

***BRussells* Tribunal Dossier** **Introduction to the "Salvador option"** **and Iraq's "Death squads" - *PART 5* -**



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- **Ensuring salaried 'sovereignty' (Imad Khadduri, 12 Nov 2008)**

"It is somewhat curious," says Mr Chalabi, "that the intelligence service of a country which is sovereign – that no one really knows who is funding it."

In fact there are very few Iraqis who do not believe they have a very clear idea of who funds Iraq's secret police. Its director is General Mohammed Abdullah Shahwani, who once led a failed coup against Saddam Hussein, and was handpicked by the CIA to run the new security organisation soon after the invasion of 2003. He is believed to have been answering to them ever since.

For all Mr Bush's pious declarations about respecting Iraqi sovereignty, General Shahwani is reported to work primarily for American intelligence. The intelligence service is "not working for the Iraqi government – it's working for the CIA," Hadi al-Ameri, a powerful Shia lawmaker, was quoted as saying three years ago. "I prefer to call it the American Intelligence of Iraq, not the Iraqi Intelligence Service."

[The US can quit Iraq, or it can stay. But it can't do both: Iraqis have a clear idea who they believe funds their secret police](#) November 11, 2008

It may be surprisingly "*curious*" for *Al-Chalabi* who knows all about the cosy relationship between some of the Iraqi security forces and the US. He himself brought the 'startup team' to Iraq, posing as his own militia. These were several hundred Iraqis trained by the US in Hungary before the war. Many incidents are attributed to Chalabi's 'own militia' acting outside the law and with impunity.

But then again, *Hadi al-Ameri* is one of Iraq's most notorious armed-militia leaders who is working in close connection with Iran's Revolutionary Guards. He is the Iraqi Interior Ministry who is widely believed to be under the control of the Badr Organisation and its political face SCIRI. See this two years old posting: "[Will the US have to reinvade Iraq to depose him?](#)" November 21, 2006

For the record, and to avoid Al-Chalabi any more embarrassing curiosities, there are other Bremer appointed high government officials that have been receiving their salaries, for more than five and a half years now, directly from the Americans and the CIA and not from the Iraqi government. They are:

- The above mentioned head of the "Iraqi" National Intelligence Service - Al-Shawani (see previous posting: [The Genocide Option](#) February 05, 2007)
- The head of the "Iraqi" Central Bank - Sinan Al-Shibibi
- The presidential advisor - Mowafaq Al-Rubaie
- The head of the High Judicial Council
- The head of the Elections Committee

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Which other "sovereign" state can boast such paid loyalties, but a SOFA one? (Well, maybe Obama's Rahm Israel Emanuel)

Al-Shahwani.....Al-Shibibi (on the right)



Al-Rubaei (second from left)



posted by [Imad Khadduri](#)

- **Iraqis have a clear idea who they believe funds their secret police (11 Nov 2008)**

Patrick Cockburn: The US can quit Iraq, or it can stay. But it can't do both

If it ever comes to court it should be one of the more interesting libel cases of the decade. The Iraqi National Intelligence Service is threatening to sue Ahmed Chalabi, the Iraqi politician, for asking who pays for it.

"It is somewhat curious," says Mr Chalabi, "that the intelligence service of a country which is sovereign – that no one really knows who is funding it."

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In fact there are very few Iraqis who do not believe they have a very clear idea of who funds Iraq's secret police. Its director is General Mohammed Abdullah Shahwani, who once led a failed coup against Saddam Hussein, and was handpicked by the CIA to run the new security organisation soon after the invasion of 2003. He is believed to have been answering to them ever since.

The history of the Iraqi intelligence service is important because it shows the real distribution of power in Iraq rather than the spurious picture presented by President Bush. It explains why so many Iraqis are suspicious of the security accord, or Status of Forces Agreement, that the White House has been pushing the Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Malki to sign. It reveals the real political landscape where President-elect Barack Obama will soon have to find his bearings.

For all Mr Bush's pious declarations about respecting Iraqi sovereignty, General Shahwani is reported to work primarily for American intelligence. The intelligence service is "not working for the Iraqi government – it's working for the CIA," Hadi al-Ameri, a powerful Shia lawmaker, was quoted as saying three years ago. "I prefer to call it the American Intelligence of Iraq, not the Iraqi Intelligence Service."

It seems that not much has changed since then. The intelligence service does now appear in the Iraqi budget as being in receipt of \$150 million, though this seems somewhat measly given the extent of its operations, which includes running paramilitary units. One of its main missions is to spy on Iranians on behalf of the US, employing much the same cadre of intelligence officers who carried out this task for Saddam Hussein.

Fear of covert US control is one of the reasons why the Iraqi government has been so intent on insisting that all US forces be out of Iraq by the end of 2011. The latest draft of the security accord has dropped mention of US troops staying behind for training, or making the US withdrawal conditional on improved security in Iraq being maintained.

The American position in Iraq has always been undermined by the fear that, whatever they claimed to be doing in Iraq, their long-term objective was to rule the country. The overthrow of Saddam Hussein, one of the world's more disastrous leaders, was generally popular in Iraq. But the occupation was disliked by the majority of Iraqis from the beginning.

The result of this is that over the last five and a half years America has always been politically weak in Iraq. Put simply, it has very few friends among Iraqis outside Kurdistan. The Shia and Sunni communities have, for their own ends, made tactical alliances with the occupier, but never wanted a permanent presence. Once Iraqis and their neighbours no longer fear that the US intends to rule Iraq directly or indirectly through local nominees then America's position becomes much stronger.

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This should be good news for Barack Obama. He wants US combat troops out in 16 months. The Iraqi government largely agrees. But if the presidential election proved anything it was that neither candidate knew much about what was happening Iraq.

John McCain claimed absurdly that the US was on the verge of victory, and during his visits to the Green Zone his staffers annoyed US embassy officials by requesting them not to wear helmets and body armour when standing next the candidate. McCain's people feared this might undermine in the eyes of American television viewers their candidate's claim that US prospects in Iraq were rosier than had been reported.

The key to the US conducting an orderly retreat from Iraq is that this retreat should be real and the US should not try to control essential Iraqi state institutions like the intelligence service. It is also crucial that Obama seriously negotiate with the Iranians. So long as the Iranian leadership thinks that Iraq might be the launching pad for an attack on Iran it will never be in Iranian interests for Iraq to be stabilised.

The same is true of Syria. A problem for Obama is that McCain's quite false claim that America's position in Iraq has become stronger has been largely accepted by the US media so any compromise with Iran can be portrayed as a sell-out.

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- **A tidal wave of misery is engulfing Iraq (02 Nov 2008)**

By Michael Schwartz

11/02/08 "[Mother Jones](#)" -- -- A tidal wave of misery is engulfing Iraq—and it isn't the usual violence that Americans are accustomed to hearing about and tuning out. To be sure, it's rooted in that violence, but this tsunami of misery is social and economic in nature. It dislodges people from their jobs, sweeps them from their homes, tears them from their material possessions, and carries them off from families and communities. It leaves them stranded in hostile towns or foreign countries, with no anchor to resist the moment when the next wave of displacement sweeps over them.

The victims of this human tsunami are called refugees if they wash ashore outside the country or IDPs ("internally displaced persons") if their landing place is within Iraq's borders. Either way, they are normally left with no permanent housing, no reliable livelihood, no community support, and no government aid. All the normal social props that support human lives are removed, replaced with...nothing.

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Overlapping Waves of the Dispossessed

In its first four years, the Iraq war created three overlapping waves of refugees and IDPs.

It all began with the Coalition Provisional Authority, which the Bush administration set up inside Baghdad's Green Zone and, in May 2003, placed under the control of L. Paul Bremer III. The CPA immediately began dismantling Iraq's state apparatus. Thousands of Baathist Party bureaucrats were purged from the government; tens of thousands of workers were laid off from shuttered, state-owned industries; hundreds of thousands of Iraqi military personnel were dismissed from Saddam's dismantled military. Their numbers soon multiplied as the ripple effect of their lost buying power rolled through the economy. Many of the displaced found other (less remunerative) jobs; some hunkered down to wait out bad times; still others left their homes and sought work elsewhere, with the most marketable going to nearby countries where their skills were still in demand. They were the leading edge of the first wave of Iraqi refugees.

As the post-war chaos continued, kidnapping became the country's growth industry, targeting any prosperous family with the means to pay ransom. This only accelerated the rate of departure, particularly among those who had already had their careers disrupted. A flood of professional, technical, and managerial workers fled their homes and Iraq in search of personal and job security.

The spirit of this initial exodus was eloquently expressed by an [Iraqi blogger](#) with the online handle of AnaRki13:

"Not so much a migration as a forced exodus. Scientists, engineers, doctors, architects, writers, poets, you name it—everybody is getting out of town.

"Why? Simple: 1. There is no real job market in Iraq. 2. Even if you have a good job, chances are good you'll get kidnapped or killed. It's just not worth it staying here. Sunni, Shiite, or Christian—everybody, we're all leaving, or have already left.

"One of my friends keeps berating me about how I should love this country, the land of my ancestors, where I was born and raised; how I should be grateful and return to the place that gave me everything. I always tell him the same thing: 'Iraq, as you and me once knew it, is lost. What's left of it, I don't want...'

"The most famous doctors and university professors have already left the country because many of them, including ones I knew personally, were assassinated or killed, and the rest got the message—and got themselves jobs in the west, where they were received warmly and given high positions. Other millions of Iraqis, just ordinary Iraqis, left and are leaving—without plans and with much hope."

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In 2004, the Americans triggered a second wave of refugees when they began to attack and invade insurgent strongholds, as they did the Sunni city of Falluja in November 2004, using the full kinetic force of their military. Whether the Americans called for evacuation or not, large numbers of local residents were forced to flee battleground neighborhoods or cities. The process was summarized in a thorough review of the history of the war compiled by the Global Policy Forum and 35 other international non-governmental organizations:

"Among those who flee, the most fortunate are able to seek refuge with out-of-town relatives, but many flee into the countryside where they face extremely difficult conditions, including shortages of food and water. Eventually the Red Crescent, the UN or relief organizations set up camps. In Falluja, a city of about 300,000, over 216,000 displaced persons had to seek shelter in overcrowded camps during the winter months, inadequately supplied with food, water, and medical care. An estimated 100,000 fled al-Qaim, a city of 150,000, according to the Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS). In Ramadi, about 70 percent of the city's 400,000 people left in advance of the U.S. onslaught.

"These moments mark the beginning of Iraq's massive displacement crisis."

While most of these refugees returned after the fighting, a significant minority did not, either because their homes (or livelihoods) had been destroyed, or because they were afraid of continuing violence. Like the economically displaced of the previous wave, these refugees sought out new areas that were less dangerous or more prosperous, including neighboring countries. And, as with that first wave, it was the professionals as well as the technical and managerial workers who were most likely to have the resources to leave Iraq.

In early 2005 the third wave began, developing by the next year into the veritable tsunami of ethnic cleansing and civil war that pushed vast numbers of Iraqis from their homes. The precipitating incidents, according to Ali Allawi—the Iraqi finance minister when this third wave began—were initially triggered by the second-wave-refugees pushed out of the Sunni city of Falluja in the winter of 2004:

"Refugees leaving Falluja had converged on the western Sunni suburbs of Baghdad, Amriya and Ghazaliya, which had come under the control of the insurgency. Insurgents, often backed by relatives of the Falluja refugees, turned on the Shi'a residents of these neighbourhoods. Hundreds of Shi'a families were driven from their homes, which were then seized by the refugees. Sunni Arab resentment against the Shi'a's 'collaboration' with the occupation's forces had been building up, exacerbated by the apparent indifference of the Shi'a to the assault on Falluja.

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"In turn, the Shi'a were becoming incensed by the daily attacks on policemen and soldiers, who were mostly poor Shi'a men. The targeting of Sunnis in majority Shi'a neighbourhoods began in early 2005. In the Shaab district of Baghdad, for instance, the assassination of a popular Sadrist cleric, Sheikh Haitham al-Ansari, led to the formation of one of the first Shi'a death squads... The cycle of killings, assassinations, bombings and expulsions fed into each other, quickly turning to a full-scale ethnic cleansing of city neighbourhoods and towns."

The process only accelerated in early 2006, after the bombing of the Golden Dome in Samarra, a revered Shiite shrine, and crested in 2007 when the American military "surge" onto the streets of Baghdad loosened the hold of Sunni insurgents on many mixed as well as Sunni neighborhoods in the capital. During the year of the surge all but 25 or so of the approximately [200 mixed neighborhoods](#) in Baghdad became ethnically homogenous. A similar process took place in the city's southern suburbs.

As minority groups in mixed neighborhoods and cities were driven out, they too joined the army of displaced persons, often settling into vacated homes in newly purified neighborhoods dominated by their own sect. But many, like those in the previous waves of refugees, found they had to move to new locales far away from the violence, including a large number who, once again, simply left Iraq. As with previous waves, the more prosperous were the most likely to depart, taking with them professional, technical, and managerial skills.

Among those who departed in this third wave was [Riverbend](#), the pseudonymous "Girl Blogger from Baghdad," who had achieved international fame for [her beautifully crafted reports](#) on life in Iraq under the U.S. occupation. Her description of her journey into exile chronicled the emotional tragedy experienced by millions of Iraqis:

"The last few hours in the house were a blur. It was time to go and I went from room to room saying goodbye to everything. I said goodbye to my desk—the one I'd used all through high school and college. I said goodbye to the curtains and the bed and the couch. I said goodbye to the armchair E. and I broke when we were younger. I said goodbye to the big table over which we'd gathered for meals and to do homework. I said goodbye to the ghosts of the framed pictures that once hung on the walls, because the pictures have long since been taken down and stored away—but I knew just what hung where. I said goodbye to the silly board games we inevitably fought over—the Arabic Monopoly with the missing cards and money that no one had the heart to throw away...

"The trip was long and uneventful, other than two checkpoints being run by masked men. They asked to see identification, took a cursory glance at the passports and asked where we were going. The same was done for the car behind us. Those checkpoints are terrifying but I've learned that the best technique is to avoid eye contact, answer questions politely and pray under your breath. My mother

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and I had been careful not to wear any apparent jewelry, just in case, and we were both in long skirts and head scarves...

"How is it that a border no one can see or touch stands between car bombs, militias, death squads and... peace, safety? It's difficult to believe—even now. I sit here and write this and wonder why I can't hear the explosions..."

The Human Toll

The number of Iraqis who flooded neighboring lands, not to speak of even approximate estimates of the number of internal refugees, remains notoriously difficult to determine, but the most circumspect of observers have reported constantly accelerating rates of displacement since the Bush administration's March 2003 invasion. These numbers quickly outstripped the flood of expatriates who had fled the country during Saddam Hussein's brutal era.

By early 2006, the [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#) was already estimating that 1.7 million Iraqis had left the country and that perhaps an equal number of internal refugees had been created in the same three-year period. The rate rose dramatically yet again as sectarian violence and ethnic expulsions took hold; the International Organization for Migration estimated the displacement rate during 2006 and 2007 at about 60,000 per month. In mid 2007, Iraq was declared by [Refugees International](#) to be the "fastest-growing refugee crisis in the world," while the United Nations called the crisis "the worst human displacement in Iraq's modern history."

Syria, the only country that initially placed no restrictions on Iraqi immigration, had (according to [UN statistics](#)) taken in about 1.25 million displaced Iraqis by early 2007. In addition, the UN estimated that more than 500,000 Iraqi refugees were in Jordan, as many as 70,000 in Egypt, approaching 60,000 in Iran, about 30,000 in Lebanon, approximately 200,000 spread across the Gulf States, and another 100,000 in Europe, with a final 50,000 spread around the globe. The [United States](#), which had accepted about 20,000 Iraqi refugees during Saddam Hussein's years, admitted 463 additional ones between the start of the war and mid-2007.

President Bush's "surge" strategy, begun in January 2007, amplified the flood, especially of the internally displaced, still further. According to James Glanz and Stephen Farrell of the [New York Times](#), "American-led operations have brought new fighting, driving fearful Iraqis from their homes at much higher rates than before the tens of thousands of additional troops arrived." The combined effect of the American offensive and accelerated ethnic expulsions generated an estimated displacement rate of 100,000 per month in Baghdad alone during the first half of 2007, a figure that surprised even Said Hakki, the director of the Iraqi Red Crescent, who had been monitoring the refugee crisis since the beginning of the war.

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During 2007, according to UN estimates, Syria admitted an additional 150,000 refugees. With Iraqis by then constituting almost 10% of the country's population, the Syrian government, feeling the strain on resources, began putting [limits](#) on the unending flood and attempted to launch a mass repatriation policy. Such repatriation efforts have, so far, been largely fruitless. Even when violence in Baghdad began to decline in late 2007, [refugees](#) attempting to return found that their abandoned homes had often either been badly damaged in American offensives or, more likely, appropriated by strangers (often of a different sect), or were in "cleansed" neighborhoods that were now inhospitable to them.

In the same years, the weight of displaced persons inside Iraq grew ever more quickly. Estimated by the UN at 2.25 million in September 2007, this tidal flow of internally displaced, often homeless, families began to weigh on the resources of the provinces receiving them. Najaf, the first large city south of Baghdad, where the most sacred Shiite shrines in Iraq are located, found that its population of 700,000 had increased by an estimated 400,000 displaced Shia. In three other southern Shia provinces, IDPs came by mid-2007 to constitute over half the population.

The burden was crushing. By 2007, [Karbala](#), one of the most burdened provinces, was attempting to enforce a draconian measure passed the previous year: New residents would be expelled unless officially sponsored by two members of the provincial council. Other governates also tried in various ways, and largely without success, to [staunch](#) the flow of refugees.

Whether inside or outside the country, even prosperous families before the war faced grim conditions. In Syria, where a [careful survey](#) of conditions was undertaken in October 2007, only 24% of all Iraqi families were supported by salaries or wages. Most families were left to live as best they could on dwindling savings or remittances from relatives, and a third of those with funds on hand expected to run out within three months. Under this kind of pressure, increasing numbers were reduced to [sex work](#) or other exploitative (or black market) sources of income.

Food was a major issue for many families; according to the United Nations, nearly half needed "urgent food assistance." A substantial proportion of adults reported skipping at least one meal a day in order to feed their children. Many others endured foodless days "in order to keep up with rent and utilities." One refugee mother told McClatchy reporter Hannah Allam, "We buy just enough meat to flavor the food -- we buy it with pennies... I can't even buy a kilo of sweets for Eid [a major annual celebration]."

According to a rigorous McClatchy Newspaper survey, most Iraqi refugees in Syria were housed in crowded conditions with more than one person per room (sometimes many more). Twenty-five percent of families lived in one-room apartments; about one in six refugees had been diagnosed with a (usually untreated) chronic disease; and one-fifth of the children had had diarrhea in the two weeks before being questioned. While Syrian officials had aided refugee parents in getting over two-thirds of school-aged children enrolled in schools, 46% had dropped out—due mainly to lack of appropriate

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immigration documents, insufficient funds to pay for school expenses, or a variety of emotional issues—and the drop-out rate was escalating. And keep in mind, the Iraqis who made it to Syria were generally the lucky ones, far more likely to have financial resources or employable skills.

Like the expatriate refugees, internally displaced Iraqis faced severe and constantly declining conditions. The almost powerless Iraqi central government, largely trapped inside Baghdad's Green Zone, requires that people who move from one place to another register in person in Baghdad; if they fail to do so, they lose eligibility for the national program that subsidizes the purchase of small amounts of a few staple foods. Such registration was mostly impossible for families driven from their homes in the country's vicious civil war. With no way to "register," families displaced outside of Baghdad entered their new residences without even the increasingly meager safety net offered by guaranteed subsidies of basic food supplies.

To make matters worse, almost three-quarters of the displaced were women or children and very few of the intact families had working fathers. Unemployment rates in most cities to which they were forced to move were already at or above 50%, so prostitution and child labor increasingly became necessary options. [UNICEF reported](#) that a large proportion of children in such families were hungry, clinically underweight, and short for their age. "In some areas, up to 90 per cent of the [displaced] children are not in school," the UN agency reported.

Losing Precious Resources

The job backgrounds of an extraordinary proportion of Iraqi refugees in Syria were professional, managerial, or administrative. In other words, they were collectively the repository of the precious human capital that would otherwise have been needed to sustain, repair, and eventually rebuild their country's ravaged infrastructure. In Iraq, approximately 10% of adults had attended college; more than one-third of the refugees in Syria were university educated. Whereas less than 1% of Iraqis had a postgraduate education, nearly 10% of refugees in Syria had advanced degrees, including 4.5% with doctorates. At the opposite end of the economic spectrum, fully 20% of all Iraqis had no schooling, but only a relative handful of the refugees arriving in Syria (3%) had no education. These proportions were probably even more striking in other more distant receiving lands, where entry was more difficult.

The reasons for this remarkable brain drain are not hard to find. Even the desperate process of fleeing your home turns out to require resources, and so refugees from most disasters who travel great distances tend to be disproportionately prosperous, as the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans so painfully illustrated.

In Iraq, this tendency was enhanced by American policy. The mass privatization and de-Baathification policies of the Bush administration ensured that large numbers of professional, technical, and

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managerial workers, in particular, would be cast out of their former lives. This tendency was only exacerbated by the development of the kidnapping industry, focusing its attentions as it did on families with sufficient resources to pay handsome ransoms. It was amplified when some insurgent groups began assassinating remaining government officials, university professors, and other professionals.

The exodus into the Iraqi Diaspora has severely depleted the country's human capital. In early 2006, the United States Committee on Refugees and Immigrants estimated that a full [40%](#) of Iraqi's professional class had left the country, taking with them their irreplaceable expertise. Universities and medical facilities were particularly hard hit, with some reporting less than 20% of needed staff on hand. The oil industry suffered from what the *Wall Street Journal* called a "petroleum exodus" that included the departure of two-thirds of its top 100 managers, as well as significant numbers of managerial and professional workers.

Even before the huge 2007 exodus from Baghdad, the United Nations Commissioner of Refugees warned that "the skills required to provide basic services are becoming more and more scarce," pointing particularly to doctors, teachers, computer technicians, and even skilled craftsmen like bakers.

By mid-2007, the loss of these resources was visible in the [everyday functioning](#) of Iraqi society. By then, medical facilities commonly required patients' families to act as nurses and technicians and were still unable to perform many services. Schools were often closed, or opened only sporadically, because of an absence of qualified teachers. Universities postponed or canceled required courses or qualifying examinations because of inadequate staff. At the height of an incipient [cholera epidemic](#) in the summer of 2007, water purification plants were idled because needed technicians could not be found.

The most devastating impact of the Iraqi refugee crisis, however, has probably been on the very capacity of the national government (which de-Baathification and privatization had already left in a fragile state) to administer anything. In every area that such a government might touch, the missing managerial, technical, and professional talent and expertise has had a devastating effect, with post-war "reconstruction" particularly hard hit. Even the [ability](#) of the government to disperse its income (mostly from oil revenues) has been crippled by what cabinet ministers have termed "a shortage of employees trained to write contracts" and "the flight of scientific and engineering expertise from the country."

The depths of the problem (as well as the massive levels of corruption that went with it) could be measured by the fact that the electrical ministry spent only 26% of its capital budget in 2006; the remaining three-quarters went unspent. Yet, at that level of disbursement, it still outperformed most government agencies and ministries in a major way. Under pressure from American occupation officials to improve its performance in 2007, the government made concerted efforts to increase both

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its budget and its disbursements for reconstruction. Despite initially optimistic reports, the news was grim by year's end. [Actual expenditures](#) on electrical infrastructure might, for example, have slipped to as low as 1% of the budgeted amount.

Even more symptomatic were the few successes in infrastructural rebuilding found by *New York Times* reporter James Glanz in a survey of capital construction throughout the country. Most of the successful programs he reviewed were initiated and managed by officials connected to local and provincial governments. They discovered that success actually depended on avoiding *any* interaction with the ineffective and corrupt central government. The provincial governor of Babil Province, Sallem S. al-Mesamawe, described the key to his province's success: "We jumped over the routine, the bureaucracy, and we depend on new blood—a new team." They had learned this lesson after using provincial money and local contractors to build a school, only to have it remain closed because the national government was unable to provide the necessary furniture.

The government's staggering institutional incapacity is, in fact, a complex phenomenon with many sources beyond the drain of human capital. The flood of managers, professionals, and technicians out of the country, however, has been a critical obstacle to any productive reconstruction. Worse yet, the departure of so many crucial figures is probably to a considerable extent irreversible, ensuring a grim near-future for the country. After all, this has been a "brain drain" on a scale seldom seen in our era.

Many exiles still intend to, even long to, return when (or if) the situation improves, but time is always the enemy of such intentions. The moment an individual arrives in a new country, he or she begins creating social ties that become ever more significant as a new life takes hold—and this is even truer for those who leave with their families, as so many Iraqis have done. Unless this network-building process is disrupted, for many the probability of return fades with each passing month.

Those with marketable skills, even in the dire circumstances facing most Iraqi refugees, have little choice but to keep seeking work that exploits their training. The most marketable are the most likely to succeed and so to begin building new careers. As time slips by, the best, the brightest, and the most important carriers of precious human capital are lost.

The Displacement Tsunami

The degradation of Iraq under the American occupation regime was what initially set in motion the forces that led to the exile of much of the country's most precious human resources—absolutely crucial capital, even if of a kind not usually considered when talk turns to investing in "nation building." How, after all, can you "reconstruct" the ravaged foundations of a bombed-out nation without the necessary professional, technical, and managerial personnel? Without them, Iraq must continue its downward spiral toward a nation of slum cities.

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The orgy of failure and corruption in 2007 was an unmitigated disaster for Iraqi society, as well as an embarrassment for the American occupation. From the point of view of long-term American goals in Iraq, however, this storm cloud, like so many others, had a silver lining. The Iraqi government's incapacity to perform at almost any level became but further justification for the claims first made by L. Paul Bremer at the very beginning of the occupation: that the country's reconstruction would be best handled by private enterprise. Moreover, the mass flight of Iraqi professionals, managers, and technicians has meant that expertise for reconstruction has simply been unavailable inside the country. This has, in turn, validated a second set of claims made by Bremer: that reconstruction could only be managed by large outside contractors.

This neoliberal reality was brought into focus in late 2007, as the last of the money allocated by the U.S. Congress for Iraqi reconstruction was being spent. A "petroleum exodus" (first identified by the *Wall Street Journal*) had long ago meant that most of the engineers needed for maintaining the decrepit oil business were already foreigners, mostly "imported from Texas and Oklahoma." The foreign presence had, in fact, become so pervasive that the main headquarters for the maintenance and development of the Rumaila oil field in southern Iraq (the source of more than two-thirds of the country's oil at present) runs on both Iraqi and Houston time. The American firms in charge of the field's maintenance and development, KBR and PIJV, have been utilizing a large number of subcontractors, most of them American or British, very few of them Iraqi.

These American-funded projects, though, have been merely "stopgaps." When the money runs out, vast new moneys will be needed just to sustain Rumaila's production at its present level.

According to *Harper's Magazine* Senior Editor Luke Mitchell, who visited the field in the summer of 2007, Iraqi engineers and technicians are "smart enough and ambitious enough" to sustain and "upgrade" the system once the American contracts expire, but such a project would take upwards of two decades because of the compromised condition of the government and the lack of skilled local engineers and technicians. The likely outcome, when the American money departs, therefore is either an inadequate effort in which work proceeds "only in fits and starts;" or, more likely, new contracts in which the foreign companies would "continue their work," paid for by the Iraqi government.

With regard to the petroleum industry, therefore, what the refugee crisis guaranteed was long-term Iraqi dependence on outsiders. In every other key infrastructural area, a similar dependence was developing: electrical power, the water system, medicine, and food were, *de facto*, being "integrated" into the global system, leaving oil-rich Iraq dependent on outside investment and largesse for the foreseeable future. Now, that's a twenty-year plan for you, one that at least 4.5 million Iraqis, out of their homes and, in many cases, out of the country as well, will be in no position to participate in.

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Most horror stories come to an end, but the most horrible part of this horror story is its never-ending quality. Those refugees who have left Iraq now face a miserable limbo life, as Syria and other receiving countries exhaust their meager resources and seek to expel many of them. Those seeking shelter within Iraq face the depletion of already minimal support systems in degrading host communities whose residents may themselves be threatened with displacement.

From the vast out-migration and internal migrations of its desperate citizens comes damage to society as a whole that is almost impossible to estimate. The displacement of people carries with it the destruction of human capital. The destruction of human capital deprives Iraq of its most precious resource for repairing the damage of war and occupation, condemning it to further infrastructural decline. This tide of infrastructural decline is the surest guarantee of another wave of displacement, of future floods of refugees.

As long as the United States keeps trying to pacify Iraq, it will create wave after wave of misery.

Michael Schwartz, professor of sociology at Stony Brook University, has written extensively on popular protest and insurgency. This report on the Iraqi refugee crisis is from his forthcoming Tomdispatch book, War Without End: The Iraqi Debacle in Context (Haymarket Books, June 2008). His work on Iraq has appeared on numerous Internet sites, including Tomdispatch, Asia Times, Mother Jones, Information Clearing House and ZNET. His email address is Ms42@optonline.net.

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- **State-Sanctioned Paramilitary Terror in Basra Under British Occupation (Max Fuller, 08 Aug 2008)**

Max Fuller, member of the BRussells Tribunal Advisory Committee.

Articles by the same author:

- **'For Iraq, the Salvador Option Becomes Reality' / "Voor Irak wordt de 'Salvador-optie' realiteit"** and **'Crying Wolf: Media Disinformation and Death Squads in Occupied Iraq'** (www.globalresearch.ca) and **Who is controlling the death squads in Iraq?**
- **The Silence of the Lambs? A Cry to Raise Our Voices! Proof of US orchestration of Death Squads Killings in Iraq** (09 March 2007)
- **Ghosts of Jadiriyah. A survivor's testimony** (14 Nov 2006)
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- **¡Nunca Olvida! Never Forget! The US role in Iraq's death squads** (July 2006)
- **The Assault on Adhamiya - Not Civil War Yet** (July 2006)



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- [*Jihad killings in Baghdad require immediate UN investigation*](#) (12 July 2006)
- [*Conflicting Media Accounts: Evidence of Iraqi Death Squad Conspiracy*](#) (26 June 2006)
- [*Diyala - A Laboratory of Civil War?*](#) (20 June 2006)
- **Website:** www.cryingwolf.deconstructingiraq.org.uk

Abstract

Whilst Iraqi prime minister Maliki's spring offensive in Basra has provoked wide speculation about the extent to which it was an autonomous Iraqi government operation and on its success or lack of success in kerbing the power of the so-called Mahdi Army, the reported capture and execution of one of Basra's most important political figures has gone almost entirely unremarked. From the fragmentary record available, this article examines the role of Yussef Sinawee al Mosawi and his Thar Allah (God's Revenge) militia organisation. In the conflict between Thar Allah and the Basra governor's Fadhila (Virtue) party it is possible to identify a political schism that lies at the heart of Iraq's future, both in terms of ongoing efforts towards Balkanisation and the theft of its oil industry. An examination of Thar Allah and its relations with the world of covert operations also reveals a great deal about the extent of British involvement in the violence that has racked this economically vital city and suggests how counterinsurgency warfare plays an essential role in continuing politics by other means.

The Life, Murderous Times and Enigmatic Death of Sayed Yussef Sinawee al Mosawi

The Enigmatic Death

On 20 April 2008 it was reported on the website *al Badeel al Iraqi* that the leader of the Thar Allah militia Yusuf Mosawi had been executed in Baghdad under the supervision of Abu Mujahid, an adviser to Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki^[1].

Few in the west are likely to have even heard of the Thar Allah (God's Revenge) organisation, let alone its chairman, Sayed Yussef Sinawee al Mosawi, yet the detention of this militia-commander-cum-radical-Shiite-cleric as part of the much-slated 'Knights Assault' in Basra in March was important enough within the politics of contemporary Iraq to warrant mention by both the Oil Minister Shahrستاني^[2] and the prime minister himself, speaking in an interview on CNN^[3].

If it is true that Mosawi has indeed been executed, whilst many Iraqis might well breathe a sigh of relief, it is beyond any doubt that his killing after just some two weeks' detention constitutes yet another political murder to add to the thousands upon thousands of others of which Mosawi and Thar Allah may very well be a part.

Even amid the chaotic politics and genocidal violence that has gripped Iraq from the outset of the Anglo-American occupation, an examination of the extremist Shiite militia Thar Allah may well offer

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seriously concerned onlookers an opportunity to see beyond the popular media paradigms of 'sectarian civil war' and the 'oil and militia' politics of the south.

Murderous Times

Thar Allah is said to have been one of four new Islamist organisations that opened offices in Basra in October 2003.^[4] Although Thar Allah has been almost exclusively identified with the internal politics of Basra, it was reported that the organisation already had additional offices in Nasiriyah, Missan and Talha, and intended to open others in Baghdad, Diwaniya and Karbala.^[5] In fact, it was subsequently reported that an armed group operating in Baghdad and Tikrit going by the name Thar Allah issued a statement on 1 November 2003 in which it claimed that its membership was drawn from 'all the factions of Iraqi people'. The group is recorded as issuing a statement in which it claimed to be 'hunting down and killing supporters of the Saddam Hussein regime, specifically those who worked in the security and intelligence services'.^[6]

It seems extremely likely that this is in fact the same or a related organisation to the 'militant Shia' Thar Allah that appears in Basra less than two weeks later under the leadership of Sayed Yussif al Mosawi, who claims that 'We have confirmed information that groups from al-Qaeda, dozens of them, have crossed the borders from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia ... [and] are here to coordinate with former Saddam men.'^[7]

It is precisely at this time that a second wave of killings of members of the former government begins in Basra, with 12 recorded deaths in October alone.^[8] From this savage new beginning, these killings are linked with a White Toyota Sedan without plates that will later become identified as the Death Car.^[9]

At almost exactly the same time that Thar Allah pops up in Basra and murders of Baathists begin, the British are known to have been not merely deploying raw police onto Basra's streets, but building up a new intelligence apparatus^[10], initially identified as the Special Operations Department^[11], based at the Jameat police station. The head of this 'hard but effective'^[12] 45-man unit was a former member of another Shiite militia, the Badr Brigade, associated with one of the main exiled Iraqi opposition parties (now a major part of government), the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI)(13)^[13], yet a murky relationship between Thar Allah and the Special Operations Department already existed. According to anonymous interviews with 'coalition intelligence and military officials' conducted by Knights and Williams on behalf of the Western Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP) in 2006:

While Badr elements in police intelligence identified former Baathists and detained some in unauthorized prisons, other SCIRI-affiliated movements used police supplied intelligence to undertake targeted killings of Sunnis and Shiites accused of Baath-era crimes. The best known of

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these organisations was Thar Allah... [Although British forces had strong indicators to suggest such activities were carried out by SCIRI-affiliated groups, the movement's careful courting of the coalition and its use of 'cutouts' such as the police intelligence unit and Thar Allah shielded it from further scrutiny].^[14]

However much British forces had been hoodwinked by SCIRI, it is clear that they were aware of the crimes being committed by their own Special Operations Department, as well as Thar Allah. In fact, by early 2004 such crimes had become so apparent that even *The Sunday Times* was accusing the British-backed Police Intelligence of killing former Baath Party members^[15], while the Western media in general had recognised that 'groups posing as Islamic parties', including Thar Allah, were meting out brutal street justice, including tracking down former Baathists, running illegal checkpoints, conducting house searches and punishing those 'deemed to have flouted Islamic customs'.^[16]

Leaving the Special Operations Department aside for now, given such appearance, the recorded behaviour of British forces towards Thar Allah appears all the more remarkable. One incident in autumn 2003 involved the arrest of six alleged Baathist 'insurgents' by Thar Allah, who apparently confessed on videotape to a number of bombings. The men were held in 'hopes of tracing the remaining plotters' (for which we should undoubtedly read tortured) until the intervention of British forces, who arrested both the six Baathists along with 13 members of Thar Allah, but the Thar Allah militiamen were all released the following day.^[17]

By March 2004, British officials still claimed that Thar Allah and other Shiite political groups had generally behaved responsibly.^[18] Yet less than a week later, it briefly appeared that British forces had had a change of heart when they are reported to have attempted to evict Thar Allah from its illegally occupied headquarters^[19] and confiscated light weapons.^[20] But once again, Thar Allah was quickly let off the hook, with the 'coalition apologising to the group and returning its weapons'.^[21] In relation to this leniency and in spite of their obligations under International Law, one British officer had this to say: 'We are not in the business of charging around arresting people'. Basra's deputy police chief was even more candid in regard to Thar Allah: 'we share the same views and they help us with security'.

For the remainder of 2004 Thar Allah and its leader Yusef Mosawi seems to disappear from view, presumably left to continue helping the police with security, detaining and murdering former Baathists, imposing brutal street justice a la Sharia law and generally contributing to the 'scores, possibly hundreds' of political assassinations that had been reported by May.^[22] Nonetheless, behind the scenes, changes were being made within Basra's intelligence apparatus. According to the journalist Stephen Grey, the British attempted to close down the Special Operations Department, but that 'despite their efforts, it returned in other guises', while the worst abuses were driven underground (at one point British forces discovered that it had been torturing prisoners in a nextdoor nightclub). By the end of the year, Grey records that the Special Operations Department had been renamed the Criminal

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Investigation Department. He also claims that the British had spent all year attempting to remove the Chief of Police, identified as Brigadier Ali. However, Ali had refused to go and had established an Internal Affairs Department run by a former Badr member that had been 'conducting an internal reign of terror inside the police'.^[23] According to the US State Department, following allegations by the Iraqi police that Internal Affairs was responsible for the killings of 10 former Baathists, the chief of intelligence was removed in December, but retained command of Internal Affairs.^[24] In so far as punitive action is concerned, from their anonymous interviews with British insiders, Knights and Williams report that when transition took place in June, British 'entreaties to cull the Jameat threatened deeply entrenched factional interests' and consequently fell on deaf ears. The result was that the 'many factional and sectarian murders committed by the Jameat went unpunished'^[25].

