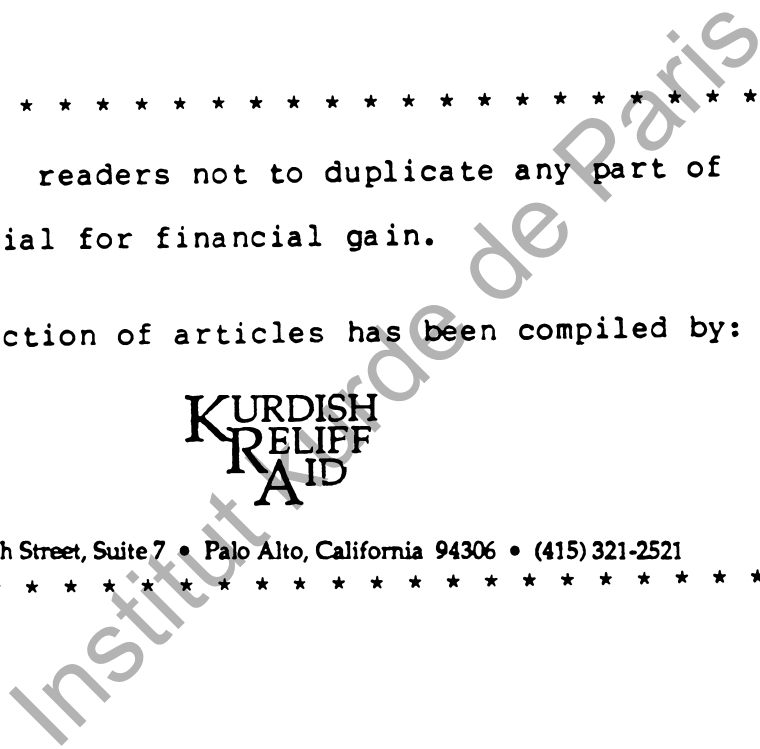


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Kurdistan on Fire

"Kurdistan on Fire" is part of the history of the tragic events that have taken place in the greater occupied Kurdistan with special emphasis on Iraqi-occupied Kurdistan from 1986-1990 as reported in the western, mainly American, media.

What you see and read here is only the tip of the iceberg. The scope of the Kurdish tragedy and the true extent of the destruction of Iraqi-occupied Kurdistan is impossible to know until after the fall of the present regime when, hopefully, a full inquiry can be made into the untold crimes of the regime of Saddam Hussein against the defenseless Kurdish population. Iran, Turkey, and Syria have not been any more humane than Iraq to their own Kurdish population. The only reason that Iraqi-occupied Kurdistan is in the spotlight is that the Kurds there have been more active in their fight for freedom in the last few decades than their brethren in the other parts of Kurdistan. In Iran, the Shah kept the Kurds under tight control and Khomeini declared a "holy war" against them soon after the establishment of the Islamic Republic. Turkey does not recognize its twelve million Kurds as a separate nationality and considers them "mountain Turks who have forgotten their language" and miraculously learnt another. Turkey's policy of forcible assimilation is notorious. Syria's policy of Arabization of its share of the Kurdish prize is a long-standing one.

Even though the Kurds have been subjected to state terrorism and extreme violations of their basic human rights by the various states that have controlled their destiny ever since the dismemberment of Kurdistan and its annexation by force to Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria at the end of the First World War, they never imagined anything like the reign of terror under Saddam Hussein and his Baath Arab Socialist Party. For the Kurds, life under Saddam has been a hell; there is not a family or an inch of land that his savagery has not touched. The regime of Saddam has committed genocide against a people who have asked for nothing but to live in peace, dignity, and freedom in their own land.

Recently, an American television reporter remarked in disbelief about the "Intifada" in Palestine/Israel that since the beginning of the uprising over two years ago two hundred and fifty homes have been demolished. A Lithuanian woman commented the other day about her country's drive for independence that, "We have been waiting for independence for fifty years!" The Kurds are far from wishing to minimize the suffering of any other nation and the sacrifices they have made for freedom, for we are for the freedom and self-determination of all nations; however, we must also speak the truth and, thus, we would like to say to these two individuals and millions of others: Go and see Iraqi-occupied Kurdistan and find out if there are still any villages standing; study a bit of Kurdish history and find out how long we have been waiting for our freedom and our independence.

Institut kurde de Paris

1986

Institut kurde de Paris

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Christiane More reports on the tangled alliances and conflicts in the frontier country between Iraq and Iran

The long march of the Kurds

TWO hours north-west of Sulaymaniyah on the way to the Iranian border, you pass the last Iraqi army post. From there on, you are in a sort of Kurdish Wild West, a barren country, where villages and springs are few and far between. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) has its own checkpoint here, in the "Liberated Zone." Since 1983, this has been the refuge of the armed opposition groups to the Khomeini regime, from here they conduct their operations with Baghdad's blessing.

Each of these groups has set up its headquarters here — mudwalled, earth-roofed houses for the top brass, tented villages for the rest. These settlements have been set up alongside the scattered villages in the area, which are built into the mountainside, giving it the appearance of a gigantic stairway. Smuggled goods are openly on sale here — Adidas trainers (made in Iran), samovars, Iraqi cigarettes and Kalashnikovs side by side with crates of Pepsi and blocks of ice. Radio transmitters have been installed, field hospitals, training camps, primary schools and even prisons (for Iranian captives) have been set up.

There is fierce rivalry between the two main factions competing for public sympathy in the area; the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) brings in medical volunteers from abroad and organises mass vaccination campaigns, while the Komala (Kurdish Communist Party of Iran) relies on the dynamism and commitment of its fighters. A large number of young people, including a high proportion of women, are attracted by their revolutionary and egalitarian fervour.

A dozen "peshmergas" (Kurdish freedom fighters — "those who precede death") conduct us to Alan, near Sardasht inside Iran, at the foot of Mount Nori, which is patrolled by 500-600 Iranian soldiers. We pass the Komala checkpoint where smugglers exact customs duties, issuing an official looking "receipt." The political groups share control of the crossing points between Iran and Iraq and the dues are one of their main sources of income.

We are now in territory controlled by the Komala. Gunfire can be heard in the distance. A few days before these villages had been heavily bombarded by Iranian cannon and mortar

fire. On this side of the mountains, the villages are much richer, set amid lush gardens and orchards. Local people offer the peshmergas bed and board for the night.

At nightfall the peshmergas take over control of the territory from the Iranian pasdaran (revolutionary guards), who retreat into their bases. We are invited to supper in a house where the main room serves as a dining-room-cum-bedroom. A plastic sheet is spread on the floor and a supper of rice and yoghurt appears. On the draining board stands a samovar which has been brewing all day, and tea will be served continuously until bedtime. Weak tea is swallowed with a lump of sugar held between the teeth here in Iranian Kurdistan — in Iraqi Kurdistan they drink it strong and sweet from the glass. The mountains unite the Kurds — they belong to them — but they also divide them. This detail is one of many that illustrate how the Kurds adapt to the customs of the country where they live. The alphabet, of necessity, is another: Iraqi and Iranian Kurds use Arabo-Persian script, Turkish Kurds use the Roman alphabet and the Kurds in the Soviet Union use the Cyrillic.

Whichever group one belongs to, listening to the radio is an important part of the evening — one's own station, the opposition's, the broadcasts from the Islamic Republic, all foreign stations broadcasting in Iranian or Kurdish, especially the Voice of Israel.

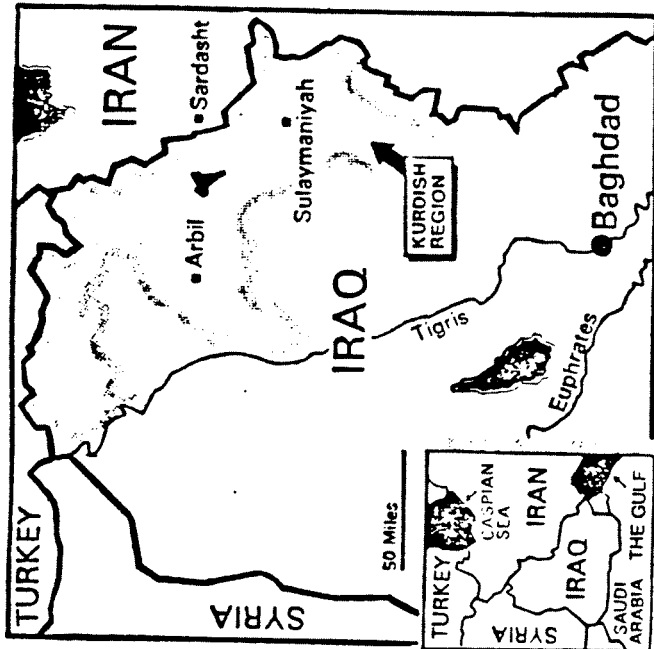
With the KDPI, the evening discussions touch on the current political situation in Iran, on the murderous armed conflict in which they have been engaged since January with the Komala and on the recent Iraqi bombing of nearby villages. With the Komala, organised evening meetings are compulsory. They spend their time questioning, convincing, explaining, educating . . . Parwin, 22, is a student and a committee member of Komala in Alan. After our five-hour trek, she takes off her Kalashnikov and ammunition belt and helps prepare a meal. Then she organises a meeting to discuss the Khomeini regime's decision to evacuate the 66 villages in the Sardasht region.

Nearby, in a tented village, Shaikh Ezzedin Hussein, a respected Kurdish Sunni religious leader and opponent of Khomeini pleaded with us:

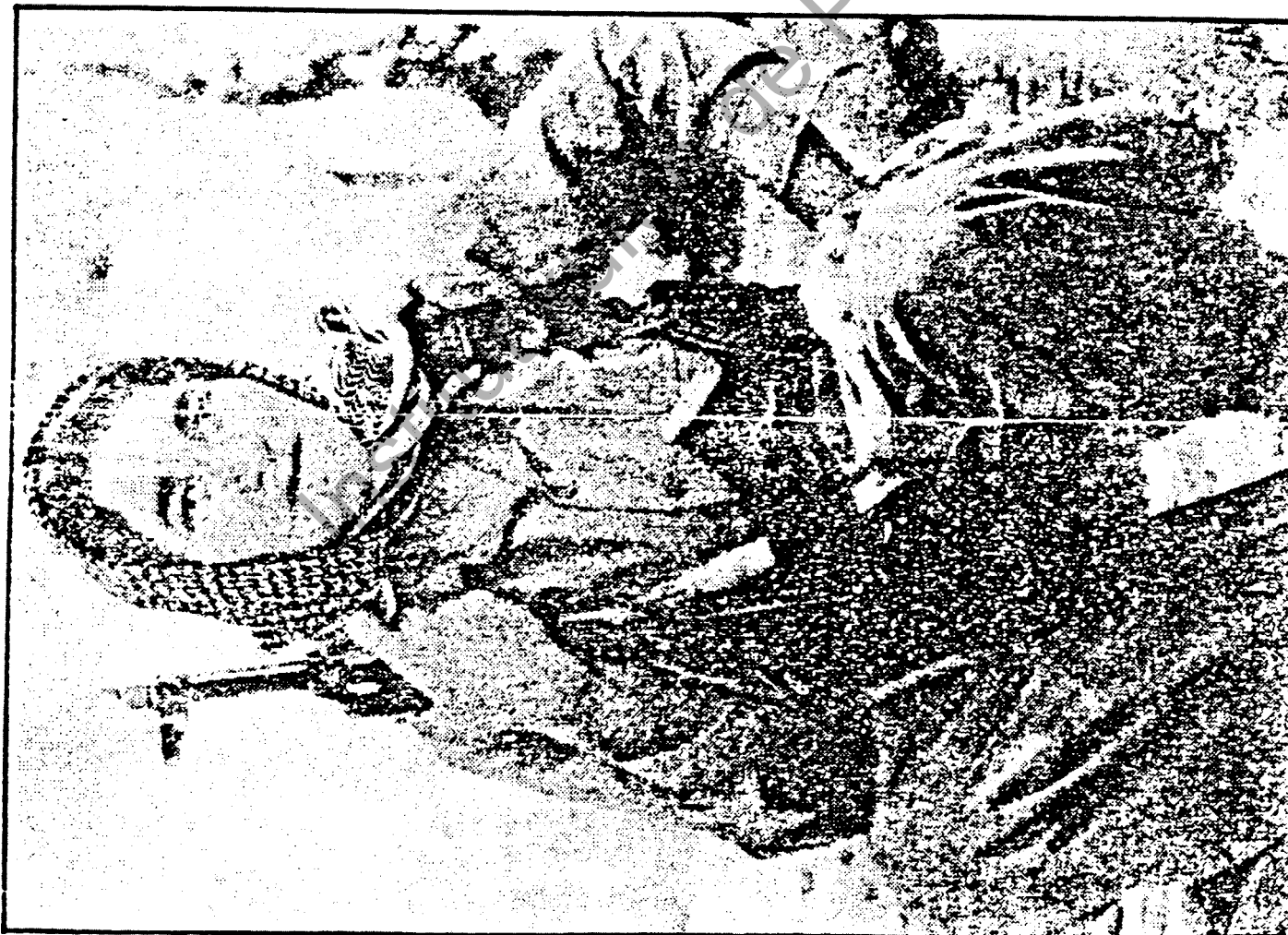
"In the name of God, tell the world that the Iranian government is trying to evacuate the areas where the Kurds are living to establish its sovereignty, that it is harassing the Kurdish people to try and cut them off from the peshmergas. Khomeini is destroying all life in the Alan and Seusni region. Tell the world that there is a people here suffering injustice and resisting to win the right to self-determination."

Another three hour trek from the Komala HQ takes us to the HQ of the KDPI, which is considered to be a close enemy by the Komala. The general secretary of the KDPI, Ar Qasemlu tells us: "The Komala have always refused to cooperate with us in any real sense. We proposed a single military command structure, but they refused. For four years there were clashes between us and the Komala but only of a localised nature and they collaborated when the situation became militarily dangerous. But now they are waging all-out war against us. During the evening conversation Khomeini is forgotten, it is the economic blockade at the Iran-Iraq war — all that can talk about is getting the revenge on the Komala.

Qasemlu explains the presence of his party and that of the other Iranian opposition groups in this border area. He says that he does not consider himself a hostage of the Baghdad government. "If you look at the map of Kurdistan, you'll realise that we are surrounded, geographically speaking. Geographically we have no access to the sea. Politically we are surrounded by more or less hostile countries (which is at least that can be said of the Turkish government). If a country offers us unconditional freedom of movement then we will cooperate with them, as we are doing with the Iraqi government. We, the Kurds and Iraqis — are both fighting the Khomeini regime. Although we are effectively fighting on the same side of the barricade



- Kurds: 10 million people in Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Soviet Armenia.
- Kurdistan is the homeland claimed since the late 19th-century in northern Iraq, north-western Iran and southern Turkey.
- Main groups based in Iraq: Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI), allied with Iraqi government; Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), shaky recent alliance with KDPI.
- Based on Iranian border: Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), allied with Iranian government; Kurdish Communist Party of Iran (Komala), opposed to KDP and KDPI.
- 1975 Algiers accord between Iran and Iraq threatened all Kurdish movements.
- 1975 KDP almost wiped out.
- 1979 Khomeini took over in Tehran, KDPI briefly hoped for autonomy under new regime.
- 1980 Gulf War began.
- 1982 KDP sent back into Iraq from Iran.
- 1983 Iranian government offensive against



we are not fighting on behalf of the Iraqi government: our struggle began long before the Iran-Iraq war, which is useful for them. We consider this de facto cooperation to be legitimate since it helps the liberation movement of the Iranian Kurds.

