatred for the US is particularly strong not only in the Middle East, but increasingly in South East Asia. After the initial outpouring of sympathy for the US after 9/11, the US lost friends quickly with its attacks on Afghanistan. It is predicted that the rise in fundamentalism will send shock waves across the Middle East and the rest of the world.

In terms of reconstruction efforts, it is extremely unrealistic of the US to think it will attack Iraq, conquer the country, and then plant the seeds of democracy in short order. As demonstrated by the situation in Afghanistan at present, such simple linear progressions just do not occur. After the war in Iraq, a struggle for supremacy will undoubtedly emerge between Shias, Sunnis, and Kurds. The fear of weapons of mass destruction is great, but far more generally, there is a fear that once a unilateral, pre-emptive strike occurs against Iraq that multilateralism will disappear. If that were to happen, what would stop India from attacking Pakistan? Indeed, in order to protect themselves, those countries that already have nuclear capabilities may strengthen them, and those who do not may develop them.

Emergency Preparedness

Pierre Beaudet, Alternatives; Lai-Ling Lee, MSF; Susan Johnson, Canadian Red Cross; Paul Seshadri, CARE Canada

Moderator: Kathy Vandergrift, World Vision Canada

Kathy Vandergrift

United Nations agencies have re-evaluated their previous needs assessment for Iraq, based on new assessments of the potential humanitarian impact of a military attack on Iraq, including the report of the independent mission sponsored by Canadian NGOs, entitled "Our Common Responsibility." In addition to the basic questions of access, resources to meet humanitarian needs, and security, humanitarian organizations are dealing with some difficult ethical issues in relation to the war in Iraq. There is a tension between the principles of impartial and independent humanitarian assistance and the obligations of an occupying power in international law. In particular, humanitarian agencies are struggling with questions of military-civilian cooperation and whether they should accept funding and support from the governments who are waging war in Iraq. In addition, there is concern about the tendency to see scarce resources diverted from other emergency situations as international attention is focused on Iraq. How these difficult issues are handled in the Iraq situation will set important precedents for the future of humanitarian assistance.

Pierre Beaudet

There are approximately four million people living in Northern Iraq: three million Kurds and one million Iraqis. For the last 10 years, a sort of experiment has taken place in the North, a national project designed to support a political evolutionary process in Iraq and in Kurdistan. There are many reasons why this experiment is being carried out, perhaps most importantly because Kurdish people want to see themselves as part of a new and unified Iraq sometime in the future. New attitudes are emerging in this region, along with a burgeoning civil society that expresses itself very clearly.

Good relations have been fostered in the North between Iraqis and Kurds, a major departure from historical patterns and antagonistic relationships. The northern society that is emerging is one that thinks independently, focuses on grassroots movement, involves women, espouses pluralism and supports free and open media. Indeed, if there is any chance that Iraq will emerge from this war and misery, it will be partially because of the efforts that have been made in this region.

Exactly how far the northern Iraq project will branch out and become an Iraq-wide project remains to be seen. It must be remembered that most of the inhabitants of the north only came to Kurdistan after the first Gulf War, following Saddam's persecution of the entire group during the war. War, for the Kurds, will only bring additional tensions and crisis, including exacerbated problems with Turkey.

When war breaks out, food security will obviously be very important, but it is vital that international humanitarian aid agencies do not only offer short-term fixes for the problems in Iraq. Simply giving aid continuously will not solve long-term problems. In terms of health and IDPs, for example, there are existing local Iraqi and Kurdish agencies and capacities that can be developed in order to ensure indigenous capabilities grow in the future. At present, local agencies have a capacity to deal with tens of thousands of IDPs, not millions. If there were more ingenuity

exhibited by international donors, more could be done with precious resources. The relationships between local agencies and foreign agencies are quite difficult and labour intensive. We need to do more at the local level than just sign contracts—we need a real commitment. This is where the issue of culture comes into question -- how do we get into a society and engage? How do we invest in local institution building?

Money and supplies will be donated and the job will get done because the situation is just too big for the world to ignore. How this involvement will play out remains to be seen. One of the biggest casualties of a prolonged crisis is ordinary people who are getting killed but also the dismantling of social structures and infrastructures. How can a society and culture wrecked by war be rebuilt? There may be an opportunity amidst this tragedy if the people in the region, both Iraq and Kurdistan, support the transformation process.

Lai-Ling Lee

MSF worked in Iraq and Kurdistan assisting Kurdish refugees after the first Gulf War and until 1993, when they were forced leave. Ten years later, there is now a team of medical staff (doctors, nurses, surgeons, and logistical support crews) who work with the Iraqi Red Crescent Society in order to prepare for emergency situations and intend to stay for the duration of the war. Humanitarian action, whether carried out by a government or others, really occurs as a result of the failure of political and military action.