Pausing to analyse the period to the end of 2004 briefly, we may note just how remarkable these reports really are. What we are being told is that in the first six to eight months of occupation, the British occupiers of Basra built up an intelligence-based special police unit drawn from selected Shiite militiamen which, in conjunction with certain other paramilitary militia units, more or less instantly set about murdering its political opponents from the former government and imposing an extremist Islamist form of social cleansing. Having set this monster loose on the streets of Basra, British forces then not only failed to reign it in, but on two occasions behaved with what appears to be extraordinary leniency towards one of the associated paramilitary militias, Thar Allah, despite their ongoing obligation to provide security to the residents of Basra. In relation to such heinous derelictions of duty, British spokesmen's responses were to insist that 'we are not in the business of running around arresting people' and that 'violent deBaathification will come to its own conclusion'^[26]. Furthermore, despite the failed entreaties to 'cull the Jameat', following 'transition' Assistant Chief Constable Stephen White, a veteran from Northern Ireland, received an OBE for his role in setting up the policing structures in southern Iraq.^[27]

A Political Life

On 30 January 2005 Iraqis went to the polls. One of the candidates was Yussef Mosawi, running on behalf of the Thar Allah political party as part of the Coalition of Islamic Basra (*Al-Ittilaf al-Basra al-Islamiyya*), dominated by SCIRI. According to Knights and Williams, the January elections in Basra were 'marred by violent intimidation beforehand and equally brutal recriminations afterwards'.

But the 30 January elections did not mark Mosawi's formal entry into Basra's factious political scene. On 16 January an Iraqi newspaper had already recorded that:

Al-Basra Council has decided to assign to Mr Youssif al-Mossowi, the member of the council and the head of the higher supervisory commission as a daily supervisor for working of checkpoints subordinating for Basra Police leadership...

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Al-Mossowi said that his work has been done in coordination with Basra Police Leadership, especially during the night to monitor the negligence and duty elusion, confirming that this realized to guarantee security pre-elections period and ensure security during the election.^[28]

So the head of the Islamist Thar Allah militia organisation that had for the previous year been linked to political killings and social cleansing was not only running in the January elections, but *supervising* a political process described as being 'marred by violent intimidation beforehand and equally brutal recrimination afterwards'. On top of that, this man was the head of a 'higher supervisory commission' and ran the police checkpoints that must have allowed his and other paramilitary militiamen unimpeded access to their victims. It is beyond any reasonable doubt that by now British forces must have been fully cognizant of who Mosawi was and had endorsed his role on the higher supervisory commission, where they will undoubtedly have placed their agents and advisers. At this time, not one Iraqi police or military unit was even able to take the lead in operations and we must therefore assume absolutely the deep continuing involvement of British forces at every level of the security apparatus in Basra.^[29]

In regard to the 'brutal recriminations afterwards', we may suggest that one of the chief reasons for the such recrimination was that, despite winning 20 of 41 seats on the Basra Provincial Council, the Coalition of Islamic Basra was marginally outgunned by an alliance of the other main parties, dominated by Fadhila (a party of the Sadrist current that does not recognise Muqtada al Sadr as a source of authority). It was from Fadhila that the new governor, Muhamad al-Waeli was drawn, but power in Basra remained deeply divided and the influence of Mosawi and others remained substantial. In fact, according to Knights and Williams, it was precisely at this time that 'Using militiamen serving in the security forces, Sadrist factions and SCIRI affiliates such as Badr and Thar Allah accelerated their intimidation of local university professors, trade unionists, and other secular figures' to the extent that the early months of 2005 'witnessed unprecedented levels of political violence and crime'.^[30] Again we must note this qualification that it is militiamen **servicing in the security forces** that are responsible for carrying out political violence and intimidation, ie it is the very OBE-worthy institutions established by the British that are responsible for the violence.

An example of this influence in action was demonstrated in what at the time was an extremely mysterious report in *The Telegraph*, describing negotiations on the appointment of a new chief of police between the governor and the head of Thar Allah. According to the report it was obvious that power lay with the 'bearded cleric puffing on a cigarette'.^[31] The outcome of these negotiations is illuminating, for the new police chief, Hassan al-Sade, presumably Mosawi's favourite (a later source claims that Sade, a former officer in marine special forces, was appointed by Alawi^[32], was the former head of the British trained Tactical Support Unit^[33] and a strong supporter of British 'attempts to purge the [police] force of militia elements'.^[34]

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Whilst the record for Thar Allah again largely goes quiet until October 2005^[35], it is known that in response to the success of Fadhila, which at this time also held the Oil Ministry in Baghdad, Thar Allah became part of another SCIRI-led alliance, known as the Pentacle House (*al-Bayt al-Khumasi*), alongside the Badr Organisation, *Sayid al-Shuhada* (Master of Martyrs) and *Mu'assasat Shahid al-Mahrab* (another SCIRI affiliate). According to the International Crisis Group, 'Despite their tense relations, the Sadrists and SCIRI are informally allied against Fadhila' [and remember that it is exactly this combination of Sadrist factions and SCIRI affiliates which is blamed for the violence through its presence in the security forces!].^[36]

The significance of the Pentacle House alliance rivalry with Fadhila and its allies is that it defines the key political schism in Basra. Most fundamental, the SCIRI-dominated position leads the charge for the creation of a Shiite super state in the south of Iraq^[37], whilst Fadhila and its allies have supported an integrationist, nationalist position, despite assertions that the governor has complained about lack of resources reaching the south^[38]. The immediate goal of the Pentacle House alliance is the ousting of Governor Waeli.

In August Thar Allah once more emerges briefly, when it is accused of attempting to murder a former naval officer, indicating its continuing role in political violence. After the family of the naval officer successfully drove off Thar Allah, they were arrested by the police, detained and tortured for over a week.^[39]

Before moving on to the most significant episode involving Thar Allah it is first necessary to examine the most spectacular event that took place in Basra in 2005 (at least through the prism of the western media) and which sparked the most dramatic and perhaps unexpected political crisis. In September, two undercover British service personnel in Arab disguise were arrested by Iraqi police and detained at the Jameat police station^[40]. The two men were heavily armed (accusations were made that the car in which they were spotted contained bomb-making equipment) and opened fire on the Iraqi police in an attempt to avoid arrest. Rather than negotiate, answer questions about the identities or activities of the two agents or allow the Iraqi legal system to take its course, British forces instead chose to assault the Jameat and release the detainees by force. Several Iraqi civilians were shot dead in the angry protests that the assault provoked, with many Iraqis concluding that the two agents had been planning to plant a bomb in a civilian area^[41]. If British forces were not in the business of running around arresting people, it seemed that they were most definitely in the business of running around shooting Iraqis and destroying Iraqi infrastructure rather than face Iraqi scrutiny over the actions of top-secret paramilitary agents. In the event, despite the destruction to the Jameat itself, the two men were actually 'rescued' from another building to which they had been moved by armed militiamen under the nose of the presiding Iraqi judge. Curiously, following the snatch by 'militiamen' the two undercover operatives were better treated^[42] and had been left entirely unguarded by the time that British forces recovered them, as though two sets of hands were at work within the Iraqi security apparatus!

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The assault of the Jameat produced two obvious and hugely significant consequences. The first was that the governing council under the leadership of Governor Waeli immediately suspended cooperation with the British.

The second was that the governor ordered his own raid just weeks later on 22 October on the headquarters of Thar Allah. The circumstances and consequences of this raid were almost entirely unreported in the western media, but we can begin to reconstruct it from a number of partial reports, chief amongst which are a series of testimonials given to the Monitoring Net for Human Rights in Iraq and passed on to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq.^[43]

The first key point is that the raid appears to have been devised in response to allegations that government vehicles had been stolen or misused by Thar Allah, specifically in cases of abduction. The second key point is that the raid resulted in the discovery of some 50 illegal detainees (mostly Sunnis and some of them members of the Baath Party according to the testimonials) and the arrest of a similar number of paramilitary militiamen from the Iraqi Lions Movement, which appears to have operated from Thar Allah's headquarters. The militiamen are said to have confessed to carrying out 'rapes, robberies, assassinations, and to extorting money from business owners and university professors'. The third key point is that the police conducting the raid insisted that they had seized evidence implicating Iranian intelligence in recent violence in Basra, including armed attacks and plots to assassinate political leaders (including Governor Waeli). Unsurprisingly, a Thar Allah spokesman insisted that the raid had been politically motivated and that the governor had spread rumours that cars used to commit crimes had been seen near the mosque (HQ) to justify his actions. But perhaps most importantly, we learn from the testimonials that no mere militia commander, fundamentalist cleric, political councillor, head of higher supervisory commission nor overseer of night time checkpoints, Yussef Mosawi is also an official of the Interior Affairs department in the Jamiyat, where he is responsible for police vehicles!

Whatever the exact circumstances, this raid and arrests (reportedly including Mosawi) would appear to have provided an ideal opportunity for British forces to become involved in an effort to expose any Iranian involvement^[44], clean up corruption, improve security and perhaps repair relations with the governor. In the event, it seems that the British position was, if anything, obstructive and the raid is almost completely missing in the Western media. If we can assume that the governor did not order a second raid against Thar Allah in 2006, the ICG report *Lessons from Basra* claims that the governor ordered the army and the police to 'launch an offensive' against Thar Allah, but that the two generals in charge refused. The governor was forced to sign a new order, assuming entire responsibility for the operation, in order to carry out the raid. Whatever raid this passage refers to, the important point is that the two recalcitrant generals were the key British allies in Basra and must have discussed the matter with their British counterparts.

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In late November, while British forces were conducting an 'underground campaign to stamp out the vicious bloodletting between Sunnis and Shiites'^[45], the Ministry of the Interior sent a team with US advisors to shake up the Basra police.^[46] The result was the reorganisation of Internal Affairs, with supposedly corrupt officers simply shifted to another department.^[47]

The 'underground campaign' itself was described by Knights and Williams as follows:

A wave of further arrests continued throughout the autumn of 2005 into early 2006, with British forces targeting a range of SCIRI, Sadrist and Thar Allah militia cells within the local police forces and municipal organs.^[48]

According to several authoritative subsequent write-ups it was this confluence of police intelligence and Thar Allah that the British had moved against. For instance:

In September, British forces first moved against elements of Tharallah and the most corrupt units in the Basra constabulary, including the Department of Internal Affairs, the Criminal Intelligence Unit and the Serious Crimes Unit. Elements from these three organisations work with Tharallah to carry out contract killings and sophisticated roadside bomb attacks on British forces.^[49]

It sounded like a promising development from the perspective of the civilian population of Basra, yet the rate of killings actually escalated under the impact of the 'underground campaign', with the majority of attacks 'perpetrated by elements wearing Iraqi police uniform, as well as elements of a special force affiliated with the Iraqi Interior Ministry which was dissolved [ie Internal Affairs]' according to British military commander Alex Wilson.^[50] And despite the campaign, Mosawi himself had reappeared to participate in the January 2006 elections.

By May the political crisis sparked after the assault on the Jameat was still not resolved. On 14 May the governor is reported to have organised a demonstration in support of his decision to suspend the chief of police, Hassan Sawadi, to demand the resignation of the new Iraqi Army's Basra-based 10th Division commandeer, General Abdul Latif Thaban and to blame two prominent Shiite clerics for a recent upsurge in violence.^[51] It appears the governor's chief criticism had been failure to prevent the ongoing waves of extrajudicial killings.^[52]

The day afterwards, 'in Basra, about 2000 followers of Shiite Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani marched in protest at allegations from the regional governor linking local clerics to terrorism.'^[53] Subsequently we learned that it was Mosawi that had been tasked with organising and leading a demonstration to 'up the ante against Waeli that had 'degenerated into clashes'.^[54]

On the same day as these demonstrations the new prime minister, Maliki, was establishing a special Basra Emergency Security Committee. The emergency committee is reported to have struggled to

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replace the provincial security committee until a compromise was reached with Waeli, whereby he would head a security committee selected by the prime minister from 'SCIRI, Fadhila and the Sadrist trend politicians'.^[55] Unfortunately, we don't know whether Mosawi was appointed to the new security committee, but we do know that by February 2007 he had been appointed to the role of deputy governor^[56] and by April 2008 he was described as a 'prominent and feared member of Basra's provincial council and security committee'.^[57] If Britain's 'underground campaign' had been designed to curb violence it was an abject failure; if it had been designed to curb the power and influence of Thar Allah and Yussef Mosawi it was equally ineffectual. In fact, Thar Allah continued to operate with the same brazen sense of impunity.

In June 2006 in a predawn raid 20 gunmen dressed in commando camouflage are reported to have stormed a police station to free three members of Thar Allah charged with killing police officers.^[58] Then in July, taking a break from killing Baathists and other political opponents, it was Yossef Mosawi who took charge of recruiting and enlisting militants to fight alongside Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon.^[59]

The year of 2006 climaxed with yet another dramatic and seemingly inexplicable^[60] episode under the auspices of Britain's latest effort to rehabilitate the police force and prepare for handover of authority, Operation Sinbad. On Christmas Day British forces conducted a second major assault on the Jameat police station (said to have been demolished the first time).^[61] The huge military operation was now targeted primarily against the Serious Crimes Unit and culminated with the early morning demolition of the entire complex using bar mines. Whilst detainees were apparently rescued^[62], computers were retrieved and the operation was touted as something of a success, it is difficult to entirely share the sense of jubilation. Despite or because of the huge military operation, the Serious Crimes Unit itself had already vacated the premises!^[63] (The farce seems to have been entirely lost on most journalists, especially the BBC's Huw Williams, who claimed 'the demolition of the building was a visible symbol of the hope that the serious crimes carried out by police officers based there should now come to an end'!) According to a Basra governate official, it was the Major Crimes Unit [sic] that had been penetrated both by Iranians and by Tha'r Allah members, while *The Times* agreed that the Serious Crimes Unit worked with Thar Allah to carry out contract killings and deadly roadside attacks.^[64]

Following the arrest of just seven members of the 400-strong Serious Crimes Squad and its rehabilitation elsewhere under the new title of the Major Crimes Unit (No doubt for Huw Williams this would have constituted a semantic symbol of hope!), neither Thar Allah nor Yussef Mosawi disappeared from the scene. Equally, the conflict between Fadhila and the SCIRI-Thar Allah axis continued to simmer throughout 2007, with both SCIRI and Tha'r Allah calling in March for swift local elections in hopes of displacing Waeli.^[65] These elections seem to have become the main focus of attention in 2007, with one Thar Allah commander stating that he had told all city council members that 'You have to make a choice. You either vote against the governor or you die'.^[66] In August Mosawi

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himself claimed that 'We are prepared for the upcoming battle, and concrete barriers won't save [Fadhila],' and that if local elections 'aren't held, we will use force to kick Fadhila out'.^[67] Thar Allah's centrality was hinted at in several more articles in the Western media, which highlighted both the ready access to patronage that Mosawi was able to enjoy as well as his ongoing role in the paramilitary arena.^[68] In September, Mosawi was actually able to roll out for a visiting journalist a classified map of the city prepared by the British military, showing the level of violence in July.^[69] Though when asked how he had obtained the map, Mosawi joked 'They steal it for us', it seems much more likely that Basra's deputy governor had access to such maps from his role on the security committee, if not to any other official or quasi-official security appointments.

The Knights' Assault and the Sons of Basra

Against a backdrop of ongoing violence, the stage appeared to be set for an epic confrontation between the SCIRI-Thar Allah axis and Fadhila. According to Mosawi:

The local conflict cannot be separated from the broader struggle between West and East because of Basra's strategic location and vast resources ... Now, Basra is at the crossroads of an Iranian-American struggle, an Iranian-Arab struggle, the struggle between factions inside Iran and an American war against Islam as a whole. Every actor in this string of conflicts is striving to take up positions in Basra to influence the course of events. Iran is supporting the Islamist parties with which it has enjoyed longstanding ties, whereas the US is supporting local and regional forces that are capable of challenging Iran's influence.^[70]

One year after his geopolitical assessment, this 'powerful young warlord' had been arrested by Iraqi and Coalition forces during the major spring 2000 offensive known as the Knights' Assault.

So was this the 'upcoming battle' at the crossroads of so many struggles for which Thar Allah had been preparing, and could the seeming demise of this militant cleric popularly believed to have been an Iranian agent^[71] at the hands of Iraqi and Coalition forces signal a victory in the East verses West, Iran verses America geopolitical conflict for influence?

Addressing the second question, we can say not if we are to believe Musawi, who apparently never saw himself or Thar Allah as one of the Iran-backed Islamist parties! In fact, Musawi accused just about everyone else, including Fadhila, of operating in the interests of Iran^[72]. But nor, apparently, did he see himself as an ally of the West, insisting that 'Coalition forces are usurpers, plunderers, and occupiers and must be resisted... I am doing that'.^[73]

To the first question, the answer may yet well be yes. Whilst a great deal of speculation has surrounded the Knights' Assault^[74], it's apparent failure and the apparent division it shows between prime minister Maliki and the US^[75], it is very possible that most of the authors of such speculation have overlooked

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its critical dimensions in their haste to pigeonhole the current dynamic as anti-Sadr (just as they insisted on pigeonholing previous dynamics as anti-al Qaeda or as sectarian conflict or even as attempts to stem 'sectarian violence'). In addition to ostensibly cracking down on Thar Allah, the offensive also targeted 'elements from al-Fadhila' and others^[76]. Among the moves was the disbanding of the Oil Protection Force, widely regarded as the military power base of Fadhila, and its replacement by an Interior Ministry controlled Oil Police^[77].

These operations by a government which draws much of its support from one half of the SCIRI-Thar Allah axis may very well represent efforts to exert control in the two principle and related issues that confront Iraq. The first issue is that of the upcoming provincial elections scheduled for October 2008, dominated in this region by the issue of the creation of a southern nine-province Shiite superstate whose existence will mark a major step on the road towards partition that so many imperialist ideologues have long advocated. Whilst Waeli appears pleased by the results of the Knights Assault, claiming that Basra is no longer dominated by 'militias'^[78], it remains very much to be seen what the election will bring in terms of Iraq's future.

The second issue is the privatisation of Iraq's oil industry. With the moves against the Oil Protection Force and Fadhila, amid charges of smuggling, it appears Maliki may be attempting to unseat those forces that have stood in the way of a privatisation agenda that seems set to see the return of the same oil companies expelled by the Baath in 1972^[79]. Once again, only time will truly reveal how successful these efforts will be.

If Thar Allah and Yussef Mosawi have truly been removed from the scene, it is perhaps because they have already fulfilled their purpose, whatever agenda they may have believed it was they served. If we glance briefly at the record, insofar as it is known, of this fundamentalist Shiite paramilitary militia, it appears that Thar Allah functioned as one arm of a secret security apparatus that has been instrumental in eliminating the vestiges of the former state as well as carrying out a policy of sectarian cleansing that we are told has almost emptied Iraq's second city of its Sunni population^[80] and enforcing an Islamic authoritarianism that must undoubtedly contribute to the suppression of dissenting voices.

It now appears that the reign of terror that Thar Allah and such other 'cutouts' as the police intelligence unit have imposed on Basra are likely to have served the long-term interests of both the architects of Iraq's Balkanisation and the oil majors looking for a 'foot in the door', since both these projects seem to have accorded with the SCIRI-Thar Allah axis. Perhaps it is small wonder then to learn from the *New York Times* That US intelligence agents were working with the intelligence unit in the Jameat, passing on 'tips, like the location of people suspected of being insurgents', knowing full well that they would find their way into the hands of Basra's death squads^[81]. Similarly, the explanation that Thar Allah and its cohorts wittingly or unwittingly operated in the interests of the

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occupation is the only possible serious explanation for the record of impunity that we encounter, especially including the return of arms to an organisation that had already been linked with political killings and the presence of its leader in key security positions.

In fact, for anyone who has looked at covert warfare and its role in counterinsurgency operations, the use of such paramilitary militias as an instrument of state policy is not only plausible, it is fundamental! The primary mechanism for conducting such intelligence-based counterinsurgency warfare is the consolidation of a specialist intelligence-gathering agency, which both provides the targets for and handles a range of paramilitary actors who carry out a strategy for which, out of political expediency (due to its fundamental illegality and immorality), the state must remain distanced. The US has carried out such strategies with great vigour in its interventionist wars in South-East Asia and Latin America. The victims, intended and unintended, run into hundreds of thousands. But it was Britain, as it was gradually divested of its colonial possessions after the Second World War, that wrote the modern handbook of counterinsurgency. Those who continue to doubt that the use of proxy paramilitaries, counter-terror and so-called pseudo operations are particularly 'British' or somehow outside the 'rules of cricket' should read the works of General Frank Kitson, who gained his experience dealing with 'civil revolts' in Kenya, Malaya, Oman, Cyprus and Northern Ireland.^[82]

It was Kitson's principles that were eventually to be deployed in the conflict in Northern Ireland and which led to the creation of a culture of collusion between the special branch of the RUC, a secretive military intelligence outfit known as the Force Research Unit and Loyalist Protestant paramilitaries in which Catholics could be murdered with impunity, according to the findings of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir John Stevens^[83]. An account of the experience of this state-sanctioned violence by Jeffrey Slukka is deeply instructive for an understanding of the situation in Iraq.^[84]

Just as in Iraq, we find that the popular media portrayal of this violence was to stereotype it as intercommunal sectarian violence. In Northern Ireland patient study and courageous investigation has revealed that far from constituting a cycle of 'tit for tat' revenge killings (the same label that is continually applied in Iraq), the majority of the victims were Catholic civilians murdered for the most part by serving and former members of the security forces, moonlighting in organisations that went by names like the Ulster Volunteer Force and Ulster Freedom Fighters.

Again, it may be of surprise to some to discover that even after the exposure of the activities of the Force Research Unit, action has not been taken to prosecute those responsible for creating the 'culture of collusion'; instead it seems that the unit has been shipped more or less wholesale to Iraq, where it plies its trade under the similarly innocuous sounding title of the Joint Support Group, with its primary mission being 'to recruit and run covert human intelligence sources or agents'.^[85] In Northern Ireland such covert human intelligence sources or agents included paramilitary killers like Brian

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Nelson, head of intelligence for the Ulster Defence Association and Albert Baker, whose gang was responsible for the notorious 'Romper Room' murders.^[86]

So if for a moment we step outside the media paradigm of rival Iranian-backed Shiite militias all competing over the smuggling of oil while simultaneously turning Basra into an Islamist hell, despite the best efforts of British forces, we can simply ask what should we expect the application of counterinsurgency warfare to look like in Basra. Put simply, we should expect to find a security committee at provincial level coordinating the combined efforts of a range of civil, military, police and para-military organisations. Below this we should expect to find some sort of centralised 'special branch' joint intelligence establishment that would include interrogation facilities, where British and/or American advisors would oversee an expansive intelligence gathering operation aimed not so much at 'terrorists' or individual fighters, but at the 'subversive' civilian 'infrastructure' of their political opponents, whether that be members of political parties or activists within supposed 'front' organisations, such as human rights agencies or trades unions. The 'intelligence' acquired primarily through interrogation would then be passed down to the various agencies, sometimes via 'cutouts', for target identification. At the extremity of this apparatus would be paramilitary units, specifically intended to maintain the maximum possible distance between the architects of the counterinsurgency policy and the application of this method of warfare.

In Basra we catch glimpses of a higher supervisory commission and security committee whose role is to coordinate security operations. We find a major intelligence operations facility established by the British housing a Special Operations Department-cum-Criminal Investigation Department where detainees are routinely interrogated/tortured. Here we find the presence of US intelligence agents/advisers, whose role is to compile lists of suspected enemies. We find that the majority of 'militia violence' is carried out by agents who are at the same time members of the security forces. And we can just make out one specific paramilitary unit whose mandate includes eliminating members of the former ruling party on the pretext of security, whose leader enjoys privileged access to classified military maps and operates the nightly curfew, and which has been repeatedly and inexplicably nurtured by British forces. With this in mind, it is not hard to understand how a paradigm of failure, lack of planning, foreign infiltration, etc, etc must be preferred by the powerful to the only other conceivable alternative.

The execution of Yussef Mosawi, however deserved it may appear to have been, has done nothing to advance accountability or justice in post-invasion Iraq. Instead it must be seen as yet another political act of violence in a long and gruesome chain whose object is to protect the guilty and conceal the truth. In the absence of a far more thorough exposure of the secret war in Basra, it is foolhardy at the very least to attempt political analyses that cannot even establish the true relationships of the various actors.

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To the consternation and embarrassment of the British state, the photograph of a number of British soldiers recently appeared in the *The Purple Standard*, a publication which praises the exploits of the outlawed Ulster Volunteer Force, a banned loyalist paramilitary group. The soldiers were pictured in Basra wearing orange sashes and playing flutes to their office, under the title 'The Rising Sons of Basra'.^[87] As our eyes recover from the dazzling glow of the media spotlights and begin to accustom themselves to the dim world of paramilitary counterinsurgency warfare, we may begin to see that the Rising Sons of Basra are the Sons of Northern Ireland, are the Sons of Rhodesia, are the Sons of Kenya, are the Sons of Malaya, and are the Sons of every conflict where a blood-red sun refuses to finally set on the neo-colonial vestiges of Empire.

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Footnotes

^[1] "Leader of Tharallah militia died under torture", Roads to Iraq, 20 April 2008 – URL:

<http://www.roadstoiraq.com/2008/04/20/leader-of-tharallah-militia-died-under-torture/>

^[2] "Basra strike against Shiite militias also about oil", Sam Dagher, *Christian Science Monitor*, 9 April 2008

^[3] "Transcript: Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki on Iraq", *CNN*, 7 April 2008

^[4] "Revenge Drives String of Killings in Basra", Joel Brinkley, *The New York Times*, 31 October 2003

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^[5] RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs), IRQ42228.E, 15 January 2004, Immigration and Refugee Board Canada. There is no further indication of what happened to these offices, but it is perfectly possible that they have continued in existence under the same or another name.

^[6] "A Survey of Armed Groups in Iraq", Kathleen Ridolfo, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 4 June 2004 [The URL of this article is no longer valid; a version of the same document can be found on Global Security, but the original reference to Tha'r Allah has been split into a non-descript sentence on Tha'r Allah and a separate entry for 'Vengeance Detachments' containing all the information originally attributed to Tha'r Allah. The version of the document that I first saw can still be obtained as a PDF from SmallWarsJournal.com. Whilst the original document is dated 4 June 2004, the PDF was created on 11 June 2005, which may suggest that the document was altered after that date – URL: <http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/iraqsurvey.pdf>]

^[7] "Al-Qaeda scare has Basra on edge", Omar Hasan, *IOL*, 12 November 2003

^[8] "Revenge killings thin ex-Baathists' ranks", Joel Brinkley, *New York Times*, November 1, 2003

^[9] The first reference to a Death Car was made by Steven Vincent, a freelance American reporter, who wrote in August 2005 that a white Toyota Mark II was used by off-duty police officers in the pay of extremist religious group to perpetrate many of the 100s of assassinations in Basra each month ("Switched Off in Basra", 31 July 2005). Shortly after Vincent's highly critical report of British 'negligence' was published, Vincent was himself snatched by gunmen in a police vehicle and subsequently murdered. References to this and another make of car associated with death squad killings in Basra were made by an eye witness who linked them with the department of Internal Affairs (see endnote 46).

^[10] "Human rights protection and promotion vital in the transition period", Amnesty International, 28 June 2004.

^[11] "Iraqi Secret Police Operating in al-Basrah", Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 30 January 2004

^[12] This glib comment was made by Capt Shay Marks, a British military spokesman. "Iraqi Party Goes From Exiled to Electable", Anthony Shadid, *Washington Post*, 14 February 2004

^[13] Now renamed simply the Simply Islamic Council for Iraq.

^[14] *The Calm Before the Storm: The British Experience in Southern Iraq*, Michael Knights and Ed Williams, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus 66, February 2007, p15

^[15] "Iraqi Secret Police Operating in al-Basrah", *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 30 January 2004

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^[16] "Iraqi Party Goes From Exiled to Electable", Anthony Shadid, *Washington Post*, February 14, 2004; "Iraqis Battle Gangs in Basra", Nicholas Blandford, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 24 March 2004; "Islamic groups' rise may lead to greater conflict", Jack Fairweather, *The Telegraph*, 7 April 2004. Incidents of what appeared to be Islamist social cleansing included a number of massacres of street alcohol vendors. When British forces intervened in one such incident on 1 February 2004, killing two of the attackers, they discovered that the 'militiamen' included a number of 'plainclothes police' that had teamed up with vigilantes; a British army spokesman, Shay Marks, insisted that the soldiers had stumbled upon a plainclothes police operation cracking down on a criminal gang ("Killings of Vendors in Iraqi City Drive Alcohol Sales Off Streets", Edward Wong, *The New York Times*, 18 February 2004).

^[17] "Iraqis battle gangs in Basra", *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 March 2004.

^[18] *ibid.*

^[19] The headquarters may well have been the offices of a women's rights organisation, said to have been taken over by Tha'r Allah in a later report; the women were threatened with death if they returned. "The Roots of Iraqi Secularism", Healing Iraq, 12 October 2004 – URL: http://healingiraq.blogspot.com/archives/2004_10_01_healingiraq_archive.html

^[20] A Weekly Review of Developments in and Pertaining to Iraq, 2 April 2004, Volume 7, Number 12, RADIO FREE EUROPE/ RADIO LIBERTY; "One American killed in al-Falouja; Annan: work is underway to form a multinational force", ArabicNews.com, 3/30/2004 – URL: <http://www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/040330/2004033012.html>

^[21] "Islamic groups' rise may lead to greater conflict", Jack Fairweather, *The Telegraph*, 7 April 2004

^[22] "Killings of civilians in Basra and al-'Amara", Amnesty International, 11 May 2004

^[23] "Iraq: our fatal blunder", Stephen Grey, *New Statesman*, 3 October 2005"; some further observations were published by Stephen Grey in an internet photo diary now removed from the web.

^[24] "In Basra, Militia Controls by Fear", Richard A Opiel Jr, *The New York Times*, 9 October 2005

^[25] *The Calm Before the Storm: The British Experience in Southern Iraq*, Michael Knights and Ed Williams, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus 66, February 2007, p29

^[26] "Rule of the death squads", Stephen Grey, *New Statesman*, 15 March 2004

^[27] "Officer honoured for Iraq role", *BBC*, 12 June 2004

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[28] "Supervisory Commission to Control Checkpoints", *Al Sabaah*, 16 January 2005 – URL: <http://horse.he.net/~swiftpow/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=14632&postdays=0&postorder=asc&start=60>

[29] In May Britain's senior police adviser, Deputy Chief Constable Colin Smith, another veteran from Northern Ireland, insisted that he was optimistic and that the ability of the Basra police force to patrol and investigate crimes was an 'exponential development ("Basra out of control, says chief of police", Rory Carroll, *The Guardian*, 31 May 2005). As late as September 2005, shortly before the arrest of 2 undercover SAS operatives, Chief Inspector Amanda Cooke, a senior British adviser to the Iraqi police in southern Iraq, absolutely refuted the accusation that the police in Basra had been thoroughly infiltrated by Shiite militiamen and took part in a campaign of assassination: 'I'm 100 per cent sure that people [at Camp Apache] are working for the common good' ("Camp Apache, the Iraqi police academy that relies on Britons", Jonny Beardsall, *The Telegraph*, 22 September 2005).

[30] *The Calm Before the Storm: The British Experience in Southern Iraq*, Michael Knights and Ed Williams, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus 66, February 2007, p27

[31] "Clerics become powerbrokers in the South", Jack Fairweather, *The Telegraph*, 14 February 2005

[32] "Basra out of control, says chief of police", Rory Carroll, *The Guardian*, 31 May 2005

[33] The Tactical Support Unit in Basra was the equivalent of the Special Police Commandos and Public Order Brigades deployed elsewhere in Iraq, ie. a high-end, specialist paramilitary counterinsurgency unit tied in closely with intelligence-based operations. See "US Collusion with Iraqi Death Squads", Max Fuller, Global Research, 26 June 2006 for a detailed description of such units at work.

[34] "After seven British deaths in a week, Basra's police chief is linked to terrorists", Oliver Poole, *The Telegraph*, 15 May 2006

[35] In a largely unexplained incident in March 2005, Yusif al Musawi leads a hundreds-strong demonstration against the Danish port operating company Maersk, which had illegally taken control of the important facility of Khor as Zubayr, leading to the company's eviction. Musawi is alleged to have accused the head of Maersk security of being a Jewish spy who should have been killed a long time ago ("Iraqi Port Weathers Danish Storm", Lotte Dolke Kaarsholm, Charlotte Aagaard and Osama Al-Habahbeh, CorpWatch, 31 January 2006).

[36] *Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra*, Crisis Group Middle East Report No 67, 25 June 2007, p7

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[\[37\]](#) "As British troops exit Basra, Shiites vie to fill power vacuum", *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 September 2007

[\[38\]](#) Whilst the International Crisis Group report (op cit.) claims that Fadhila has attempted to strengthen Basra's autonomy, perhaps on the basis of a union of three provinces, there is no doubt that the party has opposed the SCIRI-lead scheme for a nine-province federal region and a Fadhila party member, Abu Zaineb al-Edani, claims, 'We're the only party that has a national agenda,' ("Battling for Power in Basra", Insitute of War and Peace Reporting, *ICR No 230*, 7 August 2007). At the same time, Knights and Williams (op cit.) record that the Fadhila governor, under pressure from his backers in the Southern Oil Company and General Union of Oil Employees, has taken a tough line with foreign oil companies and has drafted legislation intended to limit foreign involvement in the oil sector; the ICG report also highlights that Fadhila went so far as to cut off electricity to Baghdad to counter a SCIRI-backed Kurdish drive to open up the oil sector to foreign investment!

[\[39\]](#) "US reporter murdered in Iraq had written his own epitaph", James Hider, *The Times*, 4 August 2005.

[\[40\]](#) See "Playing with fire", Ali Rifat, Michael Smith and Richard Woods, *The Sunday Times*, 24 September 2005 for a good example of mainstream reporting of the event; see "Breaking Iraq and Blaming Iran", Andrew G Marshall, Global Research, 3 July 2008, for a useful summary of the evidence relating to the event.

[\[41\]](#) Abdel Hadi al-Daraji, said to be Muqtada al Sadr's top official in Basra, accused Britian of plotting to start an ethnic war by carrying out bombings targeting Shia civilians and then blaming the attacks on Sunni Arab groups ("Shia militia fies up anti-British hatred after SAS rescue", Adrian Blomfield, *The Telegraph*, 23 September 2005).

[\[42\]](#) According to one source, 'when the soldiers were eventually moved to another house, the mood of their captors changed and that although their hands remained bound together they were treated quite well before being freed' ("Captured SAS men 'spying on drill torturer'", Sean Rayment, *The Telegraph*, 16 October 2005).

[\[43\]](#) *Special Report: Testimonials Regarding human rights in Basra*, Monitoring of Human Rights in Iraq, 8 April 2006. See also: "Abducted Lawyer in Iraqi Trail Slain", 22 October 2005; Iraqi Resistance Report, 22 October 2005; the website of Juan Cole, 23 October 2005; "Prime Minister Visits al-Basrah to Assess Situation", *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 25 October 2005; "Iraqi Security Forces Close in on Parties Tied to Iran", *Al Zaman*, 29 October 2005; *Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra*, Crisis Group Middle East Report No 67, 25 June 2007, p13.

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[44] One of two cover explanations for the undercover British presence in Basra, as narrated by an 'inside source', was that a team of 24 SAS was attempting to prevent bombers entering the city from Iran ("Playing with fire", Ali Rifat, Michael Smith and Richard Woods, *The Sunday Times*, 24 September 2005), while Blair publicly accused Iran of exporting technology and explosives to guerrillas in Basra shortly after the raid ("Iraq police are among 12 seized by British forces in Basra raid", Rory Carroll, *The Guardian*, 8 October 2005. A second explanation for the undercover presence – that the SAS was spying on a senior police commander who had been torturing prisoners – was subsequently 'revealed' as the 'real story' by equally anonymous military sources ("Captured SAS men 'spying on drill tortureer'", Sean Rayment, *The Telegraph*, 16 October 2005).

[45] "British investigate Basra torture claims", Brian Brady, *Scotland on Sunday*, 20 November 2005

[46] "A 'quagmire' as violence upsets efforts to reconstitute Iraqi police forces", Michael Moss, *The New York Times*, 24 May 2006. In an undated episode contained within the testimonials collated by Monitoring of Human Rights in Iraq that may or may not relate to this raid, after one of the so-called death cars had been traced back to Interior Affairs and its occupants arrested, the then Interior Minister Bayan Jabr ordered Governor Waeli to release the car and crew or face the cancellation of the Basra governate and its various entities! There was no outcry in support of the governor to be found in the British or international media.

[47] Each of the six members of this totally corrupt 'rogue' unit that tortured prisoners to death with drills that was actually charged was acquitted for 'lack of evidence' due to witness intimidation, presumably including Britain's Special Air Service! (*ibid.*). Maj. Peter Cripps, a British military spokesman, revealed that the members of Internal Affairs simply 'got jobs in another department' ("Iran-Iraq: Brits Crack Down on Basra's Police", *Associated Press*, 25 January 2006).