"We would never do what Mustafa Barzani did, and what his sons in Teheran are now doing, that is to say, form an alliance with a foreign government which would be harmful to the Kurdish people. Thus, our alliance with the Iraqi government is in no way directed against the Iraqi Kurds." In any case, the physical support which these Kurds receive from the Iraqi government is minimal — the peshmergas rely largely on the vast Middle East "Kalashnikov market" for their supply of individual weapons.

The KDPI have come a long way since the party was founded in 1945 with the creation of the Mahabad Republic (this Kurdish Republic was set up by the

Soviets and British allies to offset the political void caused by their occupation and lasted only a year). Last August, in this no-man's land, an important meeting took place to mark the fortieth anniversary of the party's foundation. It brought together the leading figures of the Iranian Kurdish parties (apart from the Komala) and Jalal Talabani, leader of the Iraqi PUK. Talabani had spent the best part of a year negotiating with the Baghdad government for an improvement in the status of the autonomous region, but no agreement was signed and between February and December, 1985, his committee had engineered the kidnapping of more than 30 foreign hostages in Kurdistan to bring the Kurdish problem to world attention and to force foreign companies working in Kurdistan to pay a tax to finance the revolution.

The Iranian Kurds seem to be well-entrenched in their rebellion and there seems to be little likelihood of the

situation changing as long as the Iran-Iraq war continues and as long as Khomeini, who refuses to discuss autonomy, remains in power. But the hope born of the 1979 revolution is still very much alive and the Kurds feel themselves to be essentially free and invincible in their mountain strongholds.

Trekking through the mountains with the peshmergas, in their trainers and plastic shoes (no robust mountaineering boots here), one feels that this Kurdish optimism about the future must sometimes wear a little thin. They travel light and light-heartedly — they carry only a Kalashnikov, a radio, and some sticky tape (to secure the tightly folded messages which every Kurd carries to and fro for relatives and friends). They laugh, they sing and joke. But their cheerfulness alternates with sadness: their songs are mournful, the songs of homeless men, dreaming constantly of love but for ever making war.

Turkey's Resting Place Of Stone Gods

THE NEW YORK TIMES
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1964

Mt. Nemrut is site of ancient statues

By HENRY KAMM

The immense mountaintop burial mound of King Antiochus, with its array of gigantic marble heads severed from their stone bodies, is one of the great sights of eastern Turkey. From the remembrances of the Hittites in central Anatolia to Mount Ararat in the distant east — whose heights American fundamentalists continue to scale in search of Noah's Ark, persuaded that there it ended its voyage — eastern Turkey is one of the world's most historically and culturally fascinating regions.

But the pleasure of discovery has to be paid for by endurance of the hardships of underdevelopment — poor accommodations, scarcity of safe food and drink and an almost insuperable language barrier for those without Turkish or Kurdish.

And so, coming face to face with those startling heads brought a dual reward: I saw at last those ancient works of art that even in photographs I had found strangely compelling, and I experienced one of the joys of travel that packaged jet tours, air-conditioned buses and the spread of hotel chains into remote places have been rapidly making a thing of the past. It is the per ardua ad astra phenomenon, the sense of having earned what you got, of having slogged through the mud to see the stars.

The suggestion that I rise before 2 A.M. to

drive for two to three hours on a bumpy and midsummer-dusty road winding up a mountain, then continue the climb for another mile on foot, was entertained only because leaving the ghastly hotel — the best in the area — seemed desirable at any hour.

Clearly my view of the accommodations was shared by the busload of Yugoslav trekkers heading for Ararat, hundreds of miles to the northeast. There they were, at 2 A.M., stretched out in a thin gray line of sleeping bags, preferring the comfort of the hotel's parking lot to the rigors of their rooms.

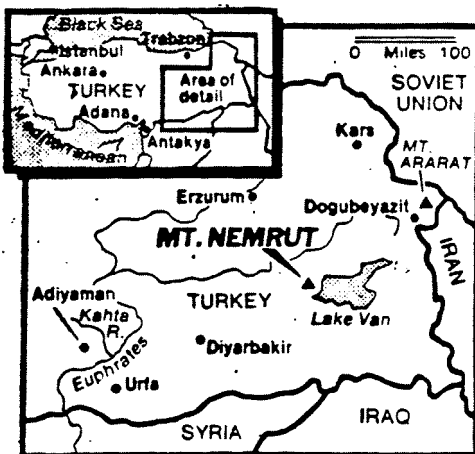
The best hotel in Adiyaman, the nearest major town, is better than average by the standards of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism in its current listing of hotels. It tips 2 on a scale that starts with 1, for luxury, and works its way down from 1. Beneath 4 is judged unacceptable. The facilities and service

at the waterless best hotel in Adiyaman gave rise to frightening visions of the hotels in town that are not even listed.

I had intended to sleep until departure, but the swarms of flies that shared my room had not. I fought them a losing battle over control of the bed. I would have ceded it to them, but it occupied all of the room.

Even the Serbo-Croat curses of the parking-lot sleepers, aroused by the engine of my car, did not diminish a sense of pleasure on leaving on my predawn mission for Mount Nemrut, 40 miles from Adiyaman and 7,217 feet above sea level. The early departure was dictated by advice from friends and guide books that to see the sun gradually awaken the massive heads from the dark is drama of the highest order and not to be missed.

No doubt friends and authors are right, but I missed the magic moment. By the time I had scaled the heights along the steep, zig-zagging path that leads from the natural mountaintop to the terraces of the 164-foot-high superstructure that Antiochus had piled on it to create his eventual burial place, dawn's rosy fingers had already begun their daily paint job on the trunkless heads. It was the cup of Turkish coffee at the end of the road, necessary to enable me to make the final ascent on foot, that cost me that moment of special enchantment.



The New York Times / Feb. 2, 1964

But there was magic enough in the extraordinary sight even without the special lighting effects. It is hard to disagree with John Freely, author of the excellent "Companion Guide to Turkey," who called Antiochus's burial mound "megalomaniacal." The king of the buffer state separating the Roman Empire from Parthia, an early Iranian kingdom, traced his ancestry to Alexander the Great of Macedonia and Darius the Great of Persia, fusing two great dynasties of god-kings. He led the kingdom, called the Commagene, in what was its golden age, ruling from 64 to 32 B.C. In A.D. 72, Commagene was conquered by Emperor Vespasian and incorporated into the Roman province of Syria.

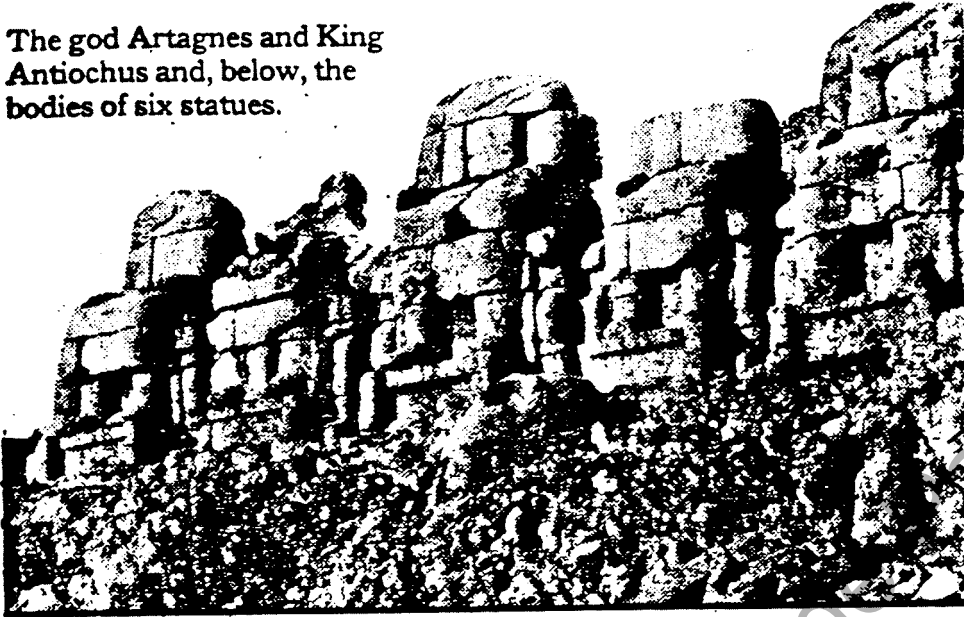
The tumulus is conical, made of fist-sized stones piled on top of the mountain, which had presumably been flattened in preparation when Antiochus ordered his mausoleum constructed. Two large terraces were cut into the flank of the cone, whose circumference is nearly 500 feet, and made into majestic open-air hieroglyphs, a combination of tomb and sanctuary.

The vision that greeted me as I turned the last of the zigzags to step onto the eastern terrace was strong enough to efface instantly all memory of the inconveniences of getting to the top of Mount Nemrut. Aligned at the rear there were six enthroned and headless statues — imposingly massive marble blocks, six blocks to each statue from bulky shoulders to huge feet set on footrests.

Yet despite the power the monuments convey, at their feet there lay the evidence of their mortality: Amid the jumble of broken blocks of marble, bases of columns and fragments of bas-reliefs stood their heads, each much taller than a man, set upright apparently wherever the head-hunters of centuries or milleniums ago had let them roll after their act of vandalism. And what heads they are! Antiochus, the descendant of two great lines of divine rulers, had his sculptors create multiple gods and demigods, fusing in their bearing and features the majesties of Hellenic and Persian civilization.



The god Artagnes and King Antiochus and, below, the bodies of six statues.



The head of a guardian eagle at the site on Mount Nemrut.

Zeus and Ahura Mazda, the chief Persian divinity, are one, as are Ares and Artemis and Hercules, gods and demigods of war and power. Apollo, Mithra, Helios and Hermes are a joint sun god. And Antiochus himself is one of the deities. An inscription says:

“I, the great King Antiochus, caused to be built on foundations never to be demolished the hieroglyphic, the ceremonial way and the throes together with all the god extraordinary efforts I have realized ideas that were born in me. What I have is proof of my belief in the presence of gods. At the end of my fortunate life, my will plunge into eternal sleep here, and my spirit will be in the heavenly paradise of Ahura Mazda.”

It is a great irony that it can only be surmised that Antiochus's wish was granted. There is no more evidence that his body is actually sleeping its eternal sleep in the granite mausoleum than there is of his spirit present whereabouts.

Although Shelley placed his “cold crack” of the statue of Ozymandias in the desert, I heard in my mind's ear the image of the “shattered visage . . . frown and wrinkled lip, and sneer of command” speak to me very loudly as I walked among the toppled heads.

Lions and eagles of comparable magnitude flanked the statues and continue to guard the site — the lions against dangers from the eagles from the air. Bas-reliefs, many of which show Antiochus shaking hands with gods, are propped up against the rear sides of the terraces.

The popularity of the sunrise show for a crowd scene at that time. I found it difficult to let the rush pass and to allow groups to return to the minibuses that brought them from below, pressed by drivers. By 8 A.M. I was almost alone among the sculptures and the glorious mountain view over the shimmering land of the

Continued on Page 32

Turkey



Henry Kahn

The heads on Mount Nemrut date to the first century B.C.

Continued From Page 9

phrates, ancient Mesopotamia.

Exaltation is not too lofty a word for the feeling that is communicated by the combination of the beauty of the physical landscape — rugged, high mountains changing colors with the light growing intense and the gleam of the sun reflected from the streams that cut through them — and the sense that one is looking over the land where much of early history was acted out, the ground where East met West and the twain parted.

On the way down there was a chance to see what the dark had hidden during the night's ride. Over the village of Eski Kahta tower the ruins of two fortresses. One is the New Castle, built in the 14th century by the Mamelukes, possibly on the ruins of an older Armenian fortification. Across the Kahta River, once called the Nymphaios, on a rocky, fortified mound, stand the ruins of Arsameia, the summer capital of Commagene. Its founder was Arsamos, an ancestor of Antiochus.

There, too, archeologists have unearthed the traces of a tomb-sanctuary. But above all, Friedrich Karl Dörner found in 1951 a magnificent bas-relief. Nearly 12 feet high and beautifully preserved, it shows a handshake between a god and a man,

another combination of Hercules, Ares and Artagnes meeting King Mithradates I Callinicos, the founder of the Commagene kingdom and the town of Arsameia. Left at its site and replaced upright, the relief is a great argument for restoring sculptures in museums to their original sites.

About five miles beyond, the road crosses the river by a handsome Roman bridge guarded at each end by a pair of columns, of which three survive. The columns symbolized the four cities of Commagene, who erected the bridge in honor of the Emperor Septimius Severus (194-211), his wife and two sons. Legend reports that one of the sons, Caracalla, who succeeded his father, murdered his brother and ordered removed the column that recalled his memory.

Another five miles down is the Karakus tumulus, the burial place of the queens and other royal women of Commagene, encircled by groups of columns. Among the statues topping them is a headless black bird, karakus, which gave the site its popular name.

Because of the rugged terrain and the altitude, Mount Nemrut is a late-spring to early-autumn excursion, to be avoided when there is risk of high winds and snow. The next time, I think I will bring a sleeping bag and spend the night on the peak. ■

The trail to Mount Nemrut

Many travel organizations arrange tours of eastern Turkey that include Mount Nemrut. Three of them are:

World of Oz (3 East 54th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022; 212-940-8463 or 800-223-6623). There are two programs this year. The first is an escorted 21-day tour of eastern Turkey, leaving June 18 and Aug. 20, with two days at Mount Nemrut. It costs \$2,085 a person, based on double occupancy, and covers all expenses except air fare to Turkey. The second, a five-night six-day tour starting in either Istanbul or Ankara every Sunday from May 1 to Sept. 30, is \$500 a person, double occupancy, all-inclusive except air fare to Turkey.

Exprintel Swan Hellenic (500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110; 212-719-1200). This company offers a 20-day Art Treasure Tour of eastern Turkey with a guest lecturer that includes one day at Mount Nemrut at \$2,336 a person, double occupancy, from and to London. It departs May 23 and Aug. 22.

Serenissima Travel (41 East 42d Street, New York, N.Y. 10017, suite 2312; 800-358-3330 or 212-953-7720). It has two tours of eastern Turkey, with a lecturer, that include Mount Nemrut. They are 18 days, one leaving May 14, the second Sept. 10. The cost is \$2,712 a person, double occupancy, all-inclusive from and to London.

