

# The Link

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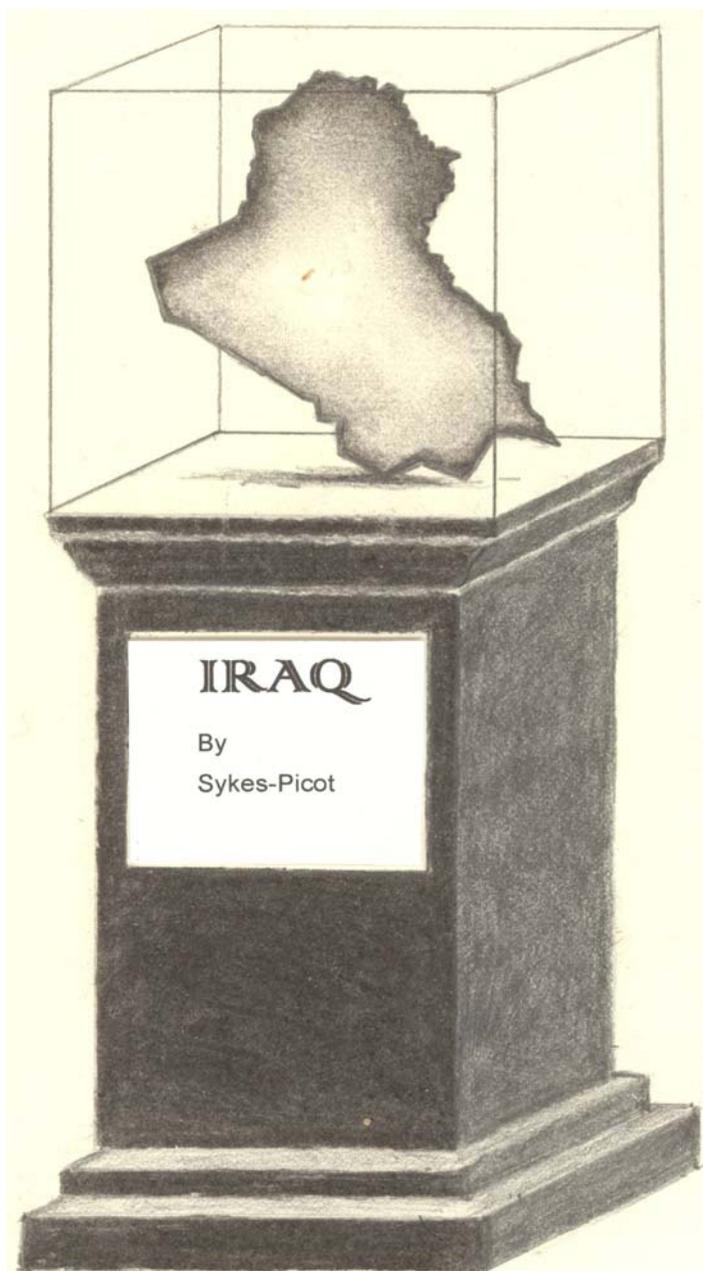
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## The Making Of Iraq

By Geoff Simons

The geographical region that the ancient Greeks called Mesopotamia (“land between the rivers”) and that we know today as Iraq was a fount of civilization. Historians search for original metaphors – a womb, cradle, crucible – as they try to convey the scale of the contribution that the people of the region made to the development of human society. The ancient Iraqis built the first cities on earth, created writing, and devised the first codified legal systems. Here – through such ancient lands as Sumer, Akkad, Babylonia, and Assyria – the cultural brew was stirred from which Western civilization would emerge.



Sykes-Picot's lines in the sand

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## About This Issue

Geoff Simons has written four books on Iraq, his most recent being "Targeting Iraq: Sanctions and Bombing in US Policy," published this year. Denis Halliday, former U.N. Assistant Secretary-General and head of the U.N. Humanitarian Program in Iraq, says of this work, "There is no doubt this is an important book." And *The Times* of London added: "Books either written or edited by Simons can be bought with confidence."



From time to time, over our 35-year history, we have profiled individual Middle Eastern countries. These include: "Saudi Arabia" (vol. 8, 1975, #3); "Syria" (vol. 8, 1975, #4) "Egypt" (vol. 9, 1976, #3); "The Yemen Arab Republic" (vol. 11, 1978, #3); "Jordan" (vol. 12, 1979, #3); and "Kuwait" (vol. 13, 1980, #4). All these issues can now be accessed on our new Web site: [www.ameu.org](http://www.ameu.org).

Surely, if ever Americans had a need to know the history of Iraq — "from Sumer to Saddam," as the title of one of Geoff's books puts it — that time is at hand. Two of Simons' books on Iraq, along with other new entries, are available from our web site catalog.

**John F. Mahoney**  
**Executive Director**

## The Sumerians and Babylonians

The geography of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley, at the heart of Mesopotamia, favored the emergence of civilized communities. The two great rivers and their tributaries made cultivation possible and facilitated trade with the most important regions of the ancient world: Persia, India, Anatolia, the Levant, and all the states of southern Europe. In the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C. farmers were building dikes and canals around the Tigris and Euphrates, and efforts to drain the wetlands were under way. By about 4000 B.C. the people were developing architecture, imaginative mythology, and rules to aid stable social organization.

The Sumerians, responsible for one of the first great explosions of culture on the Mesopotamian plain, were the first people known to have written down epic poems, a type of recorded history, and to have speculated in philosophy and natural science. It was the Sumerians who invented the plough, at first made out of tree branches and later of copper and bronze; the wheel, at first used in pottery making; and writing, at first as a pictographic system and later as an array of symbols depicting sounds. The Sumerian cuneiform method of writing, where a stylus was used to make impressions in clay, was later adopted by the Akkadians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hurrians, and others -- and so served the systematic development of many Semitic and non-Semitic languages.

By 2700 B.C. there were immense libraries in various Sumerian towns. At Tello, for example, archaeologists discovered 30,000 inscribed tablets set out in neat and logical arrays. By 2000 B.C. the Sumerians were recording their history and describing aspects of everyday life. Some ancient accounts, long since lost, are recalled in the works of later cultures. Thus a Babylonian tablet, found at Nippur, carries the Sumerian prototype of the famous "Epic of Gilgamesh," reshaped in a post-Sumerian civilization for a Babylonian au-

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dience. "Gilgamesh" and other Sumerian tales are much older than biblical stories and the chronicles of classical Greece. Here we learn of King Gilgamesh of Uruk, wandering the earth like Homer's Odysseus, and here, too, we read of another Sumerian character, like the Old Testament Noah, surviving a great flood.

The Sumerians also recorded catastrophic military defeats, as in the Elamite invasion from the east. Listen to the Sumerian "Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur":

How, O Sumer, are thy mighty fallen!  
The holy king is banished from his temple.  
The temple itself is destroyed, the city demolished.  
The leaders of the nation have been carried off into captivity.  
A whole empire has been overthrown by the will of the gods.