[48] Two sets of arrests are recorded, the first of '12 Iraqis, including police officers, who were suspected of involvement in attacks against coalition forces' on 7 October 2005 (ie. Prior to the governor's raid against Thar Allah; "Iraq police are among 12 seized by British forces in Basra raid", Rory Carroll, *The Guardian*, 8 October 2005), and the second of 14 people, including 'influential members of the serious crimes and internal affairs units, including Maj. Jassim al-Daraji, assistant director of Basra's criminal intelligence department, on 24 January 2006 ("British, Danish troops seize police in Iraqi raids" *Reuters*, 24 January 2006; "Iran-Iraq: Brits Crack Down on Basra's Police", *Associated Press*, 25 January 2006). In the first instance, we may guess that these included the six members of Internal Affairs subsequently released, while in the second we are told that nine were immediately released, while five were jailed 'for alleged roles in murder and other crimes'. According to a member of the Basra governing council, the January arrests included 12 intelligence officers, provoking fury from the governor, who intended to issue a resolution to expel the British from the city ("British Forces Arrest 12 Police Officers in Basrah", *Al-Hayat*, 25 January 2006). Bear in mind that it was the governor who

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actually raided Thar Allah to much consternation, while western analysts insist the Brit were cracking down on Thar Allah cells, but in actual fact appear to have been arresting police presumably loyal to the governor!

[\[49\]](#) "Shiite factional struggles threaten Iraqi stability", TheHill.com

[\[50\]](#) "Iraq Blunders 2: co-opting the militia", Adam Smith MP, 23 March 2006.

[\[51\]](#) Fayrouz in Beaumont blog, 14 May 2006; "Forty killed in Iraq carnage", 15 May 2006.

[\[52\]](#) "Terror links cost Basra police chief his job", Agencies, 14 May 2006. In Waeli's own words: 'I am astonished at the murders of the past week in Basra, where the police haven't made any kind of investigation'.

[\[53\]](#) *Ibid.*

[\[54\]](#) "As British troops exit Basra, Shiites vie to fill power vacuum", *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 September 2007. Juan Cole also refers to Thar Allah's role in leading demonstrations in his blog for 16 May 2006.

[\[55\]](#) *The Calm Before the Storm: The British Experience in Southern Iraq*, Michael Knights and Ed Williams, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus 66, February 2007, p32

[\[56\]](#) *idid.* P30

[\[57\]](#) *Provincial Politics in Iraq*, Michael Knights and Eamon McCarthy, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus 81, April 2008, p5

[\[58\]](#) "Raid frees 17 Iraqis abducted in Baghdad", John F Burns, *The New York Times*, 23 June 2006

[\[59\]](#) "Iranian Volunteers Set Off for Lebanon", Brian Murphy, *Associated Press*, 26 July 2006

[\[60\]](#) Andrew G Marshall has suggested that the raid was one of the last in a series of efforts to destroy the evidence related to the activities of the two undercover British servicemen arrested in September 2005 ("Breaking Iraq and Blaming Iran", Global Research, 3 July 2008). It does seem perfectly likely that the Christmas assault was connected to the ongoing feud with elements of the Iraqi police that had drifted beyond British control, but it is also quite possible that the evidence that they commandeered related much more widely to the operations of the intelligence unit and its paramilitary cohorts, perhaps as part of the process of British withdrawal. An analogous event might be the break into the very secure Castelreagh complex in Northern Ireland, which housed the Special Branch, an

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interrogation centre and the Force Research Unit, on 17 March 2002. Just three men managed to walk out with files, documents and computerised information relating to the British covert war in Ulster.

^[61] "UK troops storm Iraqi police HQ", *BBC*, 25 December 2006; "British Raid Basra Police Station", *Associated Press*, 25 December 2006.

^[62] Curiously, according to the chief of police of the time, 20 of the most dangerous prisoners accused of planting bombs, apparently vanished with the British raid ("Reduced to rubble ... British troops launch Christmas raid on the 'station of death'", Dominic Kennedy and Ned Parker, *The Times*, 26 December 2006.

^[63] "British military finds 'appalling' Iraqi prison cell", Marc Santora, *The New York Times*, 26 December 2006

^[64] *Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra*, Crisis Group Middle East Report No 67, 25 June 2007, p8; "Horrors that mirrored Saddam's worst excesses", Dominic Kennedy and Ned Parker, *The Times*, 26 December 2006

^[65] *Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra*, Crisis Group Middle East Report No 67, 25 June 2007, p16

^[66] "Battling for Power in Basra", *ICR No. 230*, Institute of War and Peace Reporting, 7 August 2007

^[67] "Militias Compete like 'Mafia Families' over Oil Rackets and Public Resources", 13 August 2007

^[68] "As British troops exit Basra, Shiites vie to fill power vacuum", *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 September 2007; "Strong Like Saddam", Kevin Peraino, *Newsweek*, 9 October 2007

^[69] "As British troops exit Basra, Shiites vie to fill power vacuum", *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 September 2007

^[70] *Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra*, Crisis Group Middle East Report No 67, 25 June 2007, p7

^[71] *ibid.* p8

^[72] *ibid.*

^[73] "As British troops exit Basra, Shiites vie to fill power vacuum", *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 September 2007

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[\[74\]](#) For an intelligent discussion, see “Breaking Iraq and Blaming Iran”, Andrew G Marshall, Global Research, 3 July 2008. For ungrounded speculation that completely misunderstands the relations of US and Iraqi troops and ignores the internal politics of Basra, try “Petraeus hid Maliki's resistance to US troops”, Gareth Porter, *Asia Times*, 19 April 2008. The idea that the Iraqi army could act independently reached farce when it was reported that the US was having to rely on spy satellites to keep tabs on its whereabouts (U.S. spies on Iraqi army, sources say”, Greg Miller, *Los Angeles Times*, July 2, 2008).

[\[75\]](#) As former CIA analyst Ray McGovern highlights, with so many embedded US troops within the Iraqi army, it is simply impossible that the Knights Assault could have been undertaken without US consent (“Ex-CIA analyst on Petraeus and Cheney”, *The Real News Network*, 11 April 2008).

[\[76\]](#) “Transcript: Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki on Iraq”, *CNN*, 7 April 2008

[\[77\]](#) “Basra Strike Against Shiite Militias Also About Oil”, Sam Dagher, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 9 April 2008

[\[78\]](#) “Militias finished in Iraq’s Basra: governor”, Ian Simpson, *Reuters*, 8 July 2008

[\[79\]](#) For instance, in February Michael Wareing, who heads the Basra Development Commission, stated, ‘My sense is that many of the oil companies are very eager to come in now, and what they’re actually waiting for is the hydrocarbon law to be passed and various projects to be signed off’, (“Oil giants are poised to move into Basra”, David Smith, *The Observer*, 24 February 2008). See also “Deals With Iraq Are Set to Bring Oil Giants Back”, Andrew E. Kramer, *The New York Times*, 19 June 2008.

[\[80\]](#) *Where is Iraq Heading? Lessons from Basra*, Crisis Group Middle East Report No 67, 25 June 2007, p7. It is also interesting to note that as a state of emergency imposed by the central government with its checkpoints and curfews ended in Basra in July 2006, Sunni families reported a wave of new leaflets warning them to flee (“In Basra, state of emergency provides little relief from violence”, Nancy A Youssef, *McClatchy Newspapers*, 4 July 2006).

[\[81\]](#) “A ‘quagmire’ as violence upsets efforts to reconstitute Iraqi police forces”, Michael Moss, *The New York Times*, 24 May 2006

[\[82\]](#) See *Gangs and Counter Gangs and Low Intensity Operations*

[\[83\]](#) *The Guardian*, 14 June 2002

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- **State-Sponsored Terror: British and American Black Ops in Iraq (25 June 2008)**

By Andrew G. Marshall

[Global Research](#), June 25, 2008

Shining Light on the "Black World"

In January of 2002, the *Washington Post* ran a story detailing a CIA plan put forward to President Bush shortly after 9/11 by CIA Director George Tenet titled, "Worldwide Attack Matrix," which was "outlining a clandestine anti-terror campaign in 80 countries around the world. What he was ready to propose represented a striking and risky departure for U.S. policy and would give the CIA the broadest and most lethal authority in its history." The plan entailed CIA and Special Forces "covert operations across the globe," and at "the heart of the proposal was a recommendation that the president give the CIA what Tenet labeled "exceptional authorities" to attack and destroy al Qaeda in Afghanistan and the rest of the world." Tenet cited the need for such authority "to allow the agency to operate without restraint -- and he wanted encouragement from the president to take risks." Among the many authorities recommended was the use of "deadly force."

Further, "Another proposal was that the CIA increase liaison work with key foreign intelligence services," as "Using such intelligence services as surrogates could triple or quadruple the CIA's effectiveness." The Worldwide Attack Matrix "described covert operations in 80 countries that were either underway or that he was now recommending. The actions ranged from routine propaganda to lethal covert action in preparation for military attacks," as well as "In some countries, CIA teams would break into facilities to obtain information." [1]

P2OG: "Commit terror, to incite terror... in order to react to terror"

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In 2002, the Pentagon's Defense Science Board (DSB) conducted a "Summer Study on Special Operations and Joint Forces in Support of Countering Terrorism," portions of which were leaked to the Federation of American Scientists. According to the document, the "War on Terror" constitutes a "committed, resourceful and globally dispersed adversary with strategic reach," which will require the US to engage in a "long, at times violent, and borderless war." As the *Asia Times* described it, this document lays out a blueprint for the US to "fight fire with fire." Many of the "proposals appear to push the military into territory that traditionally has been the domain of the CIA, raising questions about whether such missions would be subject to the same legal restraints imposed on CIA activities." According to the Chairman of the DSB, "The CIA executes the plans but they use Department of Defense assets."

Specifically, the plan "recommends the creation of a super-Intelligence Support Activity, an organization it dubs the Proactive, Preemptive Operations Group (P2OG), to bring together CIA and military covert action, information warfare, intelligence and cover and deception. For example, the Pentagon and CIA would work together to increase human intelligence (HUMINT) forward/operational presence and to deploy new clandestine technical capabilities." The purpose of P2OG would be in "'stimulating reactions' among terrorists and states possessing weapons of mass destruction, meaning it would prod terrorist cells into action, thus exposing them to 'quick-response' attacks by US forces." [2] In other words, commit terror to incite terror, in order to react to terror.

The *Los Angeles Times* reported in 2002 that, "The Defense Department is building up an elite secret army with resources stretching across the full spectrum of covert capabilities. New organizations are being created. The missions of existing units are being revised," and quoted then-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as saying, "Prevention and preemption are ... the only defense against terrorism." [3] Chris Floyd bluntly described P2OG in *CounterPunch*, saying, "the United States government is planning to use "cover and deception" and secret military operations to provoke murderous terrorist attacks on innocent people. Let's say it again: Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, George W. Bush and the other members of the unelected regime in Washington plan to deliberately foment the murder of innocent people--your family, your friends, your lovers, you--in order to further their geopolitical ambitions." [4]

"The Troubles" with Iraq

On February 5, 2007, the *Telegraph* reported that, "Deep inside the heart of the "Green Zone" [in Iraq], the heavily fortified administrative compound in Baghdad, lies one of the most carefully guarded secrets of the war in Iraq. It is a cell from a small and anonymous British Army unit that goes by the deliberately meaningless name of the Joint Support Group (JSG)." The members of the JSG "are trained to turn hardened terrorists into coalition spies using methods developed on the mean streets of Ulster during the Troubles, when the Army managed to infiltrate the IRA at almost every level. Since

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war broke out in Iraq in 2003, they have been responsible for running dozens of Iraqi double agents." They have been "[w]orking alongside the Special Air Service [SAS] and the American Delta Force as part of the Baghdad-based counter-terrorist unit known as Task Force Black."

It was reported that, "During the Troubles [in Northern Ireland], the JSG operated under the cover name of the Force Research Unit (FRU), which between the early 1980s and the late 1990s managed to penetrate the very heart of the IRA. By targeting and then "turning" members of the paramilitary organisation with a variety of "inducements" ranging from blackmail to bribes, the FRU operators developed agents at virtually every command level within the IRA." Further, "The unit was renamed following the Stevens Inquiry into allegations of collusion between the security forces and protestant paramilitary groups, and, until relatively recently continued to work exclusively in Northern Ireland." [5]

Considering that this group had been renamed after revelations of collusion with terrorists, perhaps it is important to take a look at what exactly this "collusion" consisted of. The Stevens Inquiry's report "contains devastating confirmation that intelligence officers of the British police and the military actively helped Protestant guerillas to identify and kill Catholic activists in Northern Ireland during the 1980s." It was, "a state policy sanctioned at the highest level." The Inquiry, "highlighted collusion, the willful failure to keep records, the absence of accountability, the withholding of intelligence, and the extreme of agents being involved in murder," and acknowledged "that innocent people had died because of the collusion." These particular "charges relate to activities of a British Army intelligence outfit known as the Force Research Unit (FRU) and former Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) police officers." [6]

In 2002, the *Sunday Herald* reported on the allegations made by a former British intelligence agent, Kevin Fulton, who stated that, "he was told by his military handlers that his collusion with paramilitaries was sanctioned by Margaret Thatcher herself." Fulton worked for the Force Research Unit (FRU), and had infiltrated the IRA, always while on the pay roll of the military. Fulton tells of how in 1992, he told his FRU and MI5 intelligence handlers that his IRA superior was planning to launch a mortar attack on the police, yet his handlers did nothing and the attack went forward, killing a policewoman. Fulton stated, "I broke the law seven days a week and my handlers knew that. They knew that I was making bombs and giving them to other members of the IRA and they did nothing about it. If everything I touched turned to shit then I would have been dead. The idea was that the only way to beat the enemy was to penetrate the enemy and be the enemy." [7]

In 1998, Northern Ireland experienced its "worst single terrorist atrocity," as described by the *BBC*, in which a car bomb went off, killing 29 people and injuring 300. [8] According to a *Sunday Herald* piece in 2001, "Security forces didn't intercept the Real IRA's Omagh bombing team because one of the terrorists was a British double-agent whose cover would have been blown as an informer if the

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operation was uncovered." Kevin Fulton had even "phoned a warning to his RUC handlers 48 hours before the Omagh bombing that the Real IRA was planning an attack and gave details of one of the bombing team and his car registration." Further, "The man thought to be the agent is a senior member of the [IRA] organization." [9]

In 2002, it was revealed that, "one of the most feared men inside the Provisional IRA," John Joe Magee, head of the IRA's "internal security unit," commonly known as the IRA's "torturer- in-chief," was actually "one of the UK's most elite soldiers," who "was trained as a member of Britain's special forces." The *Sunday Herald* stated that, "Magee led the IRA's internal security unit for more than a decade up to the mid-90s - most of those he investigated were usually executed," and that, "Magee's unit was tasked to hunt down, interrogate and execute suspected British agents within the IRA." [10]

In 2006, the *Guardian* reported that, "two British agents were central to the bombings of three army border installations in 1990." The claims included tactics known as the 'human bomb', which "involved forcing civilians to drive vehicles laden with explosives into army checkpoints." This tactic "was the brainchild of British intelligence." [11]

In 2006, it was also revealed that, "A former British Army mole in the IRA has claimed that MI5 arranged a weapons-buying trip to America in which he obtained detonators, later used by terrorists to murder soldiers and police officers," and "British intelligence co-operated with the FBI to ensure his trip to New York in the 1990s went ahead without incident so that his cover would not be blown." Further, "the technology he obtained has been used in Northern Ireland and copied by terrorists in Iraq in roadside bombs that have killed British troops." [12]

Considering all these revelations of British collusion with IRA terrorists and complicity in terrorist acts in Northern Ireland through the FRU, what evidence is there that these same tactics are not being deployed in Iraq under the renamed Joint Support Group (JSG)? The recruits to the JSG in Iraq are trained extensively and those "who eventually pass the course can expect to be posted to Baghdad, Basra and Afghanistan." [13]

P2OG in Action

In September of 2003, months after the initial invasion of Iraq in March 2003, Iraq's most sacred Shiite mosque was blown up, killing between 80 and 120 people, including a popular Shiite cleric, and the event was blamed by Iraqis on the American forces. [14]

On April 20, 2004, American journalist in Iraq, Dahr Jamail, reported in the *New Standard* that, "The word on the street in Baghdad is that the cessation of suicide car bombings is proof that the CIA was behind them." Jamail interviewed a doctor who stated that, "The U.S. induces aggression. If you don't attack me, I will never attack you. The U.S. is stimulating the aggression of the Iraqi people!" This

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description goes very much in line with the aims outlined in the Pentagon's P2OG document about "inciting terror," or "preempting terror attacks." [15]

Weeks after the initial incident involving the British SAS soldiers in Basra, in October of 2005, it was reported that Americans were "captured in the act of setting off a car bomb in Baghdad," as, "A number of Iraqis apprehended two Americans disguised in Arab dress as they tried to blow up a booby-trapped car in the middle of a residential area in western Baghdad on Tuesday. ... Residents of western Baghdad's al-Ghazaliyah district [said] the people had apprehended the Americans as they left their Caprice car near a residential neighborhood in al-Ghazaliyah on Tuesday afternoon. Local people found they looked suspicious so they detained the men before they could get away. That was when they discovered that they were Americans and called the ... police." However, "the Iraq police arrived at approximately the same time as allied military forces - and the two men were removed from Iraq custody and whisked away before any questioning could take place." [16]

It was reported that in May of 2005, an Iraqi man was arrested after witnessing a car bombing that took place in front of his home, as it was said he shot an Iraqi National Guardsman. However, "People from the area claim that the man was taken away not because he shot anyone, but because he knew too much about the bomb. Rumor has it that he saw an American patrol passing through the area and pausing at the bomb site minutes before the explosion. Soon after they drove away, the bomb went off and chaos ensued. He ran out of his house screaming to the neighbors and bystanders that the Americans had either planted the bomb or seen the bomb and done nothing about it. He was promptly taken away."

Further, another story was reported in the same month that took place in Baghdad when an Iraqi driver had his license and car confiscated at a checkpoint, after which he was instructed "to report to an American military camp near Baghdad airport for interrogation and in order to retrieve his license." After being questioned for a short while, he was told to drive his car to an Iraqi police station, where his license had been forwarded, and that he should go quickly. "The driver did leave in a hurry, but was soon alarmed with a feeling that his car was driving as if carrying a heavy load, and he also became suspicious of a low flying helicopter that kept hovering overhead, as if trailing him. He stopped the car and inspected it carefully. He found nearly 100 kilograms of explosives hidden in the back seat and along the two back doors. The only feasible explanation for this incident is that the car was indeed booby trapped by the Americans and intended for the al-Khadimiya Shiite district of Baghdad. The helicopter was monitoring his movement and witnessing the anticipated 'hideous attack by foreign elements.'" [17]

On October 4, 2005, it was reported by the *Sydney Morning Herald* that, "The FBI's counterterrorism unit has launched a broad investigation of US-based theft rings after discovering some vehicles used in deadly car bombings in Iraq, including attacks that killed US troops and Iraqi civilians, were probably

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stolen in the United States, according to senior US Government officials." Further, "The inquiry began after coalition troops raided a Falluja bomb factory last November and found a Texas-registered four-wheel-drive being prepared for a bombing mission. Investigators said there were several other cases where vehicles evidently stolen in the US wound up in Syria or other Middle Eastern countries and ultimately in the hands of Iraqi insurgent groups, including al-Qaeda in Iraq." [18]

In 2006, the Al-Askariya mosque in the city of Samarra was bombed and destroyed. It was built in 944, was over 1,000 years old, and was one of the most important Shi'ite mosques in the world. The great golden dome that covered it, which was built in 1904, was destroyed in the 2006 bombing, which was set off by men dressed as Iraqi Special Forces. [19] Former 27-year CIA analyst who gave several presidents their daily CIA briefings, Ray McGovern, stated that he "does not rule out Western involvement in this week's Askariya mosque bombing." He was quoted as saying, "The main question is Qui Bono? Who benefits from this kind of thing? You don't have to be very conspiratorial or even paranoid to suggest that there are a whole bunch of likely suspects out there and not only the Sunnis. You know, the British officers were arrested, dressed up in Arab garb, riding around in a car, so this stuff goes on." [20]

Death Squads for "Freedom"

In January of 2005, *Newsweek* reported on a Pentagon program termed the "Salvador Option" being discussed to be deployed in Iraq. This strategy "dates back to a still-secret strategy in the Reagan administration's battle against the leftist guerrilla insurgency in El Salvador in the early 1980s. Then, faced with a losing war against Salvadoran rebels, the U.S. government funded or supported "nationalist" forces that allegedly included so-called death squads directed to hunt down and kill rebel leaders and sympathizers." Updating the strategy to Iraq, "one Pentagon proposal would send Special Forces teams to advise, support and possibly train Iraqi squads, most likely hand-picked Kurdish Peshmerga fighters and Shiite militiamen, to target Sunni insurgents and their sympathizers, even across the border into Syria, according to military insiders familiar with the discussions." [21]

The *Times* reported that, "the Pentagon is considering forming hit squads of Kurdish and Shia fighters to target leaders of the Iraqi insurgency in a strategic shift borrowed from the American struggle against left-wing guerrillas in Central America 20 years ago. Under the so-called 'El Salvador option', Iraqi and American forces would be sent to kill or kidnap insurgency leaders." It further stated, "Hit squads would be controversial and would probably be kept secret," as "The experience of the so-called "death squads" in Central America remains raw for many even now and helped to sully the image of the United States in the region." Further, "John Negroponte, the US Ambassador in Baghdad, had a front-row seat at the time as Ambassador to Honduras from 1981-85." [22]

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By June of 2005, mass executions were taking place in Iraq in the six months since January, and, "What is particularly striking is that many of those killings have taken place since the Police Commandos became operationally active and often correspond with areas where they have been deployed." [23]

In May of 2007, an Iraqi who formerly collaborated with US forces in Iraq for two and a half years stated that, "I was a soldier in the Iraqi army in the war of 1991 and during the withdrawal from Kuwait I decided to seek asylum in Saudi Arabia along with dozens of others like me. That was how began the process whereby I was recruited into the American forces, for there were US military committees that chose a number of Iraqis who were willing to volunteer to join them and be transported to America. I was one of those." He spoke out about how after the 2003 invasion, he was returned to Iraq to "carry out specific tasks assigned him by the US agencies." Among those tasks, he was put "in charge of a group of a unit that carried out assassinations in the streets of Baghdad."

He was quoted as saying, "Our task was to carry out assassinations of individuals. The US occupation army would supply us with their names, pictures, and maps of their daily movements to and from their place of residence and we were supposed to kill the Shi'i, for example, in the al-A'zamiyah, and kill the Sunni in the of 'Madinat as-Sadr', and so on." Further, "Anyone in the unit who made a mistake was killed. Three members of my team were killed by US occupation forces after they failed to assassinate Sunni political figures in Baghdad." He revealed that this "dirty jobs" unit of Iraqis, Americans and other foreigners, "doesn't only carry out assassinations, but some of them specialize in planting bombs and car bombs in neighborhoods and markets."

He elaborated in saying that "operations of planting car bombs and blowing up explosives in markets are carried out in various ways, the best-known and most famous among the US troops is placing a bomb inside cars as they are being searched at checkpoints. Another way is to put bombs in the cars during interrogations. After the desired person is summoned to one of the US bases, a bomb is place in his car and he is asked to drive to a police station or a market for some purpose and there his car blows up." [24]

Divide and Conquer?

Craig Murray, former British Ambassador to Uzbekistan, wrote in October of 2006, that, "The evidence that the US directly contributed to the creation of the current civil war in Iraq by its own secretive security strategy is compelling. Historically of course this is nothing new - divide and rule is a strategy for colonial powers that has stood the test of time. Indeed, it was used in the previous British occupation of Iraq around 85 years ago. However, maybe in the current scenario the US just over did it a bit, creating an unstoppable momentum that, while stalling the insurgency, has actually led to new problems of control and sustainability for Washington and London." [25]

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Andrew G. Marshall contributed to breaking the Climate Change consensus in a celebrated 2006 article entitled *Global Warming A Convenient Lie*, in which he challenged the findings underlying Al Gore's documentary. According to Marshall, 'as soon as people start to state that "the debate is over", beware, because the fundamental basis of all sciences is that debate is never over'. Andrew Marshall has also written on the militarization of Central Africa, national security issues and the process of integration of North America. He is also a contributor to *GeopoliticalMonitor.com*. He is currently a researcher at the *Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG)* in Montreal and is studying political science and history at Simon Fraser University, British Columbia.

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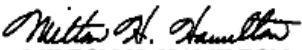
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- **US Special Forces counterinsurgency manual FM 31-20-3 (18 June 2008)**

(Redirected from [US Special Forces counter-insurgency manual FM 31-20-3](#))

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Summary

US Army Field Manual FM 31-20-3, *Foreign Internal Defense Tactics Techniques and Procedures for Special Forces*; 2004 edition. Made US Army doctrine (policy) on 20 September 1994; 219 printed pages. Written at the sensitive but unclassified level.

This sensitive US military counterinsurgency manual could be critically described as "*What we learned about running death squads and propping up corrupt government in Latin America and how to apply it to other places*". Its contents are both history defining for Latin America and, given the continued role of US Special Forces in the suppression of insurgencies and guerilla movements world wide, history making.

The document, which is official US Special Forces policy, directly advocates training paramilitaries, pervasive surveillance, censorship, press control, restrictions on labor unions & political parties, suspending *habeas corpus*, warrantless searches, detainment without charge, bribery, employing terrorists, false flag operations, concealing human rights abuses from journalists, and extensive use of "psychological operations" (propaganda) to make these and other "population & resource control" measures palatable.

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The 1994 version of this document is available, perhaps by mistake, on the Leaven Worth Army site:
http://calldp.leavenworth.army.mil/mhi/2005051007132363/31_20_3.pdf

The 2007 version of this document (renamed to FM 3-05.202, Special Forces Foreign Internal Defense Operations): http://www.army.mil/usapa/doctrine/31_Series_Collection_1.html (needs US Army username/password for access). Of additional interest is TC 31-73 SPECIAL FORCES ADVISOR GUIDE (2008, also restricted).

Selected extracts follow. Note that the manual is 219 pages and contains substantial material throughout. These extracts should merely be considered representative. Emphasis by [Wikileaks](#).

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[...]

Insurgent Strategies.

There are three general strategies of insurgency: foco, mass-oriented, and traditional.

Foco Insurgency.

A foco (Spanish word meaning focus or focal point) is a single, armed cell that emerges from hidden strongholds in an atmosphere of disintegrating legitimacy. In theory, this cell is the nucleus around which mass popular support rallies. The insurgents build new institutions and establish control on the basis of that support. For a foco insurgency to succeed, government legitimacy must be near total collapse. Timing is critical. The foco must mature at the same time the government loses legitimacy and before any alternative appears. The most famous foco insurgencies were those led by Castro and Che Guevara. The strategy was quite effective in Cuba because the Batista regime was corrupt and incompetent. The distinguishing characteristics of a foco insurgency are The deliberate avoidance of preparatory organizational work. The rationale is based on the premise that most peasants are

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intimidated by the authorities and will betray any group that cannot defend itself. The development of rural support as demonstrated by the ability of the foco insurgency to strike against the authorities and survive. The absence of any emphasis on the protracted nature of the conflict.

Fidel Castro/Cuba

In 1952, Fidel Castro began his revolutionary movement in Cuba. After an unsuccessful attack of Ft. Moncada, he was imprisoned. Upon release in 1955 he fled to Mexico to train a new group of guerrilla warriors. In 1956, Castro and 82 of his followers returned to Cuba on a yacht. Of this group, only 12 of Castro's followers made their way to the Sierra Maestra mountains. From his remote mountain base, he established a 100 to 150-man nucleus. As Castro's organization grew, small unit patrols began hit-and-run type operations. While Castro continued to expand his area of influence, the popularity of the corrupt Batista government waned. In May of 1958, the government launched an attack on the Sierra Maestra stronghold. Castro withdrew deeper into the mountains, while spreading his message on national reform. Batista's continuing repression of the country led to general strikes and continuing growth in popular support for Castro's small cell of revolutionaries. Finally, Batista fled the country on 1 January 1959, and Castro established a junta and became the Prime Minister and President.

Mass-Oriented Insurgency

This insurgency aims to achieve the political and armed mobilization of a large popular movement. Mass-oriented insurgencies emphasize creating apolitical and armed legitimacy outside the existing system. They challenge that system and then destroy or supplant it. These insurgents patiently build a large armed force of regular and irregular guerrillas. They also construct a base of active and passive political supporters. They plan a protracted campaign of increasing violence to destroy the government and its institutions from the outside, Their political leadership normally is distinct from their military leadership. Their movement normally establishes a parallel government that openly proclaims its own legitimacy. They have a well-developed ideology and decide on their objectives only after careful analysis. Highly organized, they mobilize forces for a direct military and political challenge to the government using propaganda and guerrilla action. The distinguishing characteristics of a mass-oriented insurgency are:

Political control by the revolutionary organization, which assures priority of political considerations. Reliance on organized popular support to provide recruits, funds, supplies, and intelligence. Primary areas of activity, especially in early phases, in the remote countryside where the population can be organized and base areas established with little interference from the authorities. Reliance upon guerrilla tactics to carry on the military side of the strategy. These tactics focus on the avoidance of battle, except at times and places of the insurgents choosing, and the employment of stealth and secrecy, ambush, and surprise to overcome the initial imbalance of strength. A phased strategy

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consisting first of a primarily organizational phase in which the population is prepared for its vital role. In the second phase, armed struggle is launched and the guerrilla force gradually builds up in size and strength, The third phase consists of mobile, more conventional warfare. Conceptually, this third phase is accompanied by a popular uprising that helps overwhelm the regime. It is a concept of protracted war.

Vietnam Conflict.

The Vietnam conflict (1959-1975) is one example of a mass-oriented insurgency. In December 1960, under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, the National Liberation Front was formed in North Vietnam. Its main goal was to establish shadow governments at all levels in South Vietnam to take control of the population from the South Vietnamese. The National Liberation Front also used propaganda and guerrilla action, expecting the South Vietnamese population to rally to their side and overthrow the government. The insurgency was actually a failure because the mass uprising of the population, envisioned by the communist leaders, never occurred. Relentless guerrilla attacks did serve to weaken the government of South Vietnam, but they did not cause it to fall. In the spring of 1975, North Vietnam launched a massive conventional invasion of South Vietnam using armored vehicles. Saigon, the capital city, fell on 30 April.

Traditional Insurgency.

This insurgency normally grows from very specific grievances and initially has limited aims. It springs from tribal, racial, religious, linguistic, or other similarly identifiable groups. The insurgents perceive that the government has denied the rights and interests of their group and work to establish or restore them. They frequently seek withdrawal from government control through autonomy or semiautonomy. They seldom specifically seek to overthrow the government or control the whole society. They generally respond in kind to government violence. Their use of violence can range from strikes and street demonstrations to terrorism and guerrilla warfare. These insurgencies may cease if the government accedes to the insurgents demands. The concessions the insurgents demand, however, are so great that the government concedes its legitimacy along with them.

Huk Rebellion.

The Huk rebellion in the Philippines can be considered a traditional insurgency despite its Communist origin. The Huks first surfaced as an armed force resisting the Japanese occupation of the Second World War. After the war, when other resistance bands disarmed, the Huks did not. After the American liberation, the Huks saw a chance to seize national power at a time when the newly proclaimed Philippine Republic was in obvious distress as a result of a monetary crisis, graft in high office, and mounting peasant unrest. By 1950, the Huks had built a force of 12,800 armed guerrillas

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with thousands of peasant supporters on central Luzon. They were defeated in a series of actions by the Armed Forces of the Philippines led by Ramon Magsaysa. By 1965, they were nearly extinct, down to 75 members. Largely agrarian, the Huks do not view the government as totally in need of replacement but believe that many of the people in it need to be replaced. Recently the Huk movement has been gaining popular support, once again on the island of Luzon.

[...]

Counterintelligence

[...]

Most of the counterintelligence measures used will be overt in nature and aimed at protecting installations, units, and information and detecting espionage, sabotage, and subversion. **Examples of counterintelligence measures to use are**

Background investigations and records checks of persons in sensitive positions and persons whose loyalty may be questionable.

Maintenance of files on organizations, locations, and individuals of counterintelligence interest.

Internal security inspections of installations and units.

Control of civilian movement within government-controlled areas.

Identification systems to minimize the chance of insurgents gaining access to installations or moving freely.

Unannounced searches and raids on suspected meeting places.

Censorship.

[...]

PSYOP [**Psychological Operations**] are essential to the success of PRC [**Population & Resources Control**]. For maximum effectiveness, a strong psychological operations effort is directed toward the families of the insurgents and their popular support base. **The PSYOP aspect of the PRC program tries to make the imposition of control more palatable** to the people by relating the necessity of controls to their safety and well-being. PSYOP efforts also try to create a favorable national or local government image and counter the effects of the insurgent propaganda effort.

Control Measures

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SF [US Special Forces] can advise and assist HN [Host Nation] forces in developing and implementing control measures. Among these measures are the following:

Security Forces. Police and other security forces use PRC [Population & Resources Control] measures to deprive the insurgent of support and to identify and locate members of his infrastructure. Appropriate PSYOP [Psychological Operations] help make these measures more acceptable to the population by explaining their need. The government informs the population that the PRC measures may cause an inconvenience but are necessary due to the actions of the insurgents.

Restrictions. **Rights on the legality of detention or imprisonment of personnel (for example, habeas corpus) may be temporarily suspended.** This measure must be taken as a last resort, since it may provide the insurgents with an effective propaganda theme. PRC [Population & Resources Control] measures can also include curfews or blackouts, travel restrictions, and restricted residential areas such as protected villages or resettlement areas. Registration and pass systems and control of sensitive items (resources control) and critical supplies such as weapons, food, and fuel are other PRC measures. Checkpoints, searches, roadblocks; **surveillance, censorship, and press control;** and **restriction of activity that applies to selected groups (labor unions, political groups and the like) are further PRC measures.**

[...]

Legal Considerations. All restrictions, controls, and DA measures must be governed by the legality of these methods and their impact on the populace. In countries where government authorities do not have wide latitude in controlling the population, special or emergency legislation must be enacted. **This emergency legislation may include a form of martial law permitting government forces to search without warrant, to detain without bringing formal charges, and to execute other similar actions.**

[...]

Psychological Operations

PSYOP can support the mission by discrediting the insurgent forces to neutral groups, creating dissension among the insurgents themselves, and supporting defector programs. **Divisive programs create dissension, disorganization, low morale, subversion, and defection within the insurgent forces.** Also important are national programs to win insurgents over to the government side with offers of amnesty and rewards. Motives for surrendering can range from personal rivalries

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and bitterness to disillusionment and discouragement. **Pressure from the security forces has persuasive power.**

[...]

Intelligence personnel must consider the parameters within which a revolutionary movement operates. Frequently, they establish a centralized intelligence processing center to collect and coordinate the amount of information required to make long-range intelligence estimates. Long-range intelligence focuses on the stable factors existing in an insurgency. For example, various demographic factors (ethnic, racial, social, economic, religious, and political characteristics of the area in which the underground movement takes places) are useful in identifying the members of the underground. Information about the underground organization at national, district, and local level is basic in FID [Foreign Internal Defense] and/or IDAD operations. Collection of specific short-range intelligence about the rapidly changing variables of a local situation is critical. **Intelligence personnel must gather information on members of the underground, their movements, and their methods. Biographies and photos of suspected underground members, detailed information on their homes, families, education, work history, and associates are important features of short-range intelligence.**

Destroying its tactical units is not enough to defeat the enemy. The insurgent's underground cells or infrastructure must be neutralized first because the infrastructure is his main source of tactical intelligence and political control. **Eliminating the infrastructure within an area** achieves two goals: it ensures the government's control of the area, and it cuts off the enemy's main source of intelligence. An intelligence and operations command center (IOCC) is needed at district or province level. This organization becomes the nerve center for operations against the insurgent infrastructure. Information on insurgent infrastructure targets should come from such sources as the national police and other established intelligence nets and agents and individuals (informants).

The highly specialized and sensitive nature of clandestine intelligence collection demands specially selected and highly trained agents. Information from clandestine sources is often highly sensitive and requires tight control to protect the source. However, tactical information upon which a combat response can be taken should be passed to the appropriate tactical level.

The spotting, assessment, and recruitment of an agent is not a haphazard process regardless of the type agent being sought. During the assessment phase, the case officer determines the individual's degree of intelligence, access to target, available or necessary cover, and motivation. He initiates the recruitment and coding action only after he determines the individual has the necessary attributes to fulfill the needs.

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All agents are closely observed and those that are not reliable are relieved. A few well-targeted, reliable agents are better and more economical than a large number of poor ones.

A system is needed to evaluate the agents and the information they submit. The maintenance of an agent master dossier (possibly at the SFOD B level) can be useful in evaluating the agent on the value and quality of information he has submitted. The dossier must contain a copy of the agent's source data report and every intelligence report he submitted.

Security forces can induce individuals among the general populace to become informants. **Security forces use various motives (civic-mindedness, patriotism, fear, punishment avoidance, gratitude, revenge or jealousy, financial rewards) as persuasive arguments.** They use the assurance of protection from reprisal as a major inducement. Security forces must maintain the informant's anonymity and must conceal the transfer of information from the source to the security agent. The security agent and the informant may prearrange signals to coincide with everyday behavior.

Surveillance, the covert observation of persons and places, is a principal method of gaining and confirming intelligence information. Surveillance techniques naturally vary with the requirements of different situations. The basic procedures include mechanical observation (wiretaps or concealed microphones), observation from fixed locations, and physical surveillance of subjects.

Whenever a suspect is apprehended during an operation, a hasty interrogation takes place to gain immediate information that could be of tactical value. The most frequently used methods for gathering information (map studies and aerial observation), however, are normally unsuccessful. Most PWs cannot read a map. When they are taken on a visual reconnaissance flight, it is usually their first flight and they cannot associate an aerial view with what they saw on the ground.

The most successful interrogation method consists of a map study based on terrain information received from the detainee. The interrogator first asks the detainee what the sun's direction was when he left the base camp. From this information, he can determine a general direction. The interrogator then asks the detainee how long it took him to walk to the point where he was captured. Judging the terrain and the detainee's health, the interrogator can determine a general radius in which the base camp can be found (he can use an overlay for this purpose). He then asks the detainee to identify significant terrain features he saw on each day of his journey, (rivers, open areas, hills, rice paddies, swamps). As the detainee speaks and his memory is jogged, the interrogator finds these terrain features on a current map and gradually plots the detainee's route to finally locate the base camp.