6th Test of Cruise Missile Ends in a Quick Crash at Sea

Cold Lake, Alberta

The sixth test of a U.S. cruise missile over Canada ended in failure yesterday when the unarmed weapon crashed into the Beaufort Sea moments after it was launched from a B-52 bomber.

U.S. Air Force officials at the scene refused to speculate what might have gone wrong.

However, Harley Andre, Canada's associate defense minister, said in Ottawa that the missile's engine apparently failed to start after

launch and "it fell with the trajectory of a brick . . . onto the ice."

The missile was to have flown from the Beaufort Sea to a target 1550 miles away at the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range near Cold Lake.

The 4½-hour test was to have included practice interceptions by two planes from Cold Lake and by four from the United States, said Major Luigi Rossetto, a public affairs officer for the Canadian Forces.

Iran Says New Front Opened Near Iraq's Biggest Oil Field

Erhnan

Iranian forces captured 37 abandoned villages in northern Iraq yesterday, taking them to within 16 miles of the Kurdish provincial capital of Sulaymaniyah, an Iranian war communique said.

Kirkuk, 60 miles west of Sulaymaniyah, is the site of Iraq's biggest oil field, a major refinery and the main outlet for its oil exports — a pipeline to Turkey carrying 1 million barrels of crude a day.

There were hundreds of Iraqi casualties in the assault near Sulay-

maniyah, set among snow-capped mountains 170 miles northeast of Baghdad, the statement said.

In Baghdad, Iraq said its forces were waging a final and decisive battle on the Faw peninsula — the southern front where Iran launched an offensive on February 9. Baghdad radio was silent on reports of the new Iranian thrust.

Iran's 16-day-old offensive on the Faw peninsula in southern Iraq has also been seen as a clear warning to nearby Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to lower oil output and temper their support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Iran earns 95 percent of its foreign currency from oil and would like to see the oil price remain high.

The low-flying, terrain-following missile, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, was designed to fly below radar coverage. Northwestern Canada was chosen as a test area because its geography and climate resemble that of the northern Soviet Union, Rossetto said.

The last cruise missile launched over Canada crashed January 22 near Cold Lake, about 190 miles northeast of Edmonton. A U.S. military spokesman said that missile crashed because it ran out of fuel after encountering strong headwinds. It was launched from a B-52 bomber based in Michigan.

The tests are conducted under a five-year agreement between the United States and Canada that was signed in 1983.

Associated Press

Iran-Bound Tankers Struck By Iraqi Jets

Baghdad

Iraq, stymied in its bid to oust 30,000 Iranian invaders, is stepping up attacks on oil tankers in an apparent attempt to regain the initiative in the 5½-year Persian Gulf war as heavy fighting continues on the ground in northern Iraq.

Iraq said its jet fighters destroyed a large ship off the Iranian coast Saturday night. Shipping sources said the 105,000-ton Hong Kong-owned Energy Courage was hit by an Iraqi missile as it steamed toward Iran's main oil terminal at Kharg Island. It was the fourth confirmed attack in five days by Iraqi planes on ships.

Yesterday, shipping sources said, an Iranian helicopter attacked the empty Turkish tanker Atlas 180 miles northeast of Qatar in the central gulf, killing the chief engineer and causing extensive damage.

In the rugged northern fronts where Tehran-backed Kurdish guerrillas have been supporting Iran, Tehran reported new advances yesterday.

Tehran radio said the guerrillas attacked the road between Chwarta and Sulaymaniyah, capital of Iraq's Sulaymaniyah province, a strategic target 170 miles northeast of Baghdad.

The broadcast said the Kurds captured 40 Iraqi troops, and Iranian troops seized 20 abandoned Kurdish villages and shelled an Iraqi garrison, killing 150 Iraqis and destroying 60 vehicles.

Iraq said that 350 Iranian soldiers were killed in a battle near Chwarta and 450 Iranians were killed in fighting in the Penjwin area to the east.

Iran also reported that Iraqi planes dropped chemical bombs yesterday on a Kurdish village in northwestern Iran, injuring many civilians. Iran has often accused Iraq of using chemical weapons against Iranian troops, but this was believed to be its first complaint of civilian casualties from chemical warfare.

On the southern front, where an Iraqi counterattack against Iranian invaders has bogged down, Iran reported that its anti-aircraft fire downed three more Iraqi planes, bringing the total to 67 in the 3-week-old offensive.

U.P. & Reuters



The New York Times / Chester Higgins Jr.

Vera Beaudin Saeedpour, head of the Kurdish library, is the widow of a Kurdish nationalist and the daughter of an Orthodox Jew. "I felt the responsibility that goes with knowing," she said.

Kurdish Library to Open in Brooklyn

By MARVINE HOWE

Kurdistan today is a diffuse place, a state of mind instead of a country, a broad expanse of mountains and plateaus that stretches across eastern Turkey, northern Syria, northern Iraq and western Iran.

Kurdistan, in fact, might be said to be anywhere a Kurd and his culture are found — in Moscow or Damascus, in Paris or Bonn.

And soon it will be found in Brooklyn, nestled quietly in a private brownstone in Prospect Heights, a stately place with two large urns and hyacinth plants and a mission to keep alive the heart's blood of a homeless nation.

This week, the brownstone, at 345 Park Place on the corner of Underhill Avenue, will become a Kurdish library, the first of its kind in North America, a repository of rare books, ancient maps and costumes of many colors. But more than this, it will be a reminder for some that geography can separate a people but not disperse them.

Plight of the Kurds

"It is extremely important to have a center of Kurdish research because our people are politically fragmented and our culture is threatened with extinction," said a Kurdish scholar at Columbia University's Department of Middle Eastern Studies. He asked to be identified by his pen name, Sa-

mande Siaband, because he feared reprisals against members of his family who live in Iraq and Iran.

There are at least 15 million Kurds living in the Moslem world. In Turkey, he said, the Kurdish language, names and costumes are outlawed; in Iraq, Kurdish lands are a battleground and in Iran, the Government is trying to crush the Kurdish movement for autonomy.

In the United States, there are 2,500 to 3,000 Kurds in pockets in New York, Tennessee, North Dakota, California and Michigan.

The plight of the Kurds — their diaspora and what they say is their persecution — came home twice to an American woman named Vera Beaudin Saeedpour.

Few Kurdish Institutions

She is the widow of Hommayoun Saeedpour, a Kurd who devoted himself to the nationalist cause and who died of leukemia in 1981. She is also the daughter of an Orthodox Jew, someone who is keenly aware of the history of her own people and who compares the silence of the world at the time of the Holocaust to the general indifference toward the persecution of the Kurds today.

"I felt the responsibility that goes with knowing," she said.

Thus, this determined 55-year-old woman became the driving force be-

hind the Kurdish library, situated on the main floor of her Brooklyn brownstone.

She initially created The Kurdish Program, a privately supported effort to publicize the situation of the Kurds, and obtained recognition by Cultural Survival Inc., a nonprofit organization founded by anthropologists at Harvard University and committed to the survival of threatened societies. The only other Kurdish institutions of this kind are the Kurdish Institutes of Paris and Bonn, which receive financing from the French and West German Governments respectively.

The opening of the library was to be marked last night, the Kurdish New Year, with a celebration in the ballroom of the Diplomat Hotel in Manhattan.

Temo, a popular Iraqi Kurdish singer, was to come from Paris to play the tamboura, — a kind of lute — and sing haunting songs of exile. Kurdish musicians from West Germany were invited to play the zornah (flute) and dohol (drum), amid the festivities of Kurdish dances and Kurdish food — stuffed eggplant and meat patties.

By Appointment Only

The library will at first be open only by appointment. Most of the books have been acquired through private donations: works on Kurdish history and culture written in English, French and German, including such classics as Austen H. Layard's "Nineveh and Babylon" and such recent works as "Ma Vie de Kurde" by Noureddine Zaza.

More than half the books in the new library are in Kurdish, which is related to the Persian language. That there are so many books in Kurdish is a matter of irony to some immigrants who note that Kurdish publications are banned in most countries where Kurds live.

Also in the collection are a number of maps dating to 1807, photographs of Kurdish life from the exhibition "The Kurds, an Endangered People" that toured this country last year, mannequins in costumes of hand-loomed goat hair from southeastern Turkey, brocade and velvet dresses from Iraq and Iran, and rugs and other ethnic artifacts donated by Columbia University's Department of Anthropology.

The Kurdish Program plans to present monthly lectures or slide shows in the library and to offer a Kurdish language course. There are also plans for a Kurdish oral history project and scholarships for Kurdish students.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, MARCH 30, 1986

Study Says Torture in Turkish Jails Continues

Although Turkish authorities have recently allowed greater exercise of civil liberties, prisoners in Turkish police stations and prisons continue to be subjected to torture and inhumane cell conditions, a human rights organization has charged.

The report, issued last week by the New York-based organization Helsinki Watch, said that despite increased freedom of expression for most individuals, Turkey continues to detain political prisoners and to restrict many publishers and scholars.

The organization noted that the military-backed Government of Prime Minister Turgut Ozal had lifted martial law in all but 9 of the country's 67 provinces and permitted open parliamentary debate and wider press coverage of reported instances of torture.

The group cited new laws in Turkey to punish torturers and to provide a partial amnesty for political prisoners.

But the study reported recent inci-

dents of torture involving electric shock, rape and severe beatings.

It also reported police raids in which literature was confiscated. The study said the independence and quality of universities, severely damaged by punitive dismissals of many professors during martial law, had not been restored.

Cautious View of Future

The report was cautious on the future of civil liberties in Turkey, saying that "matters seem better mainly because people are talking about them openly, but warned that "repressive legislation remains in place and is being utilized in a seemingly haphazard fashion that serves to keep a degree of intimidation alive."

Responding to the Helsinki Watch report in a prepared statement, the Turkish Embassy in Washington said: "The Turkish Constitution, Turkish law and

Turkish Government policy categorically prohibit inhumane treatment of detainees and prisoners. Torture of detainees is a felony crime, and security and correctional officials suspected of perpetrating such offenses are prosecuted and subjected to severe sentences when found guilty."

The embassy's statement said all allegations raised in the Helsinki Watch report would be investigated, but it denied all charges of illegal detention of political prisoners.

"There are no prisoners in Turkey who have been incarcerated for their political views," it said. "The law on enforcement of prison sentences recently was changed resulting in partial and complete amnesty for all prisoners in Turkey. Capital sentences have been reduced to 30 years, life sentences to 20 years and all others have been reduced by half. As a consequence it is expected that 70 to 80 percent of all prisoners will be released forthwith."

Grief Fills 'Vale of Peace' as Iraqis Bury War Dead

By CHARLES P. WALLACE, *Times Staff Writer*

NAJAF, Iraq—Despite the dazzle of spring sunshine glancing off the golden dome of the Mosque of Ali, the crumbling streets of ancient Najaf are filled with haunting reminders of death.

Funeral processions by the score lend the city a melancholy rhythm as entire villages arrive here to bury Iraqi soldiers who have died in the war with Iran. Black-garbed marchers hold up hand-colored photographs of smiling young men with fierce mustaches. Sidewalk peddlers hawk glasses of tea and pistachio nuts to the bereaved.

The more affluent mourners charter a bus for the funeral party. Others arrive in orange and white taxis, with the slender coffins, frequently wrapped in an Iraqi flag, tied to the roofs like vacation canoes.

The grave of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammed, is here,

and thus Najaf is considered a holy city by followers of the Shia Muslim faith. It was here, residents note, that Iran's spiritual leader, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, found sanctuary when he was exiled by Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi.

For centuries, millions have come to Najaf's vast graveyard, a virtual city of unoccupied buildings known as the "Vale of Peace," to bury their dead.

With Iraq locked in a war for survival with Iranian forces in the Faw Peninsula for the last six weeks, Najaf has witnessed an outpouring of grief unusual even by the standards of a city whose fate seems so inextricably linked with death. There are now traffic jams in the cemetery.

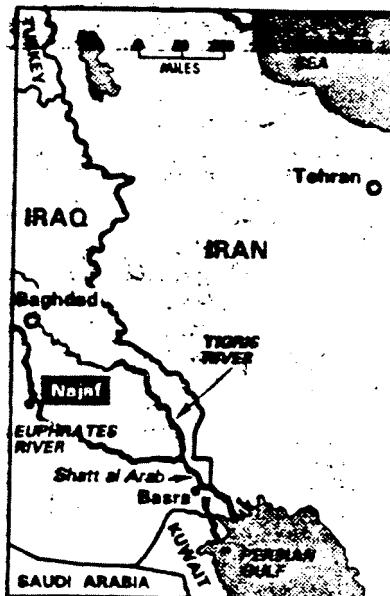
Iraqi officials have issued no casualty statistics since the war

Please see IRAQ, Page 14

IRAQ: War Dead Buried in 'Vale of Peace'

Continued from Page 1
began in September, 1980. Western diplomats in Baghdad believe that up to 10,000 Iraqis may have been killed since February. Perhaps 30,000 Iranians have died in their human wave attacks.

The gloom of Najaf contrasts sharply with life in Baghdad, the capital, where the authorities have taken pains to keep the war from intruding too severely.



Los Angeles Times

Indeed, if it were not for the evening television news, which shows endless film of Iranian casualties at the front, a visitor to the capital might never be aware that a war of major proportions has been waged for more than five years.

The shops seem well stocked by Iraqi standards, and the streets are filled with gleaming new Volkswagens made in Brazil. Entertainment, in nightclubs and bars, has thrived.

Hotel space in Baghdad was at a premium the other day because of a conference of poets and an international convention of insurance brokers, who, appropriately, specialize in war risks.

According to diplomats, funerals are rarely permitted in Baghdad. This is in keeping with an effort to keep up morale.

Refrigerated Bodies

One diplomat recounted the experience of a close friend who went to look for a dead relative. He was ushered into a refrigerated warehouse where, the friend said, he saw at least 2,000 bodies.

According to the diplomat, the dead are frequently brought from the southern city of Basra by overnight train and transferred to the mortuaries, with a few bodies released to families each week. In this manner, the grief is spread over an entire year instead of being concentrated in the aftermath of big battles.

Travelers to Basra are startled to see taxis hired by the army transporting the dead north. Often, a family's first indication that something is amiss with a relative in the armed forces is the arrival of a taxi with a rough-hewn wooden coffin on the roof.

"There is no question that the Iraqis are tired of this war," a Western diplomat in Baghdad said. "But it is no longer a case of winning. It is now a question of not losing."

According to diplomats, most hospitals are overflowing with war wounded. Only the most critical surgical care is available for the civilian population.

One of the ways Iraq has been able to maintain the appearance of normality despite the heavy burden of the war has been to import manpower to replace young men who have been drafted and sent off to the front.

It is estimated that between 1 million and 3 million foreign workers are in the country, which has a population of only 14 million. The great majority of the foreigners, perhaps a million of them, are

laborers from Egypt.

With the price of oil falling, Iraq has been forced to tighten its belt economically. Among other recent measures, the government has lowered the amount of money Egyptians can send home from 57 dinars (about \$182) to 25 dinars (\$80).