The "holy king" is Ibi-Sin, the deified monarch of Ur who ruled from 2029 to 2006 B.C. The Elamites sacked the temple of Ishtar and carried off the idol of the goddess. The cult of Ishtar, the Sumerian Aphrodite, survived into Christian times.

The Sumerian "King List," which charted the dynasties, has helped researchers to explore the evolving culture based on the great cities of Eridu, Ur, Uruk, Larsa, Lagash, Nippur, and Nisin. Today the ancient cities are largely buried beneath the desert sand and under later renamed urban settlements. Ur, the most famous of the cities, was called by the Arabs Tell al Muqayyar ("the Mound of Pitch") and is believed by some modern researchers to have been the home of Abraham. Thus ancient Sumeria has significance for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Sumerian civilization inevitably attracted predators. Semitic tribes swept across the open Mesopotamian plains, captured the ancient cities, killed local kings, and settled down to enjoy the fruits of their conquests. This collision of Sumerian civilization with the culture of the conquering tribes generated the later sophisticated culture of Babylonia. The Greeks declared that Babylon contained two of the Seven Wonders of the World, and the Romans saw it as "the greatest city the sun ever beheld."

The outer defenses of Babylon were 10 miles in circumference, 50 feet high and 50 feet deep, all surrounded by a moat. Four-horse chariots could turn on the tops of the walls, which carried 100 bronze gates in the full circumference. Within the walls a rich art and complex mythology flourished, along with science, law and a sophisticated social organization. At the start of the history of Babylon stands the great figure of Hammurabi (2123-2081 B.C.), a conqueror and law-giver through a reign of some 43 years. The famous Code of Hammurabi, comprising 285 laws, was enshrined on a diorite cylinder, unearthed in Susa in 1902, and is now in the Louvre.

To the complex culture of Babylon were added the significant contributions of the conquering Assyrians, the Jews, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Parthians, the Sassanians, and others. All helped to enrich the civilization of the

region, and all proved vulnerable to the energy and ingenuity of later conquerors. The last of the Sassanian kings, the child Yazdgerd, raised an army to resist an Arab invasion, but his forces were crushed on the plain of Nihawand in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Fueled by the warrior tradition of the desert Bedouin and the passion of a new religion, the Arab conquest had begun.

## **The Arabs, Islam, and Baghdad**

The name "Arab" first appears on an inscription of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III who, in 853 B.C., defeated an alliance of states in which King Ahab of Israel was supported by a certain "Jundibu the Arab." Thereafter, many Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions refer to the Aribi or Arabu. The Arabs were later called Ishmaelites, since the Jews came to see the Arabs after the rise of Islam as fellow-descendants of the patriarch Abraham via his son Ishmael.

Mohammad, born in or around 570 A.D., is perceived as The Prophet, a unique messenger of the word of the "one true God." When he died in 632, Mohammad, who had no sons, left no provision for succession. Dispute arose about the nature of his religious legacy, and the early divisions yielded schisms that would run through all the centuries to come. Today, the two major groups within Islam are the Sunnis and Shi'a.

The Arab conflict with the Jews was evident during the life of The Prophet, despite Mohammad's efforts at reconciliation. Failure to reach accommodations led to intellectual diatribes and military conflict. The early Arab victories in war stimulated a dramatic Arab expansion that began with a series of probing raids from the Arabian peninsula, today Saudi Arabia, into Mesopotamia. In 633, the desert to the west of the head of the Persian Gulf was occupied by the large Bedouin tribe of Beni Bekr ibn Wail, formerly loyal to the Arab Lakhmid princes, satellites of the Persian state. Local tribes, intimidated by the Arab onslaught, were quick to offer alliances and to profess Islam.

The Arab forces were formidable, relying on the zeal of their javelin-throwing tribesmen on camels or horses. They captured the Sassanid capital of Ctesiphon on the Tigris, near to what was to be the site of Baghdad, the seat of the later Abbasid caliphs.

Then, around 650, the Arabs poured eastward from the river Euphrates and soon took control of the whole of Mesopotamia, establishing dominion over Syria, Egypt, and Iraq. Persia (today Iran), whose people were conscious of their own imperial past, eventually converted to Islam, while preserving substantial cultural autonomy.

Caliph Muawiyyal (661-680) founded the Umayyad dynasty and moved his capital from Medina in Saudi Arabia to Damascus in Syria. When the Umayyad caliph Hisham died in 734, his dynasty began its irreversible decline, and another

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branch of Mohammad's family, the descendants of his uncle Abbas, assumed leadership. The new dynasty, the Abbasids, moved the focus of the caliphate from Syria to Iraq.

The caliph Abdul Abbas, the first Abbasid Prince of the Faithful, died of smallpox in 754. He was succeeded by his brother Abu Jafar, given the title of al-Mansur, The Victorious. Mansur's most celebrated act was the creation of Baghdad in 762. He is said to have laid the first brick with his own hand.

Situated on the west bank of the Tigris, Baghdad was to emerge as the most splendid metropolis of the time and became known as the Round City or the City of Peace. Its diameter was some two miles, with three concentric walls, each with four gates controlling the highways that radiated from the ca-



The land between the rivers

liph's palace at the center of the city to the four corners of the Muslim empire. The surrounding countryside supported the large city. Grain was brought down from Jazira in northern Iraq, camels could ply trade overland with Persia, and ships could sail down the Tigris to Muslim and other lands. Tribute and taxes fed the treasure-houses of Baghdad, and the great city developed as the heart of a vast trading network.

Baghdad reached the peak of its glory under the caliphs Haroun al-Rashid (786-809) and his son al-Mamun (813-833). Mosques and palaces abounded, as did patios, pavilions, walkways and gardens. Philosophy and science flourished, and a literary revolution erupted. "The Thousand and One Nights" - - immortalizing the exploits of Aladdin, Ali Baba, and Sinbad the Sailor -- dates to this period, many of the tales deriving from far afield in Persia, India, Turkey, and Greece. Haroun and his son often appear in the stories, though some of the main characters -- such as King Shahryar and the prime minister's daughter Shahrazad (Scheherazade) -- carry Persian names.

The Abbasid dynasty, however, was doomed to early extinction. Beset by Turkish forces, Byzantines, and others, the Abbasids could not create and consolidate a unified Muslim empire. The Zanj (slave) revolt further weakened the caliph-

ate, and in 945 the Buyid clan from northwest Persia seized control in Baghdad, finally extinguishing the political power of the caliphs.

## Seljuks, Mogols, and Ottomans

In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Abbasids had developed the practice of importing foreign mercenaries to secure their rule. These guards, known as Mamluks ("owned"), became powerful enough to make and unmake kings, reducing the surviving Abbasids to puppet rulers and mere "shadow-caliphs."