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If the interrogator is unable to speak the detainee's language, he interrogates through an interpreter who received a briefing beforehand. A recorder may also assist him. If the interrogator is not familiar with the area, personnel who are familiar with the area brief him before the interrogation and then join the interrogation team. The recorder allows the interrogator a more free-flowing interrogation. The recorder also lets a knowledgeable interpreter elaborate on points the detainee has mentioned without the interrogator interrupting the continuity established during a given sequence. The interpreter can also question certain inaccuracies, keeping pressure on the subject. The interpreter and the interrogator have to be well trained to work as a team. The interpreter has to be familiar with the interrogation procedures. His preinterrogation briefings must include information on the detainee's health, the circumstances resulting in his detention, and the specific information required. A successful interrogation is contingent upon continuity and a welltrained interpreter. A tape recorder (or a recorder taking notes) enhances continuity by freeing the interrogator from time-consuming administrative tasks.

[...]

Political Structures. A tightly disciplined party organization, formally structured to parallel the existing government hierarchy, may be found at the center of some insurgent movements. In most instances, this organizational structure will consist of committed organizations at the village, district province, and national levels. Within major divisions and sections of an insurgent military headquarters, totally distinct but parallel command channels exist. There are military chains of command and political channels of control. The party ensures complete domination over the military structure using its own parallel organization. It dominates through a political division in an insurgent military headquarters, a party cell or group in an insurgent military unit, or a political military officer.

[...]

Special Intelligence-Gathering Operations

Alternative intelligence-gathering techniques and sources, such as doppelganger or pseudo operations, can be tried and used when it is hard to obtain information from the civilian populace. These pseudo units are usually made up of ex-guerrilla and/or security force personnel posing as insurgents. They circulate among the civilian populace and, in some cases, infiltrate guerrilla units to gather information on guerrilla movements and its support infrastructure.

Much time and effort must be used to persuade insurgents to switch allegiance and serve with the security forces. **Prospective candidates must be properly screened and then given a choice**

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of serving with the HN [Host Nation] security forces or facing prosecution under HN law for terrorist crimes.

Government security force units and teams of varying size have been used in infiltration operations against underground and guerrilla forces. They have been especially effective in getting information on underground security and communications systems, the nature and extent of civilian support and underground liaison, underground supply methods, and possible collusion between local government officials and the underground. Before such a unit can be properly trained and disguised, however, much information about the appearance, mannerisms, and security procedures of enemy units must be gathered. Most of this information comes from defectors or reindoctrinated prisoners. Defectors also make excellent instructors and guides for an infiltrating unit. **In using a disguised team, the selected men should be trained, oriented, and disguised to look and act like authentic underground or guerrilla units.** In addition to acquiring valuable information, the infiltrating units can demoralize the insurgents to the extent that they become overly suspicious and distrustful of their own units.

[...]

After establishing the cordon and designating a holding area, the screening point or center is established. All civilians in the cordoned area will then pass through the screening center to be classified.

National police personnel will complete, if census data does not exist in the police files, a basic registration card and photograph all personnel over the age of 15. They print two copies of each photo- one is pasted to the registration card and the other to the village book (for possible use in later operations and to identify ralliers and informants).

The screening element leader ensures the screeners question relatives, friends, neighbors, and other knowledgeable individuals of guerrilla leaders or functionaries operating in the area on their whereabouts, activities, movements, and expected return.

The screening area must include areas where police and military intelligence personnel can privately interview selected individuals. The interrogators try to convince the interviewees that their cooperation will not be detected by the other inhabitants. They also discuss, during the interview, the availability of monetary rewards for certain types of information and equipment.

[...]

Civilian Self-Defense Forces [Paramilitaries, or, especially in an El-Salvador or Colombian civil war context, right wing "death squads"]

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When a village accepts the CSDF program, the insurgents cannot choose to ignore it. To let the village go unpunished will encourage other villages to accept the government's CSDF program. The insurgents have no choice; they have to attack the CSDF village to provide a lesson to other villages considering CSDF. In a sense, **the psychological effectiveness of the CSDF concept starts by reversing the insurgent strategy of making the government the repressor. It forces the insurgents to cross a critical threshold-that of attacking and killing the very class of people they are supposed to be liberating.**

To be successful, the CSDF program must have popular support from those directly involved or affected by it. The average peasant is not normally willing to fight to his death for his national government. His national government may have been a succession of corrupt dictators and inefficient bureaucrats. These governments are not the types of institutions that inspire fight-to-the-death emotions in the peasant. The village or town, however, is a different matter. The average peasant will fight much harder for his home and for his village than he ever would for his national government. The CSDF concept directly involves the peasant in the war and makes it a fight for the family and village instead of a fight for some faraway irrelevant government.

[...]

Members of the CSDF receive no pay for their civil duties. In most instances, however, they derive certain benefits from voluntary service. These benefits can range from priority of hire for CMO projects to a place at the head of ration lines. **In El Salvador, CSDF personnel (they were called civil defense there) were given a U.S.-funded life insurance policy with the wife or next of kin as the beneficiary.** If a CSDF member died in the line of duty, the widow or next of kin was ceremoniously paid by an HN official. The HN administered the program and a U.S. advisor who maintained accountability of the funds verified the payment. **The HN [Host Nation] exercises administrative and visible control.**

Responsiveness and speedy payment are essential in this process since the widow normally does not have a means of support and the psychological effect of the government assisting her in her time of grief impacts on the entire community. These and other benefits offered by or through the HN government are valuable incentives for recruiting and sustaining the CSDF.

[...]

The local CSDF members select their leaders and deputy leaders (CSDF groups and teams) in elections organized by the local authorities. In some cases, the HN [Host Nation] appoints a leader who is a specially selected member of the HN security forces trained to carry out this task. **Such appointments occurred in El Salvador where the armed forces have established a formal**

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school to train CSDF commanders. Extreme care and close supervision are required to avoid abuses by CSDF leaders.

[...]

The organization of a CSDF can be similar to that of a combat group. This organization is effective in both rural and urban settings. **For example, a basic group, having a strength of 107 members, is broken down into three 35-man elements plus a headquarters element of 2 personnel. Each 35-man element is further broken down into three 11-man teams and a headquarters element of 2 personnel. Each team consists of a team leader, an assistant team leader, and three 3-man cells. This organization can be modified to accommodate the number of citizens available to serve.**

[...]

Weapons training for the CSDF personnel is critical. Skill at arms decides the outcome of battle and must be stressed. Of equal importance is the maintenance and care of weapons. CSDF members are taught basic rifle marksmanship with special emphasis on firing from fixed positions and during conditions of limited visibility. Also included in the marksmanship training program are target detection and fire discipline.

Training ammunition is usually allocated to the CSDF on the basis of a specified number of rounds for each authorized weapon. A supporting HN government force or an established CSDF logistic source provides the ammunition to support refresher training.

[...]

Acts of misconduct by HN [Host Nation] personnel

All members of training assistance teams must understand their responsibilities concerning acts of misconduct by HN personnel. Team members receive briefings before deployment on what to do if they encounter or observe such acts. Common Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions lists prohibited acts by parties to the convention. Such acts are-

Violence to life and person, in particular, murder, mutilation, cruel treatment, and torture.

Taking of hostages.

Outrages against personal dignity, in particular, humiliating and degrading treatment.

Passing out sentences and carrying out executions without previous judgment by a regularly constituted court that affords all the official guarantees that are recognized as indispensable by civilized people.

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The provisions in the above paragraph represent a level of conduct that the United States expects each foreign country to observe.

If team members encounter prohibited acts they can not stop, they will disengage from the activity, leave the area if possible, and report the incidents immediately to the proper in-country U.S. authorities. The country team will identify proper U.S. authorities during the team's initial briefing. **Team members will not discuss such matters with non-U.S. Government authorities such as journalists and civilian contractors.**

[...]

Most insurgents' doctrinal and training documents stress the use of pressure-type mines in the more isolated or less populated areas. They prefer using commandtype mines in densely populated areas. These documents stress that when using noncommand-detonated mines, the insurgents use every means to inform the local populace on their location, commensurate with security regulations. In reality, most insurgent groups suffer from various degrees of deficiency in their C2 [Command & Control] systems. Their C2 does not permit them to verify that those elements at the operational level strictly follow directives and orders. In the case of the Frente Farabundo Marti de la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) in El Salvador, the individual that emplaces the mine is responsible for its recovery after the engagement. There are problems with this concept. The individual may be killed or the security forces may gain control of the area. Therefore, the recovery of the mine is next to impossible.

[...]

Homemade antipersonnel mines are used extensively in El Salvador, Guatemala and Malaysia. (Eighty percent of all El Salvadoran armed forces casualties in 1986 were due to mines; in 1987, soldiers wounded by mines and booby traps averaged 50 to 60 per month.) The important point to remember is that any homemade mine is the product of the resources available to the insurgent group. Therefore, no two antipersonnel mines may be the same in their configuration and materials. Insurgent groups depend to a great extent on materials discarded or lost by security forces personnel. The insurgents not only use weapons, ammunition, mines, grenades, and demolitions for their original purpose but also in preparing expedient mines and booby traps.

[...]

A series of successful minings carried out by the Viet Cong insurgents on the Cua Viet River, Quang Tri Province, demonstrated their resourcefulness in countering minesweeping tactics. Initially, chain-dragging sweeps took place morning and evening. After several successful mining attacks, it was apparent that they laid the mines after the minesweepers passed. Then, the boats using the river formed into convoys and transited the river with minesweepers 914 meters ahead of the convoy.

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Nevertheless, boats of the convoy were successfully mined in mid-channel, indicating that the mines were again laid after the minesweeper had passed, possibly by using sampans. Several sampans were observed crossing or otherwise using the channel between the minesweepers and the convoy. The convoys were then organized so that the minesweepers worked immediately ahead of the convoy. One convoy successfully passed. The next convoy had its minesweepers mined and ambushed close to the river banks.

[...]

Military Advisors

[...]

Psychologically pressuring the HN [Host Nation] counterpart may sometimes be successful. Forms of psychological pressure may range from the obvious to the subtle. The advisor never applies direct threats, pressure, or intimidation on his counterpart. Indirect psychological pressure may be applied by taking an issue up the chain of command to a higher U.S. commander. The U.S. commander can then bring his counterpart to force the subordinate counterpart to comply. Psychological pressure may obtain quick results but may have very negative side effects. The counterpart will feel alienated and possibly hostile if the advisor uses such techniques. Offers of payment in the form of valuables may cause him to become resentful of the obvious control being exerted over him. In short, psychologically pressuring a counterpart is not recommended. Such pressure is used only as a last resort since it may irreparably damage the relationship between the advisor and his counterpart.

PSYOP [Psychological Operations] Support for Military Advisors

The introduction of military advisors requires preparing the populace with which the advisors are going to work. Before advisors enter a country, the HN [Host Nation] government carefully explains their introduction and clearly emphasizes the benefits of their presence to the citizens. It must provide a credible justification to minimize the obvious propaganda benefits the insurgents could derive from this action. The country's dissenting elements label our actions, no matter how well-intended, an "imperialistic intervention."

Once advisors are committed, their activities should be exploited. Their successful integration into the HN [Host Nation] society and their respect for local customs and mores, as well as their involvement with CA [Civil Affairs] projects, are constantly brought to light. In formulating a realistic policy for the use of advisors, the commander must carefully gauge the psychological climate of the HN and the United States.

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[...]

PRC [Population & Resources Control] Operations.

Advisors assist their counterparts in developing proper control plans and training programs for PRC measures. They also help coordinate plans and requests for materiel and submit recommendations to improve the overall effectiveness of operations. They can be helpful in preparing to initiate control.

Select, organize, and train paramilitary and irregular forces.

Develop PSYOP [Psychological Operations] activities to support PRC operations.

Coordinate activities through an area coordination center (if established).

Establish and refine PRC operations.

Intensify intelligence activities.

Establish and refine coordination and communications with other agencies.

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- **[How to train death squads and quash revolutions from San Salvador to Iraq \(15 June 2008\)](#)**

McCain's real Petraeus doctrine

(Redirected from [How to crush insurgencies from San Salvador to Baghdad](#))

Wikileaks has obtained the "Petraeus doctrine" the Pentagon didn't want to show you.

JULIAN ASSANGE (investigative editor)

June 16, 2008, updated: October 8, 2008

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Nicaraguan civil-war victims, 1978

“ [T]he psychological effectiveness of the CSDF concept starts by reversing the insurgent strategy of making the government the repressor. It forces the insurgents to cross a critical threshold—that of attacking and killing the very class of people they are supposed to be liberating.

99

— US Special Forces doctrine obtained by Wikileaks

So states the [US Special Forces counterinsurgency manual](#) obtained by Wikileaks, *Foreign Internal Defense Tactics Techniques and Procedures for Special Forces* (1994, 2004). The manual may be critically described as "what the US learned about running death squads and propping up corrupt government in Latin America and how to apply it to other places". Its contents are both history defining for Latin America and, given the continued role of US Special Forces in the suppression of insurgencies, including in Iraq and Afghanistan, history making.

The leaked manual, which has been verified with military sources, is the official US Special Forces doctrine for Foreign Internal Defense or FID.

FID operations are designed to prop up "friendly" governments facing popular revolution or guerilla insurgency. FID interventions are often covert or quasi-covert due to the unpopular nature of the governments being supported ("In formulating a realistic policy for the use of advisors, the commander must carefully gauge the psychological climate of the HN [Host Nation] and the United States.")

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The manual directly advocates training paramilitaries, pervasive surveillance, censorship, press control and restrictions on labor unions & political parties. It directly advocates warrantless searches, detainment without charge and (under varying circumstances) the suspension of *habeas corpus*. It directly advocates employing terrorists or prosecuting individuals for terrorism who are not terrorists, running false flag operations and concealing human rights abuses from journalists. And it repeatedly advocates the use of subterfuge and "*psychological operations*" (propaganda) to make these and other "*population & resource control*" measures more palatable.

The content has been particularly informed by the long United States involvement in El Salvador.

In 2005 a number of credible media reports suggested the Pentagon was intensely debating "the Salvador option" for Iraq.^[1] According to the New York Times Magazine:

The template for Iraq today is not Vietnam, with which it has often been compared, but El Salvador, where a right-wing government backed by the United States fought a leftist insurgency in a 12-year war beginning in 1980. The cost was high — more than 70,000 people were killed, most of them civilians, in a country with a population of just six million. Most of the killing and torturing was done by the army and the right-wing death squads affiliated with it. According to an Amnesty International report in 2001, violations committed by the army and associated groups included "extrajudicial executions, other unlawful killings, 'disappearances' and torture. . . . Whole villages were targeted by the armed forces and their inhabitants massacred." As part of President Reagan's policy of supporting anti-Communist forces, hundreds of millions of dollars in United States aid was funneled to the Salvadoran Army, and a team of 55 Special Forces advisers, led for several years by Jim Steele, trained front-line battalions that were accused of significant human rights abuses.



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US trained "death squad" victims in San Salvador, 1981

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The same article states James Steele and many other former Central American Special Forces "military advisors" have now been appointed at a high level to Iraq.

In 1993 a United Nations truth commission on El Salvador, which examined 22,000 atrocities that occurred during the twelve-year civil war, attributed 85 percent of the abuses to the US-backed El Salvador military and its paramilitary death squads.

It is worth noting what the US Ambassador to El Salvador, Robert E. White (now the president for the Center for International Policy) had to say as early as 1980, in State Department documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act:

The major, immediate threat to the existence of this government is the right-wing violence. In the city of San Salvador, the hired thugs of the extreme right, some of them well-trained Cuban and Nicaraguan terrorists, kill moderate left leaders and blow up government buildings. In the countryside, elements of the security forces torture and kill the campesinos, shoot up their houses and burn their crops. At least two hundred refugees from the countryside arrive daily in the capital city. This campaign of terror is radicalizing the rural areas just as surely as Somoza's National Guard did in Nicaragua. Unfortunately, the command structure of the army and the security forces either tolerates or encourages this activity. These senior officers believe or pretend to believe that they are eliminating the guerillas.^[2]

Selected extracts follow. Note that the manual is 219 pages long and contains substantial material throughout. These extracts should merely be considered representative. **Emphasis** has been added for further selectivity. The full manual can be found at [US Special Forces counterinsurgency manual FM 31-20-3](#).

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[...]

Counterintelligence

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[...]

Most of the counterintelligence measures used will be overt in nature and aimed at protecting installations, units, and information and detecting espionage, sabotage, and subversion. **Examples of counterintelligence measures to use are**

Background investigations and records checks of persons in sensitive positions and persons whose loyalty may be questionable.

Maintenance of files on organizations, locations, and individuals of counterintelligence interest.

Internal security inspections of installations and units.

Control of civilian movement within government-controlled areas.

Identification systems to minimize the chance of insurgents gaining access to installations or moving freely.

Unannounced searches and raids on suspected meeting places.

Censorship.

[...]

PSYOP [**Psychological Operations**] are essential to the success of PRC [**Population & Resources Control**]. For maximum effectiveness, a strong psychological operations effort is directed toward the families of the insurgents and their popular support base. **The PSYOP aspect of the PRC program tries to make the imposition of control more palatable** to the people by relating the necessity of controls to their safety and well-being. PSYOP efforts also try to create a favorable national or local government image and counter the effects of the insurgent propaganda effort.

Control Measures

SF [US Special Forces] can advise and assist HN [Host Nation] forces in developing and implementing control measures. Among these measures are the following:

Security Forces. Police and other security forces use PRC [Population & Resources Control] measures to deprive the insurgent of support and to identify and locate members of his infrastructure. Appropriate PSYOP [Psychological Operations] help make these measures more acceptable to the population by explaining their need. The government informs the population that the PRC measures may cause an inconvenience but are necessary due to the actions of the insurgents.

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Restrictions. **Rights on the legality of detention or imprisonment of personnel (for example, habeas corpus) may be temporarily suspended.** This measure must be taken as a last resort, since it may provide the insurgents with an effective propaganda theme. PRC [Population & Resources Control] measures can also include curfews or blackouts, travel restrictions, and restricted residential areas such as protected villages or resettlement areas. Registration and pass systems and control of sensitive items (resources control) and critical supplies such as weapons, food, and fuel are other PRC measures. Checkpoints, searches, roadblocks; **surveillance, censorship, and press control;** and **restriction of activity that applies to selected groups (labor unions, political groups and the like) are further PRC measures.**

[...]

Legal Considerations. All restrictions, controls, and DA measures must be governed by the legality of these methods and their impact on the populace. In countries where government authorities do not have wide latitude in controlling the population, special or emergency legislation must be enacted. **This emergency legislation may include a form of martial law permitting government forces to search without warrant, to detain without bringing formal charges, and to execute other similar actions.**

[...]

Psychological Operations

PSYOP can support the mission by discrediting the insurgent forces to neutral groups, creating dissension among the insurgents themselves, and supporting defector programs. **Divisive programs create dissension, disorganization, low morale, subversion, and defection within the insurgent forces.** Also important are national programs to win insurgents over to the government side with offers of amnesty and rewards. Motives for surrendering can range from personal rivalries and bitterness to disillusionment and discouragement. **Pressure from the security forces has persuasive power.**

[...]

Intelligence personnel must consider the parameters within which a revolutionary movement operates. Frequently, they establish a centralized intelligence processing center to collect and coordinate the amount of information required to make long-range intelligence estimates. Long-range intelligence focuses on the stable factors existing in an insurgency. For example, various demographic factors (ethnic, racial, social, economic, religious, and political characteristics of the area in which the underground movement takes places) are useful in identifying the members of the underground.

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Information about the underground organization at national, district, and local level is basic in FID [Foreign Internal Defense] and/or IDAD operations. Collection of specific short-range intelligence about the rapidly changing variables of a local situation is critical. **Intelligence personnel must gather information on members of the underground, their movements, and their methods. Biographies and photos of suspected underground members, detailed information on their homes, families, education, work history, and associates are important features of short-range intelligence.**

Destroying its tactical units is not enough to defeat the enemy. The insurgent's underground cells or infrastructure must be neutralized first because the infrastructure is his main source of tactical intelligence and political control. **Eliminating the infrastructure within an area** achieves two goals: it ensures the government's control of the area, and it cuts off the enemy's main source of intelligence. An intelligence and operations command center (IOCC) is needed at district or province level. This organization becomes the nerve center for operations against the insurgent infrastructure. Information on insurgent infrastructure targets should come from such sources as the national police and other established intelligence nets and agents and individuals (informants).

The highly specialized and sensitive nature of clandestine intelligence collection demands specially selected and highly trained agents. Information from clandestine sources is often highly sensitive and requires tight control to protect the source. However, tactical information upon which a combat response can be taken should be passed to the appropriate tactical level.

The spotting, assessment, and recruitment of an agent is not a haphazard process regardless of the type agent being sought. During the assessment phase, the case officer determines the individual's degree of intelligence, access to target, available or necessary cover, and motivation. He initiates the recruitment and coding action only after he determines the individual has the necessary attributes to fulfill the needs.

All agents are closely observed and those that are not reliable are relieved. A few well-targeted, reliable agents are better and more economical than a large number of poor ones.

A system is needed to evaluate the agents and the information they submit. The maintenance of an agent master dossier (possibly at the SFOD B level) can be useful in evaluating the agent on the value and quality of information he has submitted. The dossier must contain a copy of the agent's source data report and every intelligence report he submitted.

Security forces can induce individuals among the general populace to become informants. **Security forces use various motives (civic-mindedness, patriotism, fear, punishment avoidance, gratitude, revenge or jealousy, financial rewards) as persuasive arguments.** They use the

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assurance of protection from reprisal as a major inducement. Security forces must maintain the informant's anonymity and must conceal the transfer of information from the source to the security agent. The security agent and the informant may prearrange signals to coincide with everyday behavior.

Surveillance, the covert observation of persons and places, is a principal method of gaining and confirming intelligence information. Surveillance techniques naturally vary with the requirements of different situations. The basic procedures include mechanical observation (wiretaps or concealed microphones), observation from fixed locations, and physical surveillance of subjects.

Whenever a suspect is apprehended during an operation, a hasty interrogation takes place to gain immediate information that could be of tactical value. The most frequently used methods for gathering information (map studies and aerial observation), however, are normally unsuccessful. Most PWs cannot read a map. When they are taken on a visual reconnaissance flight, it is usually their first flight and they cannot associate an aerial view with what they saw on the ground.

The most successful interrogation method consists of a map study based on terrain information received from the detainee. The interrogator first asks the detainee what the sun's direction was when he left the base camp. From this information, he can determine a general direction. The interrogator then asks the detainee how long it took him to walk to the point where he was captured. Judging the terrain and the detainee's health, the interrogator can determine a general radius in which the base camp can be found (he can use an overlay for this purpose). He then asks the detainee to identify significant terrain features he saw on each day of his journey, (rivers, open areas, hills, rice paddies, swamps). As the detainee speaks and his memory is jogged, the interrogator finds these terrain features on a current map and gradually plots the detainee's route to finally locate the base camp.

If the interrogator is unable to speak the detainee's language, he interrogates through an interpreter who received a briefing beforehand. A recorder may also assist him. If the interrogator is not familiar with the area, personnel who are familiar with the area brief him before the interrogation and then join the interrogation team. The recorder allows the interrogator a more free-flowing interrogation. The recorder also lets a knowledgeable interpreter elaborate on points the detainee has mentioned without the interrogator interrupting the continuity established during a given sequence. The interpreter can also question certain inaccuracies, keeping pressure on the subject. The interpreter and the interrogator have to be well trained to work as a team. The interpreter has to be familiar with the interrogation procedures. His preinterrogation briefings must include information on the detainee's health, the circumstances resulting in his detention, and the specific information required. A successful interrogation is contingent upon continuity and a welltrained interpreter. A tape recorder

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(or a recorder taking notes) enhances continuity by freeing the interrogator from time-consuming administrative tasks.

[...]

Political Structures. A tightly disciplined party organization, formally structured to parallel the existing government hierarchy, may be found at the center of some insurgent movements. In most instances, this organizational structure will consist of committed organizations at the village, district province, and national levels. Within major divisions and sections of an insurgent military headquarters, totally distinct but parallel command channels exist. There are military chains of command and political channels of control. The party ensures complete domination over the military structure using its own parallel organization. It dominates through a political division in an insurgent military headquarters, a party cell or group in an insurgent military unit, or a political military officer.

[...]

Special Intelligence-Gathering Operations

Alternative intelligence-gathering techniques and sources, such as doppelganger or pseudo operations, can be tried and used when it is hard to obtain information from the civilian populace. These pseudo units are usually made up of ex-guerrilla and/or security force personnel posing as insurgents. They circulate among the civilian populace and, in some cases, infiltrate guerrilla units to gather information on guerrilla movements and its support infrastructure.

Much time and effort must be used to persuade insurgents to switch allegiance and serve with the security forces. **Prospective candidates must be properly screened and then given a choice of serving with the HN [Host Nation] security forces or facing prosecution under HN law for terrorist crimes.**

Government security force units and teams of varying size have been used in infiltration operations against underground and guerrilla forces. They have been especially effective in getting information on underground security and communications systems, the nature and extent of civilian support and underground liaison, underground supply methods, and possible collusion between local government officials and the underground. Before such a unit can be properly trained and disguised, however, much information about the appearance, mannerisms, and security procedures of enemy units must be gathered. Most of this information comes from defectors or reindoctrinated prisoners. Defectors also make excellent instructors and guides for an infiltrating unit. **In using a disguised team, the selected men should be trained, oriented, and disguised to look and act like authentic underground or guerrilla units.** In addition to acquiring valuable information, the infiltrating

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units can demoralize the insurgents to the extent that they become overly suspicious and distrustful of their own units.

[...]

After establishing the cordon and designating a holding area, the screening point or center is established. All civilians in the cordoned area will then pass through the screening center to be classified.

National police personnel will complete, if census data does not exist in the police files, a basic registration card and photograph all personnel over the age of 15. They print two copies of each photo- one is pasted to the registration card and the other to the village book (for possible use in later operations and to identify ralliers and informants).

The screening element leader ensures the screeners question relatives, friends, neighbors, and other knowledgeable individuals of guerrilla leaders or functionaries operating in the area on their whereabouts, activities, movements, and expected return.

The screening area must include areas where police and military intelligence personnel can privately interview selected individuals. The interrogators try to convince the interviewees that their cooperation will not be detected by the other inhabitants. They also discuss, during the interview, the availability of monetary rewards for certain types of information and equipment.

[...]

Civilian Self-Defense Forces [Paramilitaries, or, especially in an El-Salvador or Colombian civil war context, right wing "death squads"]

When a village accepts the CSDF program, the insurgents cannot choose to ignore it. To let the village go unpunished will encourage other villages to accept the government's CSDF program. The insurgents have no choice; they have to attack the CSDF village to provide a lesson to other villages considering CSDF. In a sense, **the psychological effectiveness of the CSDF concept starts by reversing the insurgent strategy of making the government the repressor. It forces the insurgents to cross a critical threshold-that of attacking and killing the very class of people they are supposed to be liberating.**

To be successful, the CSDF program must have popular support from those directly involved or affected by it. **The average peasant is not normally willing to fight to his death for his national government. His national government may have been a succession of corrupt dictators and inefficient bureaucrats. These governments are not the types of**

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institutions that inspire fight-to-the-death emotions in the peasant. The village or town, however, is a different matter. The average peasant will fight much harder for his home and for his village than he ever would for his national government. The CSDF concept directly involves the peasant in the war and makes it a fight for the family and village instead of a fight for some faraway irrelevant government.

[...]

Members of the CSDF receive no pay for their civil duties. In most instances, however, they derive certain benefits from voluntary service. These benefits can range from priority of hire for CMO projects to a place at the head of ration lines. **In El Salvador, CSDF personnel (they were called civil defense there) were given a U.S.-funded life insurance policy with the wife or next of kin as the beneficiary.** If a CSDF member died in the line of duty, the widow or next of kin was ceremoniously paid by an HN official. The HN administered the program and a U.S. advisor who maintained accountability of the funds verified the payment. **The HN [Host Nation] exercises administrative and visible control.**

Responsiveness and speedy payment are essential in this process since the widow normally does not have a means of support and the psychological effect of the government assisting her in her time of grief impacts on the entire community. These and other benefits offered by or through the HN government are valuable incentives for recruiting and sustaining the CSDF.

[...]

The local CSDF members select their leaders and deputy leaders (CSDF groups and teams) in elections organized by the local authorities. In some cases, the HN [Host Nation] appoints a leader who is a specially selected member of the HN security forces trained to carry out this task. **Such appointments occurred in El Salvador where the armed forces have established a formal school to train CSDF commanders. Extreme care and close supervision are required to avoid abuses by CSDF leaders.**

[...]

The organization of a CSDF can be similar to that of a combat group. This organization is effective in both rural and urban settings. **For example, a basic group, having a strength of 107 members, is broken down into three 35-man elements plus a headquarters element of 2 personnel. Each 35-man element is further broken down into three 11-man teams and a headquarters element of 2 personnel. Each team consists of a team leader, an assistant team leader, and three 3-man cells. This organization can be modified to accommodate the number of citizens available to serve.**

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[...]

Weapons training for the CSDF personnel is critical. Skill at arms decides the outcome of battle and must be stressed. Of equal importance is the maintenance and care of weapons. CSDF members are taught basic rifle marksmanship with special emphasis on firing from fixed positions and during conditions of limited visibility. Also included in the marksmanship training program are target detection and fire discipline.

Training ammunition is usually allocated to the CSDF on the basis of a specified number of rounds for each authorized weapon. A supporting HN government force or an established CSDF logistic source provides the ammunition to support refresher training.

[...]

Acts of misconduct by HN [Host Nation] personnel

All members of training assistance teams must understand their responsibilities concerning acts of misconduct by HN personnel. Team members receive briefings before deployment on what to do if they encounter or observe such acts. Common Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions lists prohibited acts by parties to the convention. Such acts are-

Violence to life and person, in particular, murder, mutilation, cruel treatment, and torture.

Taking of hostages.

Outrages against personal dignity, in particular, humiliating and degrading treatment.

Passing out sentences and carrying out executions without previous judgment by a regularly constituted court that affords all the official guarantees that are recognized as indispensable by civilized people.

The provisions in the above paragraph represent a level of conduct that the United States expects each foreign country to observe.

If team members encounter prohibited acts they can not stop, they will disengage from the activity, leave the area if possible, and report the incidents immediately to the proper in-country U.S.

authorities. The country team will identify proper U.S. authorities during the team's initial briefing.

Team members will not discuss such matters with non-U.S. Government authorities such as journalists and civilian contractors.

[...]

Most insurgents' doctrinal and training documents stress the use of pressure-type mines in the more isolated or less populated areas. They prefer using commandtype mines in densely populated areas.

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These documents stress that when using noncommand-detonated mines, the insurgents use every means to inform the local populace on their location, commensurate with security regulations. In reality, most insurgent groups suffer from various degrees of deficiency in their C2 [Command & Control] systems. Their C2 does not permit them to verify that those elements at the operational level strictly follow directives and orders. In the case of the Frente Farabundo Marti de la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) in El Salvador, the individual that emplaces the mine is responsible for its recovery after the engagement. There are problems with this concept. The individual may be killed or the security forces may gain control of the area. Therefore, the recovery of the mine is next to impossible.

[...]

Homemade antipersonnel mines are used extensively in El Salvador, Guatemala and Malaysia. (Eighty percent of all El Salvadoran armed forces casualties in 1986 were due to mines; in 1987, soldiers wounded by mines and booby traps averaged 50 to 60 per month.) The important point to remember is that any homemade mine is the product of the resources available to the insurgent group. Therefore, no two antipersonnel mines may be the same in their configuration and materials. Insurgent groups depend to a great extent on materials discarded or lost by security forces personnel. The insurgents not only use weapons, ammunition, mines, grenades, and demolitions for their original purpose but also in preparing expedient mines and booby traps.

[...]

A series of successful minings carried out by the Viet Cong insurgents on the Cua Viet River, Quang Tri Province, demonstrated their resourcefulness in countering minesweeping tactics. Initially, chain-dragging sweeps took place morning and evening. After several successful mining attacks, it was apparent that they laid the mines after the minesweepers passed. Then, the boats using the river formed into convoys and transited the river with minesweepers 914 meters ahead of the convoy. Nevertheless, boats of the convoy were successfully mined in mid-channel, indicating that the mines were again laid after the minesweeper had passed, possibly by using sampans. Several sampans were observed crossing or otherwise using the channel between the minesweepers and the convoy. The convoys were then organized so that the minesweepers worked immediately ahead of the convoy. One convoy successfully passed. The next convoy had its minesweepers mined and ambushed close to the river banks.

[...]

Military Advisors

[...]

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Psychologically pressuring the HN [Host Nation] counterpart may sometimes be successful. Forms of psychological pressure may range from the obvious to the subtle. The advisor never applies direct threats, pressure, or intimidation on his counterpart. Indirect psychological pressure may be applied by taking an issue up the chain of command to a higher U.S. commander. The U.S. commander can then bring his counterpart to force the subordinate counterpart to comply. Psychological pressure may obtain quick results but may have very negative side effects. The counterpart will feel alienated and possibly hostile if the advisor uses such techniques. Offers of payment in the form of valuables may cause him to become resentful of the obvious control being exerted over him. In short, psychologically pressuring a counterpart is not recommended. Such pressure is used only as a last resort since it may irreparably damage the relationship between the advisor and his counterpart.

PSYOP [Psychological Operations] Support for Military Advisors

The introduction of military advisors requires preparing the populace with which the advisors are going to work. Before advisors enter a country, the HN [Host Nation] government carefully explains their introduction and clearly emphasizes the benefits of their presence to the citizens. It must provide a credible justification to minimize the obvious propaganda benefits the insurgents could derive from this action. The country's dissenting elements label our actions, no matter how well-intended, an "imperialistic intervention."

Once advisors are committed, their activities should be exploited. Their successful integration into the HN [Host Nation] society and their respect for local customs and mores, as well as their involvement with CA [Civil Affairs] projects, are constantly brought to light. **In formulating a realistic policy for the use of advisors, the commander must carefully gauge the psychological climate of the HN [Host Nation] and the United States.**

[...]

PRC [Population & Resources Control] Operations.

Advisors assist their counterparts in developing proper control plans and training programs for PRC measures. They also help coordinate plans and requests for materiel and submit recommendations to improve the overall effectiveness of operations. They can be helpful in preparing to initiate control.

Select, organize, and train paramilitary and irregular forces.

Develop PSYOP [Psychological Operations] activities to support PRC operations.

Coordinate activities through an area coordination center (if established).

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Establish and refine PRC operations.

Intensify intelligence activities.

Establish and refine coordination and communications with other agencies.

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1. ↑ Newsweek. *Special Forces May Train Assassins, Kidnappers in Iraq* by Michael Hirsh & John Barry, Jan. 14, 2005, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6802629/site/newsweek/print/1/displaymode/1098/>
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- **Death Squads, Disappearances, and Torture (18 Dec 2007)**

The Unholy Trinity - From Latin America To Iraq

Death Squads, Disappearances, and Torture

By Greg Grandin

12/18/07 "TomDispatch" -- - The world is made up, as Captain Segura in Graham Greene's 1958 novel *Our Man in Havana* put it, of two classes: the torturable and the untorturable. "There are people," Segura explained, "who expect to be tortured and others who would be outraged by the idea."

Then — so Greene thought — Catholics, particularly Latin American Catholics, were more torturable than Protestants. Now, of course, Muslims hold that distinction, victims of a globalized network of offshore and outsourced imprisonment coordinated by Washington and knitted together by secret flights, concentration camps, and black-site detention centers. The CIA's deployment of Orwellian "Special Removal Units" to kidnap terror suspects in Europe, Canada, the Middle East, and elsewhere and the whisking of these "ghost prisoners" off to Third World countries to be tortured goes, today, by the term "extraordinary rendition," a hauntingly apt phrase. "To render" means not just to hand over, but to extract the essence of a thing, as well as to hand out a verdict and "give in return or retribution" — good descriptions of what happens during torture sessions.

In the decades after Greene wrote *Our Man in Havana*, Latin Americans coined an equally resonant word to describe the terror that had come to reign over most of the continent. Throughout the second half of the Cold War, Washington's anti-communist allies killed more than 300,000 civilians, many of whom were simply *desaparecido* — "disappeared." The expression was already well known in Latin America when, on accepting his 1982 Nobel Prize for Literature in Sweden, Colombian novelist Gabriel

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García Márquez reported that the region's "disappeared number nearly one hundred and twenty thousand, which is as if suddenly no one could account for all the inhabitants of Uppsala."

When Latin Americans used the word as a verb, they usually did so in a way considered grammatically incorrect — in the transitive form and often in the passive voice, as in "she was disappeared." The implied (but absent) actor/subject signaled that everybody knew the government was responsible, even while investing that government with unspeakable, omnipotent power. The disappeared left behind families and friends who spent their energies dealing with labyrinthine bureaucracies, only to be met with silence or told that their missing relative probably went to Cuba, joined the guerrillas, or ran away with a lover. The victims were often not the most politically active, but the most popular, and were generally chosen to ensure that their sudden absence would generate a chilling ripple-effect.

An Unholy Trinity

Like rendition, disappearances can't be carried out without a synchronized, sophisticated, and increasingly transnational infrastructure, which, back in the 1960s and 1970s, the United States was instrumental in creating. In fact, it was in Latin America that the CIA and U.S. military intelligence agents, working closely with local allies, first helped put into place the unholy trinity of government-sponsored terrorism now on display in Iraq and elsewhere: death squads, disappearances, and torture.

Death Squads: Clandestine paramilitary units, nominally independent from established security agencies yet able to draw on the intelligence and logistical capabilities of those agencies, are the building blocks for any effective system of state terror. In Latin America, Washington supported the assassination of suspected Leftists at least as early as 1954, when the CIA successfully carried out a coup in Guatemala, which ousted a democratically elected president. But its first sustained sponsorship of death squads started in 1962 in Colombia, a country which then vied with Vietnam for Washington's attention.