The immediate consequence of this has been an exodus of Egyptians. Airline offices in Baghdad are mobbed with Egyptians squatting in line for hours.

"People tend to focus on the war as the root of the problem," a Western diplomat said. "But the decline of oil prices coupled with the decline of the dollar is having a more significant impact."

According to Western estimates, Iraq's income is expected to decline from \$11 billion or \$12 billion last year to about \$9 billion or \$10 billion this year, even though the country has increased oil production from 1.1 million barrels to 1.5 million barrels a day. To increase exports, a pipeline to Saudi Arabia was opened last fall.

In addition to cutting back worker remittances, projects are being abandoned or completed more slowly. Iraq is asking for longer repayment terms from its creditors, the largest of them being West Germany and Japan.

In a recent interview with a group of visiting journalists, Iraqi Information Minister Latif Jasim noted that the government is "launching a campaign to minimize expenditures." But he declined to say by how much.

"In the past the Iraqis have been able to support a guns-and-butter economy—both the consumer sector and the military sector—at the same time," a Western economist said. "Now it's going to be a guns economy. There will have to be a little butter, because the regime knows it has to meet basic needs."

With foreign currency needs topping \$15 billion—a deficit of \$3 billion at least—it seems likely that Baghdad will need increasingly to pressure Kuwait and Saudi Arabia—Iraq's neighbors in the Persian Gulf who are terrified at the prospect of a victory by non-Arab Iran—to help finance the war effort.

An Arab resident of the capital for the last three years said he had noticed a dramatic rise by Iraqis in the use of a popular aphorism to describe their current predicament.

"No luck," the saying goes, "and no good mood."

The Park Slope Paper

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Prospect Heights library documents Kurdish culture

By Bill Breen
Brooklyn Paper Publications

A newly established library in Prospect Heights seeks to give back to one of the earth's oldest, and now disenfranchised, cultures a small portion of its language and place names—the stuff of which a culture is made.

The Kurdish Library, situated on the parlor floor of a brownstone at 345 Park Place at Underhill Avenue, is slowly becoming the repository for Kurdish books, costumes and maps, all of which are illegal in the countries which now claim portions of Kurdistan—a Wyoming size area that includes

eastern Turkey, northern Syria and Iraq and western Iran.

Kurdistan has been warred over for centuries, explained the library's founder Vera Beaudin Saeedpour, and its boundaries were finally abolished at the end of World War I, when as part of the Ottoman Empire it was divided by the countries that now form the modern day Middle East. For 18 million Kurds, their mountainous, river hewn land became more of a cause and a state of mind than a country.

Tribal and fiercely independent, the Kurds have been rising in uncoordinated revolts for nearly a quarter of a century, only to be suppressed, in turn, by the Arabs, Persians and Turks.

Their motto is "Have no Friends."

In Turkey, nine million Kurds are subjected to imprisonment and torture for wearing their costumes or speaking their language; in Iraq, the homeland of three million Kurds has become a wasted barren ground; in Iran, five million Kurds are fighting the Khomeini regime's efforts to annihilate them.

Concern over Kurdish separatism has been deep in Turkey, ever since the Kurds revolted against the infant republic of Kemal Ataturk in 1925. In 1979 Iraq and Turkey agreed to cooperate in suppressing Kurdish separatism in their border areas.

Saeedpour called the Kurds "a people who have lived in the same mountains for perhaps as many as 4,000 years, and have their own language, history and culture. Yet their existence has been denied by the Middle East, and they've been ignored by the West to placate our oil and strategic interests."

Three weeks ago she determined, energetic Saeedpour opened the library on the main floor of her brownstone in this quiet, tree lined residential neighborhood. On the morning of a visitor's arrival, six stained glass windows diffused a low lying sun, backlighting the hyacinths and a large silver samovar that decorate the small yet elegant room.

Enlarged color photographs — of the craggy, dun colored land and children in multi-hued costumes — decorate the walls. Alongside the prints are maps dating to 1807 that define the former boundaries of Kurdistan.

Three glass cases display musical instruments, hand-loomed costumes of goat hair from southeastern Turkey, velvet dresses from Iran and Iraq, and flat woven Kilim rugs.

Saeedpour said the Kurdish books, most of which are out of print and must be smuggled from the Middle East with great care and secrecy, are slow in arriving, but she has already filled two cases from the floor to the 14 foot ceiling.

Among them is the only alphabet book published in northern Kurdistan—most of the copies were confiscated by Turkish officials and its author was imprisoned for four months: *Scharef Naneh*, a history of the Kurds written by

a Kurd; and *A Road Through Kurdistan*, by the engineer scholar Archibald Ham which gives an in-depth look at the Kurds, their culture, and the hardships faced in building a through a land split by mountains and laced with gorge turbulent rivers.

Despite the fact that she widow of Hommayoun Saeedpour, a Kurd who died of leukemia in 1981, the 56 old Saeedpour traces her roots in the Kurdish cause to the day when her husband shared her the Oxford English Dictionary's definition of a people.

The renowned dictionary defined the Kurd as "one of a pastoral, and predatory people in Kurdistan." Saeedpour found it "strangely ironic that one can find no word in the dictionary in which any of the peoples implicated in the exploitation of the Kurd characterized as 'predator'."

She said her newly found commitment to the Kurds, bolstered by the fact that a Russian Jew she is keenly aware of that "Jews, Armenians, and now Kurds have been murdered simply because of what they are. To put economics ahead of strategic interests ahead of the defense of these people forfeit the whole rationale behind condemning the Holocaust."

In 1981 she created The Kurdish Program, a privately supported effort to publicize the plight of the Kurds, and to earn recognition by Cultural Survival Inc., a non-profit organization founded by anthropologists at Harvard University and committed to the survival of threatened peoples.

Saeedpour's initial aim for the library, which is now open only by appointment, is to enlarge its collection so as to provide a resource for scholars, journalists and other professionals. In the coming months the library plans to produce a slide and lecture series on Kurdistan, and this summer Saeedpour hopes to launch a Kurdish language program "for Kurds who do not know their own language."

The newly born library is the only repository for Kurdish books in North America, Saeedpour, and the only library in the entire world that is completely devoted to a people "continue to die, even a talk."



Vera Beaudin Saeedpour is pictured in her new Kurdish library, in Prospect Heights, with a tambur, a traditional musical instrument of the Kurds.

Brooklyn Paper Publications / Cori Anderson

Kurds Claim Victory In Battle With Iraq

FRIDAY, MAY 23, 1986 A25

By Jonathan C. Randal
Washington Post Foreign Service

AMMAN, Jordan, May 22—Kurdish insurgents trying to carve out an autonomous region in Iraq are claiming their most important victory in 25 years in fighting that threatens the already hard-pressed Iraqi government with closure of a vital international highway and oil pipeline near the Turkish border.

Masud Barzani, son of Mustafa Barzani, who led three major revolts against Iraq before his death in 1979, made the victory claim in a recent interview in Damascus. Barzani is the 39-year-old leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party.

The reported fighting would indicate that Barzani's forces, backed by Libya and especially Iran, were stepping up operations in the north of Iraq as part of a strategy to draw Iraqi troops away from the southern and central fronts where they face major concentrations of Iranian troops in the now almost six-year-old Iran-Iraq war.

Barzani claimed that 1,500 Iraqi troops and large amounts of equipment had been captured in heavy weekend fighting around the mountain town of Mangesh, less than 30 miles from the Turkish border and even closer to a busy highway that links Turkey with the northern oil center of Mosul and with Baghdad, the Iraqi capital.

Reports on the fighting have been carried by the Reuter news agency, reporting out of Iran, and by the British Broadcasting Corp., although the Iraqi government has thus far said nothing about the clashes.

[In Washington, State Department officials said they had not heard reports of fighting in the area around Mangesh.]

The Iraqi oil pipeline crossing Turkey to the Mediterranean runs parallel to the highway, which enters Turkey near the border with Syria. Until completion of another pipeline through Saudi Arabia last year, this route was Iraq's sole means of exporting its only significant earner of foreign exchange.

Indicative of the high stakes involved in Mangesh, Barzani said, was Iraq's decision to commit its strategic reserve, the Presidential Guards. But Barzani said the guards were making "no headway" despite



BY RICHARD FURNO—THE WASHINGTON POST

their use of fighter-bombers and helicopter gunships.

The guards were rushed in when an Army battalion, backed by the lightly armed People's Militia, collapsed, apparently as a result of the defection of forcibly conscripted Kurdish troops, according to Barzani.

The guards suffered heavy casualties when last deployed in February. That was in the early stages of Iraq's still unsuccessful effort to retake the Iranian-held port of Faw, the prewar Iraqi oil exporting center at the mouth of the Shatt al Arab leading to the Persian Gulf.

Captured in the current fighting "for the first time" were intact tanks as well as armored cars, anti-aircraft weapons, artillery, mortars and great quantities of ammunition, according to Barzani, who said the victory provided "a shot in the arm for our morale."

Earlier reports said that Libya had provided Barzani with long-range artillery, which was delivered through Iran.

Barzani said that even before the Mangesh fighting, his forces had cut the international road a half dozen times this spring.

But he also recalled that in May 1983, Turkish troops entered two to three miles into northern Iraq and stayed there for five days. That incursion was made under an agreement between Ankara and Baghdad, still in effect, that authorizes both nations' forces to operate up to 18 miles inside each other's territory.

Those remarks apparently reflected fears that Iraq and Turkey might again cooperate—perhaps in a longer-term, more massive fash-

ion—if the Kurds' troops sought to interrupt the vital truck supply route, much less cut the pipeline on anything like a permanent basis.

Barzani credited the local Kurdish population and Kurdish Democratic Party militants, joined by defectors from Kurdish units of the Iraqi Army, with forcing the surrender of the first 800 Iraqi soldiers in

the early stages of the Mangesh fighting, which began May 14.

Barzani compared the current fighting to the battle of Mt. Hindarain, southeast of Rowanduz near the Iranian border, in which his father's forces wiped out the Iraqi 4th Brigade in 1966.

Kurdish uprisings in this century have centered on Iran, where 5 million Kurds live, and Iraq, with a Kurdish population of 3.5 million.

Kurds Open New Front Against Iraq

Amman, Jordan

Kurdish insurgents trying to carve out an autonomous region in Iraq are claiming their most important victory in 25 years in fighting against the Iraqi government.

Masud Barzani, 39-year-old leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party, made the claim in a recent interview in Damascus.

The claim indicates that the Kurds, backed by Libya and Iran, are stepping up fighting in northern Iraq, hoping to draw Iraqi troops away from the southern and central fronts, where they face major concentrations of Iranian troops in the Persian Gulf war.

Barzani said that 1500 Iraqi troops and large amounts of equipment were captured in heavy fighting last weekend around the mountain town of Mangesh, less than 30 miles from the Turkish border and even closer to a busy highway that links Turkey with Baghdad and the northern oil center of Mosul.

Iraq's oil pipeline crossing Turkey to the Mediterranean runs parallel to the highway. Indicative of the high stakes involved, Barzani said, was Iraq's decision to commit its strategic reserve, the Presidential Guards. But Barzani said the guards are making "no headway" despite their use of fighter-bombers and helicopter gunships.

Washington Post

San Jose Mercury News ■ Sunday, May 25, 1986



Resume Mideast peace process, hatcher says

4 SOLDIERS KILLED: Kurdish guerrillas ambushed a military vehicle carrying five soldiers and killed four of them in the southeastern province of Tunceli, the Hurriyet news agency reported Saturday from Ankara, Turkey. The fifth soldier was wounded badly when rebels fired automatic weapons at the vehicle Friday as it was returning the troops from evening duty. The rebels escaped.

The Kurds Between Iran and Iraq

Martin van Bruinessen

The news from Kurdistan is sad and grim. On both sides of the Iran-Iraq border, the central governments have been carrying out violent campaigns to bring the Kurdish districts under control and to wipe out the *peshmergas* (guerrilla fighters) of the various Kurdish organizations. This entails direct military clashes as well as reprisals against the civilian population. Numerous villages have been destroyed, either by their own government's forces or in bombings by the neighboring country's air force or artillery. Summary executions are commonplace.

The Gulf War, initially fought in the south, gradually spread to the north, from Khuzistan to Qasr-i Shirin in southern Kurdistan and finally, in the summer and autumn of 1983, as far as the northernmost part of the common border. The Iranian army at last took control of the border area that had been held by the *peshmergas* of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI). Aided by the seasoned *peshmergas* of the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), now led by Mustafa Barzani's sons, Iranian troops entered Iraqi Kurdistan at two points, which they have occupied ever since. Iraq responded by sending more troops into Kurdistan as well, and by stepping up its recruitment of paramilitary units among the Kurdish tribes.

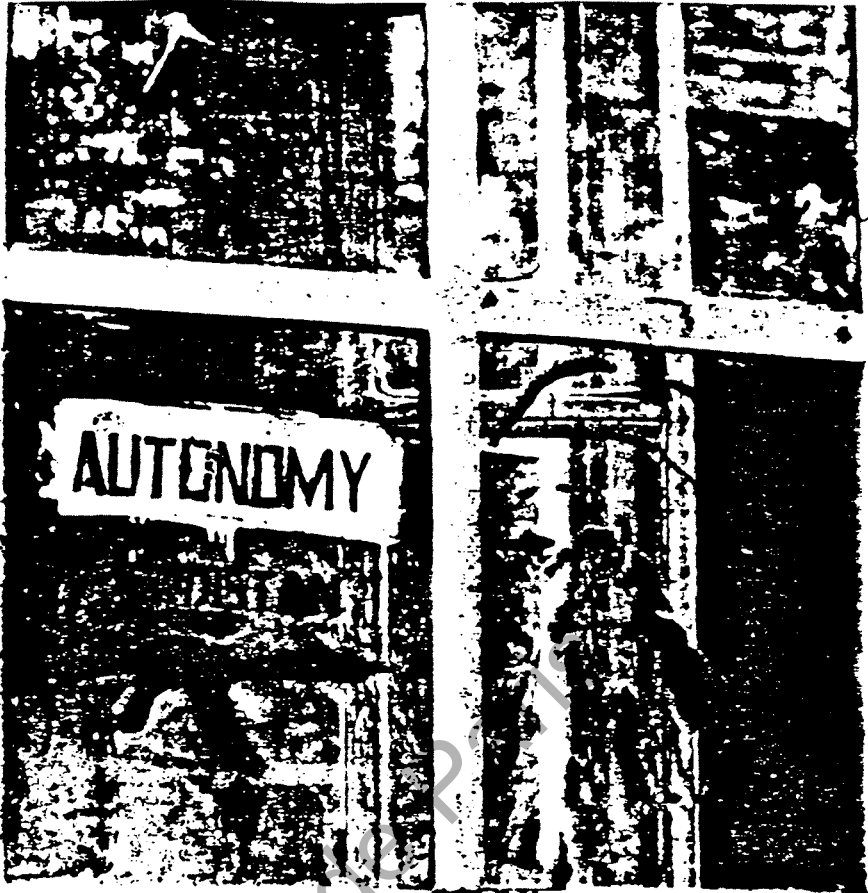
Control of territory and population became even more crucial on both sides than it had been before the war. In Iraq, severe repression alternated with attempts to co-opt parts of the Kurdish movement; the Iranian regime has been altogether more uncompromising. Both parts of Kurdistan are subject to an economic blockade, meant to hit the guerrilla groups but hurting especially the common village population. In the fall of 1985, Iraq opened its latest offensive to destroy the social bases of the Kurdish resistance. Troops arrested masses of suspected sympathizers in the towns and, according to Amnesty International, killed at least 300 civilians.¹ Among those arrested were at least 300 children between the ages of 10 and 14, many of whom were allegedly tortured.² Refugees report that many Kurdish villages in districts far removed from the front have been recently destroyed. Villagers are forced to live under permanent military surveillance in huge camps, under appalling conditions, along with tens of thousands of earlier deportees.