In January 946, Ahmad ibn Buwaith, a Persian tribal chief, broke into the palace, dragged the caliph from his throne, and drove him through the streets to the jeers of the soldiers. His eyes were put out with red-hot irons and he was thrown in jail where he died five years later. Buwaith then installed Mutia as a puppet caliph, reportedly allowing him a daily pittance as pocket money. In 1057, the later puppet caliph Quaim begged the Seljuks, who were Sunni Muslims, to end what had emerged as a Shi'ite domination in Baghdad. In due course Tughril Beg, a Seljuk chief of the Ghuzz tribe, managed to enter Baghdad, whereupon his forces scattered over the region to plunder, rape, and kill. Soon the Seljuk leaders, predominantly Turkish, had assumed most of the powers of the caliphs. They, not the caliphs, now made the political decisions that determined the fate of Baghdad and the surrounding region.

When the Crusades were launched in 1094 as a transparent effort to establish European control over the riches of the Middle East and beyond, they came to comprise in large part a struggle between the Christian Europeans and the Muslim Seljuks. The Arab populations had been squeezed out of the centers of power, and it was left to the Turks to defend their holdings in the region. History records that Muslims were generally tolerant of Jews and Christians, but the Crusades helped to erode this tradition of tolerance. We need only remember the testimony of Raymond of Aquiles on the Christian conquest of Jerusalem:

Wonderful sights were to be seen. Some of our men...cut off the heads of our enemies; others shot them with arrows...others tortured them longer by casting them into the flames. Piles of heads, hands and feet were to be seen in the streets...men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins...it was a just and splendid judgment of God that this place should be filled with the blood of the unbelievers.

In such a fashion the Europeans indelibly marked the Muslim perception of Christian cruelty and ambition. But, accord-

ing to some late Muslim historians, there was even worse to come --- the onslaught on Islam by the Mongol horde.

In January 1258, a vast Mongol army, having swept across Mesopotamia, reached Baghdad, and the inhabitants knew what to expect. Whenever the Mongols attacked a city the pattern was the same. They bombarded the defensive walls, after which slaves were forced to lead the assault. Then all the surviving inhabitants were marshaled outside the city walls, the women to be raped, and thereafter all the people -- men, women, and children -- to be butchered.

On January 30, 1258, Hulagu, a grandson of Genghis Khan, ordered the bombardment of Baghdad to begin. Within three days the defenses were in ruins, while Mongol engineers were breaking the irrigation dikes to flood the city and drown the inhabitants. The survivors were then assembled on the plain outside Baghdad, where they were shot and hacked to death, their corpses piled in heaps. It is estimated that around 800,000 men, women, and children were killed over a period of days in the streets and houses of Baghdad and on the plain outside the city. European Christians reportedly took great delight at the sacking of the great Muslim city.

The Mongols were superstitious about shedding the blood of sovereign princes, so they resisted their natural impulse to shoot or hack to death the caliph Mustasim and his sons. Instead they rolled them in carpets before trampling them under the hooves of the victims' horses. Thus the Abbasid caliphate, long moribund, was extinguished in 1258, and all the glories of medieval Baghdad were reduced to ruins.

By now a Persian national revival under the Safavid dynasty was leading to substantial territorial gains in Mesopotamia and elsewhere. The Mongol Tamerlane had achieved yet another conquest of Baghdad, but thereafter the Mongol supremacy waned and the Safavids took control of Basra, Baghdad, and other parts of Iraq. A long contest between the Persian Safavids and the Turkish Ottomans eventually yielded a definitive peace on May 17, 1639, whereupon the final borders between Iraq and Persia were established and the Ottomans consolidated their grip on Iraq.

Soon the long decline of the Ottoman empire began until, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ottoman dominion was widely perceived as the "sick man of Europe." Its final collapse during the First World War, however, did not yield the long-overdue emancipation of Iraq and the other occupied lands. The Arab Nation was now about to face another imperialism, one that in due course would be given a fresh impetus by the discovery of immense oil reserves throughout the region.

## The Western Impact

Iraq, under the Ottomans, had remained one of the most backward regions of the Turkish empire: it was poorly governed and underdeveloped, with Ottoman interests generally focused elsewhere. The appointed *walis* (governors) had prob-

lems trying to discipline the desert tribes and the settled Kurdish communities in the north of the country. But, although the area remained backward, the Europeans were becoming increasingly aware of the region's potential strategic and commercial importance.

As early as 1798 Britain had dispatched a permanent agent to Baghdad, a small response to Napoleon's supposed intention to march across Mesopotamia to India. In 1836, the British government decided to fund an expedition to explore the possibility of using steamboats to navigate the Euphrates from its source in Syria to its outlet on the gulf; by the 1850s the possibility of expanding the railway communications in the region was being considered.

Russian expansion in Persia represented a threat to British communications in the Middle East, and so a plan for the Euphrates Valley railway to link the Mediterranean to the gulf stimulated much official thought. The British focus on protecting the colony of India concentrated attention on Mesopotamia, apart from any additional or strategic benefits that Iraq might offer.

Between 1900 and 1902, ships totaling 478,000 tons called at Basra, and the vast majority of these flew the British flag. Britain supplied 65 percent of the Mesopotamian market, most of such trade being cloth exported from Manchester. Within Iraq itself British merchants controlled much of the carrying trade; e.g., the Euphrates and Tigris Navigation Company, established in 1859, was a British family concern. The British Consul General at Baghdad maintained his own steamer, the *Comet*, on the Tigris and was protected by his own Sepoy contingent of Indian soldiers.

The discovery of oil in the region in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century soon focused British attention on Kuwait as a vital strategic area. Thus on January 23, 1899, the secessionist Sheikh Mubarak, wanting Kuwait to withdraw from the Ottoman *vilayet* of Basra, one of the chief administrative divisions of Turkey, signed an agreement with Britain guaranteeing British protection in return for an assurance that neither he nor his heirs would "cede, sell, lease or mortgage, or give for occupation or for any other purpose a portion of his territory to the government of any other power without the previous consent of Her Majesty's Government." Kuwait was properly a part of Iraq, but it suited Britain and the upstart Mubarak to pretend otherwise.

The collapse of the Ottoman empire during WWI served to intensify British, French, and American efforts to control the Middle East. On April 27, 1919, at the San Remo Conference, Britain and France agreed to monopolize all Middle Eastern oil, excluding the United States on the ground that the U.S. excluded all non-American interests from areas it controlled. Baghdad had fallen to the British in 1917, and at the end of the war the British forces were in control of most of Iraq. It was soon plain that Britain and France would ignore promises of Arab independence.

The notorious Sykes-Picot memorandum, approved by the British and French cabinets in early February 1916, carved up

the region in a way that largely conformed with the mandates authorized by the new League of Nations a few years later. That this is far from forgotten history for Iraqis was underlined in an October 25, 2002 New York Times article by Daniel Wakin who reported that the idea of a U.S. role in a post-Saddam Iraq “summons up angry emotions in a region where sensitivities about the colonial past run deep. When asked about American plans for Iraq, people here evoke the Sykes-Picot agreement...”.

