Iraq's Security and Intelligence Structures:
More Problems

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Key Points

*   Saddam Hussein's powerful security and intelligence apparatus was almost entirely Sunni.

*   Iraq's most formidable enemy has been Iran, a country with which Baghdad seems to have lost most of its intelligence battles.

*   Considering the new, dominant role played by the Shiites in the present Iraqi administration and the Iranian influence in that community, the new Iraqi special services are bound to face problems, many of them manufactured or fuelled by Teheran.

*   The most difficult task in Iraq is, and will remain, the running of an effective security network, to address the most urgent security threats inside Iraq and countering foreign based terrorists.

*   The presence of allied troops in Iraq makes it easier for foreign hostile intelligence services, especially those from Islamic states, to recruit locals.

*   The Iraqi special services will remain at the very best an awkward partner of the allied forces and may become openly hostile once the coalition forces leave the country.

*   The best the allies can hope for at the moment is to be able to influence the recruitment and training of Iraqi special services personnel, by emphasising and occasionally enforcing professionalism and patriotic teaching based on Iraqi nationalism and positive nation building, excluding hatred of any nation or group and emphasising the common points of the two dominant regions.

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Introduction – "House With No Doors, windows or Guards"[1]

More than three years after the allies entered Iraq, the coalition's enemies have turned the conflict into a guerrilla/terrorist war of attrition. With no happy end in sight, it is now almost certain that the coalition forces are planning an exit strategy. This may happen later rather than sooner, with the continuing bloodshed slowing down the normalisation of the country and the withdrawal, but in the meantime Iraqi governments will need to develop a new, functioning security apparatus which can render ineffective radicals who may be supported by foreign governments, aiming at hurting the members of the coalition; dominating the country; attempting to establish a radical Islamic state or bases from which they could launch terrorist operations against Western interests.

Iraq has become a battlefield in which small radical minorities of Sunnis and Shias fight coalition troops and are even more preoccupied with killing and intimidating each other. The Sunni/Shia killing campaign, fuelled by foreign special services, has been the most formidable obstacle in establishing viable power structures working in the interest of a new, stable Iraq.

1. New Special Services – More problems

It was clear from the first days of what many Iraqis describe today as an occupation, that the new government, whoever was going to be in charge of it, would need security and intelligence organs and that it would be impossible to set up such an organisation without the participation of members of Saddam Hussein's security apparatus.

The rumour about the resumption of work of the new intelligence departments covering Iran and Syria began at the end of July 2003.[2] On 25 September 2003, the Iraqi newspaper Al-Yawm al-Akhar reported that Lieutenant-General Tahir Jalil al-Habbush, the last head of Saddam's civilian intelligence service, who fled to Kurdistan on the eve of the fall of Baghdad, was to supervise the establishment of the new Iraqi intelligence organisation. He was allegedly selecting his old subordinates who been working against Syria and Iran. Working against Iran also meant monitoring the Shia community in Iraq.[3] The problem was that the allied forces in Iraq claimed not to have known about Gen al-Habbush's whereabouts, and four years later he still has not been apprehended. The Intelligence HQ was targeted in October 2005 by a suicide bomber. A number of personnel were wounded.[4]

In November 2003, Adnan Pachachi, a senior member of the Iraqi Governing Council, said that Iraq needs a "well-trained and well armed police force and intelligence service. We also need to improve our intelligence methods." He accepted

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that the experience of some members of the former special services would be necessary.[5] It was evident that the new Iraqi leader would need all the security paraphernalia of a state fighting for its survival. The statement was later echoed by Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, who told the Egyptian newspaper Al-Ahram that the new government in Baghdad "reinstated many officers because it is difficult to create an officer overnight".[6] Maj-Gen Samir Mahdi al-Wa'ili, undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Security Affairs announced three days later that his ministry was ready to recruit former security personnel "whose hands are not stained with their brothers' blood".[7]

The creation of new special services with the assistance, or full participation, of Saddam's security personnel was bound to anger the Shia majority, one of the main targets of their attention in the past. Especially in the hot political climate in Iraq, this problem was certain to snowball into unmanageable proportions because the more vengeful the Shia were becoming, the more pressured the new government would be to look for experts to combat this, resulting in the recruitment of more of Saddam's former security staff. Already in October 2003, a group of young Iraqis announced the creation of revenge squads with the sole purpose of killing Saddam's security and intelligence personnel.[8]

In January 2004, the official spokesman for the Iraqi National Congress [INC] accused the coalition forces of establishing the army and security agencies without the knowledge of the interim Iraqi Governing Council and of re-appointing some of the henchmen of the Saddam's regime.[9] In March 2004, one of the Iraqi papers announced that the new intelligence service was to include 2,500 members of Saddam's intelligence service.[10] This was another provocative piece of disinformation. Even five months later the service had less than 1,000 employees.[11] The Iraqi Governing Council let it be known that it had discussed establishing an Iraqi intelligence service which would exclude all the former Baath Party members, but it did not mention the "old" intelligence personnel. The new organisation was to be supervised by the newly created National Security Council.[12] According to Iraqi Interior Minister Falah, the new security service would have only information-gathering functions, without the power to arrest anyone.[13]

Muhammad Abdallah al-Shahwani (68) became the first official General Director of the new Iraqi National Intelligence Department (NID). Born in 1938 in Mosul, al-Shawani joined the army in 1955 and graduated from the Iraqi Military Academy three years later. He served for 13 years as an instructor at the Special Forces School and was pensioned off in 1984, at the age of 46, with the rank of major general. Although put under security surveillance, Gen al-Shahwani escaped to the UK in 1990, where he led a secret resistance group until 1996. To punish him, Saddam's henchmen murdered his three sons and other members of the family. He returned to Iraq in 2003 after taking an active part in its liberation.[14] Gen Shahawani and his organisation are monitored by Husayn Kamal, a Sunni Kurd, the interior ministry's undersecretary for intelligence affairs.[15] By autumn 2004, the not so new Iraqi intelligence service had become one of the prime targets of Shia revenge squads. Between 29 September and 14 October 2004 alone, 18 Iraqi intelligence employees were murdered in well planned attacks. General al-Shahwani accused Iran and members of "political organizations operating in Iraq" of the killings, an accusation clearly directed at the Shia community.[16] Iraqi Defence Minister Hazim al-Sha'lan repeated al-Shahawani's allegations against Iran in December 2004, also blaming Syria for training terrorists.[17] The Iranians ignored this, but the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) rejected the accusation, accusing Gen al-Shahawani of making unauthorised statements.[18] On the other hand, the National Security Adviser Muwaffaq al-Rubay'i in 2004

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described the Salaafis, organized crime and Saddam supporters as the main threats to Iraq's security, without mentioning Iran.[19]

Victimised in the past, the Shia community was a fertile ground for violent groups bent on destruction and penetrated by the Iranian special services. They have been determined to continue their revenge campaign and the religious quest. Their attempt to penetrate the new Iraqi security organisation has been only partly successful. According to unconfirmed reports, at the beginning of 2004, the Shias represented 3 per cent of the Iraqi intelligence service and the rest were Sunnis and Kurds.[20] Many of those whose applications to join special services and special forces were rejected blamed the ruling parties for dividing influences in these organisations. The rejected candidates complained that the applications for the Special Forces required the support of the Islamic Da'wah Party, applications for the security forces needed that of the National Accord Movement and those who wished to join the intelligence service required the endorsement of the Kurdish parties.[21] In April 2005, the National Assembly decided to question the minister of interior about the alleged re-appointment of 5,000 former security and intelligence employees.[22] Gen Al-Shahwani said two months later that the employees of Saddam's special services represent "only five per cent of the current department's formation". The number of people working for him did not exceed 1,000 - the old system employed about 15,000 people.[23]

Iraqi intelligence and security officials have clearly defined terrorism as the main problem. The Shia officials blame only the Sunni radical elements, including Saudi salafists and the Syrians. The Sunnis usually blame the Shias and Iran – both sides being correct, if somewhat selective, in their accusations.

At the beginning of 2005, Maj-Gen al-Shahwani said that he estimated the number of gunmen in Iraq at 20,000 to 30,000. They are supported by around 200,000 people giving the combatants logistical support.[24] Numerically the number of combatants is said to have diminished recently. Their ability to hurt both Iraqi and coalition forces has not diminished, however. A major investment and reforms of intelligence and security services was inevitable. The Interior Ministry began by setting up an electronic communication interception centre closely linked with the Rapid Reaction Police Brigade.[25] The major problem remains the human factor in a working atmosphere where Iraqi nationalism has only the bitter taste of the previous regime, and the ethnic and religious groups have never stopped fighting. The reorganisation of the intelligence service into a "National Information and Investigation Agency" announced in March 2006 will not change much, as the principal human and administrative ingredients are the same.[26]

2. On the Ruins of Saddam Hussein's Empire

Saddam Hussein built the most powerful (outside Israel) and one of the most cruel security and intelligence communities in the history of the Middle East. His whole security apparatus has been assessed at 150,000 to 200,000 people, including support staff.[27] Its extremely brutal methods of control over the whole country were morbidly successful, considering the tribal, social and religious divisions of Iraq, Saddam's disastrous foreign adventures and the volatile nature of the region. Brutally effective, Saddam Hussein's security apparatus consisted of seven principal organisations, the Presidential Affairs Department and the whole Baath Party administration, like his special services, was entirely at his disposal. (See Appendix 1) Saddam Hussein did not trust his most capable men, and learned little

from his disastrous campaign against Iran and Kuwait, in spite of warnings from intelligence officials.[28] The rotation of top security personnel was frequent and brutal. The purges of power structures had one aim – to keep the dictator and those close to him in power. These methods were effective against internal opponents but they did not stop the US intelligence community and its allies collecting substantial amounts of useful information before the military campaign against Saddam Hussein began, in spite of the paucity of humint sources at the very top of the Iraqi leadership. The speed and efficiency with which the allied forces took over Iraq suggests that the battlefield intelligence information available to the anti-Saddam coalition was very good.[29]

The intelligence information which helped to topple Saddam Hussein was built up from information gained during and after the liberation of Kuwait, including from prisoners of war; a stream of defectors coming from Iraq in the last two decades;[30] Iraqi nationals who either volunteered or were persuaded to cooperate; and technical intelligence collection with the help of regional countries interested in weakening or destroying Saddam, the new NATO countries which during the Cold War had extensive commercial contacts with Baghdad, countries in which Iraqi intelligence personnel were particularly active and some elements of the Kurdish resistance movements.[31]

Where the coalition got its assessment wrong was the expectation that the liberation of Iraq from Saddam Hussein would result in a consensual Iraqi government supported by an enthusiastic population, willing to concentrate on rebuilding their country. For the democratic, comparatively accountable, media-driven, transparent, quick-fix world of allied governments, this was the only acceptable outcome. They ignored clearly visible religious, ethnic and regional frictions bound to create major problems.

Making post Saddam's Iraq stable, with the religious divide and unfriendly Syria and Iran happy to hurt the USA "on the cheap" was almost mission impossible from the outset. Rebuilding the Iraqi special services has been a vital but equally difficult task. As long as the coalition forces are able to monitor, and to some degree influence the situation, the new services will be able to function, in spite of leakages, frictions, political patronage and divided loyalties. Allied departure would most probably result in the instant fragmentation of loyalties in special services and other power structures. The biggest benefactor of such a collapse would be Iran, whose special services have been consistently investing in subverting and weakening Iraq and the allied forces.

