

Iraq; the civil war that will keep the country together!

A civil war is the most effective method to disrupt the ongoing political process of a country.

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The current political process in Iraq, as the result of the January 30 elections shown to be rigged and flawed in an article by Scott Ritter "[Hijacking Democracy in Iraq](#)" and later confirmed and expanded on by Seymour M. Hersh in his article "[GET OUT THE VOTE...Did Washington try to manipulate Iraq's election?](#)", has reached the tar pit that is the writing of the new Iraqi constitution.

This rigging of the political process by the United States, which actually started as early as Bremer who gave veto powers to the Kurdish minority over any future political system in Iraq has continued into the elections in favor of the two major allies, interim Prime Minister Allawi and the Kurdish population to the north, as its purveyors of access and control over Iraq and its resources.

In a previous article I wrote "[Anatomy of a civil war; a Lebanese perspective on Iraq](#)", I pointed out that the biggest vote rigging took place in the form of unwarranted and ruthless military operations in Sunni areas conducted by the occupation shortly before the January elections. The result of which was the predictable withdrawal of the Sunnis from the electoral process and the effective removal of their undesirable votes from the ballot boxes; equivalent to twenty percent of the eligible electorate.

The net result of all these intrusions, even though the occupation authority failed to secure Allawi's political future, was still a couple of short-lived victories. The Shiites did not receive the proportional representation that is due to them and were prevented from achieving a majority, thereby, delaying the formation of a political system sympathetic to Iran.

The other short-lived victory was the disproportionately high Kurdish representation due to high turnout and multiple voting by Kurdish individuals. It was believed that such strong showing by the Kurds would give them a stronger say in the writing of the constitution and secure their future as a long-term ally of Washington.

Currently, even though the governing coalition is Shiite and Kurd, the Kurds are complaining that they are not part of the inner governing circle and that the Shiites are [monopolizing power](#) and marginalizing their ministers. They are also complaining that the Shiites have reneged on the agreement to [repatriate Kurds](#) in Kirkuk; a city they hope to be the capital of their autonomous region.

Clearly, the delay by the Shiites to implement the repatriation agreement stems from the

unwillingness of Iraqi-Arabs to relinquish Iraqi territory and reflect their true feeling about a federal system. Also, it reflects their unwillingness to dislodge mostly Shiite constituents from Kirkuk in order to make room for Kurds.

The Sunnis, even though they now understand and appreciate their mistake of not joining the electoral process, cannot rejoin now even if they wanted to. Only today, three of their representatives on the committee drafting the constitution were assassinated.

In another development, current Prime Minister Jaafari just concluded a visit to Iran and signed cooperation agreements described by Iran, to the dismay of the neocons, as a new dawn in Iranian-Iraqi relationship; a delay of the inevitable of barely seven months.

That would lead us to think that the Shiites should be basking in their newfound powers. On the contrary, the rise in the insurgency has undermined security, bankrupt the government, and left it powerless and unable to protect the population with its leading Shiite members publicly asking that their respective militias be allowed to assist in securing their neighborhoods.

Barely seven months after these purple-fingered and unprecedented elections, the honeymoon had long since passed, and, with the approach of the next milestone, the writing of the new constitution, we see Iraq on the verge of a divorce, i.e. a civil war.

The constitution, even if written, risks not being approved. You might ask, what is the point in writing it? A rule in its approval vote, designed to give veto powers to the Kurds to help them negotiate and secure a federal system and autonomy, did not take into account that by default it also gave the Sunnis such veto power and that they are very likely to exercise it.

Without the writing and approval of the constitution, the biggest losers are the Kurds and the neocons. The neocons commitment to an autonomous Kurdish territory is what kept the Kurds in the political process and the guarantee would have been through the new Iraqi constitution.

This new constitution would also give Washington the legal framework to provide the Kurds with unconditional support, a la Israel. It was also intended to be the wide-open back door for future US intervention in Iraq long after troop withdrawal and certainly in the case of a civil war.

Faced with an election that was rigged, a representation that is not proportional and that disenfranchised a large segment of the population, a security situation that is deteriorating, a constitution that might not be written let alone approved, disenchantment on all front, Kurdish, Sunni, Shiite, and the occupier, what is left to do in order to save face? What is left to do in order to salvage the situation? What is left to do in order to address the grievances of all parties and most importantly to ensure that the new Iraq is built on proportional representation of its constituency?

There are three options. I am going to ignore the middle of the road one since it has been tried for the last 5 months and has failed.

The option I favor is the one I call the right thing to do option, which rarely ever happens. This option hinges on the parties agreeing that they have reached a dead end, that the process was highly flawed, and that it is best to start anew with a clean slate under the

auspices of the UN. This option also entails that the Bush administration issues the most sincere apology to the Afghani, Iraqi, and American people for [the horrors they put them through](#); there is also a need to apologize to the rest of the world but not with the same degree of sincerity. Lastly, a mass resignation of the Bush administration with a call for new general elections with control of the country relinquished to the UN while things are sorted out. It is only then that the world could forgive and forget and the Iraq war would not be hailed as the war that brought democracy to Iraq; it would be hailed as the war that brought democracy back to the US via Iraq - for some reason, I feel compelled to warn that this paragraph contained intentional sarcasm.

What is most likely to happen is the horrible option where Iraq plunges into a full-blown civil war, which I predict to last about five years. Within five years, the warring factions and the population at large will reach the traditional war fatigue and the realization that Iraq is exactly where it was five years ago except there are less people around. There will be a rush to get the warring factions to sit together at a peace conference either in Oman or a resort in Sinai. The Kurds by the end of the talks will get a lesser form of autonomy but not a federal system and not Kirkuk. The United States will still be the guarantor of that autonomy with a much smaller back door for future intervention. The Sunnis and the Shiites will both get the proportionate representation they deserve. The country's resources will be equally shared among the population.

Unfortunately, the consequences of the dead end reached today as a result of stupidity, greed, vindictiveness, and arrogance will only burden the shoulders of the innocent; we know very well that some will pay with their lives.

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