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**Iraq War Note: Tikrit and Iraq's Remaining Forces**  
**By Anthony H. Cordesman**  
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At the Pentagon briefing this afternoon, General Myers noted that there were still substantial elements of the regime's apparatus left in Baghdad, including elements of the Fedayeen, Special Republican Guards, Special Security Organization, Mukhabarat, and Baath Party Security, the organization that Saddam used to gain power.

Myers also said that there were 10 Regular Army Division and one brigade of the Republican Guards left in the north.

There is no way to know how many elements will flee north from Baghdad, if any. It is important to note, however, that if Myers and USCENTCOM are correct, the Republican Guards have now lost virtually all of their tanks and artillery.

Moreover, if the regular army units are still in place, as Myers said, there is only one Republican Guards Brigade of the Adnan Division to defend Tikrit. The Adnan Division is one of only mediocre quality by Guards standards and a brigade would only have around 50-60 tanks even at full strength.

The issue of defending Tikrit is complicated by the fact that it is in the center of a number of towns loyal to Saddam. The key ones are Samarra, Ad Dawr, and Bayji. If there is any area with broad tribal and ethnic links to Saddam it is here.

At the same time, no one should refer to Tikrit as easily defendable or as a fortress. It is one of the worst cities in Iraq to defend.

- It is long and narrow, with little defensive depth.
- It has been given so much money that streets are often wide and open.
- The main palace complex is totally outside the city with no defensive shield in terms of civilian areas.
- There are three airports on the outskirts that have to be defended.
- It has many major equipment and storage centers, and command and control facilities but these have been hit from the air for some 19 days.
- There are many major routes into the city or just north and south of it, and a bridge crosses the Tigris from the east in its center while two roads go up and easily bridgeable Tigris on either side of the river.



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- A major four-lane bypass goes by the city on the west, allowing easy movement without entering the city.
- The terrain is relatively trafficable off-road all around the city.
- No population in Iraq can arouse less sympathy. This is the center of the families that have supported the regime, manned its security services and profited from it.

As for the 10 divisions in the north, one of the great mysteries of the war is why Saddam left so many forces in place rather than rushed them south the moment it was clear the 4th US Army Infantry Division was not coming through Turkey. These divisions are placed near the Kurdish area and Iranian border and they too have been hit hard for 19 days.

The regular army forces have all been hit hard from the air and include:

- The 1st Corps is headquartered at Kirkuk and the 5th Corps at Mosul. They normally guard the Turkish border area and deploy on the edge of the Kurdish enclave, and guard the oilfields in the north. They have a total of 8 divisions, but only two are heavy mechanized divisions.
- Headquarters and key command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I) facilities of both Corps, and division/brigade headquarters hit hard from the air.
- The 1st Corps: 1 Mechanized Division; 3 Infantry Divisions. It has its headquarters at Khaleed Camp (al Rashid Command Center) in Kirkuk City. It includes the 2nd Infantry Division headquartered at Alrabee, the 5th Mechanized division headquartered at Shuwan, the 8th Infantry Division headquartered at Shuwan, and the 38th Infantry Division headquartered at Quader Karam.
- They have been under significant air attack and recently under limited pressure because of US deployments in the north. Believed to have had some units retreat. Status unknown.
- The 5th Corps: 1 Mechanized Division; 3 Infantry Divisions. It has its headquarters at Alsalamia Camp (Amouria Command Center) in Mosul. It has units defending the border area with Syria and Turkey as well as covering other parts of the north. It includes the 1st Mechanized Division headquartered at Makhmur, the 4th Infantry Division headquartered at Bashiqa Maonten, the 7th Infantry Division headquartered at Alton Kopri Castle, and the 16th Infantry Division headquartered near the Saddam Dam and Mosul.
- They have been under significant air attack and recently under limited pressure because of US deployments in the north. Believed to have had some units retreat. Status unknown.



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- The 2nd Corps is headquartered at the Mansouria Alabal Camp (Al Yarmouk Command Center) in Deyala, and is deployed east of Baghdad to defend against Iran or any attack by Iranian-backed Iraqi opposition forces. It includes the 3rd Armored Division headquartered at Jalawia, the 15th Infantry Division headquartered at Amerli, and the 34th Infantry Division headquartered near Khanaqin.
- They have been under significant air attack and recently under limited pressure because of US deployments in the north. Believed to have had some units retreat. Status unknown.