3. Iran – The Main Enemy

The silent war between the Iraqi and Iranian special services has been going on for a number of decades. It was largely overlooked by the international commentators focused on the war between the two countries in the 1980s and later on other conflicts and instabilities in the region. The standing of the two countries on the international arena was clear and unambiguous until the end of the 1970s. The special services of both countries, with the blessing of their political masters, have been working for decades to undermine each other. Until 1979, Iran was ruled by the pro-US and generally Western orientated Shah Reza Pahlavi. Iraq, like most of the Arab countries resentful of Washington's alliance with Israel and Iran, had close links to the USSR and its Warsaw Treaty partners.

Iraqi special services won their first, short lived and spectacular victory in their struggle against their Iranian opponents when Gen Teymur Bakhtiar, the head of

the Iranian security and intelligence service SAVAK, who was dismissed by the Shah in 1961, defected to Iraq with a group of his former underlings and set up, with the full support of the Iraqi intelligence and security services contacts with Dr Radmaneh, the Secretary General of the Iranian Communist Party. The second round was won by Teheran, when SAVAK succeeded in penetrating Bakhtiar's group. He was killed by one of his assistants while on a hunting trip. His killer, sent by SAVAK, escaped across the border to Iran and was later resettled in South America.[32]

In 1972, SAVAK recruited one of the highest ranking security officials in Iraq, blackmailing him after a chance surveillance operation in Baghdad.[33] The same year, an Iraqi Intelligence Officer, Hashem Nuri, defected to Iran and provided SAVAK with valuable information about his organization and the Iraqi Baath Party, including the at the time little known fact that Saddam Hussein chaired the liquidation committee of the party.[34]

The Iraqi leaders saw the Iraqi Shia community as a major potential threat and in 1970 they began mass deportations of Iraqi Shias, to which they later added physical elimination of selected Shia religious leaders and mass arrests of Shia activists. The level of Iraqi leadership paranoia was heightened by a failed plot in June 1973, organised by a small group of Iraqi Shia security officers. Between 1970-1975 Baghdad expelled 54,000 Iranians living in Iraq, attempting at the same time to infiltrate Iran with its own intelligence personnel and collaborators. Agents of SAVAK responsible for the filtration points for the refugees were able to catch 250 Iraqi Army officers attempting to enter Iran illegally.[35]

In 1974, frontier clashes between the two countries broke out. The Iranian special services and the army supported with weapons and money the Kurdish rebels in Iraq, forcing Baghdad to seek an uncomfortable peaceful solution of the conflict. In March 1975, at the OPEC meeting in Algiers, Iran and Iraq signed an agreement in accordance with which both countries accepted their common frontiers. Iraq accepted the Iranian territorial demands, including the contested Shatt Al-Arab waters. In return Iran stopped military and financial assistance to the Kurds. The agreement ended the frontier clashes but was seen in Baghdad as a sad necessity. It was signed, not by the Iraqi president Al Bakr, but by his number two, Saddam Hussein, for whom the agreement must have been a personal insult, and therefore temporary once he took power. The Iraqis continued expelling Shias in large numbers and in October 1978 they expelled even their main anti-Shah asset Ayatollah Khomeini. From the late 1970s about 200,000 Shias, described by the regime in Baghdad as an Iranian fifth column, were deported from Iraq. Fadhil al-Barak, the head of the Iraqi Intelligence "Mukhabarat" between 1983 and 1984 described them as people "who are linked historically, psychologically, socially, politically and economically with their Iranian homeland".[36]

The Iraqi security methods were brutal in the extreme but their security concerns were to some extent understandable. The fall of the Shah and the ascent of Ayatollah Khomeini brought about an unprecedented surge of Shiism and Iraq with its large Shia population was the nearest natural target of the new Iranian leadership. The purges in the Iranian armed forces and SAVAK convinced Saddam Hussein that his armies would be able to take by force what Iraq lost in the October 1975 agreement and win even more land and concessions from Teheran. The Iraqi all-out offensive began on 22 September 1980. The Iran-Iraq war stopped the spread of 'Iranian' revolution in Iraq and served Saddam Hussein as excuse to suppress or eliminate the Shia clergy and to brutalize Iraq's Shia community. The

UN brokered a cease-fire in August 1988 but a peace treaty between the two countries is yet to be signed.

The security and intelligence conflict has never stopped. Both had substantial contingents of nationals from the other's country, ready to do anything to undermine the regimes of the countries they came from. They were equipped and trained by their host countries for irregular warfare, subversion and spying. The Iranians had the advantage of sharing the same religion with the majority of the Iraqi population The Iraqi intelligence services had no such potentially receptive pool for recruitment in Iran. The Marxist organisation Mujahdeen-e Khalq, was set up in 1965 in Iran and then embedded in Baghdad in 1983. The organization operated in the Iraq-Iran border area, harassing the Iranian side and conducting reconnaissance operations for the Iraqis.[37] The Iranians treated Mujahdeen with the seriousness they deserved. The Iranian special services killed several Mujahdeen officials and appear to have been a step ahead of most of their operations. The Mujahdeen's incursion into Iran on 25 July 1988, less than a month before the cease-fire was signed, was intercepted by the Iranians and 2,000 Mujahdeen fighters were killed.

The Iraqis tried to approach Iran during the UN oil embargo. According to unconfirmed reports Baghdad tried to establish contacts with Teheran in the spring of 1999, when the head of the Iraqi Mukhabarat visited Teheran in an attempt to improve relations and facilitate sales of oil through Iranian ports, circumventing the UN embargo.[38] The Iranians refused to cooperate.

Mujahdeen-e Khalq became a spent force after the allied forces took over Iraq. In the present climate, however, and with an unhelpful Iranian attitude, certain members of Mojahdeen-e Khalq may still become an attractive asset for any anti-Iranian coalition, in spite of their controversial methods.[39] In the post-war Iraq the Iranian intelligence organisations will continue to be particularly active among the Iraqi Shias, a liberated but still resentful majority, coordinating their actions through selected Shia mosques. The present leadership in Teheran is aware that, at the moment at least, the only way it can hurt its greatest enemy, the USA, is by subverting Washington's efforts to stabilise Iraq. Gen Muhammad al-Shahawani, the head of the Iraqi National Intelligence Department, said that 27 members of the diplomatic staff in the Iranian embassy in Baghdad were spies recruiting killers of Iraqi special service personnel.[40] Iranian interference will continue regardless of who is in charge in Baghdad. The Iranians know their enemy. The head of Iran's security and intelligence ministry (Ettela'at) served four years as ambassador to Baghdad.[41]

4. Special Services of Neighbouring Countries and Other Visitors

Throughout Saddam's rule Iraq, like most other important or controversial countries, had been periodically courted and permanently spied upon. The heads of democratic intelligence services had no difficulties convincing their politicians that Iraq should be "looked at". It was a strategically important country, an important oil producer and exporter, run by a particularly dangerous dictator, whose intelligence services behaved with exceptional brutality murdering, kidnapping and intimidating their opponents, real or imaginary, as an integral part of its internal and foreign policy.

Relations with other neighbours' special services were usually less than friendly, mainly because of Saddam's imperial ambitions and uncompromising character. All its four Arab neighbours recognised Iraq's importance as an oil producer, an

unyielding opponent of Israel and a bulwark against the militant Shiism supported by Teheran. Turkey, as a NATO member, was one of the principal targets of Iraqi intelligence operations. Relations with Syria were not good because of the differences between the two presidents and the later bifurcated Baath party. Heavily dependent on Iraqi oil, Jordan was not trusted because of its general pro-Western stance and after the invasion of Kuwait, Saddam had no friends in Riyad. Iraq's position and policies attracted the attention of the largest and most influential intelligence services in the world.

The USA

The Cold War put the USA on the Iranian side until the militant Shias took over in 1979. At the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war, the Iranians were still holding to the US diplomatic hostages taken on 4 November 1979, in clear violation of all international norms of behaviour. They were released instantly when Ronald Reagan was sworn in. After the release of the US diplomats the Iranians had no reason to fear direct US military intervention. Shaken by Teheran's aggressive militancy, however, Washington made sure that Teheran was not going to be the winner in the war with Iraq, and the US intelligence community provided the Iraqis with necessary intelligence information through a small team of experts stationed in Baghdad.[42] This limited intelligence assistance to Baghdad ceased immediately with the end of the conflict.[43]

For the last 16 years Iraq has been one of the principal targets of the US intelligence community. Irrespective of how many losses and political bruises the US has sustained by the time of its pull-out of Iraq, its security interest in the region will not diminish. The US intelligence community has at its disposal the archive of all power structures of Iraq and a detailed knowledge of the new security and intelligence organisations.[44] Even if the future Iraqi government was to turn against the USA, Washington's experience, new and old intelligence assets and continuing investment in its intelligence community observing the Middle East will continue to make it one of the major players in the region.

The USSR and Russia

After the early 1970s mass expulsion of Soviet military and security advisers from Egypt, Baghdad could have been Moscow's main Middle Eastern ally. In 1969 however, the ruling Baath party began gradual and brutal suppression of the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP). When in 1972 the USSR and Iraq signed a friendship treaty, the old ICP was practically destroyed. What was left of it was willing to collaborate with the Baath party and the Iraqi security organs. The friendship treaty was followed by an agreement allowing the Soviet KGB to assist Iraq in reorganising its internal security bodies, supply the Iraqis with surveillance equipment, exchange intelligence information and provide training for Iraqi civilian and military security and intelligence personnel in the USSR. The agreement included a clause on assistance by Iraqi personnel to Soviet nationals in third countries in exceptional circumstances.

The decision taken in Moscow to cooperate with the Iraqi intelligence community was a risky strategy but it offered interesting challenges. The Soviet intelligence community gained a new foothold in the Middle East, after losing one in Egypt. Moscow could call for Iraqi assistance in NATO countries where their Warsaw Pact allies were watched almost as attentively as were the KGB and GRU (military

intelligence) officers. In the 1980s the Iraqi military attachés received orders to gather information on technical aspects of weapons of mass destruction in foreign countries and their stockpiles.[45] The first part of the order was a logical element of the Iraqi military ambitions, to develop weapons of mass destruction. However, even if Saddam Hussein considered sending a terrorist group to infiltrate or attack a depot holding WMD in a foreign country, their chance of bringing back to Iraq samples of such weapons or their technical specification was practically nil. Information about WMD stockpiles was more useful to Moscow than to Baghdad. The Iraqi intelligence services were also tasked with finding out about the structure of NATO forces, of which the sole direct beneficiary was Moscow.[46]

The cooperation between the KGB, the GRU and Iraqi intelligence was not a partnership of equals. The Iraqis were a useful intelligence subcontractor for the USSR, with a serious nuisance value for countries targeted by the Soviet intelligence organizations, stretching the security budget and manpower resources in the countries in which they operated. Originally the Iraqi General Intelligence Department relied on assistance from the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Cuba. These four countries provided Iraq with technical equipment and training.[47] Gradually other Soviet satellites began to cooperate with the Iraqis. Moscow was extraordinarily pragmatic when it came to intelligence cooperation with Iraq, maybe because it mirrored some of its own old Stalinist policies and their brief happy relationship with Maoist China.