For MSF, emergency preparedness is a state of mind, not stockpiles of supplies. As much as the logistical chain is important, it is more important that the situation in the country is constantly monitored, that the teams make contacts, meet locals, and help those in need.

At present, MSF has teams ready to respond in neighbouring Kuwait, Jordan, and Iran. There is understandably a very real fear that war will not be conducted humanely and that international humanitarian law will not be respected. If this is the case, the delivery of humanitarian assistance must be conducted in the most neutral way possible. This is very difficult for NGOs working on the ground. MSF believes that the needs of the population should be the sole objective of any mission and that politics should not be involved in decisions made regarding humanitarian aid. Indeed, while the current crisis in Iraq is important, there are also other large crises in other areas of the world that should not be ignored, including Liberia, Ivory Coast and many others.

Paul Seshadri

CARE has been in Jordan for the past nine years and in Iraq for the past 12. It also has ongoing projects in the Palestinian Territories, including the Gaza Strip. Over the past two months, a CARE International Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) has been established in Amman to help scale-up the long-term development projects and prepare emergency interventions in the event of a conflict. There are six staffers in this unit, including a policy analyst, logistical support staff, financial coordinators, security officer etc. The RCU has been established to support the already existing CARE teams in Amman and Baghdad. Amman seems to have become the centre of operations for a large number of international organizations who plan to use it as a base for operations in Iraq.

CARE International will be dealing largely with long-term projects in Iraq, including water and nutritional projects and well as planning for prioritized emergency responses. The water system in Iraq is very sophisticated and the water projects are designed to maintain the system throughout the war and in post conflict situation. CARE is also working in hospitals on supplementary

feeding projects. The aid agency operates on the premise of independence and impartiality, but the main problem facing the organization at present is funds. As many other international humanitarian organizations have noticed, international donors are withholding funds at present, waiting for the war to begin in Iraq. This is making long-term planning very difficult.

Susan Johnson

In the Middle East region, including Iraq's six border countries, the Red Cross is working with national Red Crescent societies to assist their regional efforts and to help them prepare for population movements. These countries have different strengths and capabilities. The strongest Red Crescent capacities to respond to refugees are present in Turkey and Iran. The International Red Cross also has on stand-by a number of emergency clinics, field hospitals, mass water treatment facilities, and communications and logistics systems, which can be established in the region if and when the need arises.

Based on indigenous capacity and international agencies' contribution, there has been a lot of work done to date. However governments and private donors need to help more. Donors are holding back and waiting until something actually happens in Iraq.

The militarization of aid delivery continues to pose problems for the Red Cross and other humanitarian aid agencies: armies engage in such operations in order to further their military and political goals not in for humanitarian motives. It is vital that humanitarian aid be governed by impartial and neutral agencies with non-political goals.

In response to a question about funding from coalition governments, each panel member stated their position at this point in time and that the matter is under review in each agency, as the situation changes quickly. A common theme is the desire to have the UN play an important role in co-ordination between agencies and with military forces.

Participants

Pierre Beaudet is the Executive Director of Alternatives, a Canadian NGO working in peacebuilding and rehabilitation in over 25 countries, including the Palestinian Occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq. He has a PhD in economic sociology and has authored various books and articles, including *Southern Africa after Apartheid*, published by MacMillan books.

Gerry Barr is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, the principal umbrella coalition for Canadian non-governmental organizations engaged in international development co-operation. He previously held the position of Department Leader, International Affairs at the United Steelworkers of America, Canadian National Office and was Executive Director and Treasurer of the Steelworkers' Humanity Fund, the labour-based non-governmental organization working in areas of international development co-operation and solidarity action. From 1994 to 2000, he was Director of the North-South Institute. In 1996, he was awarded the Pearson Peace Medal by the United Nations Association in Canada.

David Carment is an Associate Professor of International Affairs at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs and Director of the Centre for Security and Defence Studies at Carleton University. He has authored several books, most recently *Using Force to Prevent Ethnic Violence: An Evaluation of Theory and Evidence* and *Conflict Prevention: Path to Peace or Grand Illusion?* He also serves as the principal investigator for the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy project and is a member of the Board of Directors for The Forum on Early Warning and Early Response.

John Bryden, MP was first elected to House of Commons in October 1993 and re-elected in 1997 and 2000 as a Liberal Member of Parliament. He has a BA (Honours) in English and History from McMaster University and an M. Phil in English from Leeds University. His professional training is in journalism, and he worked for over 20 years for major Canadian newspapers. Mr. Bryden has authored two books, including *Deadly Allies: Canada's Secret War 1937-1947* (1989), which dealt with Canada's role in chemical and biological warfare research. Mr. Bryden has done extensive work analyzing the charity and non-profit sector in an effort to make this industry more publicly accountable.