Britain and France then set about deciding what was to be done with their new quasi-colonial territories. The French, as expected, kept Syria and Lebanon, with the British controlling Palestine and Mesopotamia. On November 2, 1916, the followers of Sharif Hussein of Mecca proclaimed him “King of the Arab Countries,” a title that was immediately rejected by Britain and France. But in 1921, the London strategists, with Mesopotamia renamed Iraq, saw advantage in planting Hussein’s son, Feisal, as the puppet king of Iraq. Soon afterwards, Sir Percy Cox, the British Political Representative in the gulf, was busy drawing up the frontiers between Kuwait, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

Accounts of his efforts are revealing. At one point, he lost patience with the negotiations, upbraided Ibn Saud, the future king of Saudi Arabia, and quickly drew lines on the map to settle the issue. In a different mood Cox may well have created different frontiers in the Middle East. As it was, the frontiers between Iraq and Kuwait had been determined at the whim of a British official.

Resentful of their new colonial status, the Arabs struggled to resist the military occupation by the colonial powers. It was an unequal contest. Arab casualties numbered in the thousands and Winston Churchill, British Colonial Secretary, is quoted in David Omissi’s “Air Power and Colonial Control” as saying “I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favor of using poison gas against uncivilized tribes.”

Nor was it only the Arabs who were treated in such a fashion; Wing-Commander Gale, of the 30th Squadron of the Royal Air Force, later observed: “If the Kurds hadn’t learned by our example to behave themselves in a civilized way then we had to spank their bottoms. This was done by bombs and guns.” And another Wing-Commander, Arthur Harris, the architect of the bombing of urban centers in WWI, added: “The Arab and Kurd now know what real bombing means in casualties and damage. Within forty-five minutes a full-size village can be practically wiped out and a third of its inhabitants killed or injured.”

British technology was able to produce a range of hideous weapons for use against the defenseless Arabs and Kurds: phosphorus bombs, war rockets, metal crowsfeet to maim people and livestock, shrapnel, liquid fire, and delay-action bombs.

### **Independence, Monarchy, and Republic**

Most Westerners viewed the prospect of Iraqi independ-

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**“I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favor of using poison gas against uncivilized tribes.”**

**– Winston Churchill**

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ence with a racist mixture of alarm and disdain. Many would have agreed with Wing-Commander Gale when, in a televised interview for London’s Channel 4 on July 6, 1992, he talked about the “gutter rats who were the Arabs – and they *were* gutter rats.” Even Westerners disinclined to use such language were likely to assume that the Arabs did not know what was best for themselves; such a mentality, wrote John Glubb in “War in the Desert, An RAF Frontier Campaign,” illustrated “the unconscious Western conviction that the peoples of the Middle East are incompetent to handle their own affairs”.

In any event, Britain, tiring of its colonial role, soon prepared to abandon the mandate. It was important to preserve British interests in Iraq, but a puppet monarch would do the trick.

In March 1925, the first Iraqi parliamentary elections were held under British supervision, and Iraqi ministers became responsible for a two-chamber parliament. Already there were insistent Iraqi calls for complete independence. A 1930 Anglo-Iraqi treaty envisaged a final British withdrawal in 1932 and an Iraq seat in the League of Nations at the same time. Britain remained convinced that its enduring influence in a strong Iraq would preserve British influence in the Middle East.

The puppet King Feisal died in 1933, the year after independence, to be succeeded by his son Ghazi, who lacked authority. There were seven political coups between 1936 and 1941, and no scope for the emergence of independent political parties.

The effective military ruler General Bakr Sidqi seized power in 1936, only to be assassinated ten months later; and after a further brief period of turmoil the pro-West General Nuri al-Said took power, a repressive autocrat to whom the British had no objection. In 1939, King Ghazi was killed in an automobile accident and was succeeded by his infant son, Feisal II, under a regent.

In March 1940, Nuri fell from power and Rashid Ali al-Gilani, sympathetic to the German fascists, seized control of

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the government. When France collapsed in 1940, Britain demanded more military bases in Iraq, a demand that Rashid immediately rejected. Hitler soon sent arms to Baghdad and dispatched German military advisors to help Rashid retain power. After substantial British attacks on the Iraqi forces, Rashid, despite Nazi support, was forced to flee into Iran. The pro-Nazi regime in Baghdad was at an end, Nuri al-Said was again installed as a puppet prime minister, and Iraq had fallen yet again under dominant British influence.

Throughout the period of the Iraqi monarchy -- a span of less than three decades -- a constant reshuffling of ministers produced 59 cabinets averaging only eight months each. On July 14, 1958, this period of turmoil ended when 200 "Free Offi-



Lines in the sand: The Middle East 1935

cers," headed by Brigadier Abdel Karim Kassim, overthrew the monarchy. Feisal II and many of his supporters, men and women, were shot dead and the corpse of the pro-British former regent Abdul Ilah was dragged through the streets. Nuri himself tried to escape but was killed when his man's shoes were seen protruding from a woman's *abba*. At first he was buried in a shallow grave; later the body was dug up and repeatedly run over by municipal buses until, in the words of one eyewitness, it resembled *bastourma*, a sausage meat. There seems to have been no doubt that the United States and Britain would have invaded Iraq in 1958 had there been any chance of restoring the monarchy, but it was now clear that Hashemite rule was at an end in Baghdad. The Hashemite monarchy, with Western military aid, was managing to survive in Jordan, but the role of Britain in Arab politics was now massively diminished.

In June 1961, Kuwait ended its 1899 agreement with Britain, and soon thereafter declared its full independence. Abdul Karim Kassim refused to recognize the new state, claiming that Kuwait belonged to Iraq, a claim he based on a 1913 Anglo-Ottoman draft agreement that described Kuwait as part of the Ottoman *vilayet* or province of Basra, i.e., the land that later became Iraq. Kassim said he did not intend to use force to regain the province, although he never ruled it out. In the end he did nothing.

Various coups were attempted against Kassim between 1958 and 1963, when he was finally toppled by a former collaborator, Abdul Salaam Arif. On February 4, 1963, four days before the coup, Kassim revealed that he had received a threatening note from the U.S. State Department. On February 12, as thousands of Iraqis were being massacred following the coup, *Le Monde* reported from Washington: "The present coup is not regarded as a menace to U.S. interests; on the contrary, it is regarded as a pro-Western re-orientation in the Middle East." And, on February 21, the Paris *L'Express* reported: "The Iraqi coup was inspired by the C.I.A."