In 1975 the Iraqi security organizations arrested twenty-one communist military officers. They were incarcerated for three years and in May 1978 Saddam Hussein, nominally still only the second most important man in Iraq, but already in charge of all power organizations, ordered their execution. The Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies protested and Moscow organized a diplomatic campaign in defence of the condemned. Saddam did not spare the officers and ordered the USSR to relocate its embassy, which was situated near one of Saddam's main palaces and the HQ of the Baath Party. He suspected, probably not without reason, that his Soviet allies of convenience were monitoring his and his officials' conversations from the embassy. After some undiplomatic arm-twisting the Russians moved to the new premises.

All this did not stop the cooperation of the Soviet and Iraqi intelligence services against common opponents. In 1975 the Iranians, after a laborious investigation, caught Maj Gen Ahmad Moghrrabi, a general staff officer working for the KGB. According to the Iranians the material received was then transmitted to Baghdad, which imprudently acted instantly on the information. The Iraqis' immediate and precise reactions triggered a successful investigation in Teheran.[48]

In 1983 Saddam Hussein appointed Dr Fadhil al-Barak as head of the Iraqi intelligence service. Dr Barak once worked in the Iraqi embassy in Moscow and wrote his doctoral thesis there (See Appendix 1).[49] The Soviet KGB and the Iraqis in the early 1980s ran a Norwegian diplomat, Arne Treholt.[50] Treholt was of little direct value for the Iraqis – his main "attraction" was his brief access to some of NATO's documents and the knowledge of the inner workings of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UN, hardly a top level priority information for a country fighting for its survival in the bloody conflict with Iran. The Iraqis were in Treholt's case most probably running errands for the KGB who were encountering difficulties in Scandinavia, as a result of the cooperation offered to British Intelligence by one of the KGB's top experts on Scandinavia, Oleg Gordievski. Treholt was arrested in 1984 and sentenced to 20 years for spying.

The Russo-Iraqi intelligence cooperation survived for almost three decades. In the mid 1990s, the Egyptians arrested a former employee of their Passport Office in al-Minya region. He was working for the Iraqi and Russian intelligence services.[51] In the Middle East Moscow's choice of partners was severely restricted after the pro-American Shah was replaced by anti-everything Imam Khomeini. Iraq was a major Soviet military hardware customer and military and security partner in the Middle East. The Soviet ability to provide the Iraqis with sensitive information from Iran must however have been reduced in 1982 by the defection from their Teheran embassy of one of their KGB "front line" officers Vladimir Kuzichkin, forcing Moscow to roll up some of their intelligence networks. Iraqi military hardware purchases were accompanied by extensive training programmes which included sigint, elint and cryptographic elements - the first Iraqi sigint centre appeared in June 1973, after the two countries signed the friendship treaty.[52]

Mikhail Gorbachev's decision to appoint Yevgeniy Primakov as his personal messenger to Iraq to solve the first Gulf conflict, provoked by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, was met with relief in Baghdad and with misgivings in the capitals of the coalition determined to force Saddam to leave the country. The coalition saw him as a competent and knowledgeable negotiator but also a cold warrior, whose priorities were to strengthen the Soviet position in the area and weaken the West, not to remove the Iraqis from Kuwait. Primakov insists that his main task was to convince Saddam Hussein that 5,000 Soviet nationals working in Iraq and their dependents should be allowed to return home. On at least one of his three visits to Baghdad between 1990 and 1991 Yevgeniy Primakov was accompanied by Gen Vyacheslav Ivanovich Gurgenov, the head of the Middle Eastern and African Department of the KGB Intelligence Directorate. They accomplished their mission, making in the process many enemies in the anti-Saddam coalition, but the Soviet nationals in Iraq were allowed to return home before the hostilities started.[53] Yevgeniy Primakov returned officially to Baghdad on 17 March 2003, that is three days before the allied invasion of Iraq, this time as an ex-head of the Russian intelligence service, ex-minister of foreign affairs and ex-prime minister, on a make-or-break mission to convince Saddam to leave his post and Iraq.[54] He failed.

The training of selected Iraqi special services personnel in Russia continued until the beginning of the new century. According to British and American media, Iraqi special services officials attended brief technical courses in Russia as late as September 2002.[55] Boris Labusov, the head of the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) Press Office announced in response to these accusations that "We do not comment on groundless and unproven accusations carried by trashy publications".[56] Having traditionally excellent contacts in the Middle East and a good knowledge of Saddam's brutally effective but leaky special service system, however, Moscow would not "invest" too much in them before a battle they were bound to lose. In Baghdad the Russian officials kept a watchful eye on the events in Iraq until the final phase of the coalition campaign. The SVR and GRU stations kept functioning until the last moment. On 20 March 2003 both outposts were put on a special-condition working regime. Both teams liaised to the end with Saddam's special services. The Russians transferred to Iraq two SVR special forces support teams and a similar team was moved to Iran where the Russian diplomats leaving Baghdad were supposed to travel.[57]

The relations between the two special services had their ups and downs. The Russians suspected that Iraq financed groups or individuals supporting its interests in Russia.[58] The Iraqis knew that the Russians recruited at the end of the 1990s Maj Gen Ismat Judi Muhamed, the director of the Iraqi military armament

and equipment directorate, the same man who successfully recruited Jurgen Gietler, the German civil servant happy to share with the Iraqis the secrets of the German Foreign Ministry. The Iraqis accused the Russian SVR of bribing Gen Muhhamed so he would endorse unauthorized purchases of Russian military hardware.[59] In the summer of 2001, Saddam Hussein appointed Sami Hanna, a former commercial project director in the Iraqi intelligence service, as the man in charge of intelligence and trade relations with Russia. He was to be based in Moscow.[60] The Iraqis needed military and security equipment Russia was willing to sell.

However, if the reports found by the allies in Baghdad, suggesting that the Russian SVR provided the Iraqis with the details of a private conversation between British Prime Minister Blair and his Italian counterpart Berlusconi are probably genuine, they are not necessarily accurate. This could have been the Mukhabarat chief of station in Moscow attempting to add credibility to the warnings given to him by the SVR by "sexing up" his report. The US media reports in March 2006 that the Russian ambassador in Baghdad passed to the Iraqi leadership information allegedly obtained by an SVR mole inside the US military machinery are unconvincing for the same reason.

France

The French intelligence service established close links with the Iraqi special services in the 1970s. The French *Service de Documentation Exterieure et de Contre-Espionage* (SDECE), responsible for intelligence, established contacts with Saddam Hussein through the good offices of Sadoun Shakir, the head of the Iraqi Security Service. Saddam Hussein, still only the second most important man in Iraq, came to Paris at the beginning of the 1970s and had a meeting with the head of SDECE, Alexandre de Marenches. The French told their visitor that they were unhappy with the Iraqi intelligence services' support given to known international terrorists and gave him irrefutable evidence to prove the point. Saddam Hussein liked the straight talk and by then he knew that France was a country he could do business with. The eagerness with which the French intelligence service was willing to collaborate with Baghdad was never shared by their counter-intelligence colleagues. On 31 July 1978 a group of Iraqi "diplomats" accredited in Paris, led by First Secretary Ibrahim Al-Sighab, attempted to kill a Palestinian terrorist in French custody. The Palestinian had attacked the Iraqi embassy in Paris but later surrendered to a French anti-terrorist team. The Iraqis opened fire as the terrorist was sitting in a police car, guarded by two police inspectors. One of the policemen died, the other was seriously wounded. The terrorist received a leg wound. The Iraqis, protected by diplomatic immunity, were expelled.[61]

In spite of this, the contacts between the intelligence services of the two countries continued successfully throughout the 1980s, although Sadoun Shakir was replaced by Saddam Hussein's incompetent half-brother Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti, who began to "modify" information he received from the French. Paris knew but could do little to influence it.[62]

In the early 1980s the Iraqi intelligence service contacted their French counterparts, by then renamed *Direction Generale de la Sécurité Exterieure* (DGSE)[63] and offered them, and the French counter-intelligence organization *Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire* (DST), a deal. The DST would provide the Iraqis with information about the members of the Iraqi opposition living in France and in return the Iraqis would provide the DGSE with information about selected Palestinian terrorists. The proposition was, in theory at least, interesting as Saddam's regime continued

supporting several known Palestinian radicals, but it would require the DST to work for the Iraqis in France. The DST finally rejected the offer when it became apparent that they would receive information not from the Iraqis but from the DGSE, their intelligence colleagues. In the fiercely competitive French security and intelligence community of the period that arrangement was not acceptable.[64] This did not stop the DGSE and the DST from collaborating with the Iraqi intelligence service during the Iran-Iraq war. According to Yves Bonnet, the former head of the DST, during this period Saddam Hussein was "courted to the point of flattery".[65] Two Iraqi dissidents were detained by the French DST on 19 February 1985 and sent by force to Iraq. The DST failed even to inform the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the incident. The French government made a valiant effort to get back the two dissidents but succeeded only in obtaining a promise from Baghdad that the two would not be executed.[66]

The French were much less accommodating when it came to some of the Iraqi undertakings outside their borders. The DGSE was instrumental in thwarting the Iraqi campaign to set up weapon ranges in Mauritania in the late 1980s and early 1990s.[67]

Germany (West, East and United)

During the Cold War, the GDR (East Germany) was much closer to the Iraqi regime than its Western, democratic relative. Everything which could weaken or embarrass the West was encouraged in East Berlin and the Iraqi intelligence services were happy to destroy, weaken and embarrass everything and everyone standing in the way of what they wanted to achieve, which was mainly the intimidation, terrorizing and physical elimination of the opponents of the Iraqi regime living abroad, most of them in the Middle East and Western Europe. West Germany and West Berlin was the home of a large Kurdish community and potentially a target for the Iraqi special services, an ideal opportunity for the GDR to assist in a subversive action without being directly involved. The relationship between the East German Security Ministry (MfS) and Saddam's special services was close but the brutality of the Iraqis surprised even the East Germans. One STASI official even remarked that "no other secret service operated on our territory so brutally and with so much contempt for human life as that of Iraq".[68]

The Iraqi intelligence officers did not hesitate to attack Saddam's opponents in broad daylight even on the territory of the GDR. The East Germans allowed their Iraqi colleges to use East Berlin as a base for operations in West Berlin. On 1 August 1980, Khalid Jaber, the first secretary in the Iraqi embassy in the GDR and Hay Ali Mahmood, the head of the Iraqi intelligence station in East Berlin, masquerading as an embassy driver, were caught by the West Berlin police, preparing a bomb attack on a Congress of Kurdish Students in West Berlin. The tip-off came to the West German intelligence service *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND) from the Syrian Intelligence Service and their contacts within the West Berlin Kurdish community.[69] The French authorities, in control of the sector in which the two Iraqis were caught, declined to assume jurisdiction over the case. The Allied occupational laws were very severe on illegal possession of firearms and explosives. Paris had excellent relations with Baghdad and Bonn was instantly blackmailed by the Iraqis, who imprisoned two West German engineers working in Iraq. After initial opposition from the West Berlin Mayor, the two Iraqi "diplomats" were expelled to Baghdad. In return, Iraq promised not to assist "terrorist or other criminal activities in Berlin", not to offer Iraq as a bolt-hole to German terrorists, to cooperate in

antiterrorist efforts and guaranteed that the two Iraqi officers would not return to their post in East Berlin. Baghdad broke its promise and both officials returned to East Berlin in November 1980.