Eager though both Iran and Iraq are to pacify their own Kurds, each has an obvious interest in keeping alive the Kurdish resistance in the neighboring country. Iran has given quite substantial support to Barzani's sons and their Iraqi KDP, and to a ostensibly Islamic groups of Iraqi Kurds. Iraq has given logistical support and arms to the two major organizations in Iran—the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) and Komala, a smaller, radical left organization.

These alliances have contributed to further division among Kurds. The Iraqi KDP, which has long had bases in northern Iranian Kurdistan, engaged in several minor clashes with KDPI after the Iranian revolution, and in 1982 these Iraqi Kurds assisted the Iranian army in expelling Iranian Kurds from strategic positions near the Turkish border. Inside Iraq, there have been clashes between the KDP and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), headed by Barzani's long-time rival Jalal Talabani. Several years now, the PUK has also been feuding with the Socialist Party of (Iraqi) Kurdistan (SPKI) and the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), who cooperate with the KDP in a joint front. In Iran, the KDPI and the Komala have declared war on each other and are contesting control of certain districts. Another measure of the lack of unity among the Kurds is that both Iraqi and the Iranian governments have been able to recruit considerable numbers of Kurds, usually tribal-based, to fight on the government side against the nationalist organizations.

In the early 1970s, the situation seemed quite different: Kurds had one (almost) undisputed leader, Mullah Mustafa Barzani, who had united virtually all nationalist Kurds of Iraq under his leadership, and also largely subordinated Kurdish activists in Iran, Turkey and Syria to the interests of the struggle in Iraq. Kurds of Iraq, Turkey and Syria lent logistic and financial support; small numbers of them even joined the struggle in Iraq and Barzani kept them from engaging in open rebellion against their own central governments, knowing that he could only count on the Iraqi government as long as Turkey and Iran would not cut off his supply lines.

The real extent of Barzani's dependence on Iran, from the 1960s on, became clear only when he was suddenly sold out by the shah in March 1975. The entire movement collapsed with



matter of weeks. There is still great resentment against Barzani and his closest advisers, both among the Iraqi Kurds who started asking themselves too late what they had really been fighting for, and among those of Iran and Turkey, who accused Barzani of collusion with the SAVAK and the MIT (the Iranian and Turkish state security and intelligence organizations). At least some of the present conflicts among the Kurds have their roots in the Barzani period and in the struggle between ambitious leaders for succession to Barzani's unique position. To some extent also, these conflicts are inherent in the nature of Kurdish society, where local and regional loyalties and enmities are slow to give way to national or class solidarity.

Conflicting Social Bases

Kurdish nationalism had its roots in two distinct social strata. The first was the urban educated classes. These were people aware of modern political ideologies who witnessed the development of Arab and Turkish nationalism into vigorous political movements. They were eager for a political role of their own. The second base was the tribal milieu, resentful of and resistant to increasing government interference. These two strata are not isolated from one another: many urban intellectuals originate from families of tribal chieftains, while most tribesmen have by now been exposed to the modern political ideas of nationalism, participatory democracy and socialism. The parties led by urban intellectuals have always been painfully aware that without the support of the tribes they would remain powerless; one of the most frequent accusations leveled against party leaders is that of "tribalism."

Nevertheless, it has always been easy to recognize the tribal and the urban-intellectual poles within the Kurdish movement. Their perceptions, their political ideas and the nature of their nationalism have remained rather different from one another, and they have often been at political loggerheads. Most tribes resent interference in their affairs by a political party as much as that by the government. The frequent feuds and power conflicts between rival chieftains make it almost impossible to have the tribes cooperate towards some distant and abstract political objective. One chieftain's joining the movement often led to his rivals' remaining aloof or even opposing it.

The Kurdish nationalists in Iraq always faced at least equal numbers of Kurdish tribesmen fighting on the government side (thus receiving arms and money and maintaining a degree of independence from outside interference). Urban politicians, on the other hand, have at times turned against the mainstream of the Kurdish movement and reached agreements with the central governments under pretexts that were unintelligible and unacceptable to the tribesmen. Both groups suspect the other of inherent tendencies to betrayal—and both have a few convincing instances to cite.

There is yet another dividing line in Kurdish society. However much the nationalists prefer to ignore or minimize its importance, it continues to be a major factor in the Kurds' disunity and political rivalries. These are the linguistic and more generally cultural differences between the speakers of the northern (Kurmanji) and the southern (Sorani) dialects.³ The Kurmanji dialects are spoken by the Kurds of Turkey and Syria, in Bahdinan (the northernmost part of Iraqi Kurdistan), and in the districts west of Lake Urumiya in Iran. Further south, dialects of the

Sorani group are spoken, giving way in the southernmost part of Kurdistan, around Khaniqin and Kermanshah, to still other dialects.

Among the Kurmanji speakers, tribal relations are much more in evidence than in the Sorani-speaking districts (although they are certainly not absent there). Most of the important Kurdish towns of Iraq and Iran are located in the Sorani-speaking zone, and during the past century most intellectual discourse among the Kurds has been in Sorani. This is largely due to the fact that Iraq was the only country where it was possible to publish books, journals and newspapers in Kurdish (subject to the same censorship as Arabic writing). In Turkey this has been absolutely forbidden; Kurmanji remained undeveloped except for a few publications in exile. In Iran and Iraq, the Sorani-speaking parts are both economically and culturally more advanced than the mountainous Kurmanji-speaking districts, and the people of these two zones tend to entertain the mutual prejudices common in such situations: the "Soran" often find the "Kurmanj" primitive and fanatical in religious affairs, but they acknowledge their fighting prowess; the "Kurmanj" often see the "Soran" as unmanly, unreliable and culturally arrogant.

Two Poles

In Iraq, the district of Barzan (in Bahdinan) and the city of Sulaimaniyya have long served as the two poles of the Kurdish movement—one highly tribal, in the heart of the Kurmanji-speaking area; the other the center of Sorani urban culture. (In Iran, the tribal area west of Urumiya and the town of Mahabad comprise similar opposites.⁴) Iraq's Kurdish political parties emerged in or around Sulaimaniyya, and the city produced a disproportionate number of party activists.

Mullah Mustafa Barzani was born into a family of religious leaders that wielded a great influence among the tribes of Barzan and its surroundings. From an early age, he had often led his family's followers in fights against rival tribes and against the British (later Arab) government of Iraq when it started interfering in regional affairs. Although Barzani was (indirectly) one of the founders of Iraq's KDP and officially its president, Barzani and the party represented in the early 1960s different, almost opposite, wings of the Kurdish movement. Barzani finally subdued the other tribes and KDP as well; he and his sons on the one hand, and his chief rival Talabani on the other, have for the past twenty years represented the opposite poles in the Kurdish movement. Barzani often had the support of urban, educated Sorani-speakers, while Talabani has always had to depend on tribal support as well. At the same time, the young urban population of the Sorani-speaking districts has always been more attracted by Talabani's radical and progressive political pronouncements than by Barzani's simple and pragmatic nationalism, while Talabani never gained a foothold in Kurmanji-speaking Bahdinan.

At present the political spheres of influence are neatly divided: Talabani's PUK controls almost all the Sorani-speaking districts; Bahdinan is firmly in the hands of Barzani's sons Idris and Mas'ud and their KDP.⁵ Other groups can only be active in Iraqi Kurdistan with the consent of either of these two parties. In Iran, the same polarization exists, although it is less important there. The Iraqi KDP has long had bases and camps in the Kurmanji-speaking, tribal north of Iranian Kurdistan.⁶ Iranian Kurds have

repeatedly accused Idris Barzani of trying to foment anti-Soran feeling among the tribes there in order to break them apart from the KDPI, which initially had a strong position in these Kurmanji-speaking districts. A few young members of the tribal elite supported the KDPI; most of the powerful chieftains preferred to keep aloof, but some of them took the side of the Barzanis when the first clashes between the (Iraqi) KDP and the KDPI took place in 1980 and 1981. In 1982 the KDP, supported by the Iranian army and revolutionary guards, succeeded in driving the KDPI's *peshmergas* from these districts, with at least the passive support of the local tribes. The army took formal control, but in practice the tribes remain almost independent, as long as they acknowledge Tehran's authority.

Class Contradictions

The more radical Kurdish organizations, such as the Iranian and the Iraqi Komala, tend to present the differences and conflicts within the Kurdish movement in terms of class conflict. They perceive themselves as the vanguard of the proletariat and the poor peasantry. The Iraqi KDP, in their view, is an unashamedly feudal organization and the KDPI is an alliance of the urban bourgeoisie and the tribal-feudal elite. This view is at first sight

convincing, even if it does not correspond with these organizations' self-perception. The (Iraqi) KDP finds its support almost exclusively in the tribal milieu now, and has been courtin landowning chieftains both in Iraq and in Iran; most of the cadre of the KDPI belong to the urban middle classes—teachers, officials, traders—while a few belong to the tribal or landowning elite. The party has been careful not to alienate the tribes.

But the composition of a party's leadership does not by itself show which class that party represents. The vast majority of leading members of all Kurdish organizations originates from either the tribal and landed elites or from the (relatively) educated urban middle class. As opponents of the (Iranian) Komala were quick to point out, several of its leaders do in fact have "feudal" backgrounds. Even a party's program may be misleading as to its class position; the only clear criterion is its attitude in cases of actual class conflict. In this respect, all parties can quote at least a few cases where they opposed "feudal" and tribal chieftains—usually those who sided with the central government against the Kurdish movement. On the other hand, most if not all the parties also happily welcomed the support of "patriotic" chieftains.

The struggle against the central governments and strengthening of nationalist sentiment among the Kurdish population have tended to cover up the existing class contradictions. In Iraq and Kurdistan there were many violent clashes between landles

Major Kurdish Organizations in Iran

Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI)

Established in 1945, initially as a pan-Kurdish party (members from Iraq as well as Iran). Based in Mahabad, which became for most of 1946 the capital of a de facto independent Kurdish republic under the leadership of this party (then still called KDP). After the collapse of the Mahabad Republic and the execution of its president and KDP's founder, Qazi Muhammad, the party went underground and shifted to the left, becoming closely allied with the (Communist) Tudeh Party. Repeated waves of arrests and reprisals in the 1950s thinned the party's membership; in 1959 most of the leaders still at large escaped to Iraq. When the political situation there deteriorated under 'Arif in 1963, they moved on to eastern Europe. During the 1960s, the party's surviving clandestine network in Iran lent Barzani, then engaged in a war with the Baghdad government, crucial logistic support. When Barzani gradually improved his relations with Pahlavi authorities, younger members of the Iranian KDP recoiled. Against Barzani's explicit command, they started guerrilla operations

inside Iranian Kurdistan in 1968. Their armed rebellion was a failure; they were soon tracked down and killed by the Iranian gendarmerie, aided, in a few cases, by Barzani's men. After their deaths, the rebels became popular heroes; both the wide popular support for the KDPI at the time of Iran's revolution and the general dislike of Barzani and his entourage among the Kurds of Iran are based on this episode.

During the Iranian revolution, jailed leaders of the KDPI were finally released; others returned from exile. They built up a strong party organization and, aided by Kurdish army officers who joined them, a military organization. The KDPI soon established itself as the Kurdish organization most firmly rooted in the population, especially in the area that had comprised the Mahabad Republic in 1946.

In the first years of confrontation with the Islamic Republic, the KDPI controlled large parts of the countryside and by night many of the towns as well. Since 1983, it has given up the idea of maintaining liberated areas; its headquarters are just across the Iraqi border; its *peshmergas* remain mobile, undertaking

actions throughout Kurdistan, even in well-guarded towns, with apparent facility.

The KDPI defines its objectives in its program: the right of self-determination for the Kurdish people *within the framework of Iran*; the struggle against the political, economic, military and cultural influences of imperialism; and the establishment of a socialist society "responsive to the specific conditions in our country." Its "strategic slogan" calls for the less distant goal of "autonomy for Iranian Kurdistan within the framework of a democratic Iran."

In 1980, a split occurred in the party leadership. The pro-Tudeh cadres, following the Tudeh Party's policy of accommodation with Khomeini, clashed with Ghassemlu and broke away. Only small numbers followed them. Qasimlu, the party's undisputed leader, is a man of great abilities who enjoys wide popularity. As regards democracy within the party, the KDPI compares favorably with the other Kurdish organizations. Among the other Iranian organizations, the KDPI saw initially the National Democratic Front and the Feda'i, and later the People's

peasants and landlords during the 1950s; in 1959 many landlords were even forced to flee the country. Such conflicts became extremely rare after the Kurdish war had started in 1961.

Something similar could be seen in Iran after the revolution. When the central government's effective authority fell away in the first months of 1979, many former landlords tried to reassume control of the lands that had been taken away from them in the shah's land reform. Some expelled peasants; others tried to collect their old feudal dues. Peasants then received support from young educated people from the towns, who found here the sort of cause that they were looking for in their revolutionary fervor. Various left organizations, including the Komala and the People's Fedai, tried to organize peasants to expell the landlords from the region; the KDPI prevented tribal chieftains near Mahabad from taking feudal dues. In the Urumiya and Marivan districts, the landlords successfully invoked the support of the (pro-government) Islamic committees and initially also of revolutionary guards (Pasdaran) against these "communists." According to the leftists, military units loyal to the Barzanis also intervened on the landlords' side.⁷

In the summer of 1979, when these conflicts were sharpest, the class divide seemed to coincide with that between supporters and opponents of the central government. In the course of the fighting in the following months, the radical left groups could not defend the peasants whom they had at first organized and incited to

more radical action against the landlords. The peasants had to suffer the reprisals alone. As a result, the Komala and other radical groups lost popular support.

The KDPI had been more circumspect: it never frontally attacked tribal chieftains and landlords, and did not organize the peasants for class action. It tried to enlist the support of peasants and landlords for its nationalist political objectives, but when necessary protected the former against incursions by the latter. The Pasdaran, on the other hand, who generally held populist ideas and were motivated against economic exploitation, stopped blindly supporting the landlords against the peasants and more selectively turned against leftists and Kurdish nationalists. In 1980, there were already far fewer landlord-peasant conflicts than in the previous year, and the alliances on both sides were much less clear-cut. I am not aware of any violent class conflicts in the following years, when the war between the central government and the Kurdish movement was in full swing.