The Kassim regime, the first republican government of Iraq, had been crushed, probably with the assistance of the West. Now the Iraqi Baath Party, the party of Saddam Hussein, was in power. Relations with the West, specifically the United States were improved; Kassim's claims to Kuwait were repudiated, and Kuwait's independence recognized. Saddam would have to wait years before becoming master of the Baath Party, but in the brutal theater of Iraqi politics he was already learning a ruthless pragmatism.

## Saddam Hussein

The 1970s saw increasing tensions between the Baathists and the other contending political factions. Saddam was rising quickly through the party ranks, learning that it would be helpful to cooperate with the C.I.A. and other covert American operators.

After the coup against Kassim, and his execution, the C.I.A. was quick to prepare lists of people to be assassinated by pro-West death squads. At this time, Saddam Hussein was one of several Iraqis who added names to the C.I.A. death lists, and upon his return from exile in Cairo, he reportedly involved himself in the torture and arbitrary execution of leftists who were perceived by the C.I.A. as representing a threat to American interests. Such anti-Communist credentials would endear him to Washington for most of the next three decades.

The first post-Kassim Baathist regime was toppled in a coup in 1966. Then, on July 17 1968, the Baathists, with essential army support, staged a successful coup in Baghdad. This coup, staged by General Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, supported by Michel Aflaq and Saddam Hussein, firmly established the Baathists in power.

Now Saddam's route to ultimate power in Iraq was clear, and he made it plain that the Baathists, not the army, would be in control of events: "We should collaborate with them, the army officers, but see that they are liquidated immediately during or after the revolution. And," he added, "I volunteer to carry out this task." (Amir Iskander, "Saddam Hussein: The Fighter, the Thinker and the Man," Hachette, Paris, 1980, p. 110.)

On the ruins of the anti-Baathist regime was established a government in which Saddam Hussein would quickly become a dominant influence.

Throughout the 1970s, Saddam -- still regarded favorably by the United States -- worked to secure his power base. He established relatives in crucial army command units, at the same time spending oil revenues to bolster army morale. The armed forces, formerly seen as a threat to civilian power, were now developed as a useful bulwark against opposition to Sad-

dam. President Bakr was happy enough to have Saddam as his deputy, for he had enabled the Baathists to rule over a now secure country.

But the days of Bakr's presidency were numbered. On July 17, 1979, Saddam Hussein declared himself president of Iraq. Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, "owing to poor health," resigned and was put under house arrest.

Five days later, Saddam carried out a terror purge of the party in a closed session attended by nearly one thousand cadres. A videotape of these proceedings was later distributed among party members to signal the new political situation. In the presence of a relaxed Saddam Hussein prominent Baathists were forced to read out confessions of their parts in supposed plots against the nation and its leadership. Saddam himself, in a dreadful exercise of terror, slowly read out the names of the

next men to confess. At times he hesitated, moving over names and then returning to them, pausing for maximum dramatic effect. At last, after proceedings that lasted days, a body of "convicted" men was finalized and forced to face the firing squad.

Saddam had emerged victorious; now no one was left in a position to challenge his authority. He had complete power over the Baathist Party, the army, the security services, the courts -- over all the organs of the Iraqi state. He would consolidate and maintain his power through the ruthless use of terror.

At the same time, however, the socialist elements in the Baathist philosophy meant that there would also be worthwhile social reforms. The Saddam regime invested heavily in education at all levels and in a multilayered health service. It encouraged the development of traditional Iraqi culture.

As a secular ruler, Saddam was committed to the protection of religious freedom. Iraqi citizens remain free to teach and practice Christianity; Christian seminaries are allowed to function without state interference, provided they do not become involved in politics. Saddam also supported the education of women and improved their status through legislation. As Nicholas Kristof concluded in his Oct. 1, 2002 New York Times column, "...Iraq offers an example of how an Arab country can adhere to Islam and yet provide women with opportunities."

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## **The torturer Saddam was a darling of the C.I.A. strategists, and the U.S.-Saddam love affair was set to last for almost three decades.**

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## **The Iran-Iraq War: 1980-1988**

This war graphically reveals the remarkable degree of American support for Saddam Hussein.

On July 4, 1937, Iran and Iraq had signed a frontier treaty agreeing to the demarcation of their borders, with the Shatt al-Arab waterway a shared conduit for commerce and other traffic. In 1969, the pro-West Shah of Iran pressed for a change in the frontier arrangements, while a Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq encouraged the Iranian regime to press its claims. In effect, Tehran had unilaterally abrogated the 1937 treaty and was using the Shatt al-Arab as if it were Iranian territorial waters. At the same time, the Shah was helping to supply arms from Israel and the United States to the Kurdish rebels.

Baghdad was also nursing other grievances. The region of Khuzistan/Arabistan was controlled by Iran but, according to Baghdad, had been stolen from Iraq under Ottoman pressure. On November 30, 1971, Iran occupied the Lesser Tunb Island, Iraqi territory, giving Baghdad further grounds for complaint. The resolutely pro-Shah United States sanctioned all these events, and all Iraq's efforts to seek redress through the United Nations came to nothing. One consequence was that U.S. policy pushed Baghdad closer to the Soviet Union.

Soon everything changed.

In February 1979, the ayatollah Khomeini seized power in

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Iran, the pro-U.S. Shah was overthrown, and Washington began to rethink its alliances in the region.

On September 22, 1980, Iraq's armies invaded Iran along an 800-mile front, from Khorramshahr in the south to Qasr-e Shirin in the north. Baghdad had decided that its residual territorial grievances could only be settled by the use of force, and that the United States would have no interest in defending the Islamic fundamentalist regime in Tehran that had toppled Washington's puppet Shah.

Saddam Hussein's calculations proved accurate. The United States did not only abstain from events in the early period of the Iran-Iraq War, it soon became an active co-belligerent with Iraq in an anti-Iran coalition.

American toleration of Saddam's military initiative was well illustrated in 1981, a few months after the start of the war. On June 7, Israeli aircraft bombed an Iraqi nuclear reactor, being built with French assistance, near Baghdad. The objective of the Israeli raid was to prevent the emergence of an Iraqi nuclear capacity that might have been used to produce nuclear weapons. This pre-emptive Israeli strike, however, was immediately condemned by President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

At the same time, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 487 condemning the Israeli action and calling upon Israel to refrain in the future from any such acts or threats. Washington and London had voted for a resolution that denounced Israel in favor of Iraq, recognized "the inalienable sovereign right of Iraq" to establish programs of nuclear development for peaceful purposes, and called upon Israel to pay compensation to Iraq "for the destruction it has suffered."

Hence, Iraq's invasion of Iran -- cited today to justify a new U.S.-led war against Saddam -- caused Washington no concern at the time. The United States offered Iraq diplomatic support both publicly and at the United Nations, and it was not long before this support assumed a military aspect.

The war dragged on inconclusively, with hundreds of thousands of casualties, for several years, but it became increasingly obvious that the United States was unwilling to tolerate an Iranian victory.