Having just ended a brutal 10-year civil war, its newly consolidated political leadership, facing a still unruly peasantry, turned to the U.S. for help. In 1962, the Kennedy White House sent General William Yarborough, [later better known](#) for being the "Father of the Green Berets" (as well as for directing domestic military surveillance of prominent civil-rights activists, including Martin Luther King Jr.). Yarborough advised the Colombian government to set up an irregular unit to "execute paramilitary, sabotage and/or terrorist activities against known communist proponents" — as good a description of a death squad as any.

As historian Michael McClintock [puts it](#) in his indispensable book *Instruments of Statecraft*, Yarborough left behind a "virtual blueprint" for creating military-directed death squads. This was, thanks to U.S. aid and training, immediately implemented. The use of such death squads would

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become part of what the counterinsurgency theorists of the era liked to call “counter-terror” — a concept hard to define since it so closely mirrored the practices it sought to contest.

Throughout the 1960s, Latin America and Southeast Asia functioned as the two primary laboratories for U.S. counterinsurgents, who moved back and forth between the regions, applying insights and fine-tuning tactics. By the early 1960s, death-squad executions were a standard feature of U.S. counterinsurgency strategy in Vietnam, soon to be consolidated into the infamous Phoenix Program, which between 1968 and 1972 “neutralized” more than 80,000 Vietnamese — 26,369 of whom were “permanently eliminated.”

As in Latin America, so too in Vietnam, the point of death squads was not just to eliminate those thought to be working with the enemy, but to keep potential rebel sympathizers in a state of fear and anxiety. To do so, the U.S. Information Service in Saigon provided thousands of copies of a flyer printed with a ghostly looking eye. The “terror squads” then deposited that eye on the corpses of those they murdered or pinned it “on the doors of houses suspected of occasionally harboring Viet Cong agents.” The technique was called “phrasing the threat” — a way to generate a word-of-mouth terror buzz.

In Guatemala, such a tactic started up at roughly the same time. There, a “white hand” was left on the body of a victim or the door of a potential one.

Disappearances: Next up on the counterinsurgency curriculum was Central America, where, in the 1960s, U.S. advisors helped put into place the infrastructure needed not just to murder but “disappear” large numbers of civilians. In the wake of the Cuban Revolution, Washington had set out to “professionalize” Latin America’s security agencies — much in the way the Bush administration now works to “modernize” the intelligence systems of its allies in the President’s “Global War on Terror.”

Then, as now, the goal was to turn lethargic, untrained intelligence units of limited range into an international network capable of gathering, analyzing, sharing, and acting on information in a quick and efficient manner. American advisors helped coordinate the work of the competing branches of a country’s security forces, urging military men and police officers to overcome differences and cooperate. Washington supplied phones, teletype machines, radios, cars, guns, ammunition, surveillance equipment, explosives, cattle prods, cameras, typewriters, carbon paper, and filing cabinets, while instructing its apprentices in the latest riot control, record keeping, surveillance, and mass-arrest techniques.

In neither El Salvador, nor Guatemala was there even a whiff of serious rural insurrection when the Green Berets, the CIA, and the U.S. Agency for International Development began organizing the first

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security units that would metastasize into a dense, Central American-wide network of death-squad paramilitaries.

Once created, death squads operated under their own colorful names — an Eye for an Eye, the Secret Anticommunist Army, the White Hand — yet were essentially appendages of the very intelligence systems that Washington either helped create or fortified. As in Vietnam, care was taken to make sure that paramilitaries appeared to be unaffiliated with regular forces. To allow for a plausible degree of deniability, the “elimination of the [enemy] agents must be achieved quickly and decisively” — instructs a classic 1964 textbook *Counter-Insurgency Warfare* — “by an organization that must in no way be confused with the counterinsurgent personnel working to win the support of the population.” But in Central America, by the end of the 1960s, the bodies were piling so high that even State Department embassy officials, often kept out of the loop on what their counterparts in the CIA and the Pentagon were up to, had to [admit](#) to the obvious links between US-backed intelligence services and the death squads.

Washington, of course, publicly denied its support for paramilitarism, but the practice of political disappearances took a great leap forward in Guatemala in 1966 with the birth of a death squad [created](#), and directly supervised, by U.S. security advisors. Throughout the first two months of 1966, a combined black-ops [unit](#) made up of police and military officers working under the name “Operation Clean-Up” — a term US counterinsurgents would recycle elsewhere in Latin America — carried out a number of extrajudicial executions.

Between March 3rd and 5th of that year, the unit netted its largest catch. More than 30 Leftists were captured, interrogated, tortured, and executed. Their bodies were then placed in sacks and dropped into the Pacific Ocean from U.S.-supplied helicopters. Despite pleas from Guatemala’s archbishop and more than 500 petitions of *habeas corpus* filed by relatives, the Guatemalan government and the American Embassy remained silent on the fate of the executed.

Over the next two and a half decades, U.S.-funded and trained Central American security forces would disappear tens of thousands of citizens and execute hundreds of thousands more. When supporters of the “War on Terror” advocated the exercise of the “Salvador Option,” it was this slaughter they were talking about.

Following U.S.-backed coups in Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina, death squads not only became institutionalized in South America, they became transnational. Throughout the late 1970s and 1980s, the CIA supported [Operation Condor](#) — an intelligence consortium established by Chilean dictator General Augusto Pinochet that synchronized the activities of many of the continent’s security agencies and orchestrated an international campaign of terror and murder.

[According to Washington’s ambassador](#) to Paraguay, the heads of these agencies kept “in touch with

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one another through a U.S. communications installation in the Panama Canal Zone which covers all of Latin America." This allowed them to "co-ordinate intelligence information among the southern cone countries." Just this month, Pinochet's security chief General Manuel Contreras, who is serving a 240-year prison term in Chile for a wide-range of human rights violations, [gave](#) a TV interview in which he confirmed that the CIA's then-Deputy Director, General Vernon Walters (who served under director George H.W. Bush), was fully informed of the "international activities" of Condor.

Torture: Torture is the animating spirit of this triad, the unholy of this unholy trinity. In Chile, Pinochet's henchmen killed or disappeared thousands — but they tortured tens of thousands. In Uruguay and Brazil, the state only disappeared a few hundred, but fear of torture and rape became a way of life, particularly for the politically engaged. Torture, even more than the disappearances, was meant not so much to get one person to talk as to get everybody else to shut up.

At this point, Washington can no longer deny that its agents in Latin America facilitated, condoned, and practiced torture. Defectors from death squads have described the instruction given by their U.S. tutors, and survivors have [testified](#) to the presence of Americans in their torture sessions. One Pentagon "torture manual" distributed in at least five Latin American countries described at length "coercive" procedures designed to "destroy [the] capacity to resist."

As [Naomi Klein](#) and [Alfred McCoy](#) have documented in their recent books, these field manuals were compiled using information gathered from CIA-commissioned mind control and electric-shock experiments conducted in the 1950s. Just as the "torture memos" of today's war on terror parse the difference between "pain" and "severe pain," "psychological harm" and "lasting psychological harm," these manuals went to great lengths to regulate the application of suffering. "The threat to inflict pain can trigger fears more damaging than the immediate sensation of pain," one handbook read.

"Before all else, you must be efficient," [said](#) U.S. police advisor Dan Mitrione, assassinated by Uruguay's revolutionary Tupamaros in 1970 for training security forces in the finer points of torture. "You must cause only the damage that is strictly necessary, not a bit more." Mitrione taught by demonstration, reportedly torturing to death a number of homeless people kidnapped off the streets of Montevideo. "We must control our tempers in any case," he said. "You have to act with the efficiency and cleanliness of a surgeon and with the perfection of an artist."

Florencio Caballero, having escaped from Honduras's notorious Battalion 316 into exile in Canada in 1986, testified that U.S. instructors urged him to inflict psychological, not "physical," pain "to study the fears and weakness of a prisoner." Force the victim to "stand up," the Americans taught Caballero, "don't let him sleep, keep him naked and in isolation, put rats and cockroaches in his cell, give him bad food, serve him dead animals, throw cold water on him, change the temperature." Sound familiar?

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Yet, as Abu Ghraib demonstrated so clearly and the [destroyed](#) CIA interrogation videos would undoubtedly have made no less clear, maintaining a distinction between psychological and physical torture is not always possible. As one manual conceded, if a suspect does not respond, then the threat of direct pain “must be carried out.” One of Caballero’s victims, Inés Murillo, testified that her captors, including at least one CIA agent — his involvement was [confirmed](#) in Senate testimony by the CIA’s deputy director — hung her from the ceiling naked, forced her to eat dead birds and rats raw, made her stand for hours without sleep and without being allowed to urinate, poured freezing water over her at regular intervals for extended periods, beat her bloody, and applied electric shocks to her body, including her genitals.

Anything Goes

Inés Murillo was definitely a member of Greene’s torturable class. Yet Greene was writing in a more genteel time, when to torture the wrong person would be, as he put it, as cheeky as a “chauffeur” sleeping with a “peeress.” Today, when it comes to torture, anything goes.

Ideologues in the war on terror, like Berkeley law professor [John Yoo](#), have [worked mightily](#) to narrow the definition of what torture is, thereby expanding possibilities for its application. They have worked no less hard to increase the number of people throughout the world who could be subjected to torture — by defining anyone they cared to choose as a stateless “enemy combatant,” and therefore not protected by national and international laws banning cruel and inhumane treatment. Even former Attorney General John Ashcroft has [declared himself](#) potentially torturable, telling a University of Colorado audience recently that he would be willing to submit to waterboarding “if it were necessary.”

Things are so freewheeling that Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz — who, at his perch at Harvard would undoubtedly be outraged if he were to be tortured — thinks that the practice needs to be regulated, as if it were a routine medical act. He has [suggested](#) empowering judges to issue “warrants” that would allow interrogators to insert “sterile needles” underneath finger nails to “to cause excruciating pain without endangering life.”

Pinochet, who didn’t shy away from justifying his actions in the name of Western Civilization, would never have dreamed of [defending torture](#) as brazenly as has Dick Cheney, backed up by legal theorists like Yoo. At the same time, revisionist historians, like [Max Boot](#), and pundits, like the *Atlantic Monthly*’s [Robert Kaplan](#), rewrite history, claiming that operations like the Phoenix Program in Vietnam or the death squads in El Salvador were effective, morally acceptable tactics and should be emulated in fighting today’s “War on Terror.”

But this kind of promiscuity has its risks. In Latin America, the word “disappeared” came to denote not just victimization but moral repudiation, as the mothers and children of the disappeared led a

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continental movement to restore the rule of law. They provide hope that one day the world-wide network of repression assembled by the Bush administration will be as discredited as Operation Condor is today in Latin America. As Greene wrote half a century ago, on the eve of the fall of another famous torturer, Cuba's Fulgencio Batista, "it is a real danger for everyone when what is shocking changes."

Greg Grandin is the author of a number of books, most recently *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism*. He teaches history at NYU.

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- **The Myth Of Sectarianism (09 Jan 2008)**

The policy is divide to rule

By DAHR JAMAIL

09/01/08 "ISR" -- -- IF THE U.S. leaves Iraq, the violent sectarianism between the Sunni and Shia will worsen. This is what Republicans and Democrats alike will have us believe. This key piece of rhetoric is used to justify the continuance of the occupation of Iraq.

This propaganda, like others of its ilk, gains ground, substance, and reality due largely to the ignorance of those ingesting it. The snow job by the corporate media on the issue of sectarianism in Iraq has ensured that the public buys into the line that the Sunni and Shia will dice one another up into little pieces if the occupation ends.

It may be worthwhile to consider that prior to the Anglo-American invasion and occupation of Iraq there had never been open warfare between the two groups and certainly not a civil war. In terms of organization and convention, Iraqis are a tribal society and some of the largest tribes in the country comprise Sunni and Shia. Intermarriages between the two sects are not uncommon either.

Soon after arriving in Iraq in November 2003, I learned that it was considered rude and socially graceless to enquire after an individual's sect. If in ignorance or under compulsion I did pose the question the most common answer I would receive was, "I am Muslim, and I am Iraqi." On occasion there were more telling responses like the one I received from an older woman, "My mother is a Shia and my father a Sunni, so can you tell which half of me is which?" The accompanying smile said it all.

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Large mixed neighborhoods were the norm in Baghdad. Sunni and Shia prayed in one another's mosques. Secular Iraqis could form lifelong associations with others without overt concern about their chosen sect. How did such a well-integrated society erupt into vicious fighting, violent sectarianism, and segregated neighborhoods? How is one to explain the millions in Iraq displaced from their homes simply because they were the wrong sect in the wrong place at the wrong time?

Back in December 2003 Sheikh Adnan, a Friday speaker at his mosque, had recounted a recent experience to me. During the first weeks of the occupation, a U.S. military commander had showed up in Baquba, the capital of Diyala province located roughly twenty-five miles northeast of Baghdad with a mixed Sunni-Shia population. He had asked to meet with all the tribal and religious leaders. On the appointed day the assembled leaders were perplexed when the commander instructed them to divide themselves, "Shia on one side of the room, Sunni on the other."

It would not be amiss, perhaps, to read in this account an implanting of a deliberate policy of "divide and rule" by the Anglo-American invaders from the early days of the occupation.

There have been no statistical surveys in recent years to determine the sectarian composition of Iraq. However, when the Coalition Provisional Authority, led by Paul Bremer, formed the first puppet Iraqi government, a precedent was set. The twenty-five seats in the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC), were assigned strictly along sectarian lines based on the assumption that 60 percent of the population is Shia, 20 percent Sunni, and 20 percent Kurds, who are mostly Sunni. For good measure, a couple of Turkoman and a Christian were thrown in.

It is evident that this puppet troupe deployed at the onset of "democracy" in Iraq was mandated to establish to the population that it was in the larger interest to begin thinking, at least politically, along sectarian and ethnic lines. Inevitably, political power struggles ensued and were cemented and exacerbated with the January 30, 2005, elections.

Mild surface scratching reveals a darker, largely unreported aspect of the divisive U.S. plan. A UN report released in September 2005 held Iraqi interior ministry forces responsible for an organized campaign of detention, torture, and killing of fellow Iraqis. These special police commando units were recruited from the Shia Badr Organization and Mehdi Army militias.

In Baghdad during November and December 2004, I heard widespread accounts of death squads assassinating Sunni resistance leaders and their key sympathizers. It was after the failure of Operation Phantom Fury, as the U.S. siege of Fallujah that November was named, that the Iraqi resistance spread across Iraq like wildfire. Death squads were set up to quell this fire by eliminating the leadership of this growing resistance.

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The firefighting team had at its helm the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, John Negroponte, ably assisted by retired Colonel James Steele, adviser to Iraqi security forces. In 1984–86 Steele had been commander of the U.S. military advisory group in El Salvador. Between 1981 and 1985 Negroponte was U.S. ambassador to neighboring Honduras. In 1994 the Honduras Commission on Human Rights charged him with extensive human rights violations, reporting the torture and disappearance of at least 184 political workers. A CIA working group set up in 1996 to look into the U.S. role in Honduras has placed on record documents admitting that the operations Negroponte oversaw in Honduras were carried out by “special intelligence units,” better known as “death squads,” of CIA-trained Honduran armed units which kidnapped, tortured, and killed thousands of people suspected of supporting leftist guerrillas. Negroponte was ambassador to Iraq for close to a year from June 2004.

The only public mention of any of this I have seen was in Newsweek magazine on January 8, 2005. It quotes Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. secretary of defense at the time, who discussed the use of the “Salvador Option” in Iraq. It compared the strategy being planned for Iraq to the one used in Central America during the Reagan administration:

"Then, faced with a losing war against Salvadoran rebels, the U.S. government funded or supported “nationalist” forces that allegedly included so-called death squads directed to hunt down and kill rebel leaders and sympathizers. Eventually the insurgency was quelled, and many U.S. conservatives consider the policy to have been a success—despite the deaths of innocent civilians and the subsequent Iran-Contra arms-for-hostages scandal."

U.S.-backed sectarian death squads have become the foremost generator of death in Iraq, even surpassing the U.S. military machine, infamous for its capacity for industrial-scale slaughter. It is no secret in Baghdad that the U.S. military would regularly cordon off pro-resistance areas like the al-Adhamiyah neighborhood of Baghdad and allow “Iraqi police” and “Iraqi army” personnel, masked in black balaclavas, through their checkpoints to carry out abductions and assassinations in the neighborhood.

Consequently, almost all of Baghdad and much of Iraq is now segregated. The flipside is that violence in the capital city has subsided somewhat of late now that the endgame of forming the death squads, that of fragmenting the population, has been mostly accomplished.

Baghdad resident, retired General Waleed al-Ubaidy told my Iraqi colleague recently, “I would like to agree with the idea that violence in Iraq has decreased and that everything is fine, but the truth is far more bitter. All that has happened is a dramatic change in the demographic map of Iraq.” Baghdad today is a divided city.

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Ahmad Ali, chief engineer from one of Baghdad's municipalities told my colleague, Ali al-Fadhily, "Baghdad has been torn into two cities and many towns and neighborhoods. There is now the Shia Baghdad and the Sunni Baghdad to start with. Each is divided into little town-like pieces of the hundreds of thousands who had to leave their homes." Al-Adhamiyah, on the Russafa side of Tigris River, is now entirely Sunni, the other areas are all Shia. The al-Karkh side of the river is purely Sunni except for Shula, Hurriya, and small strips of Aamil which are dominated by Shia militias.

Not being privy to the U.S. machinations, Iraqis in Baghdad blame the Iraqi police and Iraqi army for the sectarian assassinations and wonder why the U.S. military does little or nothing to stop them. "The Americans ask [Prime Minister Nouri al] Maliki to stop the sectarian assassinations knowing full well that his ministers are ordering the sectarian cleansing," says Mahmood Farhan of the Muslim Scholars Association, a leading Sunni group.

A more recent manifestation of the divisive U.S. policy has been the "purchase" of members of the largely Sunni resistance in Baghdad and in al-Anbar province that constitutes one-third of the geographic area of Iraq. Payments made by the U.S. military to collaborating tribal sheikhs already amount to \$17 million. The money passes directly into the hands of fighters who in many cases were engaged in launching attacks against the occupiers less than two weeks ago. Tribal fighters are being paid \$300 per month to patrol their areas, particularly against foreign mercenaries. Today the military refers to these men as "concerned local citizens," "awakening force," or simply "volunteers."

Arguably, violence in the area has temporarily declined. "Those Americans thought they would decrease the resistance attacks by separating the people of Iraq into sects and tribes," announced a thirty-two-year-old man from Ramadi, who spoke with al-Fadhily on terms of anonymity, "They know they are sinking deeper into the shifting sand, but the collaborators are fooling the Americans right now, and will in the end use this strategy against them." By the end of November 2007, the U.S. military had enlisted 77,000 of these fighters, and hopes to add another 10,000. Eighty-two percent of the fighters are Sunni.

Politically, the U.S. administration maintains its support of the Shia-dominated government in Baghdad. The fallout has been blatantly clear. On the first of December, Adnan al-Dulaimi, head of the Accordance Front, which is the Sunni political bloc in the Iraqi Parliament, was placed under house arrest by Iraqi and U.S. security forces in the Adil neighborhood, west of Baghdad. Iraqi security forces also detained his son Makki and forty-five of his guards. They were accused of manufacturing car bombs and killing Sunni militia members in the neighborhood who have been working with the U.S. military. Members of the Accordance Front, which holds 44 of the 275 seats in the Iraqi Parliament, promptly walked out. Maliki has, several times in the last several weeks, hurled public accusations and

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criticisms at al-Dulaimi, sending political and sectarian shock waves, further crippling the crumbling political process.

It is important to mention that Maliki, a U.S. puppet par excellence, acts only as told. After the January 2005 elections, the government that came into power had chosen Ibrahim al-Jaafari as its prime minister. When Jaafari refused to toe the U.S./UK line, Condoleezza Rice and her UK counterpart Jack Straw flew to Baghdad, and before their short trip ended Jaafari was out and Maliki was in as prime minister.

In the context of these facts let us now return to the big question: Will Iraq descend further into a sectarian nightmare if the occupation ends?

An indicator of how things will likely resolve themselves upon the departure of foreign troops may be drawn from the southern city of Basra. In early September, 500 British troops left one of Saddam Hussein's palaces in the heart of the city and ceased to conduct regular foot patrols. According to the British military, the overall level of violence in the city has decreased 90 percent since then.

This may or may not be a guarantee of a drop in sectarianism upon the departure of the invading armies, but it does prove that when the primary cause of the violence, sectarian strife, instability, and chaos is removed from the equation of Iraq, things are bound to improve rapidly.

Are we still going to believe that the occupation is holding Iraq together?

Dahr Jamail, who spent eight months in Iraq as an independent journalist, is author of Beyond the Green Zone: Dispatches From an Unembedded Journalist in Occupied Iraq (Haymarket Books, 2007). The New York Times' Stephen Kinzer describes his writing as "international journalism at its best." Dahr is currently on a national speaking tour sponsored by Haymarket and his articles can be found at <http://www.dahrjamailiraq.com/>.

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- **Loaded Language and Loaded Guns (03 Oct 2007)**

The Meaning of Opposites

By Charles Sullivan

10/03/07 "ICH" -- -One can no longer understand US governmental policy on the basis of conventional language or traditional wisdom. Language itself and its long-established meanings were

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long ago twisted and distorted in order to deceive the people. Now war is peace and terror and occupation is liberation. In order to make sense of what is happening, it is important to understand everything within the context of a specific economic philosophy, and the distorted capitalist system that spawned it.

That ideology was crafted by a diminutive economist named Milton Friedman, at the University of Chicago some five decades ago. The holy trinity of Friedman's version of capitalism—privatization of the public domain, corporate deregulation, and deep cuts in social spending—has resulted in enormous societal inequity and socio-economic classes. It has given us the haves and the have-nots, the haves and the have-mores.

Friedman and his disciples, collectively known as 'The Chicago School' do not believe in a minimum wage—much less a living wage, unions, worker rights, environmental protections, worker safety, or any other kind of restraint imposed upon corporations. In Friedman's view, the market should rule and profitability should be the guiding principle, the end results always justifying the means.

The implementation of Friedman's version of unfettered capitalism relies upon munificent corporate welfare, tax cuts to the wealthy, exploitation of workers, and the outright theft of other sovereign nation's natural wealth through military force—including oil and minerals, water supplies and other societal infrastructure; cheap labor, and a procession of consumers of goods and services without limits—an impossibility in a closed ecological system.

Convincing the public to support policies that are, in fact, detrimental to them, requires enormous marketing skill, as well as a corporate owned and operated propaganda apparatus that is second to none. This is accomplished by cloaking harmful policies in patriotic language, and other forms of seduction.

In order to achieve this objective, which is really nothing less than unqualified global corporate dominance, the public domain must be privatized and run not for use, but for profit; and the unparalleled might of the US military brought to bear against any nation or people who stand in the way.

It is this thinking—the dominant economic paradigm that shapes all US policy—that has brought us an endless succession of wars and other human tragedies; exacerbated global warming, and unprecedented rapacious planetary destruction, including the mass extinction of much of the world's flora and fauna — all for corporate profit.

Decades ago, in order to field test the economic theories that were formulated by the right wing think

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tanks at The Chicago School, Friedman and his disciples descended like locusts upon Latin America. The results were devastating: Democratically elected governments were systematically overthrown and brutal dictators friendly to US business interests were installed in their place—all of which were subsidized by US tax dollars with the complicity of the CIA.

As a result, US-trained death squads roamed the countryside torturing, murdering, and disappearing dissidents, union organizers, and indigenous land holders—a process that continues to this day. The corporate media, itself, an essential cog in Friedman's capitalist machine, referred to these death squads as freedom fighters, and canonized the likes Ronald Reagan as champions of liberty.

But the recipients of US policy in Latin America—those who survived them—know better. Now the same policies are being implemented in the Middle East, and with the same disastrous results. Elements of Friedman's policies have been in play here in the US for decades, and the intent is to do to the US what was done in Latin America and Iraq.

Language is a tool that can be used to either conceal or reveal truth; it can be used to inform or to distort. Given the track record of private enterprise, it is not surprising that everything associated with Milton Friedman's capitalism has been hopelessly perverted, and language is no exception.

Understanding the role played by Friedman and his disciples in shaping US policy—a doctrine adopted and praised by Republicans and Democrats alike, is critical in order to bring the big picture of world events, including our own domestic policies, into clear focus.

The disciples of Friedman's economic theorem have skillfully manipulated the language to deceive the subjects of those policies. Stripped of the garments of seductive language, the hidden kernel of truth is clearly seen: unregulated corporate power that masquerades as free market trade. The nations that have undergone Friedman's economic shock therapy: Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Indonesia, and many others, were opened up to privatization and corporate plunder that soon left them impoverished and wasted.

The once sustainable and vibrant local economies, most of them characterized by broad public ownership, were thoroughly globalized, as capitalism was forced upon those who had rejected it at the ballot box or through armed revolution. Local manufactures were no longer protected from multi-nationals: prices soared, wages fell, workers lost their jobs, unemployment rose astronomically, and the infrastructure that once provided inexpensive or free public services—among them, potable water and inexpensive food—were privatized and rendered unaffordable to the multitudes.

Shared prosperity quickly gave way to abject poverty and misery; while predatory US corporations bled

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nation after nation of their natural wealth, and kept the profits to themselves.

Here in the US, the people of New Orleans and other Gulf Coast cities in the wake of Hurricane Katrina experienced the same economic shock and awe as Latin America. The poor were relocated and resorts for the rich quickly supplanted affordable public housing. The public school system was virtually dismantled and privatized. Contractors such as Halliburton and Blackwater reaped enormous profits on the misery and suffering of the Gulf Region's working poor. Corporate profits mattered more than the lives of the people. New Orleans will never be the same.

All of this was accomplished by stripping language of its traditional connotations and perverting it into its opposite meaning. Thus lies became truth and predatory capitalism morphed into beneficent public service. The new definitions are designed to conceal the real intent of the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, and are employed as marketing tools to make blatant theft and exploitation appear palatable to the multitudes, and to the helpless victims of unfettered capitalism.

Had the hidden agenda of our elected officials been widely known to the public, the people would likely find these policies not only objectionable, but morally reprehensible and offensive. Now Orwellian doublespeak is the norm, resulting in the enforcement arm of capitalism—the police state and an emerging Gestapo society, perpetrated in the name of a democracy that does not even exist.

The dictum of freedom, as understood by rational and conscientious human beings everywhere, has traditionally been applied to people and refers to their treatment by one another and their respective governments. However, when free market capitalists speak of freedom and democracy, as we are witnessing in the catastrophic situation they have created in the Middle East, they are not referring to human freedoms at all—but to unfettered capitalism, absolute corporate rule, and human servitude to wealth garnered at public expense—essentially a global terrorist slave state. That is what is meant by so called free markets as it pertains to the human condition.

Thus democracy, rather than meaning self-government of the people, by the people, and for the people, is perverted into support for deregulated corporations that are accountable to no one, the ultimate arbiter of all forms of power—the market as a Holy Grail; the decisive triumph of private ownership over people and the public welfare by the global elite.

And that, in a nutshell, is what we are fighting for not only in the Middle East, but in 135 nations around the world. These are the American interests the military is protecting; these are the freedoms they are defending from democracy.

In the idiom of free market capitalism, all things—whether soil, mineral, plant or animal, including

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human beings (wage slaves), are diminished and commodified, and valued only in proportion as they can be privatized and exploited by the champions of Laissez-Faire capitalism.

Furthermore, let it be understood that the president and his cabinet, as well as every member of Congress (with one exception), are disciples of Friedman's economic paradigm. Not only are they doing everything in their power to implement Friedman's policies, they have been doing so for a very long time.

This perception certainly demystifies the remarkable homogeneity of US policy that has sent countless young men and women dressed in military uniforms to their deaths, and disappeared millions of leftist dissidents around the world. And it will continue unabated unless we the people put a stop to it.

*Author's note: Anyone wishing a more complete understanding of these policies should read Naomi Klein's authoritative new book, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. I cannot underscore enough the breadth and importance of Ms. Klein's work in understanding capitalism, corporate globalization, and the grossly distorted governmental policies they have spawned. Every citizen, regardless of nationality, should read this book. It is that important.*

Charles Sullivan is a nature photographer, free-lance writer, and social activist residing in the Ridge and Valley Province of geopolitical West Virginia. He welcomes your comments at csullivan@phreago.com.

- **Victims of the death squads, 16 Sept 2007**

One family's harrowing story of kidnap and murder in Iraq

Nadia Hayali tells Kim Sengupta of the day her family were seized and she lost her husband, a story that gives the lie to claims that US forces are succeeding in Baghdad

By Kim Sengupta

09/16/07 "The Independent" -- - Anyone who believes that the American-led "surge" in Iraq is succeeding should hear the story of Mohammed and Nadia al-Hayali. Both fluent in English – Nadia, who was born in Montpellier, also speaks French – they were the kind of well-educated, modern Iraqis who should have been the driving force behind a new secular democracy. Yet Mohammed is believed dead at the hands of kidnappers who seized the whole family, and Nadia is living the miserable half-life of the exile with their two children in Jordan.

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While the US commander in Iraq, General David Petraeus, spouted statistics in Washington last week to indicate that progress was being made in the Iraqi capital – suicide bombings down, fewer sectarian murders – what happened to the Hayalis dispels this carefully constructed impression of greater normality. Simply to recount my friendship with them demonstrates how far Baghdad has sunk.

I first met Mohammed, then 40, and Nadia, 39, at the Hunting Club, a private establishment behind high walls, surrounded by armed guards. With a joint income of about \$1,100 a month, the couple represented the comfortable middle class. The club was the one public place in the city where the Hayalis and their set could socialise in safety, using the restaurants, tennis courts and swimming pool.

This was the autumn of 2004. President Bush had declared "mission accomplished" in Iraq 18 months earlier. Although the insurgency was already under way, with dead bodies turning up in the streets, daily power cuts, and petrol queues looping around blocks for miles, the Hayalis still hoped that the country would settle down after a period of turbulence. They lived in al-Jamiya, a once-prosperous district now described as "mainly Sunni", where previously sectarian labels did not matter. Before the war, when Mohammed was working as an internet engineer and Nadia as a teacher, the fact that he was a Sunni and she was a Shia did not seem worthy of comment.

Nadia had initially thought that the invasion was worth the pain to get rid of Saddam Hussein and bring an end to UN sanctions. Mohammed, who after the fighting earned about \$500 a month working for the medical charity Merlin, opposed the war – not, he stressed, because he was a lover of the regime, but because he thought it would open a Pandora's box of trouble. He was right, but in 2004 it was still possible for me to visit them at home, where Nadia, also a talented artist, had decorated the place with Japanese vases, Rajasthani prints and her own paintings.

I would stop at Ali al-Hamdani's renowned pastry shop to pick up presents for the children, and met the Hayalis' relations and friends. The talk was often of what they would do when life returned to normal. There were trips to the national art museum and the theatre.

When I returned a year later, at the end of 2005, everything had changed. Suicide bombings were a daily occurrence. Death squads, often made up of members of the security forces, roamed the streets, and kidnappings had become common. It was no longer safe to go to restaurants or the theatre, and outings to the Hunting Club had stopped too, after it emerged that abductors were watching the entrances for potential victims.

My visits to the Hayalis had to be carefully planned to avoid anyone seeing me. Groups of men in dark glasses cruised around in Audis and BMWs; they were insurgents, I was told, looking for US or Iraqi

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security convoys to attack. Shias in Jamiya were beginning to feel unsafe, and the middle-class exodus from Iraq was well under way.

The Hayalis, like many of their friends, had by now made the decision to emigrate. "We don't want to leave. It's our country," said Mohammed. "But what is left now? The place is destroyed. This is what liberation has done to us." The family's income had dropped by half, because the Baghdad International School, where Nadia worked, closed as funds dried up and pupils fled the country.

Mohammed now kept a gun in the house, an old Glock. "It is the sort of thing one has to have nowadays," he said sheepishly. "But I don't even know how to use it. It's things like this that make me want to leave even more." The last time I saw him was when they were waiting for visas to Dubai, which came through after I left. "We are just surviving day by day," said Nadia. "Terrible things are taking place all around us. Unless we get out now, something bad will happen."

I learned what happened next in a phone call from Nadia in April this year. Her voice was flat, emotionless. The family had been kidnapped by an armed gang, she said. She and the two children, Dahlia, eight, and Abdullah, 10, had eventually been freed, but Mohammed had been kept captive, despite the payment of a ransom. It was not until this summer, when I saw Nadia and the children in Amman, the capital of Jordan, that the final tragedy came out.

"Do you remember how it was, even a few years ago?" asked Nadia. The confident, articulate woman I remembered had gone, and the trauma of recent months was written on her pale, drawn face. "We thought things couldn't get worse, violence will ease off, things will get better. How wrong we were."

In the final days before their departure, she said, they were unloading the shopping from their Jeep Cherokee when half a dozen men came into their driveway, carrying Kalashnikov rifles and pistols. "They said they wanted me. Somebody had told them that I was a Christian, that I was working for the Americans at the airport. Even to this day I do not know who said this about me, or why. Mohammed insisted that he go too. The children were clinging on to us, and of course we could not leave them behind.

"We were blindfolded. They put Mohammed in one car and I was with the children in the other. There was one man who kept questioning me about my religion. They said Christians were targets because of what was going on in Iraq, but also because of what was happening to Muslims in Europe, like the controversy over the hijab in France. I told them I was not a Christian, I didn't work at the airport, that I was a teacher. They were a Sunni gang who said they were followers of al-Qa'ida.

"At one point Dahlia started screaming, and one of the men stuck his gun against her face and said he

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would shoot her unless she kept quiet. I covered her with my body, that is all I could do."

The family were taken to Habaniyah, an hour's drive away, where Mohammed was put in a room by himself. "There were about six or seven in the gang. One of them was young, only about 15. He was very polite, he called me khala – Auntie. I remember thinking, 'How did this young boy end up with these killers?'

"Dahlia could not speak, she could not even sit up, she just lay shivering. I could not think of anything else but her and Abdullah. They questioned me for five hours. Then they took Abdullah into another room and asked him questions as well. They gave us dinner, chicken and some rice, but I could not eat anything, I was feeling sick. Dahlia kept waking up, she was having nightmares."

The next morning the abductors said they were going to search the family's home. They were looking, they said, for money, the family's identification documents and their computers. Sitting in their darkened, airless captivity, the family were not to know that the computers would seal Mohammed's fate. He had been working for a fund-raising agency for small businesses in Baghdad, and this had brought him into contact with US and Iraqi government organisations, classing him as a collaborator in the eyes of his captors.

"They looked through Mohammed's laptop. Then they began to question him in another room. I could hear raised voices. A little later I managed to see him. He whispered to me that I must deny all knowledge of his work. I said, 'But you have not done anything wrong.' He insisted that I must not argue with the gang, so when I was questioned, I simply told them I did not know anything about his work. They kept on saying I was lying, but I just stuck to my story. Then they questioned Abdullah about it, and he genuinely knew nothing.

"A little while later they began beating Mohammed, whipping him with their belts. I could hear the blows. The only thing I could do was try to distract the children from the noise. Then it fell silent. I was afraid that they had killed him. I said I wanted to go to the toilet, and saw him lying on the floor, covered by a blanket. He was hurt, but not dead.

"I was begging the men not to kill Mohammed, and let him go. I told them that our religion asks us to forgive people. They said they would try to make sure he was not killed, but their bosses would make the decision."

The next day Nadia and the children were told that they would be released. Mohammed would be kept behind for further investigation. The gang needed Nadia on the outside to get the ransom money they were going to demand.

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"That last meeting with Mohammed was just so terrible. He was telling me he did not think he would get out alive, he was saying that he would not see us ever again. He was crying, he asked me to look after Dahlia and Abdullah, tell them how much he loved them. I said to him, 'I will refuse to leave, I'll stay with you.' But he said I must go for the sake of the children. That was the last time I saw him."

Nadia and the children were dropped off near their home. She was told that they must not leave the house, and to await messages about what to do next. In the end a ransom of \$10,000 was delivered by Nadia after she had gathered the money with the help of relations and friends, but Mohammed was almost certainly already dead.

"I stayed at the house waiting for news," she told me. "I could see men from the gang out in the street. I had one phone call from them, asking me why I wasn't sending the children to school. I said it was too dangerous, there were a lot of kidnappings. The man said it would be safe, they would look after Dahlia and Abdullah. I really did not have an answer to that."

Finally Nadia and the children fled to her parents' home, in a safer part of the city. There they learned that two members of the family had gone to the Baghdad morgue, having heard that Mohammed's body might be there. But when they arrived, they were told that the body had already been buried. They were shown a photograph of a man; one of the relatives thought it was Mohammed, while the other was unsure.

"I never went back to our home," said Nadia. Instead she took the children to Dubai, then Amman, where they live in a tiny flat and she has found an office job. "I keep on thinking maybe it was not Mohammed in that photo at the morgue. Perhaps the kidnappers are still holding him. But I know this is probably a false hope."

"I just cannot understand why Mohammed is not here with us. We have known each other all our lives. Ours isn't an arranged marriage – we met at high school. I know many people have suffered in Iraq. But when you have spent your life with someone, someone you love, it is hard, very hard."

The greatest tragedy is that the story of the Hayalis is far from unique. No police report was ever made on Mohammed's kidnapping and probable murder, so it is not included in the figures purporting to show that the "surge" is working. The same is true of vast numbers of deaths, because going to the police, infiltrated and dominated by militias in many districts of Baghdad, is considered futile or downright dangerous. For Nadia and others like her, George Bush's last throw of the dice is irrelevant.