Guerrilla War in Iraq, 1976-1985

After the collapse of the Kurdish movement in 1975, the Iraq government embarked upon a two-pronged policy of coopting large numbers of Kurds and simultaneously implementing drast

Mujahidin, as its major strategic allies; internationally it stresses contacts with the European social-democracy. The party depends on Iraq for logistic support (and probably for other aid as well), but claims that this support is given without prior conditions.

Komala (Komalay Shoresbgeri Zahmatkeshani Kurdistanî Iran or Organization of Revolutionary Toilers of Iranian Kurdistan)

Emerged only after the revolution, in 1979, but was established clandestinely, according to present claims, as early as 1969 by the people who still lead it. In the last years of the shah's regime, the Komala had played a role in organizing peasant resistance against landlords in the Marivan area. Immediately after the revolution, the Komala found much support among young, educated urban people attracted by its radicalism: the Komala calls itself Marxist-Leninist, and was more uncompromising than the KDPI in its atti-

tude towards the central authorities, landlords and tribal chieftains and also towards the Tudeh Party and the Soviet Union. It established cordial relations with the so-called "third line" organizations, a conglomerate of all-Iran Maoist or ex-Maoist formations. The Komala set out to organize town soviets and to organize further peasant resistance against landlords. A congress in 1981, when the Komala went through an ideological crisis, condemned its earlier policies as "populist" and recommended finding a base among the proletariat. This meant shifting the emphasis to the industrialized parts of Iran. As a consequence, the Komala fused in September 1983 with three ideologically related Iranian organizations into the Communist Party of Iran. Abdullah Muhtadi, Komala's leader, became its secretary-general. The Komala is now this party's Kurdish (and only significant) branch.

In its program, this party endorses proletarian struggle against capitalism, remarks in passing that revisionism (as represented by the Soviet Union) is the greatest obstacle to this struggle, and presents as its objective a "revolutionary

democratic republic" based on sovereignty of the people (exercised through people's soviets). The professional army and bureaucracy will be abolished, and all nations will have the unconditional right to self-determination; complete equality of all will be guaranteed.

The Komala's geographical center of gravity is the Sanandaj-Marivan area, the south of the KDPI's heartland. Both have followers and are active throughout Kurdistan. There have been many conflicts between the two organizations; from 1979 on, the Komala has always strongly criticized the policies of the KDPI, which it considers a bourgeois organization and accuses of collaborating with feudal elements. The KDPI responded by pointing out that it is precisely many of the Komala's leaders that are from feudal family backgrounds, and it accuses the Komala of irresponsibly provoking clashes with government forces that cost many civilian casualties. When Komala refused to stop calling the KDPI a "class enemy" and continued making anti-KDPI propaganda, the KDPI declared war on it, and throughout 1985 there were many armed clashes between the two.

measures to strike against any revival of Kurdish hostilities. The government-created "autonomous region" comprised only a part of Iraqi Kurdistan, though it was favored with many economic development projects that benefitted a large part of the population. At the same time however, the "Arabization" of the oil-rich districts of Kirkuk and Khaniqin, as well as some areas in the northwest (Shaikhan and Sinjar) continued: Kurds were deported, and Arab peasants, some of them allegedly from Egypt, settled in their stead.⁸

In 1976, the government started evacuating a zone 10 to 20 kilometers wide, all along the Iraq-Iran border. Villages were entirely destroyed, and their inhabitants forced to live in new settlements near the cities. In the north, too, government forces destroyed many villages, cutting down fruit trees and filling water wells with concrete. This repression and evacuation affected not only rebellious villages, like those of the Barzan district, but also some tribes which had always fought on the government side, against Barzani. They, too, were forced to leave their villages. Most deportees were given money, and for some the move may even have meant an economic improvement.⁹ Still, most villagers resented their deportation; here and there they tried to resist. This instigated the early resumption of guerrilla warfare. Students from Sulaimaniyya belonging to the clandestine Komala joined such militant peasants in attacks against army units sent to destroy villages.

Meanwhile, several Kurdish organizations were being established abroad. The Komala joined the PUK as one of its three components. In 1977, the PUK established its headquarters in Kurdistan, and so did a part of the KDP. Both organizations initially had only several hundred *peshmergas*, but they were highly mobile and able to carry out hit-and-run attacks at great distances from their headquarters. As soon as word spread of a new guerrilla movement, former *peshmergas* who lived abroad or who were frustrated after they had accepted Baghdad's amnesty in 1975 made their way to Kurdistan and joined the movements. Most of those who joined belonged to the groups directly affected by the deportations or other repressive measures.

Most other Kurds doubted the wisdom of armed struggle in this phase, since the small guerrilla groups could at best be a nuisance to the government. Even when, in 1978, the Iraqi Communist Party was forced to leave the ruling National Front and allied itself with the Kurdish opposition, its chances of success did not appreciably increase. A violent fight between the two Kurdish organizations, which wiped out large parts of the PUK, caused a further loss of morale. Moreover, the very significant economic growth of the late 1970s, a result of the oil boom, conciliated many Kurds who did not directly experience government repression. The guerrilla groups found that they could not count on the mass support that they had hoped for.

This was the situation on the eve of the Gulf War, which brought many changes. The major military operations in the south forced the Iraqi army to relinquish its close control of Kurdistan. Many of the Kurds who had been deported to southern Iraq were allowed to return to Kurdistan, where they were housed in camps. Thousands of them escaped from there to the zones controlled by the Kurdish parties. Iran stepped up its military and financial support of the KDP and other guerrilla groups. Actual guerrilla activity, however, remained at a low level.

The various parties had greater freedom of movement and found it easier to establish contacts with the civilian population than before, but their competition for control of land and people

became increasingly violent. The ICP and the SPKI initially had bases in the same valley as the PUK, with which they cooperated. After they formed a National Democratic Front with the rival KDP, though, their relations with the PUK rapidly deteriorated. The PUK ultimately expelled them from the entire Sorani-speaking area.

When the Gulf War reached Kurdistan in 1983 the KDP took part in the Iranian offensive, virtually as the Iranian army's scouts. The PUK declared it would resist this invasion. The offensive forced the PUK out of its headquarters on the border, and deeper into Iraq. The following year, Talabani went to the negotiating table in Baghdad.

Until the 1983 offensive, Baghdad's policies had been conciliatory. Faced with mass desertions by its Kurdish soldiers in January 1983, it amnestied the deserters and ruled that the Kurds could serve in the army corps stationed in the relatively quiet north instead of in the dangerous south. At the same time, it entered secret negotiations with all Kurdish organizations.¹⁰

After the offensive, it took severe reprisals, especially against those associated with the Barzanis. Eight thousand men, originally from villages in the Barzan region but then living in the camps of Qushtapa and Diyana, were driven off to an unknown destination and nothing has been heard from them since. Similarly, relatives of Barzani who lived in Baghdad (and had been cooperating with the government) disappeared. Military presence in Kurdistan was stepped up, and actions against the guerrillas were carried out more systematically and with greater ruthlessness, especially after the negotiations with the PUK had broken down. Meanwhile, unprecedented numbers of tribesmen were recruited into irregular regiments designed to protect their districts against Iranian invasion as well as against the nationalist Kurdish groups. Recent visitors to Iraqi Kurdistan estimated the number of these irregulars at 150,000 or even more. When these measures, and the economic blockade, did not sufficiently affect the guerrilla groups, the government had recourse once more to reprisals against civilians.

Iranian Kurdistan Since the Revolution

The sudden eruption of nationalism among the Iranian Kurds in 1979 came as a surprise, even to many of the Kurds themselves. Until then, discontent was directed against the shah, his imperial alliances and his *nouveaux-riches* clientele. The outburst of Kurdish nationalism after the revolution certainly contrasts with the absence of similar movements among the neighboring Azeris and the Arabs of the southwest. This cannot simply be ascribed to most Kurds' being Sunni Muslims. It is true that the Kurds of Kermanshah, most of them Shi'a, keep aloof from the Kurdish movement or even actively oppose it. But in 1946, when religion played no role at all, they also opted for the central government rather than the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad. There were sectarian clashes in some mixed (Sunni-Shi'a) Kurdish villages in 1979, but they were short-lived and not repeated since. Sunni sentiment has been of minor importance in the Kurds' attitude towards the new Islamic Republic.¹¹

An explanation of the difference between the response of the Kurds and Iran's other ethnic minorities lies in the way political organizations and leaders channeled popular revolutionary sentiment during and immediately after the revolution. In most parts of Iran, religious and socialist revolutionaries of all ideological

shades directed their efforts towards obtaining influence in the central institutions of the state. They engaged in tactical alliances with, or made concessions to, the heterogeneous power block around Khomeini. In Kurdistan, uniquely, there were two organizations with a history and a social base that from the very beginning demanded autonomy for their region and put the central government's institutions on a secondary plane.

During most of 1979, these organizations could freely organize the population and broadcast their political ideas. The regime's first offensives only had the effect of strengthening the Kurds' nationalism and separatism. Another factor is that the Iranian Kurds had witnessed the Kurdish movement in Iraq and had received hundreds of thousands of refugees after the collapse of that movement in 1975. Barzani himself was generally disliked because of his collaboration with the shah's regime, but events in Iraq nevertheless stimulated the national awareness of Iran's Kurds as well.

This did not mean direct Iraqi Kurdish influence. The Kurds of Iran are as much Iranians as they are Kurds, and in the political ideas current in the early 1980s there is little influence from the Iraqi Kurds. Even the Kurdish words for such concepts as "autonomy" are different in Iran and Iraq. The development of political discourse in Iranian Kurdistan was mainly the work of the KDPI and the Komala.

In the revolutionary year of 1978, there were large demonstrations in most of the Kurdish towns, and these were not noticeably different from those elsewhere in Iran. The demonstrators demanded the liberation of political prisoners, basic civil liberties and the like. There were no specifically Kurdish demands. But the religious aspect, so prominent elsewhere, was lacking here. In June 1978, the burial of an old KDPI leader who had only recently been released after 25 years in prison turned into a large anti-government demonstration with vague nationalist overtones, but throughout that year the demand of autonomy, so fundamental later, was not yet heard. After the fall of the Pahlavi regime, in February 1979, representatives of various political groups from all over Kurdistan met and formulated eight demands which they sent to the provisional government. One of these referred to self-determination for all Iran's people, within a federal state. Most of the other points concerned social and economic justice and revolutionary democracy.

The vagueness of these demands, and the frequent changes in their formulation during the following months, reflected the amorphous and fluid political situation in Kurdistan in those days. There was a proliferation of political groups, Kurdish as well as all-Iranian, most of them richer in enthusiasm than in experience. Only the KDPI had a clear political program (dating from its third congress in 1973), but it had a shortage of good cadres and therefore could not yet dominate the discussion. In these circumstances, Izzaddin Husayni, a charismatic mullah from Mahabad, emerged as the recognized spokesman for the Kurds. He had excellent contacts with the radical left youth groups, had a reputation as a nationalist, and was acceptable to the more conservative segments of society because of his religious legitimation.

Complications and Clashes

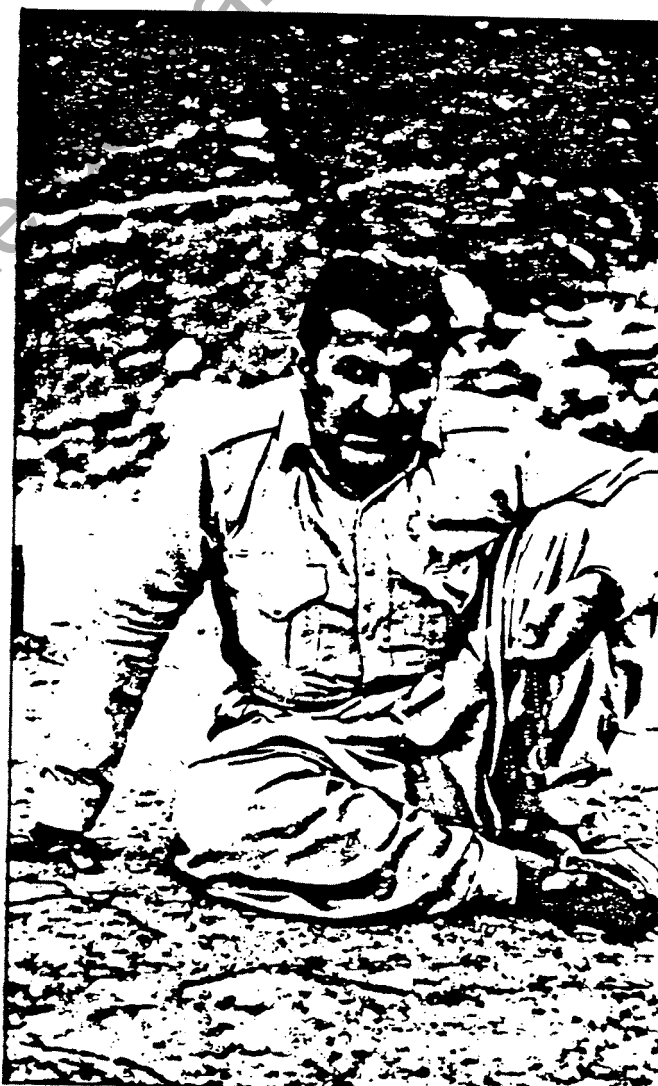
The negotiations between the Kurds and the central government were initially thwarted by the multiplicity of power centers on