On May 17, 1987, an Iraqi Super-Etendard aircraft fired two Exocet missiles at the U.S. frigate *Stark*, apparently mistaking it for an Iranian ship. The vessel was badly damaged and 37 American sailors were killed -- but U.S.-Iraqi relations were such that the Reagan administration quickly accepted Iraqi expressions of regret.

In July 1988, the U.S. frigate *Samuel B. Roberts* was badly damaged by a mine, and in September and October there were military confrontations between Iranian and U.S. forces. The U.S. Navy sank six Iranian warships and patrol boats, and attacked a number of Iranian oil platforms. When an Iranian Silkworm missile struck a U.S.-flagged Kuwaiti supertanker, the Reagan administration threatened more reprisals. U.S. forces had already killed several hundred Iranians and caused other casualties.

On May 29, 1987, Richard Armitage, U.S. assistant defense secretary, publicly stated: "We can't stand to see Iraq defeated" (MERIP Middle East Report, Sept-Oct. 1987, p. 4).

Saudi Arabia and Kuwait contributed around \$50 billion to the Iraqi war effort, and warships from Britain, France, the Netherlands, Italy, and Belgium were sent to the gulf to supplement the American fleet. Iraq's aggression against Iran was supported by a substantial coalition led by the United States.

Chemical weapons, produced from materials supplied by the U.S. and other countries, were used by both Iraq and Iran. The most publicized Iraqi use of such "weapons of mass destruction" was against the Kurds of Halabja in March 1988 -- another event that is used today to justify a new war against Saddam Hussein. Interestingly, though, the first U.S. report on Halabja blamed the Iranians, not the Iraqis, for the deaths of 5,000 Kurds. A 1990 Pentagon report noted: "Iraq was blamed for the Halabja attack, even though it was subsequently brought out that Iran too had used chemicals in this operation...it seemed likely that it was the Iranian bombardment that had actually killed the Kurds." ("Iraqi Power and U.S. Security in the Middle East," Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 17013-5050, 1990, p. 52).

Of course, none of this shows that Saddam Hussein was not responsible for the Halabja chemical attack. What it does show is how committed Washington was to protect its Iraqi ally. In the two years after Halabja, when the effects of the chemical attack were widely known, the United States remained enthusiastic in its support for the Iraqi president. Between 1978 and 1988, it even shipped strains of anthrax to Iraq, as reported in *The New York Times* of October 11, 2002.

Later in 1988, with the war over, the U.S. Commerce Department sponsored U.S. high-tech equipment at the Baghdad Trade Fair, proclaiming that Iraq was a splendid opportunity for American business. The appalling human rights record of Saddam was well known in the United States and some voices were raised in favor of imposing economic sanctions. The Reagan administration dismissed such moves as "premature."

On June 4, 1989, the U.S.-Iraq Business Forum sponsored a 23-member business delegation to Iraq. The high point of the trip was a meeting between Saddam Hussein and senior executives from Amoco, Mobile, Occidental, Westinghouse, General Motors, Xerox, Bell Textron, First City Bancorporation of Texas, and other companies. Alan Stoga, a senior associate of Henry Kissinger's New York consulting firm, was present to help Saddam reschedule his debts.

In 1990, Saddam Hussein -- having been provided with substantial military support by the United States, protected from sanctions by successive U.S. administrations, and negotiating business deals with top American executives -- had every reason to believe that his happy relationship with Washington would continue. He had protected the pro-U.S. gulf states from a resurgent Islamic fundamentalism, for which he had paid an enormous cost in men and treasure.

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What Saddam now wanted was to rebuild Iraq with the help of his former allies.

## The Invasion of Kuwait

At the end of the Iran-Iraq War Saddam Hussein was faced with a disrupted society and debt-ridden economy. He considered political changes that would aid social reconstruction, visited President Mubarak in Cairo to discuss creation of a council of the non-gulf Arab states (Egypt, Jordan, and North Yemen) which had supported Iraq in the war, and hosted an international military exhibition in Baghdad that drew 168 British companies, including the leading arms producer British Aerospace.

But now events were conspiring to damage Iraq's relations with the West. On April 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein gave an hour-long speech to his army that was broadcast in full on Baghdad Radio. No doubt, remembering the illegal Israeli bombing of the Isirak nuclear reactor near to Baghdad in 1981 and aware of Israeli nuclear weapons, Saddam referred to Iraq's chemical weapons: "By God, if the Israelis try anything against us, we'll see to it that half their country is destroyed by fire...Whoever threatens us with atomic bombs will be exterminated with chemical weapons" (quoted in Pierre Salinger and Eric Laurent, "Secret Dossier: The Hidden Agenda behind the Gulf War," 1991. p. 21).

Washington immediately branded the speech "inflammatory, outrageous, and irresponsible," but did not indicate that Saddam was talking only of a response to an Israeli nuclear attack, and paid no attention to U.N. resolution 487 (1981) that — in accord with the public statements of President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher — had unanimously condemned the earlier Israeli bombing of Iraq.

It was clear also that Kuwait, despite OPEC agreements, was massively exceeding its allowed oil quotas, causing a huge drop in oil prices which hurt a financially strapped Iraq. According to Mohamed Heikal, Iraq's oil revenue had slumped by \$7 billion and it could be argued that Baghdad was facing economic suffocation. ("Illusions of Triumph," HarperCollins, London, 1992, p. 137).

On May 30, 1990, Saddam Hussein commented to participants at an extraordinary Arab summit in Baghdad:

For every U.S. dollar drop in the price of a barrel of oil, the Iraqi loss amounted to \$1 billion annually...War is fought with soldiers and harm is done by explosions, killing and coup attempts, but it is also done by economic means sometimes. I say to those who do not mean to wage war on Iraq, that this is in fact a kind of war against Iraq. Were it possible we would have endured...But I say that we have reached a point where we can no longer withstand pressure.

— Baghdad Radio, June 18, 1990

Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, seemingly oblivious to the damage being done to the Iraqi economy, continued to

produce oil as they wished, despite appeals from other OPEC members. In addition, Iraq charged that Kuwait was continuing to take excessive amounts of oil from the Iraqi Rumeila oilfield, which extends into Kuwait, and that Kuwait refused to transfer or lease the two islands of Warbar and Bubiyan, which dominate the estuary leading to Iraq's southern port of Umm Qasr.

In the context of these and other grievances, Saddam had little reason to believe that the United States, despite some unsympathetic words and acts, would take action following an Iraqi move against Kuwait in order to forestall the ultimate collapse of the Iraqi economy. It even seemed that Washington was taking pains to advertise its indifference to the mounting crisis between Iraq and Kuwait.

On April 12, 1990, Saddam met with five U.S. senators: Robert Dole, Alan Simpson, Howard Metzenbaum, James McClure, and Frank Murkowski. The U.S. Ambassador, April Glaspie, was also there.