At the time of German reunification the Iraqis had 15 or 16 agents in the GDR. Some of them were East German nationals, others were Arab nationals naturalized in the GDR.[70] When the two Germanies united the intelligence assets and some of the archives of the GDR became a handy tool for the BND and the foreign policy makers in Bonn and later in Berlin. Democratic West Germany and West Berlin were much less hospitable grounds for Iraqi intelligence operations than the GDR, but some Middle Eastern refugee groups operating on their soil were aiming at establishing different dictatorships in their own countries, and used democracies as test ranges and hide-outs for their operations. Some activities of Iraqi diplomats were therefore tolerated by Bonn.[71] In April 1982, Sadour Shakir, promoted by Saddam Hussein to Minister of the Interior, visited Germany and met the head of the BND Klaus Kinkel.

West Germany was keen to sell its security and defence equipment and Iraq was happy to buy it. Between 1981 and 1989 West Germany sold to Iraq about DM 500,000 worth of military and security equipment, including radar technology, computers and communication equipment.[72] Iraqi special services personnel attended advanced level courses at the BND School at Haarsee in Upper Bavaria. A company in Hamburg which sold cars and firearms to Iraq in the 1980s also organised an antiterrorist course run by a former GSG-9 (the West German anti-terrorist elite unit) expert. The German special services looked the other way when important quantities of military equipment or dual purpose technology were exported to Iraq in the 1980s.[73]

It was also in Germany where the Iraqi intelligence organization had one of its most spectacular successes. Before the first Gulf war, Maj Gen Ismat Judi Muhamed, the Iraqi military attaché in Bonn, succeeded in recruiting an agent, Jurgen Mohamed Gietler, a German convert to Islam. Gietler's position in the German Foreign Ministry allowed him to provide the Iraqis with vital information concerning preparation for the Desert Storm operation.[74]

Like most democratic countries, Germany had few excuses to trade with Saddam Hussein once the Iran-Iraq conflict was over and a few years later Iraq had a trade embargo imposed on it by the UN. The information about Iraq was still top grade currency in the intelligence community and international political arena, however. In December 1998 Djabir Salim (43), the Iraqi consul to the Czech Republic and intelligence coordinator for the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia, fled to Germany.[75] His tasks included allegedly organizing terrorist attacks against Prague-based but US-funded Radio Free Europe which began broadcasting to Iraq in autumn 2000.[76] He was aware of all Iraqi intelligence operations in Central Europe and could have been very useful for the Germans, happy to barter his knowledge for information from the large part of the East German intelligence archives taken by the CIA just before the reunification.

In March 2001, the German Prosecutor's Office announced the arrest of two Iraqis accused of spying for the Iraqi intelligence service. They had been under German security surveillance from the beginning of the year in several German cities.[77]

Several media reports have suggested in recent months that the BND passed on to the CIA information on military targets in Iraq. The German parliamentary control committee cleared the BND of the accusation. The Germans had two BND agents in

Baghdad, Volker H and Reiner M, who were instructed by their bosses not "to give any direct assistance" to the US-led invasion troops, including target identification and mission coordination. Status reports had to be sent "exclusively" to the BND headquarters in Pullach, which put them together to be passed on to other intelligence services.[78]

The UK

In July 1978 the Iraqi special services in London assassinated Abdul Razzak Nayif, the former Iraqi prime minister. Two members of Iraqi military intelligence were arrested and charged with the assassination. Both received long prison sentences. The Iraqis failed to intimidate or blackmail the British government into releasing them. When the following year Abu Nidal came to London for medical treatment, his security arrangements were made by the Iraqis who acted as his protectors in Iraq.[79]

After the 1979 UK election, the Iraqis failed to appreciate the political changes taking place in the UK, when they sent a group of terrorists, tasked with occupation of the Iranian embassy in London. The Iranian embassy take-over began on 30 April 1980. It was ineptly organized by Sami Mohhamad Ali of the Iraqi Mukhabarat, who trained and prepared the terrorists but fled to Iraq before his underlings attacked the embassy. The whole operation was supervised by a senior Iraqi intelligence officer, Fawzi Al-Naimi.[80] The occupation of the embassy was terminated by several SAS teams. There was only one survivor among the hijackers.

In 1982 the Israeli ambassador in London was shot by a member of the Iraqi sponsored Abu Nidal group. The gunmen was wounded and arrested. Throughout the 1980s the Iraqis had three or four intelligence officers stationed in their London embassy. They operated mainly in the business community, among the Iraqi students in the UK, and journalists.[81] From 1991 the Iraqi interests in the UK were represented by a section in the Jordanian embassy and the Iraqis had to resort to illegals. The section of the Iraqi intelligence services operating against the UK was headed by a deputy director of Mukhabarat and the former head of its London station, former lecturer in English at Baghdad University General Khalil Ibrahim.[82]

Turkey

The Turkish special services' interests in Iraq are focused mainly on the Kurdish areas. The Turks have been concerned that the Kurdish populated areas of Iraq could become an independent Kurdish enclave serving as a base for Kurdish nationalists and radicals. A Turkish intelligence report speaks about some 4,000 militants of the Workers Party of Kurdistan (PKK) training in nine camps in Northern Iraq.[83] The Turks have also been apprehensive about waves of Kurdish refugees entering Turkey from Iraq. In March 2003, the Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT) stressed, during a briefing of the Turkish Prime Minister and the National Security Council, that the wave of refugees entering Turkey as a result of the Iraqi conflict might become a fertile ground for recruitment by the radical PKK.[84]

As one of the most important NATO members, Turkey had been treated in the past as an important target by the Iraqi intelligence services. Baghdad sent to Ankara some of its more dynamic officers. At the end of the last century the Iraqi intelligence operations in Turkey were run by Ambassador Faruq Abdullah Hijazi,

the former Secret Operations Director of the Iraqi Intelligence Service.[85] He was suspected of organizing a terrorist attack on former US President George Bush during one of his visits to the Middle East, and was therefore of particular interest to the USA special services. Ambassador Hijazi was unexpectedly transferred to Turkey from Tunisia in what some commentators interpreted as an Iraqi attempt to establish a network with Islamic radicals, and was suspected of contacts with Osama bin Laden. He returned to Baghdad on 24 September 2001.[86] Hijazi was arrested by US troops near the Syrian border on 24 April 2003.

The present situation in Iraq will keep Ankara vigilant and watchful, especially observing the Kurdish community on both sides of the border. US technical intelligence support in monitoring PKK terrorists in Turkey will assure Ankara's qualified support for US troops in Iraq. At the March 2006 meeting of the Arab League in Sudan, Turkish premier Erdogan emphasised the peaceful nature of Islam but called at the same time for countries to share intelligence for "globalisation of peace".[87]

Turkey serves increasingly as a regional security mediator and an important security partner in the regional conflicts. In October 2005, during a visit to Ankara the Iraqi Planning Minister Barham Salih said that the Iraqi government would like to "achieve wider exchange between the intelligence services of the two countries to ensure that security and stability prevails in the region".[88] A UK MI5 team is said to have visited Turkey in October 2005 to exchange information and experience in combating terrorism.[89] The CIA Director Porter Goss visited Ankara in December 2005. He was received by Prime Minister Erdogan, and met MIT Undersecretary Emre Taner, as well as Security Department Director General Gokhan Aydiner.[90] Turkish security and intelligence officials are also said to have held several meetings with security and intelligence officials from Egypt, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE to assess the situation in Iraq.[91]

Jordan

The Jordanian General Intelligence Department (GID) will continue to play an important role in Iraq. Established in 1964, the GID benefited from the stability and continuity of the political leadership and the pragmatic foreign policy of King Hussein, his successor King Abdullah and, at the same time, from their uncompromising support for the Arab causes in the Middle East, earning the respect of even the most radical Arab rulers without alienating their counterparts in Europe and USA. The importance of the GID has been recognized by King Abdullah, who awarded in spring 2002 the head of the GID Gen Sa'ad Kheir and his adviser Mohammed Dahabi medals for their services.[92] Gen Kheir, who is also the advisor to King Abdullah on Security Affairs and Director of the Jordanian National Security Council, has accompanied the king on several high profile foreign visits. In July 2002, Gen Kheir went with King Abdullah on a trip to Moscow and Paris and in August 2002 to the USA. In May 2003 General Kheir went to the USA as the King's personal messenger.[93] The GID is one of three Middle Eastern intelligence services with which the intelligence services of the developed democratic nations are able to cooperate without being accused of colluding with brutal dictators and compromising their integrity. In the harsh world of the Middle Eastern intelligence services the Jordanian GID has a good reputation. The importance of these contacts is also recognized by other Arab countries and organizations.

Syria

Syria's relations with Iraq in the Saddam Hussein era were frosty, bordering occasionally on hostile. The two Arab neighbours shared their hatred of Israel and deep distrust of the US policies in the Middle East. The best the US and the coalition in Iraq can expect from Damascus is that it will rein in some of the more radical Arab elements it has been tolerating on its soil. So far this has not been the case, but the Syrian special services' prestige in the Middle East dropped dramatically when it organised the killing of Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri. The Syrian President Bashar al-Assad reshuffled the heads of special services, at the end of 2001 increasing the importance of the civilian General Intelligence Service in relation to other intelligence and security bodies.[94] Less dogmatic than his father, President Bashar al-Assad allegedly allowed even the CIA to open briefly a liaison office in Syria to combat terrorists not protected by Damascus.[95] However, the cooperation between the USA and Syrian intelligence organs appears to be limited only to fighting against al-Qaeda and Damascus is not prepared to discuss its links with Hezbollah or Hamas, which it sees as its weapon against Israel.[96] Effective at suppressing internal opposition, the Syrian special services mysteriously fail to control the radicals operating from its soil against Iraq.

The Others

Other countries taking part in the present operation in Iraq include those who in the past had close economic relations with Iraq but are now NATO members and allies of the USA. All countries taking part in the operation have to protect their civilian and military personnel and on occasion negotiate and bribe the locals to rescue their nationals taken hostage by radicals and criminals. The role of the Italian Military Intelligence (SISMI) in Iraq, for instance, became the subject of many commentaries after the death of an Italian SISMI officer killed by friendly fire after a successful operation saving an Italian hostage.

An article in the Italian daily La Repubblica in April 2003 announced that SISMI has been active in Iraq since late December 2002 and that the Italians had particularly good links with the Shia community in Baghdad and Basra. The announcement was met with an instant official denial issued by the Italian prime minister's office, saying that SISMI has not taken part in military operations in Iraq.[97] All intelligence cells are particularly vulnerable to terrorist attacks. The Spanish intelligence cell in Iraq was particularly badly hit, losing 7 National Intelligence Centre employees in one terrorist attack at the end of November 2003.[98] One of the main advantages of keeping intelligence and security personnel in Iraq, in addition to their immediate, everyday duties, will be their experience in working in the future against any Middle Eastern based terrorists.

5. Conclusion

With the continuing terrorist attacks in Iraq, its own and the allied special services have a growing role to play. Despite heroic efforts and sacrifices made by many Iraqis, their special services will never be entirely trusted by their allies, who are seen by a large, politically myopic segment of the population as an occupation force. The allies may even find that after their pull-out the Iraqi security and intelligence community will become hostile towards their former partners. The incorporation by stealth of the radical militia into the security forces will only bring more problems.