Debbie Grisdale is the Executive Director of Physicians for Global Survival (Canada), an organization dedicated to the abolition of nuclear weapons and the prevention of war. Ms Grisdale has a Master's degree in community health. She has worked extensively in community health and international development in Canada and Latin America. She has been with PGS since 1994.

William Janzen has been Director of the Ottawa Office of Mennonite Central Committee Canada since 1975. He grew up in Saskatchewan and came to Ottawa to attend graduate school. He has an MA degree from Carleton's Norman Patterson School of International Affairs and another from the University of Ottawa in Religious Studies. His PhD, in Political Science, is from Carleton. His working trips have taken him to various parts of the world, including twice to Iraq.

Susan Johnson is the National Director of International Programs at the Canadian Red Cross. Before joining the Canadian Red Cross she worked as Manager of Programs, OXFAM-Canada, Program Development Officer - Central America, and Communications/Researcher, Union des

Pêcheurs des Maritimes/Maritime Fishermen's Union; Ms. Johnson holds a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Ottawa.

Maj. David Last is an officer in the Canadian Armed Forces, a graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada (BA), Carleton University (MA), the London School of Economics (PhD), and the US Army Command and General Staff College (MMAS). He has participated in numerous United Nations peacekeeping missions, including commanding Blue Beret Camp in UNFICYP (Cyprus) 1992-93 and serving as the Military Assistant to the Deputy Force Commander of UNPF in Zagreb in 1995. Maj. Last spent two years developing courses and conducting research at the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, and then served as national staff officer for Counter-Terrorism and Special Operations, before beginning to teach in 1999 in the Department of Political Science at the Royal Military College of Canada.

Lai-Ling Lee is responsible for government relations at Médecins Sans Frontières Canada. Her background is in political science and management of non-governmental organizations. Ms. Lee has held managerial positions in non-governmental organizations for over 12 years. Her experience as a field worker with MSF began in 1995 in the Republic of Georgia and has first-hand experience of MSF projects in Sudan, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Thailand and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Corey Levine has worked as a consultant and field officer for a number of United Nations, Canadian and international agencies as well as non-governmental organizations in Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bosnia-Herzegovina. She holds a Masters degree in Human Rights from the University of Essex.

Peggy Mason graduated from the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Common Law, in 1975. She left private practice to focus on public policy, culminating in 1989 with her appointment as Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament, a position she held for five years. Ms. Mason represented Canada in UN disarmament fora and headed the Canadian delegation to treaty review conferences addressing nuclear weapons and biological and toxin weapons. Since leaving the department of Foreign Affairs at the end of 1994, she has joined the external faculty of the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre and has been an adviser to the Canadian Government on the control of small arms, chairing the UN 2001 Group of Governmental Experts study on small arms regulation and participating in the Canadian delegation to the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects. She is currently a Senior Fellow at The Norman Paterson School of International Relations at Carleton University.

Steve Mason is the Executive Director of United Associations of Canada. He has a Master's degree in International Relations from the University of Cambridge and a BSc in Bio-Math from the University of New Brunswick. He has previously worked as a field worker with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in West Africa, as a consultant with the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and as a researcher with Human Rights Internet and the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission.

Sarmad Saedy worked as a journalist in Pakistan for seven years, first as a reporter with the Frontier Post (a national daily), and then as the editor of the Sunday edition of a competing daily called The Nation. He wrote extensively on a range of social, political, and economic issues, governance and municipal affairs, covered major issues such as the aftermath of Soviet war and the ensuing infighting in Afghanistan, the plight of refugees and war-affected children, and human rights. Before coming to Canada in early 1999, he also co-founded the Journalists Resource Centre in Lahore and worked with South Asia Partnership Pakistan. In Canada, he has been associated as both a staff member and an independent consultant with Oxfam Canada, South

Asia Partnership Canada, Coordinating Peace Consolidation Committee, Canadian Council for International Co-operation, WIAM, and the Centre for Intercultural Learning.

Paul Seshadri joined CARE Canada in early 2003 as Program Manager for Overseas Operations where he plans and coordinates humanitarian emergencies in all regions of the world and is involved program development and security planning field assessments. He has six years in program management and coordination experience in Africa (south, east, and west), Laos and Bosnia on health, education, refugee assistance and feeding projects/programmes, where he has worked for Médecins Sans Frontières, GOAL Ireland and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. A former teacher, he has an MA in Development Studies.

Kathy Vandergrift is a Senior Policy Analyst with World Vision Canada. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee. In addition, she co-chairs the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, which has made recommendations to the Security Council on Iraq.

Fergus Watt is Executive Director of the World Federalists of Canada, a position he has held since 1985. He is also Chair of the Executive Committee of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee. The World Federalists of Canada is a national non-profit organization advocating a more just, sustainable and democratically accountable world order through the strengthening of international institutions and the rule of law. World Federalists of Canada is part of the international World Federalist Movement, an international association of 35 national and regional World Federalist organizations around the world.