No one reading the various transcripts of this meeting can doubt the general placatory tone. The senators, in their attempts to propitiate Saddam, even criticized the U.S. press, with Senator Dole pointing out that a commentator on Voice of America, who had not been given authority to comment on Iraq, had been removed from his job.

Senator Simpson denounced the Western press for presuming to criticize Saddam as "haughty and pampered," whereupon Senator Metzenbaum commented: "I have been sitting and listening to you [Saddam] for about an hour, and I am now aware that you are a strong and intelligent man and that you want peace."

On July 24, 1990, as two Iraqi armored divisions were taking up positions on the Kuwaiti border, U.S. State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler emphasized that the United States did not have "any defense treaties with Kuwait, and there are no special defense or security commitments to Kuwait." The next day U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie declared to Saddam:

I admire your extraordinary efforts to rebuild your country. I know you need funds. We understand that and our opinion is that you should have the opportunity to rebuild your country. But we have no opinion on Arab-Arab conflicts like your border disagreement with Kuwait.

Glaspie then added:

I was in the American Embassy in Kuwait during the late 1960s. The instruction we had during that period was that we should express no opinion on this issue and that the issue was not associated with America. James Baker [U.S. Secretary of State] has directed our official spokesman to emphasize this instruction...when we see the Iraqi point of view that the measures taken by the U.A.E. and Kuwait are, in

the final analysis, tantamount to military aggression against Iraq, then it is reasonable to be concerned.

In short, *in late July 1990, the U.S. ambassador to Baghdad was telling Saddam Hussein that he had a legitimate case against Kuwait and that the matter was no business of the United States.*

On July 31, 1990, two days before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the U.S. assistant secretary of state, John Kelly, declared before a House of Representatives subcommittee that the United States had no defense treaty relationship with any gulf country. Asked about the possibility of an Iraqi invasion, Kelly yet again stressed that the United States had no "treaty commitment which would obligate us to engage U.S. forces."

On August 2, 1990, Iraqi forces rolled across Kuwait's border. Economic sanctions were immediately imposed on Iraq, first independently by various states and then under U.N. auspices.

The U.S.-led Operations Desert Storm and Desert Sabre succeeded in driving the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. The equivalent of seven Hiroshima atomic bombs were dropped on Iraq, some 200,000 Iraqi conscripts were variously dismembered and incinerated in the desert. Saddam, however, would remain.

Throughout the 1990s and beyond, the Iraqi civilian population was forced to endure a genocidal sanctions regime that by November 2002 had killed 1,700,000 people, most of them children. And the United States, with full British support, continued to bombard the country with a fearsome range of munitions.

In June 1993, an alleged Iraqi assassination plot against former U.S. President George Bush was used as the pretext for a cruise missile onslaught. The Clinton administration did not wait for a Kuwaiti court to reach a verdict on the accused men, and was not troubled by reports that the plot suspects had been tortured into giving confessions.

On June 26, 1993, some 23 cruise missiles were fired at Baghdad from U.S. cruisers in the gulf. Washington admitted that about seven of the missiles had missed their targets, killing more civilians.

Among the dead was Leila al-Attar, the world-renowned Iraqi artist killed with her husband when a cruise missile hit their home. Commenting on the bombing on his way to church, President Clinton said: "I feel quite good about what transpired. I think the American people should feel good" (Patrick Cockburn in *The Independent*, London, June 28, 1993).

On April 14, 1995, the United Nations Security Council, under U.S. pressure, adopted Resolution 986, ostensibly as a means of providing humanitarian relief to the suffering Iraqi people. In fact, SCR 986, the so-called "Oil-for-Food" resolution, was intended to serve various purposes. Its humanitarian provisions were largely nullified by the simple blocking of humanitarian contracts in the U.N. Sanctions Committee by the U.S. and British representatives.

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**"...we have no opinion on Arab-Arab conflicts like your border disagreement with Kuwait."**

U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie to President Saddam Hussein, July 25, 1990.

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Typically, many billions of dollars worth of humanitarian supplies were prevented from reaching the Iraqi people by the use of the American or British veto in the Committee. Hence, Iraq was effectively denied the full benefits of its own oil revenues, while at the same time the United States was gaining access to Iraqi oil and, under specific terms of SCR 986, arranging for "compensation" to be paid out of the Iraqi revenues to U.S.-friendly claimants (For full analysis of SCR 986, see my book "Targeting Iraq," chapter 10).

On January 26, 1998, a group of influential Americans wrote an open letter to President Clinton urging American action to overthrow the Saddam regime. The signers included many who would become leading figures in the administration of George W. Bush: Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Robert Zoellick, Richard Armitage, John Bolton, Paula Dobriansky, Peter Rodman, and Elliott Abrams.

Yet even during this period, U.S. companies continued to do business with Saddam. When now Vice President Richard Cheney was running Halliburton, the oil services firm, it sold more equipment to Iraq than any other company. According to *The Financial Times* of November 3, 2000, Halliburton subsidiaries in 1998 and 1999 submitted \$23.8 million worth of contracts with Iraq for approval by the U.N. sanctions committee.

In February 1998, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan journeyed to Baghdad to successfully negotiate a new weapons-inspection agreement with the Iraqi government. A principal element of the agreement was that the eight presidential sites would be open to inspection, but that diplomats appointed by the U.N. Secretary-General would accompany the inspectors. U.S. Secretary of Defense William Cohen worried that the Annan initiative "put the [U.S.] President in a box."

Backed by Great Britain, Washington worked to undo the new agreement. It urged the Security Council to adopt a fresh resolution that would justify new military action against Iraq. That effort failed: the Council refused to adopt a U.S.-sponsored war resolution. Washington continued to push for war. The result was the launching of Operation Desert Fox on December 16, 1998, without any U.N. authorization.

Operation Desert Fox was the most massive bombing campaign against Iraq since the 1991 gulf war. Targets included:

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the Hail Adel residential area on the outskirts of Baghdad, the Baghdad Teaching Hospital, the main grain silo in Tikrit, the Basra oil refinery, the Baghdad home of Hala, Saddam's daughter, the Baghdad Museum of Natural History, the Tikrit Teaching Hospital, and the Baghdad Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, responsible for the distribution of food rations.

On February 16, 2001, the United States and Great Britain launched a further massive bombing campaign using nearly 100 aircraft, as the new Bush administration laid its plans for a major war that would achieve "regime change," arguing that Saddam Hussein had ignored all the relevant resolutions on weapons inspections and that the United States was obliged to wage war on a criminal regime.

Yet U.N. reports from 1994 and 1995 attest to the high level of Iraq's cooperation with U.N. inspectors. Even in the period immediately prior to the launching of Operation Desert Fox, between November 18 and December 12, 1998, when the United States pressed for the withdrawal of the U.N. inspectors, the UNSCOM inspectors reported "obstructions" to approximately one percent of its 423 inspections. These included one case of a 45-minute delay before access was granted, and another when Iraq balked at a demand by a U.S. inspector to interview all the undergraduate students in Baghdad University's Science Department. Two other cases had to do with UNSCOM's request to inspect two establishments on a Friday, the Muslim holy day; since the establishments were closed, Iraq asserted that the inspections must be held another day or that an Iraqi official would accompany the inspectors, in accordance with an agreement between UNSCOM and Iraq regarding Friday inspections.