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- **The Bombing of the Golden Dome Mosque; one year later (12 Feb 2007)**

By Mike Whitney

02/12/07 "ICH" - - - According to the Muslim calendar, today--February 12--is the one year anniversary of the bombing of Samarra's Golden Dome Mosque. The blast is frequently pointed to as the event which transformed the conflict from an armed struggle against foreign occupation into a civil war. This change in the narrative has had some real benefits for the Bush administration by diverting attention from the nonstop fighting between American troops and the Sunni-led resistance.

The notion that Iraq is in the throes of civil war is rarely challenged in the western media despite the fact that Iraq has no history of the type of sectarian violence which is now ripping the country apart. Veteran journalist Robert Fisk put it this way:

"Iraq is not a sectarian society. People are intermarried. Shiites and Sunnis marry each other...Some from the militias and death squads want a civil war (but) there has never been a civil war in Iraq. The real question I ask myself is: who are these people who are trying to provoke a civil war? The Americans will say that it's al Qaida or the Sunni insurgents; it is the death squads. Many of the death squads work for the Ministry of Interior? Who pays the militia men who make up the death squads? We do; the occupation authorities." (Robert Fisk, "Somebody is trying to provoke a Civil War in Iraq")

So, if we accept the idea that Iraq is in a civil war, aren't we ignoring the fact that other forces may be at play just below the surface?

There's no doubt that the Bush administration is engaged in a secret war in Iraq. A great deal has already been written about "the Salvador Option" which involves the arming and training of death squads for spreading terror among sympathizers of the resistance. But it is also likely that many of the bombings we see are, in fact, false flag operations intended to pit Arab against Arab, and thereby undermine the greatest threat of all, Iraqi nationalism.

False flag operations are commonplace in foreign occupation. Robert Fisk cites a few examples in his article, "All This Talk of Civil War, Now This" (UK Independent, 2006):

"I think of the French OAS in Algeria in 1962, setting off bombs among France's Muslim Algerian community. I recall the desperate efforts of the French authorities to set Algerian Muslim against Algerian Muslim which led to half a million dead souls.

And I'm afraid I also think of Ireland and the bombings in Dublin and Monaghan in 1974, which, as the years go by, appear to have an ever closer link, via Protestant "loyalist" paramilitaries, to elements

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of British military security.”

It’s impossible to know how much of the violence we see is real and how much is “black-ops”. Divide and rule is an adage that is as old as war itself and it is certainly being used in Iraq. In fact, the Bush administration commissioned the Rand Corporation to draw up a plan which promotes this very strategy.

The Rand Study was called: “US Strategy in the Muslim World after 9-11”. The document provided “A framework to identify major ideological orientations within Islam, examines critical cleavages between Muslim groups.” The goal of the paper was to develop a Shaping Strategy for pacifying Muslim populations where the US has commercial or strategic interests. The conclusions of the document are enlightening. Rand suggests the US, “Align its policy with Shiite groups who aspire to have more participation in government and greater freedoms of political and religious expression. If this alignment can be brought about, it could erect a barrier against radical Islamic movements and may create a foundation for a stable U.S. position in the Middle East.”

Clearly, the administration is following the recommendations Rand study and has decided elevate the Shiites over the previously dominant Sunnis.

The Bush administration also appears to be applying parts of another theory which was conjured up by the fiercely nationalistic, Oded Yinon, in his “The Zionist Plan for the Middle East”. Yinon said:

"It is obvious that the above military assumptions, and the whole plan too, depend also on the Arabs continuing to be even more divided than they are now, and on the lack of any truly mass movement among them... Every kind of inter-Arab confrontation will assist us in the short run and will shorten the way to the more important aim of breaking Iraq up into denominations as in Syria and Lebanon... Syria will fall apart."

Similar to the Rand study’s recommendations, Yinon’s strategy is to pit Sunni against Shiite in a way that destroys Arab unity and to leaves the country weak and fragmented.

Again, there’s nothing new in these theories, but we should realize that much of the media narrative is crafted in a way that conceals the truth while promoting the objectives of the US occupation. Beyond the smokescreen of “civil war” (some of which is real, of course) is a coherent and carefully articulated plan to quash the resistance and steal Iraq’s resources. That is the real force which is generating much of the violence that we see on the ground.

In practical terms, Robert Fisk provides a credible description of how these black-ops are executed in

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Iraq. In his article, "Seen through a Syrian Lens" (UK Independent 4-29-06) the Fisk gives the details of a conversation he had with a trusted "security source" who told Fisk that: (the US) "is desperately trying to provoke a civil war around Baghdad in order to reduce its own military casualties."

"I swear to you that we have very good information," Fisk recounts, "One young Iraqi man told us that he was trained by the Americans as a policeman in Baghdad and he spent 70 per cent of his time learning to drive and 30 per cent in weapons training. They said to him: 'Come back in a week.' When he went back, they gave him a mobile phone and told him to drive into a crowded area near a mosque and phone them. He waited in the car but couldn't get the right mobile signal. So he got out of the car to where he received a better signal. Then his car blew up."

As incredible as it seems, Fisk assures us that he's heard the same story many times from different sources.

Again:

"There was another man, trained by the Americans for the police. He too was given a mobile and told to drive to an area where there was a crowd - maybe a protest - and to call them and tell them what was happening. Again, his new mobile was not working. So he went to a landline phone and called the Americans and told them: 'Here I am, in the place you sent me and I can tell you what's happening here.' And at that moment there was a big explosion in his car."

Fisk is a hardnosed journalist not easily given to exaggeration. His account of these incidents simply adds to the growing body of "hearsay" evidence that US intelligence agencies are directly involved in inciting sectarian violence. These stories cannot be corroborated, but, of course, that hasn't stopped many Iraqis from believing that the US is behind the daily bombings.

Of course, the question of "who" is funding and facilitating the terrorism in Iraq presents a serious challenge to an administration that has based its foreign policy in terms of a war on terror. Public support would quickly erode if the American people knew that Bush was directly involved in the same activities as our nemesis, al Qaida.

Traditionally, the United States has no problem supporting Islamic extremists as long as they serve our overall foreign policy objectives. The CIA funded the mujahideen in Afghanistan, the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) in Kosovo, and now provides material support and weaponry to the MEK Mujahideen-e- Khalq; a Marxist militant group which is on the State Dept list of terrorist organizations. What matters is not ideology but whether or not the groups can advance Washington's imperial aspirations.

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This demonstrates that Bush's finger-wagging against "ideological extremism" or "radical Islam" is just more empty rhetoric. Ideology plays a very small part in the current war. Dick Cheney's comments in a speech to the Institute of Petroleum in London in 1999 may shed a bit of light on this point. He said, "By 2010 we will need on the order of an additional fifty million barrels a day. So where is the oil going to come from? ... While many regions of the world offer great oil opportunities, the Middle East with two thirds of the world's oil and the lowest cost, is still where the prize ultimately lies."

While depletion of oil reserves have accelerated beyond Cheney's expectations at the time ;(the world's 4 largest oil fields are in a state of irreversible decline) the facts remain the same. The world is running out of oil and the US intends to deploy its military to seize vital reserves wherever they may be. The war on terror is simply the mask that conceals this ongoing struggle.

The Bush administration seems less and less concerned that their "divide and rule" strategy remains hidden from the public. There've been a number of articles in the mainstream press about Bush's \$86 million gift to Mahmoud Abbas' to train and equip special shock-troops to crush the democratically-elected Hamas government. And, there's been ample coverage of the CIA's covert operations in Lebanon that are directed against Hezbollah. The only conclusion we can draw from this, is that Bush really doesn't care anymore if the world knows that the US is purposely fueling the anarchy which is quickly spreading across the entire Middle East. (The latest accusation that Iran is supplying roadside bombs to the Iraqi resistance just shows how sloppy the administration has gotten in managing its propaganda. Iran, of course, is Shiite, whereas, the Iraqi resistance is predominantly Sunni. The likelihood that Iran is providing roadside bombs to the former members of Saddam's army is remote to say the least.)

Bush's "dirty war" in Iraq has become increasingly violent and confused. The neocon trust in "creative destruction" has succeeded in fragmenting Iraqi society, but the long-term prospects for normalization (or resource extraction) appear bleak. At this point, it seems irrelevant whether the bombing of the Golden-dome Mosque was the work of Sunni extremists or the US intelligence agencies. After all, propaganda may be useful for shaping public opinion but it cannot win wars. And that is the dilemma that Bush now faces.

It has been exactly one year since the Askirya Mosque was flattened. Most Americans now believe that we are mired in an "unwinnable" war. Public support is eroding, the violence is escalating, the administration is drifting sideways, and the end is nowhere in sight. The inability of the administration to think politically or change course has thrust America to the brink of its worst defeat in history.

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- **Top secret army cell breaks terrorists (05 Feb 2007)**

By Sean Rayment

Last Updated: 1:03AM GMT 05 Feb 2007



The JSG was formed in the '80s to tackle the IRA

Deep inside the heart of the "Green Zone", the heavily fortified administrative compound in Baghdad, lies one of the most carefully guarded secrets of the war in Iraq. It is a cell from a small and anonymous British Army unit that goes by the deliberately meaningless name of the Joint Support Group (JSG), and it has proved to be one of the Coalition's most effective and deadly weapons in the fight against terror.

Its members - servicemen and women of all ranks recruited from all three of the Armed Forces - are trained to turn hardened terrorists into coalition spies using methods developed on the mean streets of Ulster during the Troubles, when the Army managed to infiltrate the IRA at almost every level. Since war broke out in Iraq in 2003, they have been responsible for running dozens of Iraqi double agents.

Working alongside the Special Air Service and the American Delta Force as part of the Baghdad-based counter-terrorist unit known as Task Force Black, they have supplied intelligence that has saved hundreds of lives and resulted in some of the most notable successes against the myriad terror groups fighting in Iraq. Only last week, intelligence from the JSG is understood to have led to a series of successful operations against Sunni militia groups in southern Baghdad.

Information obtained by the unit is also understood to have inspired one of the most successful operations carried out by Task Force Black, in November 2005, when SAS snipers shot dead three suicide bombers.

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The killing of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq up until his death in June last year, followed intelligence obtained by the JSG, as did the rescue of the kidnapped peace campaigner, Norman Kember.

"The JSG is the coalition's secret weapon," revealed one defence source. "Their job is to recruit and run covert human intelligence sources or agents - we never use the term informer. The Americans are in awe of the unit because they have nothing like them within their military."

During the Troubles, the JSG operated under the cover name of the Force Research Unit (FRU), which between the early 1980s and the late 1990s managed to penetrate the very heart of the IRA. By targeting and then "turning" members of the paramilitary organisation with a variety of "inducements" ranging from blackmail to bribes, the FRU operators developed agents at virtually every command level within the IRA.

The unit was renamed following the Stevens Inquiry into allegations of collusion between the security forces and protestant paramilitary groups, and, until relatively recently continued to work exclusively in Northern Ireland.

The JSG recruits men and women of any rank from all three services up to the age of 42. Volunteers attend a two week pre-selection course where those not in possession of the unique set of skills required to handle agents successfully are weeded out.

Candidates who get through pre-selection then spend the next four months at the Intelligence Corps headquarters at Chicksands, Bedfordshire, being taught driving and close-quarter battle skills - operators must be capable of using a wide variety of weapons but must be expert shots with a pistol.

But most important of all, -volunteers must be able to befriend people they may actually despise, win their trust and persuade them to become agents, which in some cases will mean getting them to inform on friends and relatives. Those who eventually pass the course can expect to be posted to Baghdad, Basra and Afghanistan.

Sources have told The Sunday Telegraph that in Baghdad intelligence is obtained in a variety of ways. Some of it comes through phone calls to a confidential hot-line where callers can either talk to a member of the JSG or arrange a meeting inside the "Green Zone". It is too dangerous for operators to meet agents at a secret rendezvous in other parts of the city.

With so many Iraqis entering the zone every day, those who want to pass on information can do so with a certain amount of anonymity. But a risk still remains. All potential agents are warned that anyone suspected of being a coalition spy will be tortured before being murdered. If he is married, his wife will be gang-raped in front of their children, who will in all probability also be murdered, they are

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told. Despite the risks, JSG operators deal with dozens of Iraqis every week who are -prepared, for a variety of reasons, to become informers.

"Some Iraqis come to us because they are simply fed up with the violence," said one source. "They may have had -members of their families -murdered, tortured or kidnapped. Unlike much of the middle class which has already fled the country, they may be too poor to leave and so they come to us to see if they can make a difference.

"They may have a little bit of information or detailed knowledge of a planned attack. We also have to deal with terrorists and that presents us with a difficulty. We are happy for them to pass us information but it is made absolutely clear to them that as a member of a terrorist group they are criminals and they should cease all activity immediately - we have had cases where Shia or Sunni men have provided us with information and as part of the debriefing process we have discovered that they are terrorists themselves. We warn them that they are running the risk of being killed or captured and that they should get themselves into a position within the organisation where they will not be directly involved in murder."

To senior American officers in Baghdad, the JSG is playing a vital role in the most important theatre of the war on terror.

"In many respects, Afghanistan is a side issue and that is something the Americans understand better than British politicians," said a source. "Ask any senior officer in Baghdad, given a choice, which war would they be prepared to lose and they will say the war in Afghanistan.

"In many respects the war in Iraq has redefined insurgent warfare. Think of the very worst of Northern Ireland combined with the very worst of the Balkans and you are coming close to life on a daily basis in Baghdad. The situation is chaotic and bordering on being hopeless. The Iraqis have absolutely no faith in their army or police force because they are all or nearly all linked to militias.

"Only the coalition forces can bring real security - if the war is lost chaos will reign and the whole of the region will be dragged into a bloody and catastrophic ethnic war."

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- **Rights group says Gov't protecting death squad members (30 Oct 2006)**

Source: IRIN

10/30/06 "Reuters" -- -- The Iraqi government must move quickly to prosecute all Ministry of Interior personnel responsible for "death squad" killings in Baghdad and elsewhere, the New-York based NGO Human Rights Watch (HRW) said on Saturday.

"Evidence suggests that Iraqi security forces are involved in these horrific crimes, and thus far the government has not held them accountable," said Sarah Leah Whitson, director of HRW's Middle East division. "The Iraqi government must stop giving protection to security forces responsible for abduction, torture and murder."

Sectarian violence between the majority Shi'ite Muslims and Sunni Muslims in Iraq has been steadily escalating since a revered Shi'ite shrine was bombed in the northern city of Samarra in February.

Since then, local and international sources say thousands of ordinary Iraqis have been killed and the UN's refugee agency (UNHCR) says some 365,000 people have been forced to flee their homes.

Brig. Abdul-Karim Khalaf, the Iraqi interior ministry's spokesman, said that the ministry and the Supreme Judicial Council have begun investigating all officers and employees suspected of collaborating in the ongoing sectarian violence.

"Those who committed crimes will be punished 100 percent and the ministry will not hesitate to punish anyone for any wrongdoing he did," Khalaf told IRIN.

Khalaf said that as part of the interior ministry's restructuring plan, which started in October, 3,000 policemen were fired on corruption or rights abuses charges. A total of 600 of the 3,000 personnel fired will face prosecution, according to Khalaf.

Khalaf added that the Shi'ite-dominated ministry also sacked two officers in charge of commando units that have been accused by Sunnis of running death squads that kill Sunnis.

On 15 October, Iraq's Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, a Shi'ite Muslim, pledged in a nationally televised address to crack down on militias. "The state and the militias cannot coexist. Arms can only be in the hands of the government and no one has the right to be above the law," al-Maliki said.

However, analysts say that government rhetoric is not being matched by action. "He [al-Maliki] has

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issued repeated statements against illegal armed groups, but he is not able to take any concerted action against these militias because of their political weight in his government," said Emad al-Janabi, a Baghdad-based political sciences professor at the University of Mosul.

"This increase in violence has put him at odds with the United States over his seeming unwillingness to crack down against the armed wings of his major political supporters," al-Janabi added.

Shi'ite militias - such as the al-Mahdi army and the Badr Brigade, the two most prominent - have links with religious members of the government, analysts say. As such, these militias are thought to have infiltrated the country's police force and are running death squads which roam Baghdad and nearby cities and towns snatching, torturing and killing Sunnis by the thousands.

In return, Sunni insurgent fighters have fought back viciously, as violence in the centre of Iraq has begun to resemble civil war.

- **Great Moments in the History of Imperialism (William Blum, 23 June 2006)**

By William Blum

06/23/06 "[Information Clearing House](#)" -- -- National Public Radio foreign correspondent Loren Jenkins, serving in NPR's Baghdad bureau, met earlier this month with a senior Shiite cleric, a man who was described in the NPR report as "a moderate" and as a person trying to lead his Shiite followers into practicing peace and reconciliation. He had been jailed by Saddam Hussein and forced into exile. Jenkins asked him: "What would you think if you had to go back to Saddam Hussein?" The cleric replied that he'd "rather see Iraq under Saddam Hussein than the way it is now." [1]

When one considers what the people of Iraq have experienced as a result of the American bombings, invasion, regime change, and occupation since 2003, should this attitude be surprising, even from such an individual? I was moved to compile a list of the many kinds of misfortune which have fallen upon the heads of the Iraqi people as a result of the American liberation of their homeland. It's depressing reading, and you may not want to read it all, but I think it's important to have it summarized in one place.

Loss of a functioning educational system. A 2005 UN study revealed that 84% of the higher education establishments have been "destroyed, damaged and robbed".

The intellectual stock has been further depleted as many thousands of academics and other professionals have fled abroad or have been mysteriously kidnapped or assassinated in Iraq; hundreds

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of thousands, perhaps a million, other Iraqis, most of them from the vital, educated middle class, have left for Jordan, Syria or Egypt, many after receiving death threats. "Now I am isolated," said a middle-class Sunni Arab, who decided to leave. "I have no government. I have no protection from the government. Anyone can come to my house, take me, kill me and throw me in the trash." [2]

Loss of a functioning health care system. And loss of the public's health. Deadly infections including typhoid and tuberculosis are rampaging through the country. Iraq's network of hospitals and health centers, once admired throughout the Middle East, has been severely damaged by the war and looting.

The UN's World Food Program reported that 400,000 Iraqi children were suffering from "dangerous deficiencies of protein". Deaths from malnutrition and preventable diseases, particularly amongst children, already a problem because of the 12 years of US-imposed sanctions, have increased as poverty and disorder have made access to a proper diet and medicines ever more difficult.

Thousands of Iraqis have lost an arm or a leg, frequently from unexploded US cluster bombs, which became land mines; cluster bombs are a class of weapons denounced by human rights groups as a cruelly random scourge on civilians, particularly children.

Depleted uranium particles, from exploded US ordnance, float in the Iraqi air, to be breathed into human bodies and to radiate forever, and infect the water, the soil, the blood, the genes, producing malformed babies. During the few weeks of war in spring 2003, A10 "tankbuster" planes, which use munitions containing depleted uranium, fired 300,000 rounds.

And the use of napalm as well. And white phosphorous.

The American military has attacked hospitals to prevent them from giving out casualty figures of US attacks that contradicted official US figures, which the hospitals had been in the habit of doing.

Numerous homes have been broken into by US forces, the men taken away, the women humiliated, the children traumatized; on many occasions, the family has said that the American soldiers helped themselves to some of the family's money. Iraq has had to submit to a degrading national strip search.

Destruction and looting of the country's ancient heritage, perhaps the world's greatest archive of the human past, left unprotected by the US military, busy protecting oil facilities.

A nearly lawless society: Iraq's legal system, outside of the political sphere, was once one of the most impressive and secular in the Middle East; it is now a shambles; religious law more and more prevails.

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Women's rights previously enjoyed are now in great and growing danger under harsh Islamic law, to one extent or another in various areas. There is today a Shiite religious ruling class in Iraq, which tolerates physical attacks on women for showing a bare arm or for picnicking with a male friend. Men can be harassed for wearing shorts in public, as can children playing outside in shorts.

Sex trafficking, virtually nonexistent previously, has become a serious issue.

Jews, Christians, and other non-Muslims have lost much of the security they had enjoyed in Saddam's secular society; many have emigrated.

A gulag of prisons run by the US and the new Iraqi government feature a wide variety of torture and abuse -- physical, psychological, emotional; painful, degrading, humiliating; leading to mental breakdown, death, suicide; a human-rights disaster area.

Over 50,000 Iraqis have been imprisoned by US forces since the invasion, but only a very tiny portion of them have been convicted of any crime.

US authorities have recruited members of Saddam Hussein's feared security service to expand intelligence gathering and root out the resistance.

Unemployment is estimated to be around fifty percent. Massive layoffs of hundreds of thousands of Baathist government workers and soldiers by the American occupation authority set the process in motion early on. Later, many, desperate for work, took positions tainted by a connection to the occupation, placing themselves in grave danger of being kidnapped or murdered.

The cost of living has skyrocketed. Income levels have plummeted.

The Kurds of Northern Iraq evict Arabs from their homes. Arabs evict Kurds in other parts of the country. Many people were evicted from their homes because they were Baathist. US troops took part in some of the evictions. They have also demolished homes in fits of rage over the killing of one of their buddies.

When US troops don't find who they're looking for, they take who's there; wives have been held until the husband turns himself in, a practice which Hollywood films stamped in the American mind as being a particular evil of the Nazis; it's also collective punishment of civilians and is forbidden under the Geneva Convention. Continual bombing assaults on neighborhoods has left an uncountable number of destroyed homes, workplaces, mosques, bridges, roads, and everything else that goes into the making of modern civilized life.

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Hafitha, Fallujah, Samarra, Ramadi ... names that will live in infamy for the wanton destruction, murder, and assaults upon human beings and human rights carried out in those places by US forces.

The supply of safe drinking water, effective sewage disposal, and reliable electricity have all generally been below pre-invasion levels, producing constant hardship for the public, in temperatures reaching 115 degrees. To add to the misery, people wait all day in the heat to purchase gasoline, due in part to oil production, the country's chief source of revenue, being less than half its previous level.

The water and sewage system and other elements of the infrastructure had been purposely (sic) destroyed by US bombing in the first Gulf War of 1991. By 2003, the Iraqis had made great strides in repairing the most essential parts of it. Then came Washington's renewed bombing.

Civil war, death squads, kidnaping, car bombs, rape, each and every day ... Iraq has become the most dangerous place on earth. American soldiers and private security companies regularly kill people and leave the bodies lying in the street; US-trained Iraqi military and police forces kill even more, as does the insurgency. An entire new generation is growing up on violence and sectarian ethics; this will poison the Iraqi psyche for many years to come.

US intelligence and military police officers often free dangerous criminals in return for a promise to spy on insurgents.

Protesters of various kinds have been shot by US forces on several occasions

At various times, the US has killed, wounded and jailed reporters from Al Jazeera television, closed the station's office, and banned it from certain areas because occupation officials didn't like the news the station was reporting. Newspapers have been closed for what they have printed. The Pentagon has planted paid-for news articles in the Iraqi press to serve propaganda purposes.

But freedom has indeed reigned -- for the great multinationals to extract everything they can from Iraq's resources and labor without the hindrance of public interest laws, environmental regulations or worker protections. The orders of the day have been privatization, deregulation, and laissez faire for Halliburton and other Western corporations. Iraqi businesses have been almost entirely shut out though they are not without abilities, as reflected in the infrastructure rebuilding effort following the US bombing of 1991.

Yet, despite the fact that it would be difficult to name a single area of Iraqi life which has improved as a result of the American actions, when the subject is Iraq and the person I'm having a discussion with

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has no other argument left to defend US policy there, at least at the moment, I may be asked:

"Just tell me one thing, are you glad that Saddam Hussein is out of power?"

And I say: "No".

And the person says: "No?"

And I say: "No. Tell me, if you went into surgery to correct a knee problem and the surgeon mistakenly amputated your entire leg, what would you think if someone then asked you: Are you glad that you no longer have a knee problem? The people of Iraq no longer have a Saddam problem." And many Iraqis actually supported him.

William Blum is the author of: Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War 2

NOTES

[1] NPR, "Day to Day", June 6, 2006

[2] New York Times, May 19, 2006

- **Impunity, 09 June 2006**

"Successive imperialist powers have shown that the bottom line in combating the hopes and dreams of ordinary people is to resort to spreading terror through the application of extreme violence." Max Fuller; "For Iraq, the 'El Salvador Option' becomes Reality"

By Mike Whitney

06/09/06 "[Information Clearing House](#)" -- -- George Bush is right; Iraq is "the central battlefield in the global war on terror". Regrettably, it is United States that is the main sponsor and supporter of that terror in the form of American-trained death squads. Death squad activity in Iraq now accounts for more than 1,000 casualties per month. The Baghdad morgue has become a conveyor-belt for American-generated carnage.

Up to now, the US involvement in the killing has been effectively concealed by the mainstream media. Apart from infrequent reports on the internet, there is little information connecting the burgeoning death toll to America's counterinsurgency operations.

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That changed on May 4, 2006 when Congressman Dennis Kucinich gave a speech on the floor of the House which linked the Bush administration to the death squad's in Iraq. Reading from a long list of newspaper articles he had compiled, Kucinich provided a detailed account of America's disturbing undercover war. Naturally, his speech was shunned by the major media and consigned to the memory hole. It outlines the extent of America's complicity in the ongoing slaughter and asks us to question whether any additional involvement can be morally justified.

Kucinich's speech was framed in the context of 2 letters which he delivered to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and President George Bush. His comments are entered below:

April 5, 2006

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

I am writing to request a copy of all records pertaining to Pentagon plans to use U.S. Special Forces to advise, support and train Iraqi assassination and kidnapping teams.

On January 8, 2005, Newsweek magazine first published a report that the Pentagon had a proposal to train elite Iraqi squads to quell the growing Sunni insurgency. The proposal has been called the "Salvador Option," which references the U.S. military assistance program, initiated under the Carter Administration and subsequently pursued by the Reagan Administration, that funded and supported "nationalist" paramilitary forces who hunted down and assassinated rebel leaders and their supporters in El Salvador. This program in El Salvador was highly controversial and received much public backlash in the U.S., as tens of thousands of innocent civilians were assassinated and "disappeared," including notable members of the Catholic Church, Archbishop Oscar Romero and the four American churchwomen. According to the Newsweek report, Pentagon conservatives wanted to resurrect the Salvadoran program in Iraq because they believed that despite the incredible cost in human lives and human rights, it was successful in eradicating guerrillas.

Mr. Secretary, at a news conference on January 11, 2005, you publicly stated that the idea of a Salvador option was "nonsense." Yet mounting evidence suggests that the U.S. has in fact funded and trained Iraqi assassination and kidnapping teams and these teams are now operating with horrific success across Iraq.

We know that the Pentagon received funding for training Iraqi paramilitaries. About one year before the Newsweek report on the "Salvador Option," it was reported in the American Prospect magazine on January 1, 2004 that part of \$3 billion of the \$87 billion Emergency Supplemental

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Appropriations bill to fund operations in Iraq, signed into law on November 6, 2003, was designated for the creation of a paramilitary unit manned by militiamen associated with former Iraqi exile groups. According to the Prospect article, experts predicted that creation of this paramilitary unit would "lead to a wave of extrajudicial killings, not only of armed rebels but of nationalists, other opponents of the U.S. occupation and thousands of civilian Baathists." The article further described how the bulk of the \$3 billion program, disguised as an Air Force classified program, would be used to "support U.S. efforts to create a lethal, and revenge-minded Iraqi security force." According to one of the article's sources, John Pike, an expert of classified military budgets at www.globalsecurity.org, "the big money would be for standing up an Iraqi secret police to liquidate the resistance."

We know that some of the Pentagon's Iraq experts were involved in the Reagan Administration's paramilitary program in El Salvador. Colonel James Steele, Counselor to the U.S. Ambassador for Iraqi Security Forces, formerly led the U.S. Military Advisory Group in El Salvador from 1984-1986, where he developed special operating forces at brigade level during the height of the conflict. The role of these forces in El Salvador was to attack "insurgent" leadership, their supporters, sources of supply, and base camps. Currently Colonel Steele has been assigned to work with the new elite Iraqi counter-insurgency unit known as the Special Police Commandos, operating under Iraq's Interior Ministry. Director of National Intelligence, John Negroponte, was U.S. Ambassador to Iraq from June 2004 to April 2005. From 1981 to 1985, he was ambassador to Honduras where he played a key role in coordinating U.S. covert aid to the Contras, anti-Sandinista militias who targeted civilians in Nicaragua. Additionally, he oversaw the U.S. backing of a military death squad in Honduras, Battalion 3-16, which specialized in torture and assassination. The U.S. had similar programs of supporting paramilitary groups set up in Nicaragua and Honduras as its program in El Salvador. In a Democracy Now interview on January 10, 2005, Allan Nairn, who broke the story about U.S. support of death squads in El Salvador, suspected that Ambassador Negroponte would most likely be involved in the economic side of U.S. support to death squads in Iraq.

We know that a wave of abductions and executions, in the style of the death squads of El Salvador, and with ties to an official government sponsor, and to the U.S., has hit Iraq. News reports over the past 10 months strongly suggest that the U.S. has trained and supported highly organized Iraqi commando brigades, and that some of those brigades have operated as death squads, abducting and assassinating thousands of Iraqis. Some news highlights: • May 1, 2005 -- Los Angeles Times reports that the U.S. is providing technical and logistical support to the Maghawir (Fearless Warrior) brigades, the Interior Ministry's special commandos, according to Major General Rasheed Flayih Mohammed. Iraqi authorities plan to increase deployment of the 12,000-strong Maghawir (Fearless Warrior) brigades, which are composed of well-trained veterans who have worked closely with U.S. forces in Najaf, Fallujah and Mosul and include the Wolf, Scorpion, Tiger and Thunder brigades. • May 16-20, 2005 -- Los Angeles Times and New York Times reveal discovery of 46 bodies, all Iraqi

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men abducted and slain execution-style, in various locations: floating in the Tigris, dumped in ditches and garbage-strewn lots, and buried at a poultry farm. • June 15, 2005 -- Washington Post reports that U.S. forces had knowledge of secret and illegal abductions of hundreds of minority Arabs in Kirkuk. The abductions were by forces led by Kurdish political parties and backed by the U.S. military. • June 20, 2005 -- Los Angeles Times reports that Saad Sultan, of Iraq Human Rights Ministry said that police and security forces attached to the Iraqi Interior Ministry, thousands of whom have been trained by American instructors, are responsible for abusing up to 60% of estimated 12,000 detainees in prison and military compounds. He says the units have used tactics reminiscent of Saddam's secret intelligence squads. • July 3, 2005 -- Reuters News reports that the government of Iraq publicly acknowledged that the new security forces were using torture. Article further says that accounts are common of people being seized by armed men in the uniforms of the police, army or special units like Baghdad's Wolf Brigade police commandos, and then disappearing without trace or being found dead. • July 28, 2005 -- Los Angeles Times reports that members of a California Army National Guard company, the Alpha Company, who were implicated in a detainee abuse scandal, trained and conducted joint operations with the Wolf Brigade, a commando unit criticized for human rights abuses. In an online Alpha Company newsletter, Captain Haviland wrote, "We have assigned 2nd Platoon to help them transition, and install some of our 'Killer Company' aggressive tactical spirit in them." The article further states that despite the Wolf Brigade's controversial reputation for human rights violations, it is regarded as the gold standard for Iraqi security forces by U.S. military officials. • August 31, 2005 -- BBC reports that on the night of August 24, a large force of the Volcano Brigade raided homes in Al-Hurriyah city in the Baghdad, kidnapping and then executing 76 citizens. The victims were all shot in the head after their hands and feet had been tied up. They suffered the harshest forms of torture, deformation and burning. • November 16, 2005 -- Reuters News reports the discovery of 173 malnourished men, some of whom were tortured, imprisoned in a secret jail run by Shi'ite militias tied to the Interior Ministry. • November 17, 2005 -- Newsday reports that in the past year, the U.S. military has helped build up Iraqi commandos under guidance from James Steele, a former Army Special Forces officer who led U.S. counterinsurgency efforts in El Salvador in the 1980s. The brigades built up over the past year include the Lion Brigade, Scorpion Brigade and Volcano Brigade. • February 15, 2006 -- Associated Press reports that the Interior Ministry has launched a probe into death squad allegations. • February 19, 2006 -- BBC reveals that morgues in Baghdad receive dozens of bodies picked up daily from rivers, sewage plants, waste burial sites, farms and desert areas. Most of the bodies are handcuffed and blindfolded civilians with a bullet or more in the forehead, indicating that they were executed. The handcuffs used on the victims are like those used by the Iraqi police. • February 26, 2006 -- The Independent reports that outgoing United Nations' human rights chief in Iraq, John Pace, revealed that hundreds of Iraqis are being tortured to death or summarily executed every month in Baghdad alone by the death squads working from the Ministry of Interior. He said that up to three-quarters of the corpses stacked in the Baghdad mortuary show evidence of gunshot wounds

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to the head or injuries caused by drill-bits or burning cigarettes. • March 9, 2006 -- Los Angeles Times reports that Iraqi police officers who worked at the Interior Ministry's illegal prison had received American training, and that U.S. trainers have also given extensive support to 27 brigades of heavily armed commandos accused of a series of abuses, including the death of 14 Sunni Arabs who were locked in an airtight van last summer. • March 10, 2006 -- Sidney Morning Herald reports that men wearing the uniforms of U.S.-trained security forces, which are controlled by the Interior Ministry, abducted 50 people in a daylight raid on a security agency. Masked men who are driving what appear to be new government-owned vehicles are carrying out many of the raids. • March 27, 2006 -- The Independent reports that while U.S. authorities have begun criticizing the Iraqi government over the "death squads," many of the paramilitary groups accused of the abuse, such as the Wolf Brigade, the Scorpion Brigade and the Special Police Commandos were set up with the help of the American military. Furthermore, the militiamen were provided with U.S. advisers some of whom were veterans of Latin American counter-insurgency which also had led to allegations of death squads at the time.

Mr. Secretary, in light of this evidence of U.S. support for and the existence of death squads in Iraq, what is the basis for your January 11, 2005 statement, that the idea of a Salvador option in Iraq is "nonsense"? I request a copy of all records pertaining to Pentagon plans to use U.S. Special Forces to advise, support and train Iraqi assassination and kidnapping teams. I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely, Dennis J. Kucinich, Member of Congress

Kucinich's speech gives us a much better idea of what is really going on in Iraq. He exposes the US as the driving force behind the paramilitary units that are currently torturing and killing vast numbers of Iraqi civilians. The entire operation has been set into motion by American intelligence agencies with the intention of inciting sectarian violence and thrusting the country towards partition.

The appearance of Colonel James Steele, as counselor for the Iraqi Security Forces, should remove any doubt about the real nature of America's involvement. Steele's "stock and trade" is the "spreading terror through the application of extreme violence"; Max Fuller's apt description of US counterinsurgency campaigns in Latin America. Steele was clearly enlisted to train others in the techniques of guerilla warfare and spread mayhem throughout the country.

Kucinich's claims are particularly illuminating in relation to the recent killing of terror-mastermind Abu Musab al Zarqawi. Zarqawi was the Pentagon's "psy-ops invention" who was created to rationalize the steady deterioration of Iraqi society. By connecting the Bush administration to the death squads the entire foundation for the war on terror begins to crumble. As Kucinich points out, the main

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proponent of terrorist activity in Iraq is the United States not Islamic extremists. American death squads are getting away with murder, and they are doing so with complete impunity.

- **Seen through a Syrian lens, 'unknown Americans' are provoking civil war in Iraq (Robert Fisk, 28 April 2006)**

Friday, 28 April 2006

In Syria, the world appears through a glass, darkly. As dark as the smoked windows of the car which takes me to a building on the western side of Damascus where a man I have known for 15 years - we shall call him a "security source", which is the name given by American correspondents to their own powerful intelligence officers - waits with his own ferocious narrative of disaster in Iraq and dangers in the Middle East.

His is a fearful portrait of an America trapped in the bloody sands of Iraq, desperately trying to provoke a civil war around Baghdad in order to reduce its own military casualties. It is a scenario in which Saddam Hussein remains Washington's best friend, in which Syria has struck at the Iraqi insurgents with a ruthlessness that the United States wilfully ignores. And in which Syria's Interior Minister, found shot dead in his office last year, committed suicide because of his own mental instability.

The Americans, my interlocutor suspected, are trying to provoke an Iraqi civil war so that Sunni Muslim insurgents spend their energies killing their Shia co-religionists rather than soldiers of the Western occupation forces. "I swear to you that we have very good information," my source says, finger stabbing the air in front of him. "One young Iraqi man told us that he was trained by the Americans as a policeman in Baghdad and he spent 70 per cent of his time learning to drive and 30 per cent in weapons training. They said to him: 'Come back in a week.' When he went back, they gave him a mobile phone and told him to drive into a crowded area near a mosque and phone them. He waited in the car but couldn't get the right mobile signal. So he got out of the car to where he received a better signal. Then his car blew up."

Impossible, I think to myself. But then I remember how many times Iraqis in Baghdad have told me similar stories. These reports are believed even if they seem unbelievable. And I know where much of the Syrian information is gleaned: from the tens of thousands of Shia Muslim pilgrims who come to pray at the Sayda Zeinab mosque outside Damascus. These men and women come from the slums of Baghdad, Hillah and Iskandariyah as well as the cities of Najaf and Basra. Sunnis from Fallujah and Ramadi also visit Damascus to see friends and relatives and talk freely of American tactics in Iraq.

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"There was another man, trained by the Americans for the police. He too was given a mobile and told to drive to an area where there was a crowd - maybe a protest - and to call them and tell them what was happening. Again, his new mobile was not working. So he went to a landline phone and called the Americans and told them: 'Here I am, in the place you sent me and I can tell you what's happening here.' And at that moment there was a big explosion in his car."

Just who these "Americans" might be, my source did not say. In the anarchic and panic-stricken world of Iraq, there are many US groups - including countless outfits supposedly working for the American military and the new Western-backed Iraqi Interior Ministry - who operate outside any laws or rules. No one can account for the murder of 191 university teachers and professors since the 2003 invasion - nor the fact that more than 50 former Iraqi fighter-bomber pilots who attacked Iran in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war have been assassinated in their home towns in Iraq in the past three years.

