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Trends. The Latest Victory of Saddam Hussein

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Here are the advantages that were obtained by Saddam Hussein in negotiations with United Nations (UN) Secretary General Kofi Annan. (1) The United States Government (USG) will continue to expend treasure through the deployment of additional military forces throughout the Mideast. The longer the forces remain, the greater the probability of exacerbating anti-USG sentiment throughout local populations. The longer the forces remain, the more other USG security imperatives are given short shrift. (2) Saddam has succeeded in changing the terms of resolutions to which the Iraqi Government was forced to agree after the Persian Gulf War. (3) Only the many Iraqis who are not part of Saddam Hussein's power infrastructure have suffered for Saddam's many violations of UN resolutions. (4) Saddam has won another "Great Victory"--at least in the eyes of many in the Mideast--by once again going eyeball to eyeball with world's only super power. Sure, maybe he blinked. But he has still survived, while most other Mideast leaders appear terrified to confront the USG. (5) Although the new agreement will be subject to verification, its signing is literally an encomium to Saddam's word--as if past violations of resolutions has not tarnished it. (6) Time is on Saddam's side, and he has bought additional time during which international support for rigid sanctions and inspections will ineluctably decrease. (7) Sooner or later, the USG will be confronted with the decision of when enough is enough and military forces need to be moved elsewhere. As soon as this happens, the iron fist behind the velvet glove of diplomacy is gone. Even if the USG unilaterally decides to attack Iraq, even more time will be necessary before the attack can be launched. (8) The UN sanctions--ending criteria of no weapons of mass destruction, no means to develop them, and no existing delivery vehicles can never be met due to their very nature--especially biological warfare assets. Even if the UN Special Commission formally certifies that Iraq has met the criteria, the operational truth may be quite different. And if this truth is discovered after sanctions have been lifted, the possibility of UN approval of new sanctions will be extremely low. So will support for virtually unilateral USG military intervention. (9) With each crisis, Saddam has bought more time to hide, transfer, and develop proscribed assets. He has done so once again and has only been coerced into agreeing to do what was agreed on back in 1991. (10) The new agreement actually results in a UN and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) command and coordination structure that facilitates poor communication, personality conflicts, administrative snafus, and the like that can be exploited by Saddam into UN and IAEA violations of the new agreement that can, in turn, be righteously abrogated. (11) The myth of UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) effectiveness in locating and destroying biological warfare (BW) assets has been reinforced by Saddam to his advantage. In actuality, the defection of a son-in-law--Hussein Kamal, now deceased--may well have had more to do with significant BW identification and potential destruction than the UNSCOM process. Unfortunately, other close relatives may view the deceased not as calls to glory but to action. Unfortunately, UNSCOM may be forced to eventually give Saddam a clean bill of health in the absence of discovered assets not existing ones. Another Great Victory in the Mother of All Battles for Saddam. (See Akehurst, L., Kohnken, G., Vrij, A., & Bull, R. (1996). Lay persons' and police officers' beliefs regarding deceptive behaviour. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 10, 461-471; Hala, S., & Chandler, M. (1996). The role of strategic planning in accessing false-belief understanding. *Child Development*, 67, 2948-2966; Recent IBPP articles on Iraq by using the keyword feature at the IBPP website; Text of the United Nations-Iraq Agreement. (February 24, 1998). *The New York Times*, (<http://www.nytimes.com>)).