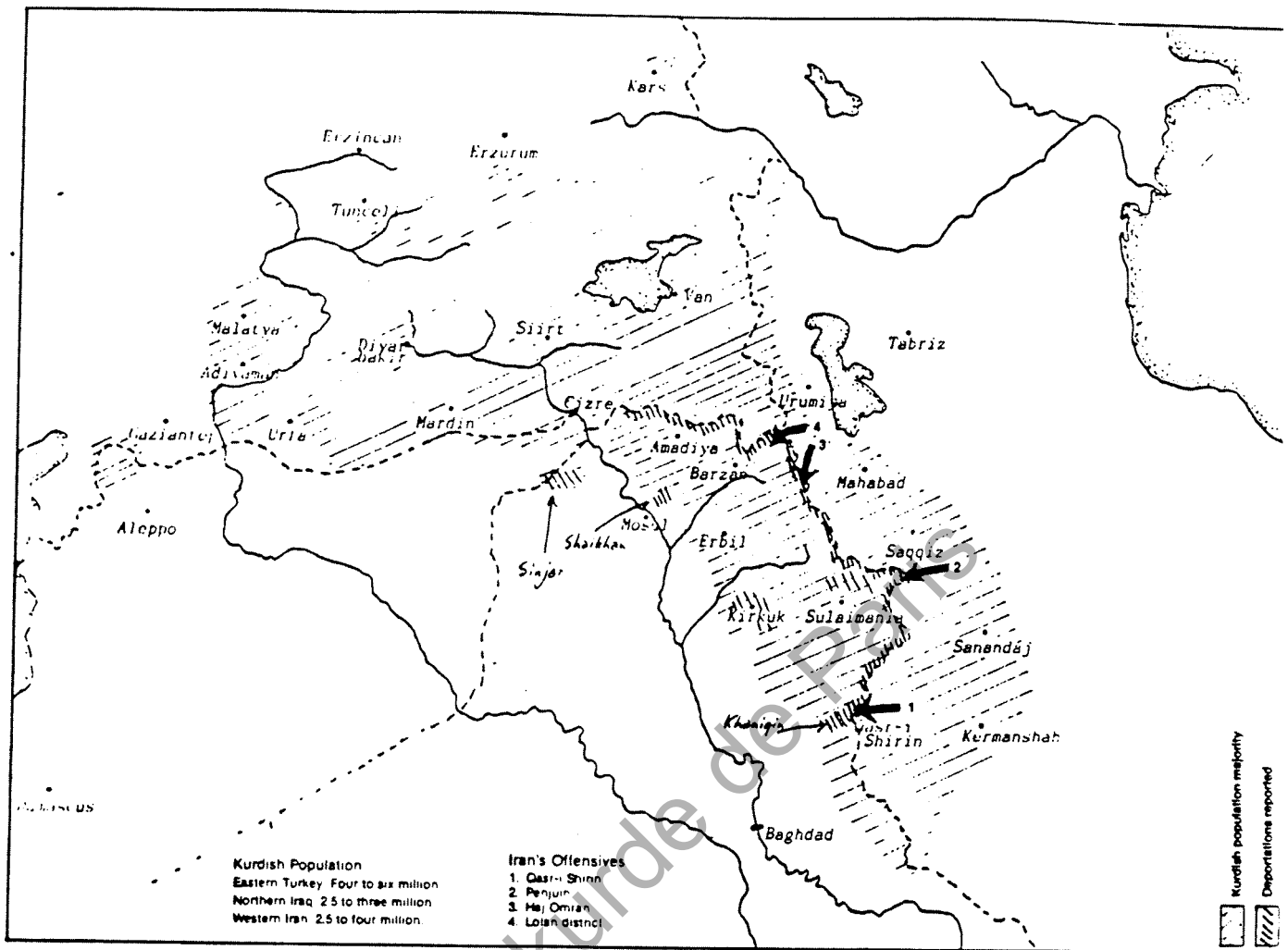
both sides. The situation was further complicated by the presence, immediately behind the Iraqi and Turkish borders, unknown numbers of partisans of the *ancien regime* led by notorious generals (such as Palizban, Uvayssi and Aryana) who tried to destabilize the new regime by carrying out raids into Iran. The Kurdish organizations were suspected, incorrectly it would seem, of collusion with these royalists. Moreover, all sorts of local conflicts suddenly assumed much wider importance when parties to these conflicts allied themselves with the central government or with (a faction of) the Kurdish movement. In the spring and summer of 1979, several of these local conflicts led to violent clashes between Kurdish and pro-government forces. The first large military offensive against the Kurds, in August 1979, was triggered by such a local clash in the town of Paveh.

The KDPI and, to a lesser extent, the Komala rapidly built up networks of party branches and recruited party members and *peshmergas*, whom they gave political education and military training. In the context of the heated political discussions of the spring and summer of 1979, their conceptions of autonomy and popular sovereignty gained wide acceptance. After the first government offensive in August 1979, the KDPI emerged as the dominant political (and military) force in Kurdistan, and in the

Jalal Talabani.

Martin van Bruine





Martin van Bruinessen/Lori Ozendine

Kurdistan.

following years it further consolidated this position.

The strength of the Kurdish resistance to the summer offensive of 1979 forced the government to reopen negotiations and offer, as a concession to the demand of autonomy, a form of administrative decentralization.¹² This was the most far-reaching offer ever made to the Kurds, but the KDPI rejected it as insufficient. It did guarantee certain cultural rights, such as the free use of Kurdish (and other minority languages), but did not recognize the Kurds as a nation. Also, the proposed decentralization was likely to cut Kurdistan into a number of districts, each including many non-Kurdish regions as well.

A major stumbling block in all negotiations has been the Islamic regime's consistent refusal to speak in terms of national rights. But this was not the only reason why the KDPI rejected the proposal. Izzaddin Husayni, with his radical supporters and the Komala, refused even to negotiate with the government, which they denounced as reactionary and more dictatorial than the shah's, and the majority of the Kurdish population seemed to support this attitude. With a conciliatory posture, the KDPI would risk losing a part of its popular support to the more radical groups. Moreover, the proposal originated with the "liberal" wing of the regime, and people expected that the more fundamentalist factions would later not feel bound by it. Finally, the Kurds underestimated the strength of the regime, believing that it would either fall or could be forced to make further concessions.

It is not clear whether Iraq influenced the KDPI's rejection of the government's offer (and other proposals in the following year). When the pro-Tudeh wing of the KDPI broke away a few months later, it accused Qasimlu of close contacts with the Baghdad regime, but did not produce any evidence that party policies were affected by this. When Iraq invaded Iran in September 1980, the KDPI proposed to Tehran a ceasefire and offered to fight the invader, provided Tehran gave in to its basic demands. There was no response. In fact, the government stepped up its military operations against the Kurds along with those on the Iraqi front. Since the beginning of the Gulf War, the KDPI has become even more dependent on Iraq. But unlike the Iraqi KDP, it appears to have guarded its independence in its major policy decisions.

As compared with the first year after the revolution, the situation is much less complex now. Only one of the original power centers in Tehran is left, the one least likely to make concessions to the Kurds. On the Kurdish side, the KDPI is clearly the major power. Early in 1982 it joined the National Resistance Council, formed the preceding year by Bani Sadr and Mas'ud Rajavi of the People's Mujahidin Organization after their escape from Iran to France. Bani Sadr was at last willing to give in to the KDPI's demand of autonomy. This coincided with a shift in the party's long-term objectives: the new program adopted at the Fifth Party Congress (December 1981) called for the over-

throw of the Khomeini regime before even referring to any specifically Kurdish demands. Until 1983, the KDPI had permanent control of vast areas in Kurdistan, and functioned there as a government—constructing roads, building houses, organizing schools and hospitals, even administering a court of law with an experienced and professional judge. A major Iranian offensive in the summer of 1983, in which the Iraqi KDP took active part, ended this experience. KDPI headquarters are now across the Iraqi border.

There are no "liberated areas" in Iran any more, but the *peshmergas* still penetrate deep into Iran and stay there for weeks or even months on end, supported by the villagers and townspeople. As in Iraq, the Kurds can be a considerable nuisance to the government, but they do not pose a real threat. The KDPI's partners in the National Resistance Council never became the formidable force they once promised to be. This is probably why the party reversed its position again. In the summer of 1984, recognizing that the Islamic regime had at least the passive support of the majority of Iran's population, the KDPI signalled

its readiness to negotiate. The negotiations were broken off in an early stage, ostensibly because the Kurds insisted on autonomy. (The government replied that there is no basis for this in the Quran.) Nevertheless, the KDPI left the National Resistance Council, which objected to its negotiating with the government at all. Shortly thereafter, in January 1985, the Komala and the KDPI declared war on one another. The KDPI clearly had the upper hand. Cynics (there are many among the Kurds) believe that this is the prelude to a new round of negotiations, between the only two forces in Iran that have been able to consolidate themselves.¹³

Religion and Politics

Most Kurdish villagers are intensely pious but usually tolerant of other opinions. Many urban Kurds have very liberal religious ideas. Religious-political organizations have not been numerically important during the past decade, but Tehran's persistent efforts to create and/or reinforce them require some comment.

Major Kurdish Organizations in Iraq

Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)
Not long after the establishment of the Iranian KDP in Mahabad, Iraqi Kurds, at the instigation of Mullah Mustafa Barzani (then in Iran himself), established an Iraqi KDP. Most of the founding members were intellectuals and army officers from the town of Sulaimaniyya, the chief center of Kurdish nationalism. In the 1950s, Barzani's closest associates lost control of the party to Ibrahim Ahmad, a Sulaimaniyya lawyer who long exerted a major influence on the Kurdish movement in Iraq (and continues to do so indirectly as the political mentor and father-in-law of Jalal Talabani). The faction loyal to Barzani for several years existed as a separate organization; it had closer contacts with the Iraqi communists than the "official" KDP. In 1957 the two factions reunited.

After 'Abd al-Karim Qasim's coup in 1958, the KDP was legalized and Barzani was allowed to return from his exile in the Soviet Union. A few years previously, he had been made honorary president of the party (Talabani conveyed this news during a visit to Eastern Europe in 1955). Soon after his return Barzani began to interfere rather high-handedly in party affairs. Initially his relations with Ibrahim Ahmad's faction seemed good; he broke with his erstwhile supporters, who were then close to the communists.

In the following years, especially after

the first armed clashes between the Kurds and the Baghdad government in September 1961, there were repeated conflicts between Barzani and the politburo (i.e., Secretary-General Ibrahim Ahmad), both of whom saw themselves as the rightful leader of the Kurdish movement and expected the other to obey their policy decisions. The rivalry came to a head in 1964, when Barzani signed a cease-fire agreement with the government without even notifying the politburo. The latter immediately held a conference condemning and virtually expelling Barzani. Barzani declared this conference null and void, and convened a party congress that was dominated by his supporters. Barzani had the Ibrahim Ahmad faction expelled, and a new politburo of Barzani loyalists elected. One of the members of the new politburo was Mahmud Osman, a physician from Sulaimaniyya, who remained one of Barzani's closest collaborators until 1975.

The old politburo, meanwhile, still had headquarters and an armed force in southern Kurdistan (Mawet); *peshmergas* loyal to Barzani attacked them and drove them across the Iranian border, where they were given asylum. The politburo had reportedly been in contact with the Iranian authorities as early as 1962; this incident seems to have provided the occasion for Tehran to bet on Barzani instead. In 1965, Talabani and his fighting men sought a conciliation with Barzani and

returned to Iraqi Kurdistan.

Around the same time, the Kurds started receiving modern armaments in significant quantities. Iranian involvement increased steadily, and this support helped Barzani to further consolidate his control of the Kurdish movement. Talabani saw himself reduced to insignificance, which is probably the major reason why he broke away again, branding Barzani as tribal, feudal and reactionary. Not able to hold his own against Barzani's superior forces, and in spite of his popularity among the Sorani-speaking townspeople, he concluded a deal with the Baghdad government allowing him control of the Sulaimaniyya-Kirkuk districts. On many occasions, his *peshmergas* fought side by side with the Iraqi army against Barzani supporters in this area, which earned Talabani the odium of being a traitor. (Ibrahim Ahmad meanwhile had remained behind in Tehran, and later moved to Baghdad, which lent further credibility to the accusations against his faction.)

In March 1970, after protracted negotiations, the Baghdad government concluded a peace agreement with Barzani, giving in to many Kurdish demands, including autonomy. Ibrahim Ahmad and Jalal Talabani had lost their usefulness to the government, and had little choice but humbly returning to the KDP fold once again. They refrained from openly criti-

The Shi'i Kurds of the Kermanshah region, who kept aloof from the Kurdish movement, have provided considerable numbers of "Muslim *pehmergas*" to help the government fight the nationalist and leftist Kurds. There are, to my knowledge, no specifically Kurdish Shi'i organizations, but in the largely Sunni Kurdish town of Sanandaj, the first year of the revolution saw the emergence of a Sunni religious organization as the political rival of the Komala. Its leader, Muftizade, a graduate from al-Azhar in Cairo, had a program of Islam, cultural rights, administrative decentralization and anti-communism. His ideas were close to Bani-Sadr's, and his was the only organization of Iranian Kurds willing to cooperate with the central government, indicating that Sunni-Shi'i differences were not the cause of the Kurds' opposition to the Islamic regime. After the first central government offensive, which cost Sanandaj many casualties, Muftizade and his followers had to leave town to escape the wrath of the vast majority of the population. They have not been able to play a significant role since, especially after the fall of Bani-Sadr.

Izzaddin Husayni, who had been designated as the Kurds'

spokesman, was also a cleric, but that was hardly the reason for his popularity. He found his strongest support among the radical left groups. His role was eclipsed when the KDPI and the Komala consolidated their party organizations.

Since the beginning of the Gulf War, Iran has attempted to set up explicitly Muslim organizations among the Iraqi Kurds, but with little success. The (Iran-sponsored) Supreme Council Islamic Resistance in Iraq has only one Kurdish member: "Shaikh" Muhammad Najib Barzinji. Notwithstanding the occasional appearance of his photograph in the fundamentalist press as the "leader of the Kurdish Muslim warriors," he is but a simple village imam, without followers.

Only slightly more substantial was the "Kurdish Muslim Army" established in 1980 by Abbas Shabak, a former associate of Jalal Talabani. Shabak had established good contacts in Tehran; he received money and arms with which to recruit *pehmergas* among the still-numerous Iraqi Kurdish refugees living in Iran. In its best days, this group could boast over a thousand armed men. The PUK tolerated their operations in

cizing Barzani until the collapse of the movement in March 1975.

1972 was an important watershed. Through the shah, Barzani established contact with Washington and the KDP started receiving covert CIA support. This no doubt influenced Barzani's decision to reject the severely curtailed autonomy law promulgated by Baghdad in 1974. A few leading members of the KDP (among them Aziz Aqrabi and Hashim Aqrabi) broke with Barzani and went over to the government, establishing their own Baghdad-based KDP, which always remained a paper organization only.* After the collapse of 1975, Barzani and the KDP leadership, with the exception of Salah Yusufi, who surrendered to Baghdad, took refuge in Iran. The party was disbanded.

Barzani withdrew from politics, and the struggle for succession started. Barzani's long-time confidant, Mahmud Osman, broke with him. Osman went to Europe and published a vehement attack on Barzani and his sons. He established his own party, at first called KDP/Preparatory Committee, then the United Socialist Party of Kurdistan, and finally merging with other groups into the Socialist Party of Kurdistan in Iraq (SPKI). Jalal

Talabani, who had been Barzani's representative in Damascus, set out organizing his own Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) there. In Iran, Barzani's sons Mas'ud and Idris joined hands with another close collaborator of their father, "Sami" (Muhammad Mahmud 'Abd ul-Rahman) and established the KDP/Provisional Command (Qiyada Muvaqqata). This organization attracted those who felt a strong personal commitment to the Barzani family; the majority of its supporters were from the northernmost Kurmanji-speaking part of Iraqi Kurdistan, while the PUK and Mahmud Osman found their support almost exclusively in the Sorani-speaking parts.

In the autumn of 1976, "Sami" led a group of *pehmergas* back into the Turkish-Iraqi border area, with at least tacit approval from Tehran. Essential logistic support was given by a related organization in Turkish Kurdistan which then was very influential among the tribes as well as the small-town youth of the border districts. A very bloody clash with the PUK in the spring of 1978, and internal conflicts (between "Sami" and Idris Barzani) weakened the Provisional Command, which retired to Iran. Most of its armed men remained in Ushnuviya and some villages further north—the area where the Barzanis had lived in the time of the Mahabad Republic and that had been their major foreign base in the early

1970s. At a congress in the autumn of 1979, the conflict between Idris Barzani and "Sami" came to a head. "Sami," who had tried to cultivate a progressive image and saw the presence of the authoritarian and extremely conservative Idris as an obstacle, chose to leave the party and soon established his own Democratic People's Party of Kurdistan.