Whoever runs Iraq in the future will need special services. Their present leaders, managers, and teaching personnel should emphasise the best features of Iraqi nationalism, realistic legal and operational training, moderate aspects of Islam, Iraqi national unity and a brief common history, without attempting to blindly copy western models. The best models for the new Iraqi special services are probably to be found in Turkey, Jordan, Egypt and Morocco, not in the EU member states or North America.

Appendix 1

A Brief History of the Iraqi Security and Intelligence Community 1958-1991

After the overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy in July 1958 Col Rifat Al-Haj Siri, Director of Military Intelligence, took part in two failed coups against the head of state General Kassem. He was forgiven the first but executed after the second equally unsuccessful coup.[99] The July 1968 military coup which brought to power Gen Ahmed Hussein al-Bakr started a chain of political assassinations which shared many common features with the Stalinist purges in the USSR. The real and perceived enemies of the ruling Baath party and President Bakr were killed in Iraq, hunted down abroad or tortured in the interrogation centre at Kasr Al-Nihaya (Palace of the End), Iraq's even more brutal version of the Soviet Lubyanka, the NKVD HQ in the 1930s. Joseph Stalin, after all, was one of Saddam Hussein's heroes. Between the end of July 1968 and June 1982 the Iraqi intelligence and security services killed thousands of people including a former Prime Minister, two Deputy Prime Ministers, five ministers, including two foreign ministers, and one Army General. Many others were imprisoned, tortured or exiled and several, not always successful, attempts were made to murder prominent Iraqis living abroad.[100] Saddam very quickly became the first executioner in chief - according to an Iraqi intelligence defector Saddam Hussein chaired a liquidation committee in the Baath Party and was therefore in charge of security bodies. His main henchman was originally an ambitious general, Nazem Kazar, a Shia, the head of the Iraqi General Security Directorate.[101]

On 30 June 1973, General Kazar overreached himself when with a small group of fellow Shias, he attempted his own coup d'état by kidnapping the ministers of defence and the interior and trying to kill president al-Bakr. When the assassination attempt failed, Kazar tried to negotiate with the ruling Baath party, of which he was a prominent member, whilst trying at the same time to escape with his hostages to Iran. His populist, hard-line demands to conduct more assertive anti-Israeli policies, stronger anti-Kurdish measures, support for Palestinian groups and purging of the Baath party were not accepted. Kazar was caught before he was able to reach the Iranian border, but not before he killed the defence minister and wounded the minister of interior. He and thirty-three other conspirators were executed. The ensuing reforms gave Saddam Hussein and the leadership of the Baath Party better control over the special services and their activities.[102] After Gen Kazar's coup and the subsequent reforms, Saddam's half-brother Barzan Ibrahim and Saddam's friend Sadoun Shakir controlled all special services. All the heads of the internal security bodies were Saddam's relatives and trusted collaborators, ready to implement his most cruel and unreasonable orders.

In 1979, when the pro-Western regime in Iran – a vital piece of a geostrategic puzzle during the Cold War - was overthrown by the disgruntled Iranian majority led by radical Shia clerics, the Iraqi intelligence service was suddenly recognised by the Western countries as a more useful than embarrassing partner. The Shah fled Iran on 16 January 1979 and Ayatollah Khomeini returned triumphant 15 days later. In June 1979, Saddam Hussein overthrew president Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr. Fifteen months later, profiting from wide-scale purges and chaos in the Iranian power

organizations, Saddam Hussein launched a full scale attack against Iran. Although Baghdad was the aggressor, the new Iranian regime made enemies all over the world with its extremist internal and foreign policies. The new Iranian leadership was actively anti-American, anti-Israeli anti-democratic and anti-everything which was not radically Shia. Iraq had a marginalized and oppressed Shia majority and festering border disagreements with Iran. Saddam Hussein was therefore a potentially convenient if somewhat embarrassing temporary ally. When on 22 September 1980 Saddam Hussein attacked Iran he had few supporters but when he began to lose, the number of his temporary allies grew instantly. An Iraq dominated by the Shia majority supported by Teheran was a frightening prospect. The Western governments were concerned that if the aggressive brand of Shiism spread, Teheran could control a large percentage of world's fossil fuel deposits and border the world's largest oil exporter, Saudi Arabia. The West wanted Iran to lose. Individual Western companies provided Baghdad with armament and training and generally saw Iraq as a client to whom they could sell just about anything Baghdad wanted, as their governments and security services looked the other way, adhering to a policy of "don't ask, sell". In comparison with Iran, Iraq was seen as the lesser evil. The United States began to supply battlefield intelligence. The limited and brief intelligence relationship with the US was terminated instantly when the conflict ended.

At the top of the Iraqi security pyramid was Saddam Hussein, its sole decionmaker and ultimate task master, controlling the special services with his two sons and the members of no more than 15 families from the Tikrit area. He was also in complete control of the supreme defence and security coordinating body, the National Security Council, which served as his personal security secretariat; the Presidential Affairs Department, staffed by about 1,000 people; and the Intelligence Council, responsible for monitoring the activities of all Iraqi intelligence bodies.[103] Gen Abdul Hamid Mahmud al-Tikriti, his most trusted official, was taken into custody on 16 June 2003 by the US forces. He had served also as the presidential secretary and the head of his security detail.

The most powerful of Saddam Hussein's security organisations was the **Special Security (Organisation)** SS(O) *al-Amn al-Khas* set up in 1985 when the end of the Iraq-Iran conflict was nowhere in sight and Saddam needed a new organisation which could monitor high ranking officers and civilian officials dissatisfied with the way the war was conducted. During the conflict over Kuwait the SS(O) was responsible for concealment of SCUD missiles.[104] The SS(O) recruited Sunnis from the Tikrit, Huwaya and Samarra regions.

The SS(O) started with 1,000 employees. Its numerical strength, just before the allied intervention, was assessed at 5,000 to 10,000 people.[105] The SS(O) had several outposts in the strategically important parts of Iraq. It was the only organisation allowed to supervise the Special Presidential (Republican) Guards (al-Harras al-Jamhuri al Khas) and Saddam's Fedayeen. According to unconfirmed reports, the salary of a head of section in the SSO was ten times the salary of a head of section in the Military Intelligence Directorate and five times the salary in other intelligence and security bodies.[106] The last director of the SS(O) and the assistant to his son Qusay, Saddam's nephew, Hani abd al-Latif al-Tilfah al-Tikriti, is still at large.

Until the establishment of the SS(O) in 1985, the most powerful security organisation was the **Main Security Directorate** (MID) *Mudyrat al-Amn al-Ammah*, sometimes referred to as the General Security Directorate or the General Security Service, until the late 1970s a part of the Interior Ministry. As the principal keeper

of Iraqi internal security, the MID was present in every town and village in Iraq, performing standard security tasks. In 2002 the staff of the MID was assessed at 10,000 to 15,000 people. On 7 August 1995, Gen Hussein Kamel,[107] one of Sadam Hussein's most trusted men, defected to Jordan. The defection, a failed coup in the summer of 1996 and the attempt on Saddam Hussein's son Uday's life in December 1996 resulted in several purges in the MID. Its head, Khalid al-Juburi, and several members of the al-Juburi family judged by Saddam as unreliable, were removed from their posts. Some of these changes have been attributed to Saddam's dissatisfaction with his tribal allies responsible for the supervision of Military Intelligence and the MID. Khalid al-Juburi was replaced by Maj Gen Abdallah Taha Abbas al-Ahbabi, the former head of Military Security. The purges covered 42 top internal security and police officers around the country. Its last head, Rafi abd al-Latif Tilfah al-Tikriti, is still at large.[108]

The Main Intelligence Department, *Dai'rat at-Mukhabarat al-Amma* or the Mukhabarat (also referred to as the General Intelligence Department, GID), established in the middle of the 1960s, has its roots in the security apparatus of the Baath Party and was known before the 1973 security reforms as al-Jihaz al-Khaz (Special Apparatus). The GID was supervised by the Baath Party's Revolutionary Council. Saddam decided that the new organization was to have a wide remit and considerable capabilities, requiring a motivated and reliable staff. The Baath Party issued a resolution to encourage its members to join the GID.[109] Mukhabarat was for several years in the safe hands of Sadoun Shakir, one of Saddam's closest friends. It continued to expand rapidly until 1979 when it achieved its originally planned size and power and became an elite structure, essentially the Baath Party's Intelligence service.

The GID was highly politicized and was allowed to have a close look at other security structures and political bodies in Iraq. As the organization grew in size its first director, Sadoun Shakir, with the rank of minister, began to experience problems with running the organization. He was transferred in July 1979 to the Ministry of Interior and was replaced by Saddam's half-brother Barzan al-Tikriti. According to unconfirmed reports the Mukhabarat was briefly run by Ashraf al-Nadhiri before Barzan al-Tikriti was appointed. On Saddam's order Barzan made sure that the candidates from the Tikrit area would be given preferential treatment among those applying for a job in the organization. Barzan was also credited with the removal of non-Iraqi Arabs from the intelligence service, although some exceptions to that rule were made. He was removed from his position in 1983 and sent to the Iraqi UN mission in Geneva. His downfall was the result of his interference in Saddam's private life and the wrong threat assessment made by his organization at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war. The GID allegedly argued that the Iranians would not be able to withstand the Iraqi attacks for longer than a week. To improve his position, Barzan also filtered the intelligence information prepared for Saddam.[110]

He was briefly replaced by Staff Lt Gen Hisham Sabbah al-Fakhiri, who was not able to control the finances of his organization, was not respected by the Tikritis dominating the service, and was therefore almost immediately replaced by Dr Fadil al-Barak, former Deputy Military Attaché in Moscow.[111] Fadil al-Barak had excellent contacts in the Soviet defence and intelligence community, a significant asset as the Iraqi onslaught on Iran was slowly grinding to a halt. The Iraqis needed Soviet military hardware and Moscow was happy to supply it. Barzan al-Tikriti was uneducated, crude and manipulative. Fadil al-Barak was a scholar who wrote his doctoral thesis in the USSR on pan-Arabism in Iraq in 1941, but at the same time

was from the same mould, reflecting the political atmosphere in a particularly difficult time for Iraq and its leader.[112] Fadil Al-Barak was a fiery nationalist who, in 1984, in the middle of the Iran-Iraq war, published a book, inspired by a speech given by Saddam in 1979, on the harmful influence of Jewish and Iranian schools in Iraq.[113]

At the time of the military conflict with Iran, Saddam Hussein, dissatisfied with the work of the organisation, ordered al-Barak to reduce the size of the GID. The downsizing meant that many Mukhabarat officers, especially those who had worked for the GID for less than five years, were transferred to the army. These transfers had on occasions negative effect on the GID because many transferred officers were taken prisoner by the Iranians and became a source of valuable information for Teheran. This may have contributed to Fadil al-Barak's downfall in 1984. He was arrested in 1989, charged with espionage and executed.[114]