Amid this chaos, a colleague of my source asked me, how could Syria be expected to lessen the number of attacks on Americans inside Iraq? "It was never safe, our border," he said. "During Saddam's time, criminals and Saddam's terrorists crossed our borders to attack our government. I built a wall of earth and sand along the border at that time. But three car bombs from Saddam's agents exploded in Damascus and Tartous- I was the one who captured the criminals responsible. But we couldn't stop them."

Now, he told me, the rampart running for hundreds of miles along Syria's border with Iraq had been heightened. "I have had barbed wire put on top and up to now we have caught 1,500 non-Syrian and non-Iraqi Arabs trying to cross and we have stopped 2,700 Syrians from crossing ... Our army is there - but the Iraqi army and the Americans are not there on the other side."

Behind these grave suspicions in Damascus lies the memory of Saddam's long friendship with the United States. "Our Hafez el-Assad [the former Syrian president who died in 2000] learnt that Saddam, in his early days, met with American officials 20 times in four weeks. This convinced Assad that, in his words, 'Saddam is with the Americans'. Saddam was the biggest helper of the Americans in the Middle East (when he attacked Iran in 1980) after the fall of the Shah. And he still is! After all, he brought the Americans to Iraq!"

So I turn to a story which is more distressing for my sources: the death by shooting of Brigadier General Ghazi Kenaan, former head of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon - an awesomely powerful position - and Syrian Minister of Interior when his suicide was announced by the Damascus government last year.

Widespread rumours outside Syria suggested that Kenaan was suspected by UN investigators of involvement in the murder of the former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri in a massive car bomb

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in Beirut last year - and that he had been "suicided" by Syrian government agents to prevent him telling the truth.

Not so, insisted my original interlocutor. "General Ghazi was a man who believed he could give orders and anything he wanted would happen. Something happened that he could not reconcile - something that made him realise he was not all-powerful. On the day of his death, he went to his office at the Interior Ministry and then he left and went home for half an hour. Then he came back with a pistol. He left a message for his wife in which he said goodbye to her and asked her to look after their children and he said that what he was going to do was 'for the good of Syria'. Then he shot himself in the mouth."

Of Hariri's assassination, Syrian officials like to recall his relationship with the former Iraqi interim prime minister Iyad Alawi - a self-confessed former agent for the CIA and MI6 - and an alleged \$20bn arms deal between the Russians and Saudi Arabia in which they claim Hariri was involved.

Hariri's Lebanese supporters continue to dismiss the Syrian argument on the grounds that Syria had identified Hariri as the joint author with his friend, French President Jacques Chirac, of the UN Security Council resolution which demanded the retreat of the Syrians from Lebanese territory.

But if the Syrians are understandably obsessed with the American occupation of Iraq, their long hatred for Saddam - something which they shared with most Iraqis - is still intact. When I asked my first "security" source what would happen to the former Iraqi dictator, he replied, banging his fist into his hand: "He will be killed. He will be killed. He will be killed."

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- **Samara's black day يَأْرَنِم سُرَّال, February 23, 2006**

The news about the contemptible bombing of Iraq's revered Shiite shrines in Samara is puzzling.

For while:

"The Interior Ministry said four men, one wearing a military uniform and three clad in black, entered the mosque and detonated two bombs, one of which collapsed the dome into a crumbly mess, leaving just traces of gold showing through the rubble.

[Sunnis Hit After Shiite Shrine Blast](#), by Ziad Khalaf, Feb 22, 2006

And

"A police officer, who declined to give his name, said armed men, with at least one wearing a uniform, broke inside the shrine before sunrise and seized the five policemen responsible for guarding the site."

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[Blast damages Iraq Shia shrine](#) February 22, 2006

سمش لاقورش لبق عمجال اومحتق!، ةيركسع سبالم يدتري مهدحأ ، لاجر ةعضب ناب: " [ربخال لوقي](#) نيح يفف
-هتسارحب اونك نيذلا ةسمخال ةطرشلا اودي قو

- : لوقي " [ةيلخال دل ريزو](#) " [حي رصت](#) نإف

سبالم يدتري مهدحأ [ةي قيقد ني سمخو ةعباسلا ةعاسلا يف طابش / 21](#) [ءاشال ثلا ءاسم](#) ةيباهرا ةعومجم تماق دقف"-
امه يلع يركسع لانسحلا و يدهال يلع ني مامال ا حيرض يلع اورطيسو ءادوس تالذب نودتري نالشو ةطررم ةيركسع
-ني سدق مل نيح يرضلا لخال ةفسان تاوبع ءعضوب اوماقو ماسلا

لكشب ءبقلا مده يلا اءام [ني توبعلا ريجفت مت طابش / 22](#) [مويلا اءه حابص ةي قيقد 40](#) [و ةسداسلا ةعاسلا يفو](#)
ةرطي سلا تمتو شءاحل لحم يلا ءارماس يف ريواعمل ءاول كرحت روفلا يلعو حيرضلل يلامشلا راءجل نم ءزجو لمك
-تاشنملا ةي امح ءوق نم [رصنع 35](#) [غلبت](#) حيرضلا ةي امح ءوق نأ نيبت نأ ةيلخال دل ءرازو دوتو. فقوملا يلع

-لح طفلال "ةيلخال دل ريزو" ربخ نم نتيقن امثري ضقان تالا اءه رشن يف تددرت ؟ ءبارغل متظحال له

Yet,

The Interior Minister has issued a statement ([In Arabic](#)) stating that "the terrorist unit controlled the shrine on **Tuesday night, February 21, 2006 at 7:55 p.m. (local time)**" but that "the two bombs exploded on **Wednesday morning, February 22 at 6:40 a.m.**" while stating that "the shrine is guarded by **35 police guards**". We await confirmation of the Interior Minister's statement.

-: ءي دحت

[تكهت ناو وقجرت وخرت تلح ايتلا دجاسملا ليصافت](#)

Reprisals feared after shrine attack

Wednesday's attack on one of the Shiites' holiest shrines in Iraq triggered mass protests and reprisals against Sunni mosques.

Askariya shrine



The shrine as seen on Feb. 2, 2004 ...

... and after Wednesday's bombing.

- Built by Caliph al-Mutawh in 836, golden dome completed in 1905 under Muzaffar al-Din Shah
- Contains tombs of 10th and 11th imams, believed to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad (Ali al-Hadi, d. 868 and his son, Hassan al-Askari, d. 874)
- Near where last of 12 Shiite imams disappeared; Shiites believe he is still alive and will return to restore justice

قارعل ةي روء ءقوم AP

2006 طابش 22-

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:-يلاتلاك و ،"ةيلخادلا ريزو" حيرصتل تاكيداً ليميلال ربع نايع دوهشل ريراقتلالوا تدرو

[حيرضلا ريجفت قشادح نأشب عارماس يف نطاوم نم نايع دهاشل ادج قمم قدهاش](#)

2006 طابش 22-

[حيرضلا ريجفت يف ةيقارعلال قزدهجالا طروت ليصفتلاب يوري عارماس نم رخا نايع دهاش](#)

2006 طابش 23-

[ةيكيرمالا تاوقلل ةيعةيظلال ريغ ةكرحلال دهاش ممالا راوجب هبتكم عقي عارماس يف نطاوم نم ةييرج قشادح قدهاش](#)

[نحصلال برق ليللال لواط ينطولال سرحلاو](#)

2006 طابش 23-

:-هاندأ هرشنن و ،ليميلال ربع انلصو آخرأ، ايضاحاً اندروو امك

و ، (ياي آيسلا) ةيكيرمالا المخابرات قلاكومايق نع (عقوولال اذه يف ةيزيلكنالال ةغللاب) موثقة رابخاو ريراق تكانه
نبييال قشادح استمبيق تغلب تناصيصخت نم ، قصاخ "ةيقارعلال تارباخمو نم تاوق" ببيردتب ،لالتحالال ادب نمن
اهتايلمع ذيفنت ضارغال (ياي آيس) لال نم مباشرة رالودلال اهبتاو رصبت ققزترملا رصانعلال هذه لانت امو .رالود
هدوجو قرتفلالخ (يتنوبورغين) قارعلال يدل قباسلال يكيرمالال ريفسلا هب ماقدق ناك ام رارغل علعو ،ةيرسلا
،تانيسلال يف مانتي يف (سكنيف) عورشم ققزترم و ،تانيسلال فصتنم يف رودافللالا يف ايضاً ريفسك
-لالاملال ليبس لعل

Update

- [The night before the bombing: Two eyewitnesses](#)

- The [first two](#) eyewitnesses' reports (by email, in Arabic with English translation right above) appear to confirm the statement of the Iraqi Interior Ministry, but seem to directly implicate **the Special Forces of the Interior Ministry, many of whom have been trained, funded and on pay by the American CIA**

- **[British 'aid' to CIA covert operations in Iraq? September 22, 2005](#)**

[A grab from footage](#) released on September 20, 2005 shows weapons which Iraqi police said were confiscated from two undercover British soldiers after their arrest in Basra, southern Iraq, September 19, 2005. ([Reuters](#))

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And speaking of 'aid', as in [USAID](#) (do take a look at this site)

"... amid pleas for aid after Hurricane Katrina, the Bush administration has launched an unusual effort to raise charitable contributions for another cause: the government's attempt to rebuild Iraq.

Although more than \$30 billion in taxpayer funds have been appropriated for Iraqi reconstruction, the administration earlier this month launched an Internet-based fundraising effort that it says is aimed at giving Americans "a further stake in building a free and prosperous Iraq."

Contributors have no way of knowing who's getting the money or precisely where it's headed because the government says it must keep the details secret for security reasons." (emphasis added)

[New twist on aid for Iraq: U.S. seeks donations](#) September 18, 2005

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(An Update on the above:

"An extraordinary appeal to Americans from the Bush administration for money to help pay for the reconstruction of Iraq has raised only \$600 (£337), The Observer has learnt. Yet since the appeal was launched earlier this month, donations to rebuild New Orleans have attracted hundreds of millions of dollars. "

[Bush plea for cash to rebuild Iraq raises \\$600](#) September 25, 2005)

"must keep the details secret [for security reasons](#)"? Perhaps to 'aid' the British 'aid'?

See this site's previous post on this matter : [Yet another instance of an American 'terrorist act' in Iraq ...](#) [ردى ح ج احلا \(با كىب\) ىف مظامظلا نىب قلبن قولا عضو نم](#)

Updates:

- "The main thing about Covert Action is that it must be deniable. There is a term called "plausible deniability". When a government authorizes a covert action operation, the operation must be done in such a way that the government can claim that it knows nothing about it; in other words, the operation must not be attributable to the government that authorized it.

Covert Action operations are often Disinformation Operations, which are conducted in such a way as to discredit the opposition or the enemy. This is done, for example, by doing a violent action, such as a bombing, but making it look like the forces of another country or group did it. Such operations are sometimes called False-Flag Operations, meaning that the operation is conducted to make it look like it was done by people serving under another flag, preferably the enemy's flag. If the operation succeeds as designed, people will blame the action on the wrong party (the enemy). Thus, public opinion will be won over to the side that actually did the killing. Such false-flag, covert action operations are often referred to as Dirty Tricks.

.... So, who is behind many of the bombings against the Shi'ia and Sunni populations? It is quite possible, even probable, that many of them are being carried out by American, British, and even Israeli Covert Action operatives."

[What is Covert Action?](#) September 21, 2005

- **"We learned quickly" Rumsfeld had already, many times, claimed that non-distinction. Keep fooling yourself. August 24, 2005**

"I guess we were kind of naive when we first got here," said Sgt. 1st Class John Freeman, of Marion, N.C., who was put in charge of detainee operations at Bucca. "It was like, 'Hey, they're inside a fence. They don't have anything they can hurt us with.' We learned quickly."

... A former detainee, Challoub, known as Abu Hala, was a burly, bearded 45-year-old Mahdi Army commander detained in August during pitched fighting with U.S. forces in Sadr City, a Shiite slum in

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eastern Baghdad. In Bucca, he was second in command at Compound 3.

On that April morning, he said he watched as American guards tried to remove 10 prisoners from the courtyard, among them four clerics who made up the Shiite compound's leadership. The guards put the men on the ground, cuffed their hands behind them and, he said, put their boots on the clerics' backs. "As a Muslim, when you see your teacher treated like that, of course, you will get angry. As a Shiite, you should respect the cleric," said Challoub, who was released last month and returned to Baghdad. "That's when the chaos started."

... Suddenly, everything the Americans had provided the inmates over the previous months was turned against them, according to guards and a videotape of the riot made available by the military. The cinderblock had been chiseled from the concrete base of a tent pole; hundreds of pieces had been stored inside a tent the inmates used as a mosque that the military designated off limits to the guards. The detainees used floorboards as shields. They hurled socks filled with a cocktail of feces, dirt and flammable, slow-burning hand sanitizer, the Americans said. One of the crude devices ignited a Polaris all-terrain vehicle.

... "The violence, it was just absolutely incredible," said 1st Lt. Shawn Talmadge, a fire engine salesman from Richmond. "The sheer volume of rocks and the accuracy of them throwing the rocks -- it was just a full-out battle." Talmadge said he had an epiphany. "I realized, these guys have been fighting riots and wars a lot longer than we have. These guys have been fighting this way for hundreds of years."

[In Iraq Jail, Resistance Goes Underground](#) August 24, 2005

"Their most prominent leaders are not Iraqis, they are not Ho Chi Minh's with a nationalist base, but in the case of [Zarqawi](#) a Jordanian murderer," Rumsfeld said.

"And their massacres of innocents have outraged most Iraqis, rather than attracting broad support. Indeed, polls indicate that the anger against the terrorists and the insurgents is growing."

Rumsfeld said that while the specter of civil war should draw attention and concern, "I haven't seen anything to indicate that the risk is greater today than it was yesterday or the day before."

[Rumsfeld: Iraq not fated to civil war](#) August 23, 2005

The 'massacres of the innocents' have indeed outraged many Iraqis for it is slowly sinking in that these 'acts' are not perpetrated by the Iraqi Resistance but by an assortment of :

- Allawi's CIA trained '[Wolf Brigades](#)' under the CIA-paid [Shahwani](#) , head of the 'Iraqi intelligence agency' and his Langley CIA-trained 'Iraqi' mercenaries,
- With their insidious 'operative head' CIA agent [James Steel](#) of the '[Salvador Option](#)' assignment,
- The Shi'ite's [Badir Brigades](#)
- As well as by the below-the-radar [Israeli Mossad](#) (article in Arabic) **killing teams.**

An Update:

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- And, last but not least, **Militias of Iran's Secret War for Iraq** ([English](#)) and ([Arabic](#)) .

In the meantime, do [Rumsfeld's metrics](#) extrapolate only to 'yesterday or the day before'? Six months ago, he was so cock-sure of how unsure he is:

"What you need to do is have the economic progress, the political progress which is going forward in such good style (sic) . And that will determine the level of the insurgency," Rumsfeld said.

"And the level of the insurgency will determine the speed at which Iraqi security forces will be capable of managing that level of insurgency."

He acknowledged there were a lot of "ifs," but added, "That's life."

... "We don't have intelligence that good. I just don't know," Rumsfeld said."

[Rumsfeld Says No Iraq Self-Security Date](#) February 6, 2005

Though he knows this, for sure:

"The United States is not losing the global war against terrorism, nor are we losing the war in Afghanistan or Iraq," he said. Railing against violent extremists, he added, "They are what's wrong with the world." [Rumsfeld: U.S. Won't Lose in Iraq](#) August 30, 2005

Now that is a steep, downward, *learning curve*, eh?

Meanwhile, back to Bucca Prison where they do not need Hollywood movies, for it comes instinctively from a heroic people:

"Unusual US and British troop movements were observed in the city of al-Basrah on Tuesday morning as the soldiers encircled a section of the city and launched a wave of arrests in the ash-Shalamijah area to the east of the city.

The Mafkarat al-Islam correspondent in the city reported a source in the puppet "Iraqi rapid deployment force" as saying that the reason for the raids and arrests was that five Iraqi prisoners in nearby Camp Bucca in Umm Qasr had escaped on Monday night with the help of a trash man working with the prisoners.

The worker took the five prisoners out of the prison in his garbage truck, the source said. The prisoners escaped in the garbage truck when a Resistance rocket attack struck Camp Bucca, distracting the guard at the gate who neglected to search the garbage trucks that were leaving the camp, something that is normally done with each truck."

[Garbage man helps five prisoners escape Camp Bucca Monday night.](#) August 23, 2005

One result of thirteen years of economic sanctions and two and a half years of a horrid

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occupation by the Ugly American; coming to an end soon.



posted by [Imad Khadduri](#)

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- **CIA terrorism in Iraq Who? US?, June 1, 2005**

This is from a **January 1, 2004 article:**

"With the 2004 electoral clock ticking amid growing public concern about U.S. casualties and chaos in Iraq, the Bush administration's hawks are upping the ante militarily. To those familiar with the CIA's Phoenix assassination program in Vietnam, Latin America's death squads or Israel's official policy of targeted murders of Palestinian activists, the results are likely to look chillingly familiar.

The Prospect has learned that part of a secret \$3 billion in new funds—tucked away in the \$87 billion Iraq appropriation that Congress approved in early November—will go toward **the creation of a paramilitary unit manned by militiamen associated with former Iraqi exile groups. Experts say it could lead to a wave of extrajudicial killings, not only of armed rebels but of nationalists, other opponents of the U.S. occupation and thousands of civilian Baathists** (emphasis added)—up to 120,000 of the estimated 2.5 million former Baath Party members in Iraq.

"They're clearly cooking up joint teams to do Phoenix-like things, like they did in Vietnam," says Vincent Cannistraro, former CIA chief of counter terrorism. Ironically, he says, the U.S. forces in Iraq are working with key members of Saddam Hussein's now-defunct intelligence agency to set the program in motion. "They're setting up little teams of Seals and Special Forces with teams of Iraqis, working with people who were former senior Iraqi intelligence people, to do these things," Cannistraro says."

[Phoenix Rising](#) January 1, 2004

Several previous posting on this site have pointed to some of the results of the above mentioned 'planning' and 'funding':

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["There is no better way to start a civil war"](#) May 28, 2005

["Yet everyone but the comatose American populace ... can see it"](#) May 26, 2005

[Yet another instance of an American 'terrorist act' in Iraq](#) May 23, 2005

["Combat terrorism" by causing it](#) May 16, 2005

[Lest we forget "Operation Iraqi Freedom"](#) May 10, 2005

[Getting to Know the General](#) May 2, 2005

[The "Salvador option", with dressings, is being served in Iraq](#) April 22, 2005

and documented corruption: [The Demise of CIA Shadow Director in Iraq](#) April 2, 2005

General Adnan Thabit, center, and his American CIA adviser, James Steele, at a meeting with local sheiks near Samarra.



posted by [Imad Khadduri](#)

- **"Combat terrorism" by causing it, May 16, 2005**

"A few days ago, an American manned check point confiscated the driver license of a driver and told him to report to an American military camp near Baghdad airport for interrogation and in order to retrieve his license. The next day, the driver did visit the camp and he was allowed in the camp with his car. He was admitted to a room for an interrogation that lasted half an hour. At the end of the session, the American interrogator told him: 'OK, there is nothing against you, but you do know that Iraq is now sovereign and is in charge of its own affairs. Hence, we have forwarded your papers and license to al-Kadhimia police station for processing. Therefore, go there with this clearance to reclaim your license. At the police station, ask for Lt. Hussain Mohammed who is waiting for you now. Go there now quickly, before he leaves his shift work".

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The driver did leave in a hurry, but was soon alarmed with a feeling that his car was driving as if carrying a heavy load, and he also became suspicious of a low flying helicopter that kept hovering overhead, as if trailing him. He stopped the car and inspected it carefully. He found nearly 100 kilograms of explosives hidden in the back seat and along the two back doors.

The only feasible explanation for this incidence is that the car was indeed booby trapped by the Americans and intended for the al-Khadimiya Shiite district of Baghdad. The helicopter was monitoring his movement and witnessing the anticipated "hideous attack by foreign elements".

The same scenario was repeated in Mosul, in the north of Iraq. A car was confiscated along with the driver's license. He did follow up on the matter and finally reclaimed his car but was told to go to a police station to reclaim his license. Fortunately for him, the car broke down on the way to the police station. The inspecting car mechanic discovered that the spare tire was fully laden with explosives."

[A warning to car drivers](#) (in Arabic) May 11, 2005

And a [Resistance warning to this effect](#) May 14, 2005

A perhaps unrelated incident, but the circumstances are strangely similar.

"A Canadian man who was killed in Iraq last week – possibly by U.S. troops – lived near Toronto for years and also held Iraqi citizenship, the CBC has learned.

Some media cited unidentified sources who said he may have died after U.S. forces "tracked" a target, using a helicopter gunship, but Foreign Affairs said it's still investigating conflicting reports of the death.

U.S. officials have denied any involvement.

Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs will only say assigning blame is premature. It's still trying to get a complete picture of what happened from authorities in Baghdad."

[Canadian killed in Iraq was Toronto-area trucker](#) April 28, 2005

They are still trying to 'get the complete picture', remotely, sitting in Amman, Jordan. May I humbly suggest they go check his car? (Kindly see **PS below)**

"... According to a classified document prepared for Rumsfeld by his Defense Science Board, the new organization--the "Proactive, Preemptive Operations Group (P2OG)"--would actually carry out secret missions designed to provoke terrorist groups into committing violent acts. The P2OG, a 100-member, so-called "counter-terrorist" organization with a \$100-million-a-year budget, would ostensibly target "terrorist leaders," but according to P2OG documents procured by Arkin, would in fact carry out missions designed to "stimulate reactions" among "terrorist groups"--which, according to the Defense Secretary's logic, would subsequently expose them to "counter-attack" by the good guys. In other

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words, the plan is to execute secret military operations (assassinations, sabotage, "deception") which would intentionally result in terrorist attacks on innocent people, including Americans--essentially, to "combat terrorism" by causing it!

This notion is currently being applied to the problem of the Iraqi "insurgency," it seems. According to a May 1, 2005 report by Peter Maass in the New York Times Magazine, two of the top US advisers to Iraqi paramilitary commandos fighting the insurgents are veterans of US counterinsurgency operations in Latin America. Loaning credence to recent media speculation about the "Salvadorization" of Iraq, the report notes that one adviser currently in Iraq is James Steele ([mentioned previously on this site](#)), who led a team of 55 US Army Special Forces advisers in El Salvador in the 1980s. Maass writes that these advisers "trained front-line battalions that were accused of significant human rights abuses."

The Provocateur State - Is the CIA Behind the Iraqi "Insurgents"--and Global Terrorism?

May 10, 2005

Sweet Condi donned a [bullet proof vest and a combat helmet](#) to visit Liberated Iraq



PS

While on the subject of American helicopters:

"In a new American attack on the Iraqi civilian population, a US helicopter gunship opened fire on two civilian cars, each carrying a family, in the Dumiz neighborhood of Mosul.

A statement issued by the Information Bureau of the Board of Muslim 'Ulama' [Scholars], the highest Sunni religious authority in occupied Iraq, a copy of which was obtained by Mafkarat al-Islam, said that the American attack killed the driver of one of the two cars along with all the members of his family except his aged mother who survived with burns.

In the other car, all the members of that family were also killed except for a little five-year-old girl.

The little girl survived the initial attack and tried to crawl out the back of the car. Some earnest people who happened to be on the scene rushed to try to rescue the girl but American troops who witnessed

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the crime committed by their helicopter thought only to outdo the fliers and opened fire on the rescuers and the little girl, killing all of them.

The US invader troops were thus able to relish the scene of the terrified little girl engulfed in flames before her death and afterwards they had the opportunity to survey the scene of their bloody "combined forces" massacre that left body parts of innocent people scattered everywhere."

[Mosul](#) May 15, 2005

"She stood in the crowded room as her drove of minions stood around her.....A huddling mass trying to draw closer to her aura of evil. The lights flashed against her fangs as her cruel lips curled into a grimace. It was meant to be a smile but it wouldn't reach her cold, lifeless eyes... It was a leer- the leer of the undead before a feeding..."

The above was not a scene from Buffy the Vampire Slayer- it was just Condi Rice in Iraq a day ago. At home, we fondly refer to her as The Vampire. She's such a contrast to Bush- he simply looks stupid. She, on the other hand, looks utterly evil."

[The Dead and the Undead...](#) May 18, 2005

posted by [Imad Khadduri](#)

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- **Is the CIA Behind the Iraqi "Insurgents"—and Global Terrorism? (10 May 2005)**

THE PROVOCATEUR STATE

Is the CIA Behind the Iraqi "Insurgents"—and Global Terrorism?

by Frank Morales

The requirement of an ever-escalating level of social violence to meet the political and economic needs of the insatiable "anti-terrorist complex" is the essence of the new US militarism. What is now openly billed as "permanent war" ultimately serves the geo-political ends of social control in the interests of US corporate domination, much as the anti-communist crusade of the now-exhasuted Cold War did.

Back in 2002, following the trauma of 9-11, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld predicted there would be more terrorist attacks against the American people and civilization at large. How could he be so sure of that? Perhaps because these attacks would be instigated on the order of the Honorable Mr. Rumsfeld. According to Los Angeles Times military analyst William Arkin, writing Oct. 27, 2002, Rumsfeld set out to create a secret army, "a super-Intelligence Support Activity" network that would "bring together CIA and military covert action, information warfare, intelligence, and cover and deception," to stir the pot of spiraling global violence.

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According to a classified document prepared for Rumsfeld by his Defense Science Board, the new organization--the "Proactive, Preemptive Operations Group (P2OG)"--would actually carry out secret missions designed to provoke terrorist groups into committing violent acts. The P2OG, a 100-member, so-called "counter-terrorist" organization with a \$100-million-a-year budget, would ostensibly target "terrorist leaders," but according to P2OG documents procured by Arkin, would in fact carry out missions designed to "stimulate reactions" among "terrorist groups"--which, according to the Defense Secretary's logic, would subsequently expose them to "counter-attack" by the good guys. In other words, the plan is to execute secret military operations (assassinations, sabotage, "deception") which would intentionally result in terrorist attacks on innocent people, including Americans--essentially, to "combat terrorism" by causing it!

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The current senior US adviser at the Iraqi Interior Ministry, which Maass writes "has operational control over the commandos," is former top US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) official Steve Casteel, who worked "alongside local forces" in the US-sponsored "Drug War" in Bolivia, Peru and Colombia, "where he was involved in the hunt for Pablo Escobar, the head of the Medellin cocaine cartel."

The US "drug war" in Latin America also serves as a cover for ongoing counterinsurgency, employing terrorist methods to achieve two aims: one, actually combating genuine insurgency; two, the ratcheting up of a "strategy of tension," heightened social violence designed to induce fear among the citizenry and the subsequent call for greater "security."

This was the essence, for example, of Operation Gladio, a decades-long covert campaign of provocateur-style terrorism and deceit. The ostensible purpose of Gladio, officially launched as a covert NATO program in 1952, was to establish a clandestine network of "stay-behind" teams which would organize armed resistance and sabotage in the event of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe. But the network actually took a far more proactive role. Directed by US/NATO intelligence services of the West against their own populations, Operation Gladio led to possibly hundreds of innocent people being killed or maimed in "terrorist" attacks which were then blamed on "leftist subversives" or other political opponents. The most notorious such attack was the 1980 bombing of the train station at Bologna, which left 85 dead. Initially blamed on left-wing radicals, the blast was revealed upon

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investigation to be the work of an ultra-right network linked to the Italy's Gladio team; four Italian neo-fascists were eventually convicted of the crime.

The purpose was again twofold: to demonize designated enemies (the "communists") and to frighten the public into supporting ever-increasing powers for the national security state. It appears the Pentagon has been implementing Gladio-style operations for quite some time--possibly including 9-11. A stretch? Maybe not.

Witness the US Joint Chiefs discussion of "Operation Northwoods" back in 1962, a plan to blow up U.S. "assets"--including U.S. citizens--in order to justify an invasion of Cuba. Later, US Army Field Manual 30-31B, entitled "Stability Operations Intelligence - Special Fields," dated March 18, 1970 and signed by Gen. William C Westmoreland, promoted terrorist attacks (and the planting of false evidence) in public places which were then to be blamed on "communists" and "socialists." It called for the execution of terrorist attacks throughout Western Europe, carried out through a network of covert US/NATO armies, in order to convince European governments of "the communist threat."

What's striking is that during this period the primary source for US government info on the Russian "threat" was coming from the Gehlen Organization, Hitler's eastern front intelligence apparatus, which in the aftermath of World War II had cut a deal with the CIA's Allen Dulles and worked out of Fort Hunt, just outside Washington DC, before being relocated back to Munich. Headed up by super-spy Nazi General Reinhard Gehlen, the Org's "special operations" expertise was heeded, financed and well-protected by U.S. tax dollars well into the 1970's. Could the Gehlen Org have had an influence in the production of FM 30-31B?

According to FM 30-31B, "there may be times when Host Country Governments show passivity or indecision in the face of communist subversion and according to the interpretation of the US secret services do not react with sufficient effectiveness. Most often such situations come about when the revolutionaries temporarily renounce the use of force and thus hope to gain an advantage, as the leaders of the host country wrongly consider the situation to be secure. US army intelligence must have the means of launching special operations which will convince Host Country Governments and public opinion of the reality of the insurgent danger."

The U.S. Army now claims the document was a Russian forgery. Journalist Allan Francovich in his BBC documentation on Gladio and US/NATO "special operations" terrorism, asked Ray Cline, CIA deputy director from 1962 to 1966, if he believed FM 30-31B was for real and he replied: "Well, I suspect it is an authentic document. I don't doubt it. I never saw it but it's the kind of special forces military operations that are described," to be implemented at the discretion of the president and Defense Department on the "appropriate occasion."

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It could be that in Iraq--and elsewhere around the world--the "appropriate occasion" has arrived. Bush's war on terrorism could be the ultimate manifestation of the provocateur state; carrying out of clandestine "executive actions" and "special operations" directed against populations, including our own, who are truly ignorant of the real "enemy" in the face of the ever-present manufactured one, traumatized by strategic terror designed to engender fear and acquiescence to further "security measures"--thereby enriching the military, police agencies, and munitions and nuclear business enterprises.

RESOURCES:

Peter Maass, ["The Salvadorization of Iraq?."](#) New York Times Magazine, May 1, 2005.

A.K. Gupta, ["Unraveling Iraq's Secret Militias."](#) Z Magazine, May 2005

Lila Rajiva, ["The Pentagon's 'NATO Option'."](#) CommonDreams, Feb. 10, 2005.

[Statewatch Briefing on Operation Gladio](#)

US Joint Chiefs of Staff, ["Operation Northwoods"](#), 1962

[National Security Archives on Operation Northwoods](#)

[US Army, Field Manual 30-31B, 1970](#)

[FM 30-31B excerpts from Cryptome.org](#)

[WW4 REPORT #58 on P2OG](#)

Frank Morales, ["John Negroponte and the Death Squad Connection," WW4 REPORT #108](#)

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- **Getting to Know the General, May 2, 2005**

This is an opinion, worthy of reading, of a very close Iraqi friend (since high school):

"I think that anyone truly interested in freedom and democracy for the Iraqi people should carefully read the following good article and absorb its implications. It elucidates the real reason for Rumsfeld's

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recent visit to Iraq. He wanted to ensure that these 'elements' are not removed by the new government in Baghdad.

The new emerging Iraq is a composite of:

1. Saddamist core of the American-supported fighting force that is the foundation of the 'new' Iraqi army whose primary mission is to 'fight the insurgency' and to protect the political organs established by the US.
2. A 'Lebanon' style political structure that is led principally by 'expat' politicians. These leaders, in spite of serious political differences among themselves, are committed to a very long-time US presence in Iraq; and on mass privatization of Iraq national assets, whether it makes economic sense or not.
3. An economic structure that is based on these war barons intending to owning every thing in Iraq including oil, water, and land.
4. A political process that is based on show elections that produce political organs that is supposed to do many things but resolve the real challenges: economic hardships of the people of Iraq; the return of sovereignty to Iraq; demand removal of foreign presence and control; or, bring social and political harmony to enable the Iraqi people to determine their future.

In spite of the tons of talk about 'freedom' and 'democracy', the new Iraq is being reconstituted to be as repressive as the 'old' Iraq; and with even more corrupt political leadership."

S. Al-B.

[The Way of the Commandos](#) May 1, 2005

An Update: [Iraqi commando battalion pulled out of Samarra](#) May 5, 2005

- **The "Salvador option", with dressings, is being served in Iraq, April 22, 2005**

First, have the "Salvador option" :

"In devising a strategy to defeat Iraq's insurgents, the Pentagon may be gaining the upper hand but at the cost of pushing Iraq toward civil war. A report by the Wall Street Journal from Feb. 16 revealed

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that “pop-up militias” are proliferating in Iraq. Not only is the U.S. aware of these illegal militias, but the Pentagon is arming, training and funding them for use them in counter-insurgency operations. Most disturbing, one militia in particular – the “special police commandos” – is being used throughout Iraq and has been singled out by a U.S. general as conducting death squad strikes known as the “Salvador option.”

Greg Jaffe, the Journal reporter, identified at least six such militias. Yet these militias owe their allegiance not to the Iraqi people or state, but to their self-appointed leaders and associated politicians such as interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi. Even the commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East, Gen. John P. Abizaid, admitted to Congress on March 1 that such militias are “destabilizing.” Of these militias, at least three are linked to Allawi. Jaffe writes, “First came the Muthana Brigade, a unit formed by the order of ... Allawi.” The second is the Defenders of Khadamiya, referring to a Shiite shrine on the outskirts of Baghdad, which appears to be “closely aligned with prominent Shiite cleric Hussein al Sadr,” who ran on Allawi’s ticket in the January elections.

["Let A Thousand Militias Bloom"](#) April 21, 2005

“... The U.S. is saying, like, well, these are a bunch of Ba'athist dead-enders in the insurgency, but at the same time they're using the ex-Ba'athists themselves, who they said they were freeing Iraq from, to hunt down insurgents. But they are also just rounding people up willy-nilly, and there appears, like I said, to be extensive use of torture, much of it coming from this TV show that is now appearing on Iraq called, Terror: The Grip of Justice. There have been many accounts of this in the media, where a number of times a week on this television station set up by the Pentagon, Al-Iraqiya, they parade insurgents before the TV. And these reports are all noting that the suspects have swollen faces, bruised, that they're very cowed. And they're also admitting to the most absurd charges, that they are participating in gay orgies, that they get drunk inside mosques, that they're pedophiles engaging in rape, that they practice beheadings by cutting off the head of sheep. And the interesting thing is, one commentator noted, it's the exact same tactic Saddam Hussein used under his government of airing televised confessions.

And there’s one Ba'athist in particular who is at very much the center of this. It's a General Adnan Thavit, who was involved in the 1996 coup against Saddam Hussein that the former interim prime minister who just resigned, Iyad Allawi, headed up. And this character Thavit keeps popping up all over the place. He is the head of the special police commandos, which are said to number ten to eleven thousand, which would actually make them the second largest security force in Iraq, larger than the British. He was also the source for this raid a few weeks ago on this insurgent camp on Lake Tharthar, that turned out to be bogus pretty much. A reporter went there and found that there were all these insurgents still there, even though Thavit was saying something like 85 insurgents were killed. He is also now involved in this dispute over what's going on in this town south of Baghdad, claiming there

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wasn't any kidnapping and now there's reports of these bodies being dragged out of the river. And the Interior Ministry a couple of days ago even said he was assassinated, and then retracted the report the same day. He is a very shady character, and the U.S. general staff under Petraeus notes that he's very powerful, and that if he is removed, he could take his militias with him, this huge force. And right now, there's a power struggle going on. Donald Rumsfeld flew into Baghdad last week and warned the new government not to purge these Ba'athists. This largely escaped the notice of many in the media. And Talabani, who is the new president, has said that, no, we are going to purge them, and we want to use our militias."

[U.S. Funding Iraqi Militias Led by Baathists As Part of Counter-Insurgency Operation](#)

April 21, 2005

The preparations for these 'militias' have been long ongoing:

"The Iraqi authorities, with the help of American intelligence agencies, are creating an intelligence service here that will focus on rooting out guerrilla fighters, especially those from outside the country, Iraqi and American officials said Friday. The service will employ some former agents of Saddam Hussein's security apparatus and will probably receive financing from the American government, the officials said.

Many of the agents will work in the border towns of Iraq to identify foreign fighters who have slipped into the country and will monitor their activities, said Ibrahim al-Janabi, a senior member of the Iraqi Governing Council's security committee. The service will employ 500 to 2,000 people, he said, and is expected to be formed well before the Bush administration transfers sovereignty to an Iraqi government on June 30.

The Central Intelligence Agency is taking the lead in helping put together the new service, American officials said. The C.I.A. has close ties to the Iraqi National Accord, an opposition group founded by former Baath Party members who worked from London and Jordan to try to overthrow Mr. Hussein's government.

The head of the group, Iyad Alawi, heads the Governing Council's security committee and met in December with the director of central intelligence, George J. Tenet, at C.I.A. headquarters in Langley, Va., to discuss the new intelligence service, officials said. Mr. Janabi, also a senior official in the group, is a leading candidate to head the new service."

[New Iraq Agency to Hunt Rebels](#) January 31, 2004

Second, have some foreign Mercenaries (minus eight - six Blackwater mercenaries and their two Fiji bodyguards - and a Bulgarian helicopter):**

According to Ahmad Al-Chalabi:

".. you know, each one of those 22,000 [mercenaries] makes \$1,000 a day. This is \$22 million a day, or

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\$7 billion a year (*By the way, their wages are being paid for with Iraqi money, my comment*). Why is that necessary? They are not answerable to anyone and move around bearing weapons in a provocative manner.'

Q: Do you use any of them?

Not one. All my bodyguards are Iraqis."

