

changes. First, the new police officers had joined at the urging of their tribal leaders in a society in which tribal relationships were crucial. This bolstered their solidarity and made it more likely they would stand under pressure. Second, enough police officers knew who the individual members of AQI were and were motivated to take action against them. Since AQI drew from the same neighborhoods and demographic pool from which the police came from, this knowledge should not have been difficult to come by. But it was not exploited earlier. The police also brought a great deal of local intelligence with them into the force.³³ One U.S. Army lieutenant, Ed Clark, observed in May that “about 10 percent of our intelligence is actionable, while 90% of their intelligence is actionable.”³⁴

The defection of other insurgent groups was critical. The defectors had good knowledge of AQI, largely because the insurgency was networked across organizational lines prior to 2006. It was usual for Sunni insurgents not only to interact with one another but to use common sources of expertise, such as the subnetworks that created IEDs. Once the groups started breaking off from AQI, those who defected to the police force could more easily find and identify AQI leaders, thanks to their prior knowledge. In a conflict in which intelligence is paramount, former insurgent members were a crucial force multiplier.³⁵

The U.S. Role in al Anbar

The United States played an important, though supportive, role. Indeed, the working relationship between the U.S. military and the Sunni tribes of al Anbar may well have made the difference between

³³ Chris Kraul, “In Ramadi, a Ragtag Solution with Real Results,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 7, 2007, p. A6.

³⁴ Kraul (2007).

³⁵ The insurgents had, in effect, trained many of the new police officers. Consider the following newspaper story: “Marine Sgt. Tony Storey . . . recalls one man who was a natural with his AK-47. ‘Where’d you learn to shoot like that?’ Storey asked. ‘Insurgent,’ the man said with a smile” (Leila Fadel, “Iraq: Old Allegiances Loom Large as U.S. Trains Iraqi Forces,” *Miami Herald*, June 17, 2007, p. A24).