His replacement, Fadhil Selfige al-Azaaqui, survived an unprecedented five years as the head of the GID. In 1989 Saddam offered his job to another of his half brothers, Sabawi Ibrahim al-Tikriti. The Gulf War and the immediate post war period saw three changes of GID Directors. The changes at the top of Mukhabarat in the last decade of the century were on average less than every two years. In 1996 Saddam appointed a new director of Mukhabarat, Rafi Dahham al-Tikriti. The new director lost his position very quickly and was sent to Ankara as the Iraqi ambassador. By then, Saddam's sons Uday and Qusay had gained influence in the special services and conducted private wars with the many individuals holding important jobs in these organizations. Rafi Dahham was recalled back to face serious charges including the inability to tackle corruption in the service and contacts with unnamed relatives unfriendly to Saddam. His problems were compounded by the fact that during the time he was in charge of the GID, five of his high ranking officials defected, including the heads of stations in New Delhi, Athens and Prague.[115] He was also seen as being too close to his former boss, Saddam's half-brother, Barzan al-Tikriti, in UN "exile" in Geneva, which angered Saddam's two sons particularly. Rafi Dahham died officially on 12 October 1999 as a result of a heart attack but as his family was not allowed to see his body the rumours circulating in Baghdad suggested that he was executed.[116]

Approximately at the same time Saddam Hussein set up a committee, chaired by his younger son Qusay, to investigate the Intelligence Service, because some sections of the intelligence community were seen as negligent and disloyal. The committee decided to recall the head of the station in the UN office in New York, extended the responsibility of the chief of station in Qatar to Bahrain and UAE, increased the number of officers in Dubai and the UAE, under the cover of businessmen, and made changes in the embassies in Jordan and Pakistan. It also decided to investigate several high ranking officials in the special services.[117]

The man responsible for the implementation of the final purges in the GID was its last boss before the allied invasion, Lt Gen Tahir Jalil Habbush al-Tikriti. He came from the Main Security Directorate, which he had run since 1998, after its previous head Taha al-Akfadi died in mysterious circumstances.[118] Saddam's last intelligence chief began his career at the Iraqi Mission to the Arab league in Cairo between 1975–1977. Between 1977 and 1979 he was posted to the Iraqi UN mission in Geneva. After his return he was the governor of Dhi Quar Wasit region and in 1995 was appointed director general of police, an undersecretary at the Ministry of Interior and later Director of the office of Defence Minister Ali Hussein al-Majid. He also held an important position in the SS(O) under Qusay Hussein's supervision.[119] In the Main Security Directorate Tahir Jalil Habbush led a campaign against

security officers suspected of conspiring against the regime. When in 2003 the coalition forces moved into Iraq the assessments of the numerical strength of the GID ranged from 5,000 to 8,000. The organization had 300 officers in 64 Iraqi embassies around the world.[120] At least 480 Foreign Ministry employee worked or collaborated with the Iraqi intelligence service before the allied intervention.[121]

Al-Estikhabarat al-Askariya - **Military Intelligence (Service)** – MI(S) belonged originally to the Ministry of Defence but in the early 1980s, at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war, when Saddam Hussein wanted to have better control of the armed forces the MI(S) was reformed and subordinated to the Presidential Administration. The service, employing 6,000, was responsible for collection of military information, including on weapons of mass destruction, purchases of weapons, occasional physical elimination of Saddam's enemies and military training of selected terrorists, at which it had to work with the GID. The coalition forces entering Iraq must have know about the MI(S) more than about most other power organizations, after one of its bosses, Gen Wafiq Jassim Samarra'i, defected in 1994. The last head of MI(S), Lt Gen Zyhayr Talib abd al-Sattar al-Naqib, was taken in custody by the allied forces on 23 April 2003.[122]

Al-Amn al-Askariya - **Military Security (Service)** – MS(S), responsible for the security and counterintelligence work in all armed formations, was answerable only to Saddam Hussein. The organization, a part of the Ministry of Defence, became an independent body in 1992. It had about 5,000 people on its payroll. The last head of Saddam's head of *Al-Amn al-Askari* was Thabet Khalil al-Tikriti.[123]

The Al Hadi Project (Project 858) concentrated on sigint work. It was established in 1973 when Iraq signed several important bilateral agreements with the USSR. Like most of this type of organization, Project 858 was a security and intelligence sub-contractor, equipped with very large ears but no muscles, allowing it to act upon information it acquired. This was probably why Project 858 was not represented on the National Security Council. Its clients were the Presidential Administration, the Baath Party and individual special services. Based at Al-Rasheeda, about 20km north of Baghdad, and with several outposts around Iraq, the organization was gradually able to reach beyond Iraqi borders. Its employees concentrated their attention on radio transmission in Iraq and its closest neighbours but were gradually forced to pay attention to satellite communications and the Internet. Project 858 employed about 800 people, which considering its three-shift duties, labour intensive tasks and Saddam Hussein's paranoia would have been, if true, a surprisingly modest figure.[124]

Maktab Amant Sir al-Kutur (The National Secret Bureau) was the Baath Party's supreme security body answerable directly to the Presidential Office. Its administrative role appears to resemble similar departments in the ruling communist parties of the old Soviet bloc. Its operational arm, Jihaz Amn al-Hezib (The Security Service of the Party) was responsible for the physical protection of the president but its functions were shared with the SS(O). From 1992 the National Security Bureau was controlled by Qusay Hussein.[125]

Maktab al-Khas (Special Bureau) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was responsible for intelligence and counterintelligence within the ministry's remit. It was similar to one of the departments of the old Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs and shared similar features with foreign affairs ministries of many other countries which have to coordinate their activities with the national intelligence services.[126]

Iraqi diplomats and other officials expelled or recalled between January 2000 – April 2003.

In April 2001, the Czech security service BIS expelled from the Czech Republic an Iraqi diplomat, Ahmad Khalil Ibrahim Samir Al-Ani, for showing too much interest in the activities of Radio Free Europe broadcasting to Iraq.[127]

Romania expelled an Iraqi consul in Bucharest at the end of 2001.[128]

In January 2002, Sweden expelled Mushin Al-Haydari, the chargé d'affaires at the Iraqi embassy in Stockholm, and Abd-al-Quadir, the chief of intelligence station at the embassy. Both men concentrated their activities on the Iraqi community in Sweden. After their expulsion, both men defected, allegedly, to a third country. The Swedish Security Police also prevented several Iraqi diplomats from entering Sweden. An unnamed Iraqi defector quoted by a Norwegian newspaper said that the Iraqi espionage centre in Scandinavia was in Denmark.[129]

In early 2003 the US asked 60 nations to expel some diplomats stationed in their countries. The list presented to the 60 countries contained about 300 names of suspicious Iraqi diplomats.[130]

In Feb-May 2003, Husham Hussain, an Iraqi diplomat accredited in Manila, was expelled from the Philippines for contacts with extremists in October 2002.[131]

Also in February 2003, the US expelled an Iraqi correspondent accredited to the United Nations. Two Iraqi diplomats accused of espionage were expelled from the US on 5 March 2003. (The Algerian embassy in Washington represented Iraqi interests in the USA and US interests in Baghdad were represented by Poland.)[132]

An Iraqi diplomat, Hilal Ibrahim Aareff was told to leave Australia by 12 March 2003. He was accredited in Australia in 2002. By the end of the month, the Australians closed the Iraqi embassy and expelled all Iraqi diplomats. They were told to leave by 23 March 2003.[133]

After a lengthy investigation conducted by the Swedish police, Sweden expelled two Iraqi diplomats on 13 March 2003.[134]

The Iraqi ambassador in Bucharest accused the Romanian authorities of trying to recruit him as a collaborator during a meeting with a several Romanian officials on 10 March 2003. The Romanians denied the accusation but the Iraqis recalled their ambassador and the Iraqi foreign Minister Naji Sabri sent a letter of protest to his Romanian counterpart. The meeting took place on the day of the expulsion of eight Iraqi nationals from Romania. Five other Iraqis were expelled on 8 March and the Romanians closed their embassy in Baghdad.[135]

At the same time Germany expelled four Iraqi diplomats "for activities incompatible with their diplomatic status". The expulsion left two Iraqi diplomats working in Germany.[136]

The Czechs expelled four Iraqi diplomats on 21 March 2003 and the Iraqi chargé d'affaires, Malik Mohamad al-Ani, on 24 March 2003. The Iraqi embassy in Prague was left with two diplomats and technical personnel.[137]

22

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Three members of the Iraqi Interests Section of the Algerian Embassy representing Iraq in USA were ordered to leave the US in 2003 within 48 hours.[138]

Two Iraqi nationals, Nafi Haddab al-Dulami and Saad al-Qaduri, who had been living originally in Yugoslavia and later in Bosnia-Herzegovina, were arrested by the local authorities on 21 March 2003 but were later released. They were seen as a potential threat to the international community in the country. One of the suspects attempted to buy unspecified equipment for his relative, the head of a bacteriological institute in Iraq. On 28 March their permanent residence permit was cancelled and they were ordered to leave the country.[139]

Five Iraqi diplomats were asked to leave Jordan at the end of March 2003. Two of the five expelled diplomats were subsequently allowed to stay.[140]

Also in March 2003, Italy expelled four Iraqi diplomats.[141]

The Egyptians expelled the Iraqi First Secretary in Cairo Riyad Jubayr al-Ani. According to the Iraqis the expelled diplomat was a target of a recruitment in February 2003 by a US intelligence officer in Cairo.[142]

Three Iraqi diplomats were asked to leave Turkey on 3 April 2003.[143]

Seven Iraqi diplomats were expelled from Spain on 17 April 2003, after the Spanish authorities were told by an informant about 21 guns and 800 rounds of ammunition stored in the Iraqi embassy in Madrid.[144]

Endnotes

[1] Maj-Gen Muhammad Abdallah al-Shahwani, director of Iraq's National Intelligence, describing the security situation in Iraq. Al-Sharq al-Awsat, London, in Arabic 5 Jan 2005, BBC Monitoring Service (MS)

[2] Al-Adalah, Baghdad, 31 July 2003, BBC MS.

[3] Al-Yawm al-Akhar, Baghdad, 25 Sep 2003 p 1, BBC MS.

[4] Al-Sharqiyah, Baghdad, 1400 gmt 4 Oct 2005.

[5] Al-Nahdah, Baghdad, 08 Nov 2003 p 4, BBC MS

[6] Al-Ahram, Cairo, 6 Oct 2005, BBC MS.

[7] Al-Shira, Baghdad, 11 Nov 2003, p8, BBC MS

[8] Elaph web site, London, 27 Oct 2003, BBC MS.

[9] Al-Jazeera TV, 13 Jan 2004. BBC MS.

[10] Al-Bayyinah, 1 Mar 2004, BBC MS.

[11] Al-Zaman, Baghdad, 28 Jul 04, BBC MS. At the time the Iraqi National Security adviser Muwaffaq al-Rubay'i said that the number of Iraqi army troops was close to 40,000 serving in three divisions, the number of policemen was about 70,000, the National Guards – 50,000 and the Border Guards-30,000. Al-Sharq al-Awsat, London, in Arabic 29 Jun 2004, BBC MS. Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabr Solagh said that some 3,000 to 5,000 policemen graduate every month. He was hoping to "reach the international rate of having one policeman for every 150 persons". In October 2005, Iraq had one policeman for every 300 citizens. Al-Sharq al-Awsat web site, London, 9 Oct 2005, BBC MS.

[12] Al-Mu'tamar 27 March, 2004, BBC MS and Dar al-Salam Radio, 1 Apr 2004, BBC MS.

[13] Al-Jazeera TV, Doha 1310 gmt 15 Jul 2004, BBC MS.

[14] Baghdad, in Arabic 5 Apr 2004, BBC MS. Muhammad Abdallah was appointed as director of the Iraqi intelligence service in January 2004. Al-Yawm al-Akhar, 17 Jan 2004, BBC MS.