It was also disclosed that the United States was using UNSCOM for espionage purposes, a fact recently admitted by Rolf Ekeus, former head of the inspectors, in a radio interview published in the Swedish newspaper *Dagbladet* on July 29, 2002.

In late September 2002, the first draft resolution submitted by the Bush administration to the United Nations called for "no-fly" and "no-drive" zones, as well as "exclusion zones" to be established by U.S. forces in Iraq on the grounds of guaranteeing weapons inspections. In effect, this would have barred Iraqis from parts of their own country.

A revised draft retaining these provisions did nothing to dissuade other Security Council members, Britain apart, that Washington was looking for a "fig-leaf" to justify a massive aggression against Iraq.

In October 2002, the Congress of the United States gave President Bush authorization to make war on Iraq.

## A U.N. Resolution for Colonization and War

On November 8, 2002, the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1441, a virtually unchanged draft designed to make Iraqi compliance impossible. Hans Blix,

head of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (Unmovic), and other commentators were happy to acknowledge the "intrusive" nature of the new powers granted to the U.N. inspectors. None of the early commentary, however, focused on the massive scope of the new provisions.

The new powers ("revised or additional authorities") are described in Paragraph 7 of the resolution. Here we find a list of extraordinary provisions that, at the time of writing, have received no detailed public discussion. For example, Unmovic and IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) inspectors, protected by armed personnel, now have the power to establish "exclusion zones, including surrounding areas and transit corridors, in which Iraq will suspend ground or aerial movement." This provision, nominally intended to prevent the Iraqis from tampering with a site under inspection, in fact confers massive powers on the foreigners in Iraq.

It means that Iraqi officials and civilians can be barred from *any* part of their own country at the whim of U.N. staff. The resolution puts no limit on the size of the exclusion zones, the surrounding areas, or the transit corridors; and no limit on how long Iraqi ground and aerial movements will be suspended.

This colonization provision is directly supported by other powers in SCR 1441. Thus there is "free and unrestricted use and landing of fixed and rotary-winged aircraft, including manned and unmanned reconnaissance vehicles." In short, fighter-bombers, spy planes, helicopters, and unmanned drones are now authorized to range over the whole of Iraq and to land anywhere. If a U.S. plane bombs Iraqi territory and Iraqi forces try to shoot it down, the Iraqi forces will be in "material breach" of the resolution — a point explicitly made a few hours after the adoption of SCR 1441 by Richard Perle, President Bush's advisor.

Hence, the Security Council has not only legalized the existing "no fly" zones (condemned as illegal by former U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali) but has given U.N. staff the power to declare *any* part of Iraq a "no-fly no-drive" zone.

The resolution also authorizes U.N. staff, accompanied by military personnel, to have an unrestricted right of access to any sites and buildings, including presidential sites. This may sound reasonable, if the aim is to detect hidden weapons facilities, but the implications of such all-embracing authorization are massive. It means that foreign personnel can at any time demand access to Iraq's security apparatus, its military infrastructure, its research facilities, its government ministries, its schools and colleges, its clinics and hospitals, its factories — and all the homes of the Iraqi civilian population and government staff. The resolution authorizes armed personnel, acting without warning, to occupy Saddam's bedroom at 3 a.m.

The U.N. personnel are also authorized to export or destroy anything — records, materials, and equipment — that they judge is relevant to their task, and to take Iraqi personnel out of the country for interrogation. The resolution puts no limit

on how long such personnel may be held and makes no gesture to the judicial rights of people held under guard in such a fashion.

The resolution reiterates the usual "commitment of all members states to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq" — an absurdity in view of the intrusive provisions of SCR 1441. The Iraqi government is allowed no response to any action that the U.N. inspectors may take. If they dismantle and export a factory, at Iraqi expense, Iraq is allowed no appeal; if Iraqi people are taken out of the country and held incommunicado for lengthy periods, Iraq is allowed no appeal. The resolution represents a final extinguishing of any residual Iraqi sovereignty.

It is hard to imagine that such a provocative U.N. resolution was not designed to ensure an Iraqi response that could be interpreted as a "material breach" of Iraq's obligations. Significantly, unlike resolutions 687 (1991) and 1284 (1999), SCR 1441 contains *no* reference to the ending of sanctions. The U.S. and U.K. drafters of the resolution obviously never expected that the sanctions issue would be relevant, i.e., they worked on the assumption that Iraq would be unable to comply with SCR 1441, and so the question of ending sanctions after compliance would not arise.

The resolution specifies that if the inspectors report Iraqi non-compliance then the Security Council will convene to "consider" the situation. This is an obvious U.S. sop to those who originally wanted a second resolution to authorize a military response in the event of Iraqi non-compliance. But there is no demand in SCR 1441 that a second resolution will ever be submitted, and immediately after the adoption of the resolution John Negroponte, U.S. ambassador to the U.N., President Bush, and Prime Minister Blair were promising a military response if Iraq failed to comply with every U.N. demand. In his post-vote commentary on November 8, 2002, John Negroponte revealingly declared that "material breaches" of SCR 1441 could be reported by Unmovic, IAEA, or "any member state."

If SCR 1441 is not very different from the two earlier substantial drafts, then what was all the diplomatic negotiation for eight weeks about? In an effort to guarantee a unanimous vote, we know that President Bush "worked the phones," placing over 100 calls to the present members of the Security Council, most of whom receive U.S. financial aid. What were the reluctant permanent members of the Security Council promised? Was Russia, as the *Daily Telegraph* of London reported (October 14, 2002), promised \$7 billion for its vote? Was Syria, long branded a terrorist state by the U.S., told that if it voted for the resolution it would not be next on Washington's hit list? Time will tell.

Meanwhile, a nation of 280 million people, whose annual defense budget approaches \$400 billion, is preparing to go to war against a crippled nation of 22 million people. Part of that preparation, reports The New York Times of October 22, 2002, involves the U.S. Army and Marine ground troops studying how the Israeli Army used specially loaded tank rounds to blast holes in the walls of buildings in its recent house-to-house fighting in the West Bank town of Jenin. □

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12/02

### Notice

In May 2002, a delegation from the National Lawyers Guild traveled throughout the West Bank to investigate allegations of war crimes by the Israeli military. The Guild now offers a 27-minute video that documents a state-sponsored campaign aimed at destroying the identity and culture of the Palestinian people.

To order a copy send \$25 — check, money order, or credit card (please specify type, number and expiration date) — to: National Lawyers Guild National Office, 143 Madison Ave., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10016