

WHAT TIPPED THE BALANCE?

John Amato provides some perspective on the most ominous development of the week, when Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani announced that he can no longer restrain his followers. Sistani announced this in the last few days. But, as one of Amato's readers pointed out, David Ignatius reported that Sistani was worried about this back in July.

David:... the most important and powerful personality in Iraq issignaling the Bush administration this week that he is worried that thesituation in Iraq is spinning out of control. He is the crucial person.If he gives up on this effort-this effort is overâ€¦

So what happened in the interim? What tipped the balance?