[15] Al-Sharq al-Awsat web site, London, 9 Oct 2005, BBC MS.

[16] Al-Sharqiyah, 14 Oct 2004, BBC MS.

[17] Ibid. 15 Dec 2004, BBC MS.

[18] SCIRI web site in Arabic 18 Oct 2004, BBC MS. In June 2005, General al-Shahwani was accused of deliberately ignoring the Iraqi government's senior officials by a Shia news organisation, Karbala News Network web site in Arabic 15 Jun 2005

[19] Al-Ra'y web site, 29 Aug 2004, BBC MS.

[20] Al-Bayyinah, 16 May 2004, BBC MS. The return of Shias into the top of the Iraqi security and intelligence community is a natural process which does not necessarily lead to the stability of these organisations. The removal of Shia from security and intelligence organisations was completed during the Iran-Iraq conflict.

[21] Al-Watan web site, Abha, in Arabic 9 Jul 2004, BBC MS. In reality it probably means that the applicant must not be vetoed by these parties.

[22] Al-Mashriq, 26 April 2005, BBC MS.

[23] Al-Zaman, Baghdad, in Arabic 28 Jul 2004, BBC MS.

[24] Al-Sharq al-Awsat, London, in Arabic 5 Jan 2005, BBC MS.

[25] Al-Ittihad, Baghdad, in Arabic 1 Mar 2005, BBC MS.

[26] Al-Iraqiyah TV at 0855 gmt on 4 March 2006, BBC MS.

[27] Encyclopedie du Renseignement et des Services Secretes, Jacques Baud, Lavazuelle 1997 ed, pp 327 – 334; and 2002 ed pp 396 -404 (hereafter Encyclopedie) ; www.fas.org; Herzliyya Meria, Global Research in International Affairs Centre, affiliated with the Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy at the Herzliyya Interdisciplinary Centre, http://meria.idc.ac.il, FBIS; hereafter Meria; MERIA Journal, Nr 3, September 2002.

[28] In several interviews given to the world's media long before the Iraqi campaign, Gen Wafiq al-Samarra'I, a former head of the Iraqi Military Intelligence Service (defected in 1994), said that Saddam Hussein was not prepared to accept the most obvious examples of his failures.

[29] The author does wish to ignore the painful losses incurred by all sides in the conflict, the continuing chaos in Iraq and the lack of an exit strategy, but considering the scale of the operation, the number of combatants involved and the equipment used, the first part of the campaign can only be described as very successful for the coalition.

[30] For a sample of valuable defectors and immigrants see footnote 115.

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[31] In March 1991 the militia of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan started an uprising in northern Iraq. They failed to dislodge the Iraqi army but succeeded in taking archives from the Iraqi special services and Baath Party HQs in Northern Iraq. A large part of these archives and the papers left by the Iraqis were acquired by US Government bodies. Meria.

[32] The Raise and Fall of the Pahlavi Dynasty, Gen Hussein Fardust, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1999, pp226 and 227. According to an Israeli author Gen Bakhtiar was killed in August 1970. (Yacov Caroz, The Arab Secret Services, Corgi, 1978, p. 396)

[33] SAVAK, Christian Delannoy, Stock, 1990, p 142.

[34] Yacov Caroz, OP. CIT. pp. 392-393.

[35] Delannoy, OP. CIT. p 142. In the world of the regional wilderness of cracked mirrors the number of the Iraqi suspects intercepted by SAVAK is probably exaggerated. Many of those who were regarded by the Baghdad regime as of Iranian origin (recorded in their identity documents) were in fact the Arab Shias. Their Iranian "origin" was often chosen by their ancestors fter the collapse of the Ottoman empire who were hoping, wrongly, to avoid military service and other civic duties. Those who served in the Iraqi armed forces and were discharged for "wrong" religious beliefs were expelled as a potential threat. Most of them would not have worked for the Iraqi regime. The Iranian filtration point teams probably exaggerated their potential danger, either by failing to introduce a grading system in their risk assessment or aiming to use the whole issue to improve their standing in the eyes of the Shah.

[36] Fadhil al-Barak, Al-Madaris Al-Yahudiyya wa al-Iraniya fi al-ʻIraq, Baghdad, 1984 p 145, quoted in Republic of Fear, Kanan Makiya, University of California Press, p135.

[37] IRIB TV, 28 February 1995, FBIS. The organization operated also outside the Middle East using brutal methods to control their members and to intimidate their enemies and has been banned in several democratic countries.

[38] In the spring of 1999 the head of the Iraqi Intelligence Service, Rafi Daham Mijwal, is reported to have also visited Madrid. The Spanish mission aimed at examining Madrid's proposition made allegedly in 1994 to serve as mediator between Washington and Baghdad. Al-Zaman, London, 30 April 1999, FBIS. The information about the visit of the Iraqi intelligence director was repeated by Al-Zaman on 4 May 1999.

[39] The Iranians had an agent in the Iraqi Intelligence HQ for probably more than two decades. The agent, an Iraqi Kurd, was caught in 1990 and executed. Al-Zaman, London, 25 Sep 1999, FBIS.
The Iranian Security and Intelligence Ministry (VEVAK) also monitored the Iraqi intelligence efforts in Iran. In April 1996 the Iranians claimed to have arrested 89 Iraqi spies within the previous 12 months. (INA, Baghdad in Arabic, 3 April 1996, FBIS). The Iranian special services were a law unto themselves until the end of 1999, when some of their outrages were publicly debated by the members of the Iranian parliament and the media. The number of alleged Iraqi agents caught by the Iranians between April 1995 and April 1996 could have been a reflection of paranoia in some circles of the Iranian clergy, and special services not reflecting their real counterintelligence achievements. In September 1999 the Iraqis announced the arrest of Majid Jasim Abd, an officer at the Iraqi Nationality Directorate. He was accused of collaborating with the Iranian intelligence services, by providing their agents with Iraqi citizenship papers. Iraqi TV Baghdad, 15 September 1999, BBC MS.

[40] Al-Sharqiyah, 14 Oct 2004, BBC MS.

[41] Alain Chouet, former head of the French head intelligence service, DGSE, Le Figaro web site, Paris, in French 28 Jan 05.

[42] Ally to Adversary, Rick Francona, Naval Institute Press, 1999, p 14-15.

[43] Ibid. Chapter 1.

[44] The main limitation facing the USA when exploring the Iraqi intelligence and security archives is the shortage of Arabic linguists in its intelligence community. In addition to these shortages, many available Arabic linguists are on operational duties in Iraq and around the world.

[45] Republic of Fear, Kanan Makiya, University of California Press, pp12 & 13, quoting NOW, 14 September 1979.

[46] Ibid. The papers were allegedly brought by the survivors of the purges within the Baath Party in July 1979.

[47] Al-Zaman, London, 25 September 1999, FBIS. The Iraqi sigint organization "Project 858" was set up a year after the Soviet-Iraqi Friendship Treaty was signed.

[48] Delannoy OP. CIT., p 142.

[49] Makiya, OP. CIT pp17 and 135.

[50] Makiya, OP. CIT. p14.

[51] Al-Ahram Al-Masai, Cairo, 4 May 1996 p1, FBIS.

[52] Caroz, OP. CIT. p. 387.

[53] Yevgeniy Primakov, Gody v Bolshoy Politike, Sovershenno Sekretno 1999, pp 109, 308.

[54] Primakov also had secret talks in Baghdad on 23 February 2003 but the information about the visit was leaked to the media and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement explaining Primakov's visit as a mission in support of the UN peace effort. Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 28 March 2003 , www.ng.ru.

[55] Versiya website, 21 April 2003.

[56] Komsomolskaya Pravda, 15 April 2003, quoting several English language dallies.

[57] Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 28 March 2003, www.ng.ru. The SVR special unit has been referred to by the Russian media as "Shtora" (a blind) or "Ekran" (a screen or a barrier).

[58] Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 28 March 2003 , www.ng.ru .

[59] Al Quabas, Kuwait, 23 April 1999, FBIS.

[60] Al-Zaman, London 2001, p1, FBIS.

[61] Commissaire Broussard, Memoires, Plon 1997, pp 259-260.

[62] Count de Marenches and Christine Ockrent, The Evil Empire, Sidgwick & Jackson, 1988, pp 112-114; DST Police Secrete, Flammarion, 1999, p 438.

[63] The DGSE was established on 4 April 1982.

[64] Yves Bonnet, Contre Espionage, Memoires d'un patron de la DST, Calmann-Levy 2000, pp.136-137.

[65] Ibid. pp 351 and 352.

[66] The French Secret Services, Douglas Porch, MacMillan 1996, p.451. The main issue driving the French foreign policy with Iraq was Paris' readiness to sell, for the second time, a nuclear power station – the first one was destroyed by the Israeli air raid on 7 June 1981 – and to match the US, Soviet and British influence in the region.

[67] Au Coeur Du Secret, Claude Silberzahn and Jean Guisnel, Fayard 1995, p 224.

[68] Ibid. p374.

[69] Ibid. p373.

[70] Ibid. p385. The number of agents probably includes collaborators of Iraqi origin recruited in the GDR and most probably with the tacit approval of the East German STASI.

[71] Der Schatten Krieger, Erich Schmidt Eenboom, ECON 1995, p 83

[72] Ibid. p 80, quoting Wolfgang Hoffmann, Die Zeit 18 April 1991 p.25, and Rechnungen Waffen Krausser, 23 March, 4 & 24 April 1982.

[73] Eenboom, OP. CIT. p 82.

[74] Al Quabas, Kuwait, 23 April 1999, FBIS; AP, 17 November 1997.

[75] The London based Arab language daily Al-Zaman suggested that Djabir Salim defected either to the UK or Germany. However, considering a semi-open disagreement at the time of defection between Prague and London as to the Czech commitment to bilateral security cooperation and the resulting instant dishonourable dismissal of the head of the Czech security service Karel Vulterin, the Iraqi officer must have defected to Germany. CTK in English, 9 January 1999; CTK in English, 29 January 1999. The Czech daily Mlada Fronta Dnes said that some intelligence operations conducted by the US and Britain against the Iraqi regime were destroyed by leaks in the Czech Republic and that "the British lost one of its best suppliers of information from Iraq". Mlada Fronta Dnes, 8 February 1999, p 2 FBIS.

[76] CTK in English, 29 January 1999.

[77] DDP, Berlin, 1 March 2001; Al-Zaman, 4 March 2001, FBIS.

[78] DDP News Agency, in German, 13 and 18 January 2006, BBC MS.

[79] Makiya, OP. CIT. p14. Abu Nidal died of a gun-shot wound in Baghdad, in August 2002.

[80] SAS-Embassy Siege, BBC C2 and The Observer (Internet version) 16 March 2003.

[81] The Observer (Internet version) 16 March 2003.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Milliyet website, 4 Aug 2005, BBC MS.

[84] Radikal, Ankara, 26 March 2003 p.5, FBIS.

[85] Al-Zaman, London, 28 January 2000, BBC MS.

[86] Hurriyet, Istanbul, 12 October 2001, BBC MS.

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[87] Anatolia news agency, in English, 28 Mar 2006.