[Man of many colours](#) April 20, 2005

Thirdly, for deserts have some local 'security' business:

[For whom the 'dollar' tolls: Iraqi Disneyland for the American tourist and Iraqi mercenaries for the American army](#) March 4, 2005

Bloody indigestion, eh?



** PS: A [video clip](#) (which is still available) has already surfaced of the [Bulgarian helicopter downing](#) on April 21, 2005.

WARNING

Gruesome images,

as gruesome as that of the execution of the wounded old man leaning against a wall in the Fallujah mosque last November 2004.

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- **[Bush Nominates Terrorist for National Intelligence Director \(10 April 2005\)](#)**

JOHN NEGROPONTE & THE DEATH-SQUAD CONNECTION

Bush Nominates Terrorist for National Intelligence Director

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by Frank Morales

"He will be a key figure in US counter-terror operations."—BBC News, Feb. 17, 2005

"I think he could have stopped all these assassinations and torture... We're against this nomination. If he didn't see human rights violations in Honduras, it's possible he won't see human rights violations anywhere in the world."—Leo Valladares Lanza, former head, Honduran Human Rights Commission, quoted in New York Times, March 29, 2005

On February 17, 2005, President George W. Bush nominated John Negroponte, 65, to be the United States' first National Intelligence Director." According to various published reports, Negroponte will be the president's "primary briefer" in the area of global and domestic intelligence and counter-terror operations, coordinating and overseeing the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), National Security Agency (NSA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and other agencies.

His upcoming Senate confirmation seems assured, and that is a scary prospect. Why? Because Negroponte has a long and bloody criminal history, dating back to the early 1960s, of overseeing the training and arming of death squads, schooled in the techniques of torture, "forced interrogation," assassination and, as we shall see, even genocide. He has been described as an "old-fashioned imperialist," active for nearly four decades in Vietnam, Central America, the Philippines, Mexico and most recently Iraq. He got his start back in the days of the CIA's Phoenix program, which assassinated some 40,000 Vietnamese "subversives."

According to Bush, the ultra-rightist Negroponte has a real grip on today's "global intelligence needs." Indeed he does. Negroponte's long career in the "foreign service" has equipped him well to fulfill the requirements of global and domestic counterinsurgency. So while newly-installed Attorney General Gonzales supplies the legal basis for torture (as he did as a Bush White House counsel), and recently-installed Homeland Security czar Michael Chertoff acquiesces (as he did as a Justice Department pointman on the post-9-11 sweeps), Negroponte is now in a position to ratchet up the repression domestically, and further the dissolution of democracy at home.

Although Negroponte's office will be in its own projected \$200 million headquarters, Bush has said that Negroponte "will have access on a daily basis." Negroponte has actually had close presidential access for awhile. Not quite four years ago, on Sept. 18, 2001, as the embers were still smoking at Lower Manhattan's Ground Zero, Negroponte was appointed U.S. Representative to the United Nations. His mission was to work the floor and backrooms in preparation for Colin Powell's infamous February 2003 presentation to the UN making the case for war on Iraq--which even Powell now admits was based on falsehoods. Then in April 2004, with a counter-insurgency war in Iraq rapidly

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spreading, Bush nominated Negroponte to be U.S. Ambassador to that occupied nation following the June 2004 hand-over of "sovereignty" to as-yet "undetermined Iraqi authorities."

RAP SHEET

Negroponte was born in London in 1939, the son of a Greek-American shipping magnate. A graduate of Yale University, raised on New York's Park Avenue, he was a "career diplomat" between 1960 and 1997, serving in eight countries in Asia, Europe and Latin America, as well as holding positions in the State Department and White House. From 1971 to 1973, Negroponte was the officer-in-charge for Vietnam at the National Security Council (NSC) under Henry Kissinger, having worked as a "political affairs officer" (read: CIA) at the US Embassy in Saigon starting as early as 1964. At that time, he shared a room with Richard Holbrooke, then an official for the Agency for International Development, later US ambassador to the UN under Clinton. Negroponte and Holbrooke both became members of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the oldest and most prestigious of U.S. foreign policy think-tanks. Following Vietnam, Negroponte went on to "serve" for a number of years as an "economics officer" working out of the US Embassy in Ecuador.

Negroponte was appointed in 1981 by President Ronald Reagan to head up the U.S. Embassy in Honduras, where he stayed quite busy through 1985. From 1987-1989, he was deputy assistant to the president for national security affairs, reporting to Colin Powell. From 1989-1993, he was ambassador to Mexico. Following a stint as ambassador to the Philippines from 1993-1997, he "retired" from the diplomatic corps and took a well-paid position as vice president for global markets at McGraw-Hill, the big publishing company.

In 1981 President Reagan authorized paramilitary operations against the leftist government of Nicaragua. As ambassador to Honduras from 1981 to 1985, Negroponte played a key role in establishing that country as a base of operations for the CIA's "Contra" guerilla army then attempting to destabilize Nicaragua, with a 450-square-kilometer stretch along the border virtually turned over to the US-backed Nicaraguan rebels. He was also instrumental in the reign of terror then being overseen in Honduras by security chief Gen. Gustavo Alvarez Martinez, his good friend. Between 1980 and 1984, US military aid to Honduras jumped from \$3.9 million to \$77.4 million. Much of this went to facilitate the crushing of popular movements through a covert "low intensity" war.

Although the high-level planning, money and arms for this repression flowed from Washington, much of the on-the-ground logistics was run out of the Embassy in Tegucigalpa. So crammed was the tiny country with US military troops and bases at this time, that it was dubbed the "USS Honduras." The captain of this ship, Negroponte, was in charge of the US Embassy when--according to a 1995 four-part series in the Baltimore Sun--hundreds of Hondurans deemed "subversives" were kidnapped, raped,

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tortured and killed by Battalion 316, a secret Honduran army intelligence unit trained and supported by the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency.

BATTALION 316

In addition to internal repression in Honduras, Battalion 316 also participated in the CIA's covert war against Nicaragua. Members of the Battalion were conscripted by the CIA for such sensitive missions as training the Contra terrorists and even mining Nicaragua's harbors. Negroponte worked closely with Gen. Alvarez in overseeing the training Honduran soldiers in psychological warfare, sabotage, torture and kidnapping. Honduras was the second largest recipient of U.S. military aid in the hemisphere at this time after neighboring El Salvador. Increasing numbers of both Honduran and Salvadoran soldiers were sent to the U.S. Army's School of the Americas to receive training. In El Salvador, the death squads were headed up by Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, a 1972 graduate of the School of the Americas. General Luis Alonso Discua Elvir, one of his classmates at the US "torture academy," was a founder and commander of Battalion 316.

Through his support of Battalion 316, Negroponte is directly complicit in the murder of at least 184 Honduran civilians officially found to have been killed by the death squad by a 1994 Honduran truth commission. The unit used shock and suffocation devices in interrogations, kept prisoners naked--and, when no longer useful, killed them brutally, and buried them in unmarked clandestine graves. Women were raped, often in front of their families.

Negroponte was likely involved in a number of other like paramilitary formations throughout Central America, as compliant and "stable" Honduras served as a base for U.S. operations throughout the region. Recently, the New York Times (March 8, 2005) reported that the Organization of American States (OAS) has reopened an investigation, "based on new forensic evidence," into the massacre of "hundreds of peasants" at El Mozote, El Salvador in 1981--when 800 unarmed men, women and children were murdered by Salvadoran soldiers "from a battalion trained and equipped by the United States." Reports of the massacre were published at the time in the New York Times and the Washington Post--reports that were "dismissed" by Negroponte and other "officials of the Reagan administration."

Covert operations in Central America were paid for in part through the sale of cocaine. "CIA officials," according to the New York Times (July 17, 1998), "involved in the Contra program gave relatively low priority to collecting information about the possible drug involvement of Contra rebels"--while of course giving high priority to covering it all up. Ambassador Negroponte acquiesced in shutting down the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) office in Tegucigalpa, just as Honduras was emerging as an important base for CIA-facilitated cocaine trans-shipments to the United States, with profits going

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to the Contras. According to a 1989 Senate Foreign Relations Committee investigative report, "elements of the Honduran military were involved in the protection of the drug traffickers."

In 1982, the US negotiated access to airfields in Honduras and established a regional military training centers there for Central American forces, principally directed at improving the lethal effectiveness of the Salvadoran military--at a time when the Salvadoran army was carrying out massacres such as the one at El Mozote, and army-linked death squads ratcheted up a death toll of at least 800, according to El Salvador's UN-backed Truth Commission. Much of the training in these "anti-subversive" techniques--i.e., kidnapping, torture and murder--was done at El Aguacate air base in eastern Honduras. Established in 1984, the base was also used as a secret detention and torture center. In August 2001, excavations at the base uncovered 185 corpses, including those of two U.S. citizens-- church workers involved in aiding the Honduran peasant movement--thought to have been killed and buried at the site.

In 1994, when the Honduran Human Rights Commission documented the torture and disappearance of at least 184 political opponents in the previous decade, it specifically accused John Negroponte of complicity in a number of human rights violations. The Baltimore Sun reporters found that in 1982 alone, during Negroponte's first full year as ambassador, the Honduran press carried at least 318 stories of extra-judicial attacks by the military. The US Embassy, however, certified the country's record on human rights in such glowing terms that aides to Negroponte joked that they were writing about Norway, not Honduras. Rick Chidester, a former aide to Negroponte, revealed to the Sun that his supervisors had ordered him to remove allegations of torture and executions from his draft of the 1982 human rights report.

Jack Binns, who served under president Jimmy Carter as the ambassador to Honduras prior to Negroponte, made numerous complaints about human rights abuses by the Honduran military. Recently, he stated regarding Negroponte, "I think he was complicit in abuses, I think he tried to put a lid on reporting abuses and I think he was untruthful to Congress about those activities." (NYT, March 29, 2005) In one early '80s cable, Binns reported that Gen. Alvarez was modeling his campaign against suspected subversives, on Argentina's "dirty war" of the 1970s, which, in turn, had been modeled on the techniques of European fascism in the 1930s and 40s--perhaps after having received some pointers from certain elements who fled there with US support after World War II. Recall that Adolf Eichmann, overseer of the apparatus of Jewish extermination during the Nazi era, was captured in Bueno Aires in 1960.

In May 1982, Sister Laetitia Bordes, a nun who had worked for ten years in El Salvador, went on a fact-finding delegation to Honduras to investigate the whereabouts of thirty Salvadoran nuns and women of faith who fled to Honduras in 1981 after the death-squad assassination of El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero the previous year. Negroponte claimed that the Embassy knew nothing. But in a 1996

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interview with the Baltimore Sun, Jack Binns said that a group of Salvadorans--including the women Bordes had been looking for--were abducted on April 22, 1981, and savagely tortured by the DNI, the Honduran secret police. They were later thrown out of helicopters while still alive. The Sun's investigation found that the CIA and US embassy knew of these crimes, but continued to support Battalion 3-16 and ensure that the Embassy's annual human rights report did not contain the full story. According to a 1996 BBC report, Negroponte "knew about the CIA-trained Honduran army unit that tortured and killed alleged subversives." According to the Baltimore Sun report, Negroponte "was ambassador when the worst of the abuses were taking place. He knew everything that was going on."

NEGROPONTE'S REVISIONISM

When Bush announced Negroponte's nomination as ambassador to the UN shortly after coming to office, the move was met with widespread protest. Questioned at the time about whether he had turned a blind eye to human rights abuses in Honduras, Negroponte rejected the suggestion. "I do not believe then [sic], nor do I believe now, that these abuses were part of a deliberate government policy. To this day, I do not believe that death squads were operating in Honduras."

Despite the protests, the Bush administration did not back down--and even went so far as to silence potential witnesses who might have shed some light on Negroponte's criminal history. On March 25, 2001, the Los Angeles Times reported on the sudden deportation from the United States of several former Honduran death squad members who could have provided damaging testimony against Negroponte in his then upcoming Senate confirmation hearings. One of the deported Hondurans was none other than Gen. Luis Alonso Discua, the former commander of Battalion 3-16, then serving as Honduras' deputy ambassador to the UN!

Upon learning of Negroponte's 2001 UN nomination, Reed Brody of Human Rights Watch commented that "he looked the other way when serious atrocities were committed" and that "one would have to wonder what kind of message the Bush administration is sending about human rights by this appointment." Answer: What human rights? When queried about these "serious atrocities," Negroponte told CNN, "to the contrary, I think we bent over backwards to press for elections and for democratic reform.... Frankly, I think that some of the retrospective efforts to try and suggest that we were supportive of or condoned the actions of human rights violators is really revisionistic."

In 1987, during the administration of George HW Bush, Negroponte returned to the National Security Council (NSC) to work under Colin Powell as deputy assistant to the president for national security affairs. Within two years, he was back in Latin America; appointed as ambassador to Mexico, where he served from July 1989 to September 1993. There, he officiated at the block-long, fortified embassy and helped facilitate Mexico's passage of the NAFTA treaty--as well as likely U.S. intelligence operations

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that anticipated a popular reaction to the treaty. Negroponte left Mexico just ahead of the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas.

APPOINTMENT TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Negroponte was sworn in as U.S. Representative to the United Nations on Sept. 18, 2001. By November 2002, he was strong-arming a resolution through the UN Security Council which called for the "disarming" of Iraq. Standing in front of the Security Council with CIA director George Tenet, Negroponte stated that "the Resolution makes clear that any Iraqi failure to comply is unacceptable and that Iraq must be disarmed. One way or another...Iraq will be disarmed." The New York Times would later report (March 29, 2005) that "Mr. Negroponte pressed on foreign colleagues American intelligence on Iraqi weapons that turned out to be profoundly flawed. If he was miffed, Mr. Negroponte never spoke out."

Negroponte also delivered a warning to other less hawkish members of the Security Council, stating that, "if the Security Council fails to act decisively in the event of a further Iraqi violation, this resolution does not constrain any member state from acting to defend itself against the threat posed by Iraq, or to enforce relevant UN resolutions and protect world peace and security." As Stephen Kinzer, writing in the New York Review of Books (September 2001), put it, "giving him this job is a way of telling the UN: 'We hate you.'"

When faced with contention over US intentions during the UN debate leading up to the war in Iraq, Negroponte turned to grandstanding. In March 2003, Negroponte walked out of the General Assembly after Iraq's UN envoy, Mohammed Al-Douri, accused the U.S. of preparing a war of aggression. "Britain and the United States are about to start a real war of extermination" he said, "that will kill everything and destroy everything."

NEGROPONTE IN BAGHDAD

On April 20, 2004, Bush nominated Negroponte as ambassador to Iraq, stating that, "he has done a really good job of speaking for the United States to the world about our intentions to spread freedom and peace." Calling him "a man of enormous experience and skill" was all that our courageous Senators required in order to vote him in by 95-3 on May 6. He was sworn in on June 23.

Negroponte's US Embassy in Baghdad, housed in a palace that once belonged to Saddam Hussein, was and remains the largest embassy in the world, with a "diplomatic staff" of over 3,000. Opting for the kind of diplomacy he's most familiar with, he immediately "shifted more than a \$1 billion to build up the Iraqi Army," diverting the funds "from reconstruction projects" to military and intelligence projects associated with "what intelligence officials describe as the largest C.I.A. station in the world." (NYT , March 29, 2005)

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On Jan. 2, 2004, the Washington Post stated that a "major challenge" facing the diplomatic mission "will be sorting out the terms of the US military presence, which is expected to exceed 100,000 troops even after the occupation ends..." An un-named U.S. "official" stated that "we have to determine what command American troops will be under: Will it be part of some kind of multinational force, under the United Nations, under NATO? Or will they be relatively independent in an agreement with the Iraqi government? These are huge questions to be answered in a very short amount of time." We can rest assured that John Negroponte, the enforcer, made the Iraqi government an offer they couldn't refuse in favor of the "relatively independent" option.

Shortly after taking up the position, Negroponte was asked about eyewitness statements that in late June 2004, Iraq's interim prime minister, Ayad Allawi had, in a gesture of steadfast loyalty, personally executed up to six suspected insurgents in front of his US military bodyguards. While Allawi denies the accusation, Negroponte did not. In an e-mail to the Sydney Morning Herald, July 2004, he stated that "if we attempted to refute each [rumor], we would have no time for other business. As far as this embassy's press office is concerned, this case is closed."

Sydney Morning Herald columnist Alan Ramsey wrote of Negroponte's arrogant side-stepping. "Of course. One only has to consider Negroponte's record as US ambassador in Honduras to know he is a loyal servant of Republican Washington who sees and knows nothing... This same man, with an embassy regime of more than 1,000 American foreign service officers, plus American advisers salted throughout Iraqi ministries, as well as 140,000 US military personnel, now has absolute covert power in Iraq. Of course, 'the case is closed'."

By the first weeks of January 2005, Negroponte was said to be overseeing the formation of death squads in Iraq, prompting media reports about a "Salvador option." MSNBC reported on Jan. 8, 2005 that the Pentagon was "intensively debating an option that dates back to a still-secret strategy in the Reagan administration's battle against the leftist guerrilla insurgency in El Salvador in the early 1980s. Then, faced with a losing war against Salvadoran rebels, the US government funded or supported 'nationalist' forces that allegedly included so-called death squads directed to hunt down and kill rebel leaders and sympathizers. Eventually, the insurgency was quelled, and many U.S. conservatives consider the policy to have been a success, despite the deaths of innocent civilians..."

One Pentagon proposal would send Special Forces teams to advise, support and possibly train Iraqi death squads, most likely hand-picked Kurdish Peshmerga fighters and Shiite militiamen, to target Sunni insurgents and their sympathizers--even across the border into Syria, carrying out assassinations or so-called "snatch" operations, in which the targets are sent to secret facilities for interrogation.

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Major General Muhammad Abdallah al-Shahwani, director of Iraq's National Intelligence Service, was quoted in a Jan. 8, 2005 Newsweek story on the "Salvador Option," warning that the U.S. occupation has failed to crack the problem of broad support for the insurgency. The insurgents, he said, "are mostly in the Sunni areas where the population there, almost 200,000, is sympathetic to them." He said most Iraqis do not actively support the insurgents or provide them with material or logistical help, but at the same time they won't turn them in. One military source suggested that "new offensive operations" are needed that would create a fear of aiding the insurgency. "The Sunni population is paying no price for the support it is giving to the terrorists," he said. "From their point of view, it is cost-free. We have to change that equation."

Threatening everyone in a village with torture and death, if the village is deemed a potential base insurgent operations can be a very effective technique, whether the perpetrators are the Nazi SS in occupied Czechoslovakia, the death squads in El Salvador, or whatever new force is invented in Iraq. This strategy of tactical terror aims to sever an insurgency from its potential base of support.

At least one pro-occupation death squad is already in operation. On Jan. 11, 2004, just days after the Pentagon plans regarding possible "new offensive operations" were revealed, a new militant group, "Saraya Iraqna," began offering big wads of American cash for insurgent scalps--up to \$50,000, the Iraqi paper Al Ittihad reported. "Our activity will not be selective," the group promised.

CIA COUNTERINSURGENCY: PROJECT X

During Negroponte's Honduran ambassadorship, he worked closely with Duane R. Clarridge, aka "Mr. Marone", a high-ranking CIA officer based in Honduras, who was, according to a recent New York Times report (March 29, 2005), "running the covert war against communism in Central America." According to Clarridge, "Negroponte was a big supporter of the agency's covert action mission" there.

At the time, the CIA utilized its "Human Resource Exploitation Training Manual" to teach young Honduran soldiers and others the methodology of torture. Dated 1983, the manual, one in a series of recently "declassified" documents, addresses, among other subjects, "coercive interrogation" techniques utilized in "the torture situation," which is, according to the manual, "a contest between the subject and his tormentor."

The manual discusses inflicting pain or threatening pain, depriving prisoners of food and sleep, making them maintain rigid positions for long periods, stripping them naked, and keeping them blindfolded or in prolonged solitary confinement. Disseminated throughout Latin America during the early 1980s, the manual appears to have been compiled from training courses given to members of the Honduran military. The manual can be assumed to have been sanctioned by higher-ups, including

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Negroponte, given, for example, its statement that, "illegal detention always requires prior [headquarters] approval."

This secret manual was compiled from sections of an earlier 1963 training manual entitled, "KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation." This was a U.S. Military Intelligence field manual written as part of the Army's Foreign Intelligence Assistance Program. According to the manual, "all coercive techniques of interrogation are designed to induce regression" to a state of abject submission. The tormentor's "principal coercive techniques" are "arrest, detention, deprivation of sensory stimuli through solitary confinement or similar methods, threats and fear, debility, pain, heightened suggestibility, hypnosis, narcosis, and induced regression."

In a March 1992 internal "report of investigation," which was sent to then-Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, seven such interrogation manuals used for years by the Pentagon's Southern Command throughout Latin America were said to contain "objectionable" and "prohibited material." Army investigators traced the origins of the instructions on use of beatings, false imprisonment, executions and truth serums back to a top-secret program run by the Army Foreign Intelligence unit in the 1960s code-named "Project X." Written by US Army counterinsurgency experts starting in 1965, the Joint Foreign Intelligence Assistance Program used Project X to train U.S. allies in Vietnam, Iran, Latin America, and elsewhere around the world.

The report to Cheney noted that the "offensive and objectionable material" in the Project X manuals "undermines US credibility, and could result in significant embarrassment." Cheney of course, immediately embarked on a course of "corrective action," namely, to "recall" and destroy as many of the manuals as possible, shredding the "embarrassing" history--though some copies have survived, or perhaps were meant to.

Meanwhile, a July 1991 U.S. Southern Command "confidential" document records a phone conversation with a Captain Victor Tise, who served in 1982 as a counterinsurgency instructor at the School of the Americas (SOA). In it, Tise relates the history of the "objectionable material" in the manuals and the training courses that he assembled for use at the School. According to Tise, in 1976, following a decade of SOA tutoring, use of the Project X material was suspended by Congress and the Carter administration "for fear the training would contribute to Human Rights violations in other countries." But the program was restored by the Reagan administration in 1982, shortly after Negroponte arrived in Honduras.

Tise described Project X as a "training package to provide counterinsurgency techniques learned in Vietnam to Latin American countries." These "techniques" were undoubtedly derived from the Phoenix Program, the CIA's assassination campaign which liquidated 40,000 Vietnamese "subversives." The course materials Tise put together, including the manuals that became the subject

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of the investigations, were sent to Defense Department headquarters "for clearance" in 1982. They "came back approved" and "UNCHANGED," despite the fact that Tise sought to remove--or so he said--the "objectionable" parts. Subsequently, hundreds of the unaltered manuals, "objectionable material" and all, were disseminated for use throughout US-militarized Latin America over the next nine years. Negroponte's role in this particular bit of "objectionable" history remains shrouded, and shredded.

It appears that by 1965, the US intelligence community had seen fit to formalize the hard-learned lessons of the Phoenix Program in Vietnam by commissioning the top-secret Project X. Based at the U.S. Army Intelligence Center & School at Fort Holabird, Maryland, the project drew from "field experience" to "provide intelligence training to friendly foreign countries," according to a Pentagon history prepared in 1991 and released in 1997. According to the Washington Post (March 6, 1997), the Project X materials even suggested that "militaries infiltrate and suppress even democratic political dissident movements and hunt down opponents in every segment of society in the name of fighting Communism..."

In the early 1970s, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center moved to Fort Huachuca in Arizona and began exporting Project X material to foreign U.S. "military assistance groups." By the mid-1970s, the Project X material was going to armies all over the world, in effect, a textbook for global counterinsurgency and terror warfare.

In its 1992 review, the Pentagon also acknowledged that Project X was the source for some of the "objectionable" lessons taught at the School of the Americas where Latin American officers were trained in blackmail, kidnapping, murder and spying on non-violent political opponents. But disclosure of the full story was blocked when Defense Secretary Cheney ordered the destruction of most Project X records. Nearly simultaneously, President George HW Bush pardoned six Reagan-Bush administration figures of any wrongdoing in the Nicaragua operations. These included former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, and Duane Clarridge, by then named as intellectual author of another sinister murder manual, "Psychological Operations in Guerilla Warfare." Produced by the CIA, this booklet openly instructed in the assassination of public officials, and was distributed to the Nicaraguan Contras.

That George W Bush's war on terrorism is really a global war of terror directed against the entire world becomes inescapably clear with the appointment of a man linked to this grisly history to head the entire U.S. intelligence apparatus. Perhaps there is still time to apply pressure on the Senate and halt this next step in the legitimization of torture and state terrorism--if the citizenry, human rights community, clergy and responsible voices in the media can join in a single cry: STOP NEGROPONTE!

DEDICATED TO ARCHBISHOP OSCAR ROMERO, BORN 1917, ASSASSINATED MARCH 25, 1980.

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- **American Terror (21 Jan 2005)**

By Chris Floyd

01/21/05 "[Moscow Times](#)" -- More than two years ago, we wrote here of a secret Pentagon plan to

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foment terrorism by sending covert agents to infiltrate terrorist groups and goad them into action -- in other words, committing acts of murder and destruction. The purpose was two-fold: first, to bring the terrorist groups into the open, where they could be counterattacked; and second, to justify U.S. military attacks on the countries where the terrorists were operating -- attacks which, in the Pentagon's words, would put those nations' "sovereignty at risk." It was a plan that countenanced -- indeed, encouraged -- the deliberate murder of innocent people and the imposition of U.S. military rule anywhere in the world that U.S. leaders desired.

This plan is now being activated.

In fact, it's being expanded, as The New Yorker's Seymour Hersh revealed last week. Not only will U.S.-directed agents infiltrate existing terrorist groups and provoke them into action, but the Pentagon itself will create its own terrorist groups and "death squads." After establishing their terrorist "credentials" through various atrocities and crimes, these American-run groups will then be able to ally with -- and ultimately undermine -- existing terrorist groups.

Top-level officials in the Pentagon, the U.S. intelligence services and the Bush administration confirmed to Hersh that the plan is going forward, under the direction of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld -- just as we noted here in November 2002. Through a series of secret executive orders, George W. Bush has given Rumsfeld the authority to turn the entire world into "a global free-fire zone," a top Pentagon adviser says. These secret operations will be carried out with virtually no oversight; in many cases, even the top military commanders in the affected regions will not be told about them. The American people, of course, will never know what's being done in their name.

The covert units -- including the Pentagon-funded terrorist groups and hit squads -- will be operating outside all constraints of law and morality. "We're going to be riding with the bad boys," one insider told Hersh. Another likened it to the palmy days of the Reagan-Bush years: "Do you remember the right-wing execution squads in El Salvador? We founded them and we financed them. The objective now is to recruit locals in any area we want. And we aren't going to tell Congress about it." Indeed, we reported here last summer that Bush has already budgeted \$500 million to fund local paramilitaries and guerrilla groups in the most volatile areas of the world, a measure guaranteed to produce needless bloodshed, destruction and suffering for innocent people already ravaged by conflict.

The activation of the Pentagon terrorist operation is part of Bush's second-term expansion of the "war on terror." Despite some obfuscating rhetoric about "diplomacy," the Bush regime is pressing ahead with a hard-line strategy aimed at opening new military fronts in the "global free-fire zone." Any dissenting voices within the government are being ruthlessly purged. The Pentagon's secret forces are set for operations in at least 10 countries, and Bush insiders "repeatedly" told Hersh that "Iran is the

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next strategic target."

Iran has long been a focus of the small clique of "global dominationists" -- led by Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Dick Cheney and their acolytes -- who engineered the invasion of Iraq. This group is determined to "whack Iran," as one insider put it, and they're not at all discouraged by the debacle in Iraq; indeed, to them it's a rousing success. Their first objective -- openly stated years ago, before Bush took office -- was the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime and the planting of a U.S. "military footprint" in Iraq. This has now been done. The fact that it has plunged the Iraqi people into a hell of violence, chaos, terror and extremism is of no real concern to the clique. Their lofty rhetoric about "freedom" and "liberation" is meaningless sham, shuck and jive for the rubes. By the admission of the clique's own publications, they seek strategic control over the world's energy resources in order to preserve and expand American geopolitical and economic hegemony in the new century. Everything else -- including the security of the American people, put at increasing risk by the clique's reckless policies -- is of secondary importance.

U.S. forces are already conducting military reconnaissance inside Iran in preparation for strikes on alleged nuclear weapons facilities, Hersh reports. The Pentagon is feverishly updating war plans for a "maximum ground and air invasion of Iran," incorporating the new staging areas now available in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, while employing an Iranian terrorist group, MEK, to launch covert ops and terrorist acts against Tehran. MEK was once given sanctuary by Hussein, who used the group as a brutal enforcer against Kurd and Shiite insurgents. Now Bush, "riding with the bad boys," has embraced the MEK murderers as his own.

In their ignorance and arrogance, the Bushists will almost certainly strike at Iran -- despite the fact that even Iranian dissidents support the effort to make their nation a nuclear power and would join the mullahs in retaliation. The result will be a conflict far surpassing the horror and magnitude of the Iraq disaster.

In our original report on the Pentagon's terror scheme, we wrote: "Bush and his cohorts are plunging the world into an abyss, an endless night of murder and terror -- wholesale, retail, state-sponsored, privatized; of fear and degradation, servility, chaos, and the perversion of all that's best in us." Now the night has come. Now the United States stands openly -- even proudly -- for terrorism, torture and the Hitlerian principle of aggressive war. America has fallen into the pit -- and the hopes of the world go with it.

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- **I Am Become Death - The Destroyer Of The Worlds: (30 Nov 2004)**

The crimson waters of the Euphrates are now emptying into the Persian Gulf the hopes and aspirations of innocent people whose lives were snuffed out on the orders of a man rewarded for his monumental crimes by his great nation.

Anwaar Hussain

11/30/04 "ICH" -- Known as the "city of mosques" for its more than 200 mosques, Fallujah is also known for refusing to add Saddam's name to the call for prayers from its ancient minarets. It is located on the banks of river Euphrates, the largest river in Southwest Asia. The 1700 miles long Euphrates is linked with some of the most important events in olden history.

The city of Ur, found at its mouth, was the birthplace of Abraham. On its banks stood the city of Babylon. In the past, the army of Necho was defeated on its banks by Nebuchadnezzar. Cyrus the Younger and Crassus perished after crossing it. Alexander traversed it and continued his journey eastward. Presently, George Bush's forces are crossing and re-crossing it making its waters redder each time with the blood of Fallujah's citizens.

Fallujah has been laid waste. It has been bombed, re-bombed, its citizens gunned down, its structures devastated by powerful weapons. It is a hell on earth of crushed bodies, shattered buildings and the reek of death. In addition to the artillery and the warplanes dropping 500, 1000, and 2000-pound bombs, 70-ton Abrams Tanks and the murderous AC-130 Spectre gunship that can demolish a whole city block in less than a minute, the Marines had snipers crisscrossing the entire town firing at will at whatever moved outside the buildings. For those inside, the US troops were equipped with thermal sights capable of detecting body heat. Any such detection was eagerly assumed to indicate the presence

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of "insurgents" inviting a deadly salvo.

No body has an accurate idea of how many Iraqis—combatants and noncombatants—have been killed by the thousands of tons of explosives and bullets let loose upon the city. Mortuary teams collecting the dead rotting in the city streets are fighting the wandering dogs that are busy devouring their former masters. The hundreds buried beneath the rubble and debris will be dug out later. A US marine spokesman, Colonel Mike Regner, estimated 1,000 and 2,000 Iraqis dead. The world is awaiting the toll from more reliable sources with a wincing anticipation.

Eyewitnesses report human corpses littering the city's streets, nibbled at by starving canines. Parents have been forced to watch their wounded children die and then bury their bodies in their gardens. An Iraqi journalist, reporting in the city for the BBC and Reuters, said: "I have seen some strange things recently, such as stray dogs snatching bites out of bodies lying on the streets. Meanwhile, people forage in their gardens looking for something to eat. Those that have survived this far are looking gaunt. The opposite is happening to the dead—left where they fell, they are now bloated and rotting..."

Some images that did manage to filter through the layers of American censorship include scenes of the devastated landscape of the city; the bloodied and fly-covered corpses of young Iraqi men lying in the streets or heaped in rows amidst the debris; a headless body; women and children escaping with the few possessions they have left; mortuary teams collecting the dead; and Fallujah infants being treated for horrific injuries in Baghdad hospitals. US general John Sattler declared: "We have liberated the city of Fallujah."

The assault on Fallujah is a pure and simple Nazi-style collective punishment, not liberation. The city has been razed to the ground because its political, spiritual and tribal leaders, motivated by Iraqi patriotism and opposition to the presence of foreign troops in their country, organized a guerilla resistance to the US invasion.

The aim of the US assault is to make Fallujah a model to the rest of Iraq of what will happen to those thinking on similar lines. It is the leading thrust of an orgy of killing intended to crush and drive underground every voice of dissent and ensure that elections this coming January will throw up a weak-willed, pro-US toady regime. The American military is rumored to be planning similar attacks on scores of other Iraqi cities and towns.

Not a single major voice has been raised in the American media against the ongoing destruction of Fallujah. While much of the world recognizes something dreadful has occurred, the US press does not even bat an eyelash over the organized leveling of a city of 300,000 people. In none of the US media commentaries is there a single phrase of unease about the moral, or legal, questions involved in the

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attack on Fallujah. None have dared say it in as many words that the American military operation in the city is an unlawful act of aggression in an equally illegal, criminal, aggressive war.

The opposite is true in fact. Ralph Peters, the author of "Beyond Baghdad: Postmodern War and Peace," a rabid Neocon mouthpiece and revered by the ruling Neocons, in his prominently placed November 4 New York Post article wrote: "We need to demonstrate that the US military cannot be deterred or defeated. If that means widespread destruction, we must accept the price. Most of Fallujah's residents—those who wish to live in peace—have already fled. Those who remain have made their choice. We need to pursue the terrorists remorselessly..."

"That means killing. While we strive to obey the internationally recognized laws of war (though our enemies do not), our goal should be to target the terrorists and insurgents so forcefully that few survive to raise their hands in surrender. We don't need more complaints about our treatment of prisoners from the global forces of appeasement. We need terrorists dead in the dust. And the world needs to see their corpses..."

"Even if Fallujah has to go the way of Carthage, reduced to shards, the price will be worth it. We need to demonstrate our strength of will to the world, to show that there is only one possible result when madmen take on America."

Though the carnage carried out by Hitler's regime was on a different scale than that now being committed by the Bush administration, there are striking parallels. For the first time since the Wehrmacht swept through Europe, the world is witnessing a major imperialist power launching an unjustifiable war, placing an entire people under military occupation and carrying out acts of collective and visible punishment against civilian populace. The US media's wretched connivance in this deception is incredible, as incredible as the fact that this war, based on undeniable lies as it was, was sold to the American people as the gospel truth ordained by God.

To be honest, George Bush is not the first US president ordering the state's machinery to pulverize nations and peoples abroad. Even a hurried analysis of the American's government's conduct in the last century makes for a most damning indictment. Out of the US's past foreign policy woodwork, crawl out numerous invasions, bombings, overthrowing governments, suppressing movements for social change, assassinating political leaders, perverting elections, manipulating labor unions, manufacturing "news", selling blatant lies, death squads, torture, biological warfare, depleted uranium, drug trafficking, mercenaries ... you name it.

This terrorizing of nations and individuals by various US governments has been going on full bore since at least the late 1890s, when Americans obliterated a million Filipinos to keep them safe from the

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Spanish. 60 million Native Americans, the children of a lesser God, were exterminated by the orders of earlier administrations throughout the 19th century. The difference with past is that George Bush does it in the name of his God, a God far superior to any other and sanctioned fully by his coterie. Ironically, both George Bush and his nemesis, Osama Bin Laden, refer to God almost equal number of times in their public pronouncements.

The United States went into Afghanistan to kill or capture Osama Bin Laden. They killed 10,000 innocent Afghans but could not find their man. They went into Iraq to discover and eliminate Saddam's WMDs. They killed tens of thousands of Iraqis but found no WMD. They laid siege to the city of Fallujah to kill or capture Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. The city and its inhabitants have been blown to smithereens but there is no Zarqawi. Is it not only too convenient? Next when they want to attack Pakistan, or Iran, they simply have to say that Bin Laden is taking refuge there. Just like the next Iraqi city awaiting the fate of Fallujah will be the latest refuge of Zarqawi; the WMDs too could next fly to Syria or may be even Saudi Arabia. Is one imagining things here? Or is it that the US imperialism is indeed now riding full time on the back of gargantuan lies?

After granting George Bush a carte blanche to do what he likes the American citizens, of course, continue their daily lives oblivious to what is being done in their name. Between their work places and the nearest fast food joints, they just do not have enough time to check back on the activities of the man who is playing the Terminator in the name of God and in their name.

Those who do get to know a little are in a constant state of denial. One thing is sure though. Just like in post-war Germany where some even denied the holocaust. "We didn't know what was happening" is bound to become a cliché that will one day be used to ridicule Americans who claim ignorance of the atrocities committed by their administration in their name. Ironically, Khomeini died trying to get people to see America as "the great Satan," It took George W. Bush and his cohorts just four years to do exactly that, and not just in the eyes of the Muslim world.

As America sinks deeper into the heart of darkness, its thinking citizens need to jolt themselves out of their apathy. With each passing day their beloved America is scaling ever greater heights of hideous glories. The man in charge, George W. Bush, is actually living the throes of his apocalyptic dream of "I am become death-the destroyer of the worlds". He codenamed his destruction of Fallujah as "Operation Phantom Fury". But as the falsehood dies and gives way to truth, as all lies must one day, it will be the Iraqi dead that will form a legion of phantoms and would throng around Americans in a macabre dance to haunt them for decades. The fury of those phantoms will be hair raising.

Fallujah will enter history as the place where US imperialism carried out an offense of heinous proportions this November, a monstrous crime far beyond any possible forgiveness. The crimson

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waters of the Euphrates are now emptying into the Persian Gulf the hopes and aspirations of innocent people whose lives were snuffed out on the orders of a man rewarded for his monumental crimes by his great nation.

The Euphrates flows on.

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