88 Al-Sharqiyah, 1 Oct 2005, BBC MS.

89 Hurriyet website, 11 Oct 2005, BBC MS.

90 Anatolia news agency, Ankara, in English 0833 gmt 14 Dec 2005.

91 E'temad website, Tehran, in Persian 6 Apr 2006 Quoting unnamed Lebanese newspapers. BBC MS

92 Jordan Times Amman 10 June 2002.

93 Petra–JNA, 8 July 2002 and 26 July 2002, FBIS. Jordan TV 1 August 2002, FBIS. Jordanian TV 15 May 2003, BBC MS

94 Al-Quds al-Arabi, London, 24 January 2002. BBC MS

95 Al-Qanat website, Cairo 30 January 2002, BBC MS.

96 Paris Intelligence Online, 26 July 2002.

97 La Repubblica, 23 April 2003, FBIS and RAI Uno, Radio, 24 April 2003, BBC MS.

98 La Razon web site, 12 Nov 2003, BBC MS.

99 Caroz, OP. CIT. 4.

100 The full list of victims of purges from that period can be found in Makiya, OP. CIT. pp 292-296. Some of the assassination attempts were as bold as they were foolhardy. In September 1971 nine "religious dignitaries" sent for talks with the Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani suddenly began to throw hand grenades at their interlocutor. All were killed in a fire fight with Barzani's security. In February 1972 an Iraqi hit team tried to assassinate in London former Iraqi Premier Abd el-Razak el-Nayef, and in Cairo the former commandant of the Iraqi Military Academy, Col Arfan Abd el-Kader.

101 Caroz, OP. CIT. p. 392-393.

102 Ibid. p. 388 and Saddam's Bomb maker, Khidir Hamza, Scribner, 2000, p 111.

103 Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye, 23 March 2003, p5; www.fas.org; Encyclopedie 1997 ed, pp 327 – 334; and 2002 ed pp 396 -404, www.fas.org

104 Meria.

105 Encyclopedie 1997 ed, pp 327 – 334; and 2002 ed pp 396 -404; www.fas.org; MERIA Journal, Nr 3, September 2002.

106 Al Zaman, 18 April 2001, BBC MS.

107 Gen Hussein Kamel, married to one of Saddam's daughters, returned subsequently to Iraq and was almost immediately killed in a shootout.

108 Al-Sharq Al-Aswat, London 4 July 1996 p.4, FBIS; Voice of Iraqi People, in Arabic, 4 July 1996 and 18 June 1997, FBIS; Al-Watan Ai-Arabi, Paris, 26 July 1996, pp32-34, FBIS.

109 Al-Zaman, London 25 September 1999, FBIS.

110 Al-Zaman, London, 25 Sep 1999, FBIS, de Marenches and Ockrent, OP. CIT. pp 112-114; DST Police Secrete, Flammarion, 1999, p 438.

111 Al-Zaman, London, 25 September 1999, FBIS.

112 OP. CIT.

113 Makiya, OP. CIT. p17.

114 Meria.

115 The three chiefs of stations were as follows: Muhhamad al-Rudayni defected from his post in India, Jabbar Salim defected from the Czech Republic and Quays Abbas defected from Greece.
The son of the former head of intelligence and Interior Minister Sadoun Shakir fled to Dubai in March 2003, as the coalition forces entered Iraq. Sadoun Shakir, the creator of the Iraqi intelligence service from the late 1960s is said to have escaped to Syria (Al-Ta'akhi, Baghdad in Arabic 9 Jun 2003, FBIS).
An unnamed Iraqi intelligence officer defected from Geneva in 1998.
In December 2001, Neama Fares, the Iraqi ambassador in Vienna and the former youngest general in the Iraq-Iran war, refused to return home. His term ended at the end of 1999 but he was allowed to stay longer because his wife had a position as consul in the Iraqi embassy in Vienna with a powerful parallel position in one of the two Iraqi intelligence services.
Ali Abda-al-Qadir Sulayman al-Majid, former employee of the Special Security Service – removed in 1995, and a brother of Col Shabib Sulayman, one of Saddam's security secretaries, defected to Jordan at the beginning of September 2001.
An Iraqi intelligence defector held by the Kurds in Northern Iraq calling himself Abid Hussein declared in the London Observer that Iraqi Intelligence trained Palestinians at a

base near Baghdad, that "many people in Britain were collecting intelligence for Iraqi regime". Abid fled to Germany in 1999 but was imprisoned by the Kurds when he returned for his family.

Another Iraqi intelligence defector also held by the Kurds, Kassm Mohammed El-Hut, claimed that four North Africans were recruited at Mecca in 1994. He said that the Iraqi intelligence personnel came to the UK pretending to be asylum seekers.

Two important Iraqi officials defected to the USA in the summer of 2001. Muhammad al-Humaymdi was the second most important man in the Iraqi UN mission and one of the most important officials in the Syrian section of the Baath Party. The other, Falah Hasan Matrud, a member of the Iraqi intelligence community, was an arms procurement expert.

In August 1994, former Iraqi ambassadors in China and Tunisia sought asylum in Britain. In March 1996 former Army Chief of Staff Nazar al-Khazaragi defected to Jordan and later sought political asylum in Denmark. En Nizar al-Khazraji defected to Turkey in March 1996 and later moved to Jordan and subsequently to Denmark. Majid Ahmad al Samarra'i, Iraqi ambassador to Venezuela, refused to return home in December 1997 and requested political asylum in the UK. Gen Wafiq al-Sammara'I, the head of Iraqi Military Intelligence, escaped from Iraq in December 1994. Gen Ghani, one of five senior officers who led the armed rebellion in 1991 against Saddam Hussein in southern Iraq asked for political asylum in the UK.

SOURCES; The Observer 16 March 2003; Al-Ray Al Amm, Kuwait, 4 September 2001, FBIS; Profil, 10 December 2001, FBIS; Al-Zaman, London, 25 Sep 1999, FBIS; Al-Taakhi, Baghdad, 9 June 2003, BBC MS; Al-Zaman, London, 21 March 2003, FBIS; Al-Zaman, London, 12 November 1999, FBIS; Al Hayat, London, in Arabic 16 July 2001, BBC MS; Makiya,OP. CIT. p320; Al-Majd, Amman, 25 March 1996, pp1,11, FBIS; Al-Sharq al-Aswat, London, 28 December 1997, FBIS. The Sunday Telegraph, 22 August 1999, Internet version.

[116] The Sunday Telegraph (Internet version) 17 October 1999; Al-Hayat, London, 18 October 1999 and Al-Majallah, London, 7 November 1999, Al-Zaman, London, 20 December 1999, BBC MS.

[117] Al-Zaman, London, 12 November 1999, FBIS.

[118] Al-Zaman, London, 14 October 1999, p1, FBIS.

[119] Al-Zaman, London 8 July 1999, p1, FBIS, Al-Sharq al-Aswat, London, 20 October 1999, BBC MS.

[120] Encyclopedie 1997 ed pp327-334; Inside Iraqi Security Network, Sean Boyne, Jane's Intelligence Review, July and August 1997. Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye, 21 and 23 March 2003, www.nvo.ng.ru, Al-Zaman, London 8 July 1999, p1, FBIS, Al-Sharq al-Aswat, London, 20 October 1999, BBC MS, Al-Nahdah, Baghdad 20 July 2003, BBC MS. The candidates for jobs in the intelligence services were head-hunted at establishments of higher education. The recruiters offered a very attractive package to get new employees. The recruits were exempted from military service, they were also offered housing and substantial unspecified material benefits, which very few employers were able to match. They started with a 40-day military "Mannerism and Bearing Course" which was, a kind of finishing school for young intelligence officers. Al-Zaman, London, 25 Sep 1999, FBIS.

[121] Al-Hayat, 8 May 05 p 4, BBC MS. An unnamed Lt Gen in the Iraqi intelligence based in Beirut claimed that Iraq had 14 espionage units in Europe and the Middle East. The defector whose past jobs included recruiting among the Iraqi diaspora in Denmark, said that there were seven people in the Iraqi community collaborating with his service. Politiken, web site, 8 December 2001, BBC MS.

[122] Centcom, 23 April 2003, Encyclopedie 1997 pp327-334; Boyne OP. CIT. Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye, 21 and 23 March 2003, www.nvo.ng.ru; Al-Zaman, London 8 July 1999, p1, FBIS; Al-Sharq al-Aswat, London, 20 October 1999, BBC MS; Al-Nahdah, Baghdad 20 July 2003, BBC MS.

[123] http://cns.miis.edu/research/iraq/iraqint.htm; Boyne OP. CIT. Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye, 21 and 23 March 2003, www.nvo.ng.ru.

[124] http://www.iraqinews.com/org_amn_al-askarariyya.shtml, http://cns.miis.edu/research/iraq/iraqint.htm, Encyclopedie 2002 ed, pp327-334; Boyne OP. CIT. Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye, 21 and 23 March 2003, www.nvo.ng.ru,

[125] Encyclopedie 2002 ed pp327-334; Boyne OP. CIT. Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye, 21 and 23 March 2003, www.nvo.ng.ru,

[126] The list of Iraqi special services was compiled from: Encyclopedie 1997 pp327-334; Boyne OP. CIT. Makiya, OP. CIT. passim; Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye, 21 and 23

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March 2003, www.nvo.ng.ru; CENTCOM www.centcom.mil , Saddam The Secret Life, Con Coughlin, Pan Books 2002, p167, Meria; http://www.fas.org; http://www.iraqinews.com/org_amn_al-askarariyya.shtml; http://cns.miis.edu/research/iraq/iraqint.htm and Agentura http://www.agentura.ru.

[127] CTK in English, 12 November 2001.

[128] Ziua, Bucharest, 7 December 2001, FBIS

[129] Al Hayat, London, 30 January 2002, FBIS; Dagbladet, Oslo, 21 March 2002, FBIS.

[130] Nine O'clock, Bucharest, in English; 17 March 2003, BBC MS; Svenska Dagbladet, 14 March 2003; Neue Kronen Zeitung, Vienna, 9 March 2003, FBIS.

[131]Philipine Headline News Online, 19 February 2003.

[132] Jordan Times, Amman in English, 9 March 2003. The Tribune, 7 March 2003, India.

[133] Radio Australia, 18 March 2003, FBIS; Melbourne Radio, 8 March 2003, FBIS, Kyodo, 10 March 2003.

[134] Svenska Dagbladet, 14 March 2003, FBIS.

[135] Nine O'clock, Bucharest, in English, 17 March 2003.

[136] archives.tcm.ie/breakingnews/2003/03/19/story92267.asp.

[137] CTK in English, 25 March 2003.

[138]www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2003/18899.htm

[139] TV Sarajevo, 24 March 2003, SRNA new agency, 29 March 2003, BBC MS.

[140]Media Watch, 24 March 2003; Global Security.org, 23 March 2003.

[141] ANSA, Rome, 24 March 2003, FBIS.

[142] Iraqi International TV Channel, 1 April 2003, BBC MS.

[143] TRT 2 TV, 5 April 2003, BBC MS; SABC.news.com. 5 April 2003.

[144] El Pais, 20 April 2003, BBC MS.

Want to Know More ...?

See:

Yacov Caroz, The Arab Secret Services, Corgi, 1978

SAVAK, Christian Delannoy, Stock, 1990

Ally to Adversary, Rick Francona, Naval Institute Press, 1999

Republic of Fear, Kanan Makiya, University of California Press, 1998

Inside Iraqi the Security Network, Sean Boyne, Jane's Intelligence Review, July and August 1997

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