At the 1979 congress, the party assumed again the old KDP name. It is led by the two Barzani brothers and has no other leader of significance. Barzani's notoriety among Iranian Kurds caused several clashes between the latter and the KDP forces. The Barzanis entered an even closer alliance and cooperation with the Islamic Republic and locally with some powerful, conservative tribal chieftains. In 1981 they assisted Tehran in driving the KDPI's forces from the districts along the Turkish border; in 1983 they assisted in taking Haj Omran (Iraq) and part of the Pijder valley. Since then, they have resumed guerrilla fighting in northern Iraq, but to a large extent in coordination with the Iranian army.

Since November 1980, the KDP has been a member of the Democratic National Front, together with the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and the SPKI. It also has special relations with the Shi'i resistance movement, al-Da'wa. It calls itself anti-imperialist and uses, like all other Iraqi Kurdish organizations, Marxist

* These two persons are not related, as their names might suggest; both hail from the town of Agra. Hashim became the president of the pseudo-parliament of the autonomous zone and is now a minister. Aziz fled from Baghdad in 1980 and joined the Socialist Party of Kurdistan.

territory but apparently infiltrated them; in 1982 or 1983, after the PUK captured all its arms, the Kurdish Muslim Army rapidly disintegrated.

Iran's most reliable ally among the Iraqi Kurds has always been the KDP. This is not an Islamic organization; moreover, it cooperates with the Iraqi Communist Party. The search for more Islamic allies therefore continued. In the summer of 1985, Idris and Mas'ud Barzani's cousin, Muhammad Khalid, the present shaikh of Barzan,¹⁴ appeared on the scene and proclaimed himself "Kurdish Hizbullah." He entered northeastern Iraq with a large body of men, aided by Iranian troops. He sent ultimatums to the ICP and the SPKI headquarters, urging them to immediately evacuate the "sacred soil of Barzan." Both took the threat rather seriously, although by November the shaikh had not yet reached Barzan. Muhammad Khalid is reportedly well-armed, and his men are recruited from among Iraqi Kurdish refugees in Iran who are most loyal to his family. He represents a potentially formidable force in the Bahdinan area.

Turkey's Role

In May 1983, Turkish troops crossed into Iraq, ostensibly to capture Kurdish activists from Turkish Kurdistan who had found



Transporting ammunition in Iraqi Kurdistan, February 1975.

phraseology. It perceives an identity of interest between the Islamic regime of Iran and the Kurds of Iraq.

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) Soon after the collapse of Barzani's movement in March 1975, Jalal Talabani, who had remained loyal to Barzani during the last years but had kept a very low profile, contacted Kurds who had been able to reach Europe or Syria and Lebanon and set out to build a new political organization. In June 1976, the establishment of the PUK was announced from Damascus, consisting of three different groups or tendencies: the Komala, which claimed to be Marxist-Leninist and consisted mainly of (ex-)students; the Socialist Movement of Kurdistan, a vaguely progressive formation; and the "General Line," personal followers of Jalal Talabani. The two other groups also incorporated old Talabani-followers, and both later split into factions critical of and loyal to Talabani, (the Socialist Movement split in 1979, and Komala in 1985).

Talabani's control of the PUK has been almost absolute, both because many of its members do admire him and because the organization's structure facilitates his control. The Komala (not to be confused with the party of the same name in Iran) had apparently existed clandestinely from

at least the early 1970s; in mid-1976 it was the only organization that had members inside Iraqi Kurdistan, in the Sulaimaniyya region. Later that year, when the Iraqi government started the deportation of Kurdish villagers from the border regions, it was members of the Komala who joined those peasants resisting deportation and initiated the first guerrilla actions since the collapse.

This gave Talabani a propagandistic edge over his rivals, and it must have prompted the Barzanis to send men into Iraq, too. Although in early 1977 there had been overtures towards cooperation between the KDP and the PUK, their rivalry was soon in full swing. In the autumn of 1977, the PUK moved its headquarters from Damascus to Iraqi Kurdistan. Arms and other supplies, however, had to come from Syria by way of Turkey. For the PUK, too, Kurdish organizations in Turkey provided useful logistic support. The roads to Iraq, however, were largely controlled by the KDP, which had little incentive for letting goods through for Talabani.

In the spring of 1978, Talabani sent his best fighters to the Turkish border region in order to "clear the supply route" (as the PUK called it) or to "destroy our headquarters" (as the KDP expressed it). The PUK's 800 men, who did not know the

terrain, took a terrible beating at the hands of the KDP. Many of them were killed, some 300 driven into the hands of the Iraqi army or arrested by the Turks; some of the commanders were taken prisoner and later executed by the KDP. It took the PUK a long time to recover from this blow. This unfortunate incident was also cited as one of the major reasons why, less than a year later, the majority of the Socialist Movement (whose best commanders had been taken prisoner and were later killed) broke away from the PUK. They joined Mahmud Osman's group, with whom they formed the Socialist Party of Kurdistan-Iraq (SPKI).

In the 1980s, Talabani succeeded in gradually re-establishing his authority throughout the Sorani-speaking districts. His popularity in neighboring Iran increased as well. In 1979 he had established good relations with and gave some support to the Iranian Komala; his PUK and the KDPI maintained mutually cautious relations, their leaders not entirely-trusting each other. In 1981, Talabani offered Qasimlu's KDPI support when the latter was under attack from the Barzanis, and their relations gradually improved. When Iran's troops, supported by the Barzanis, attacked Iraqi Kurdistan in 1983, the PUK declared it would fight the invaders. At the same time, the PUK engaged in



Peshmergas patrolling in Iraq, March 1979.

Martin van Bruinessen

bloody clashes with the SPKI and ICP, who were in a common front with the Barzani.

It was almost predictable that Talabani would enter negotiations with the Baghdad government again. Qasimlu had been the initial go-between. Two new alliances, cross-cutting the political borders, seemed to be in the making: the Tehran-KDP-SPKI-ICP axis and the Baghdad-KDPI-PUK axis.

Talabani's opponents spoke of treason and of a repetition of the events of 1966; his supporters of the concessions the government had promised to make to the Kurds, among them a drastic revision of the 1974 autonomy law. In early 1985, the negotiations, which had dragged on for over a year, finally broke down, and hostilities between the government and the PUK resumed. The brutal operations by government troops against the civilian population last autumn took place mainly in and near PUK-controlled territory.

The PUK does not seem to have important foreign relations at present; in the past it received some support from Syria and probably also Libya, but both these sources seem to have been cut off. Following the resumption of hostilities with the government, the PUK seems to be able to send its wounded to hospitals in Iran. It is unlikely that Iran provides any more ac-

tive support than this; it prefers to work through Kurdish organizations on whose loyalty it can count. Among the Kurdish organizations, the PUK has the best contacts with the KDPI in Iran and the Socialist Party of Turkish Kurdistan (TKSP), with which it has issued several joint political statements during the past year.

The PUK as such has no explicit political program; its components, the Komala and the "Revolutionaries" (in which the remains of the Socialist Movement and the "General Line" have merged) do, but in the movement's actual policies pragmatic considerations and tactical maneuvers seem always to override abstract principles. The PUK has always spoken of autonomy for all of Iraqi Kurdistan and democracy for Iraq as its dual objectives; in 1985 an official PUK publication allegedly written by Talabani himself for the first time changed the objective to *national self-determination*, which implies the possibility of secession from Iraq.

Socialist Party of Kurdistan-Iraq (SPKI)

Barzani's long-time associate, Mahmud Osman, had broken with the Barzani family and established his own organization, the "Preparatory Committee of the KDP." Based in Damascus originally

(1977), he moved to Kurdistan, to an area close to the PUK headquarters, in 1978. Relations with Talabani were correct though never cordial. As a result of the bloody fight between the PUK and the KDP in 1978, and discontent with Talabani's style of leadership in general, in the spring of 1979 Rasul Mamand, the chief commander and politician within the Socialist Movement, broke away from Talabani and joined Mahmud Osman, taking the majority of his organization with him. They called their joint movement the United Socialist Party of Kurdistan; at its first congress in 1981, it changed its name to Socialist Party of Kurdistan-Iraq. A small third group also joined: Kurds who had broken with Barzani in 1973 or 1974 and joined the Iraqi government but were now seriously disaffected.

In 1980 the party joined a "national democratic" resistance front consisting of the Iraqi Communist Party, the PUK and some minor groups. Because of the enmity between the KDP and the PUK, it was impossible to have both organizations in the same front; the ICP and the SPKI therefore made a second, similar front with the KDP. The PUK felt double-crossed; its relations with the SPKI and the ICP kept deteriorating, especially when growing numbers of KDP *pehmer-*

refuge in the districts controlled by the KDP. Baghdad acknowledged that it had permitted a Turkish military operation of limited scope to hunt down "smugglers" and "terrorists." If this was the only aim of the intervention, it was not very successful: after a few clashes with *peshmergas*, the Turkish troops halted their advance. The *peshmergas* (of the KDP and the SPKI) avoided major confrontations, but refused to extradite Turkish Kurds. The Turkish troops finally withdrew without having captured a single person.¹⁵

This intervention was a part of Turkey's attempts to improve coordination and cooperation with its neighbors in suppressing Kurdish nationalism. By agreement with Iraq, the armies of both countries can cross into each other's territories to track down Kurdish guerrilla fighters. Turkey has failed to reach a similar agreement with Iran so far. Iran carefully guards its territorial sovereignty and is wary of other uses that might be made of such an agreement. There are, after all, American military installations in eastern Turkey, and Iranian royalist counterrevolutionaries have been welcome there too.

Turkey considers the Kurdish movements of Iraq and Iran as threats to its own security in several ways. In the 1960s and 1970s, the guerrilla struggle in Iraq and later in Iran strongly affected the national awareness of the Kurds of Turkey as well. Groups in Turkish Kurdistan organized support for the Kurdish parties in Iraq and Iran. In this way they became better acquainted with the situation in the other parts of Kurdistan. After the September 1980 military coup in Turkey, many cadres of the Kurdish organizations there fled to Iranian or Iraqi Kurdistan and remained in contact with their supporters in Turkey from across the border. The Worker's Party of Kurdistan (PKK) even established military bases in Iraqi Kurdistan, under the protective umbrella of the KDP. Since August 1984, the PKK has been carrying out spectacular guerrilla activities in Turkey's eastern provinces.¹⁶

The PKK was probably the major target of Turkey's invasion into Iraq, even though it had then not yet started its armed

actions in Turkey. In October 1984, Turkish newspapers wrote about an imminent new invasion in Iraq, and throughout the summer of 1985 troops were concentrated in the border area again. There never was a second invasion, but the threat had its effects: Turkish trucks were no longer held up by the PKK on the Cizre-Mosul-Baghdad road, the oil pipeline from Mosul to Iskenderun (vital to both Turkey and Iraq) was not cut, and in the late summer of 1985 the KDP prevented the PKK from carrying out further raids into Turkey from its territory.

It is unlikely that Turkey is sufficiently satisfied with these successes. The (very limited) guerrilla warfare carried on by the PKK in eastern Turkey is only one of its worries. It is Kurdish national awareness as such that Turkey's rulers perceive as a threat to their country's territorial integrity; and they are committed to the eradication of this national awareness, and of everything suggesting a separate Kurdish identity. Turkey will continue to persecute ruthlessly all its own Kurdish nationalists, and will persist in its efforts to coordinate operations against the Kurds with Iraq and Iran. Unlike Iran and Iraq, who have thus far tried to use each other's Kurds as tactical allies in their conflicts, Turkey has a perceived interest in the suppression of all Kurdish movements in its neighbor countries.

One of the effects of the Gulf War has been the increased role of the opposing governments in providing logistic and financial support to the Iraqi KDP and the KDPI. This, and the fighting in Kurdistan, made it possible for these organizations to consolidate their positions at the expense of smaller and more radical rival groups. The process was clearest in Iraq. After the outbreak of the Gulf War, many villagers and townspeople fled from the government-controlled areas to the zones held by the Kurdish organizations. Only those organizations with both territorial control and financial resources to support these new arrivals could profit from their presence. The KDP, supported by Iran, and the PUK, then supported by Syria and Libya, in this way accrued more reinforcements than the SPKI and the ICP. The KDP soon controlled large areas near the Turkish border and

gas came and joined guerrilla operations with the SPKI and ICP in and near PUK-controlled areas. In May 1983, PUK *peshmergas* attacked the headquarters of the SPKI and of the ICP, killing many prominent members of both. Since then, there have been intermittent fights between the PUK and the SPKI, in which hundreds were killed on both sides. The SPKI lost most of its territory to the PUK. Its present (end of 1985) headquarters are in the extreme northeastern corner of Iraq, and their position is quite precarious. The party seems dependent on the KDP's goodwill and Iran's tolerance.

The SPKI's program is kept in the vaguest terms: it is progressive and anti-imperialist, and aims at autonomy for (Iraqi) Kurdistan and democracy for Iraq. It does not receive substantial foreign support; between its two partners, the KDP and the ICP, it has become increasingly insignificant.

Iraqi Communist Party (ICP)

From 1972 until 1978, the ICP had taken part in the ruling National Front in Baghdad. Mass arrests and execution of party cadres and members in 1978 forced the party into opposition and underground. Some members of the central committee fled abroad; others went to Kurdistan, where the ICP has always had many supporters (especially in the Kirkuk and Sulaimaniyya districts). They established their headquarters next to Talabani's, in the strip of no-man's-land between Iran and Iraq, and tried to organize a wide opposition front. When their attempts to bring the PUK and the KDP together failed, they established separate fronts with each of them.

The relations between the ICP and the PUK were strained from the beginning; the ambitions of each to be the dominating force in a broad anti-government coalition undoubtedly played a part, and so

did the ICP's wish to establish close cooperation with the KDP (then believed to have excellent relations with al-Da'wa). The relations reached their nadir in May 1983, when PUK forces attacked the ICP headquarters and killed several members of the central committee and many party cadres. The ICP is not a Kurdish party, but Kurds are well represented on all levels; its armed men are almost exclusively Kurds (there are some 1000 *peshmergas*, dispersed over various parts of Kurdistan). The party sees the struggle in Kurdistan as marginal to its chief political struggle in Iraq, but it does recognize the importance of the Kurdish problem, which it believes should be solved by granting the Kurds the right of self-determination. In actual practice, the ICP's attitude to the Kurds has fluctuated considerably.

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could attract many of the peasants who had previously been deported from those zones, thus recreating a normal economic life there and giving its guerrilla a stronger base.

Further south, the zones actually controlled by the Kurdish movements were much smaller: until 1983, the PUK shared control with the SPKI and the ICP. Most Kurds deplored the PUK's violent attack on the headquarters of these parties, but it did have the desired effect. The PUK firmly established its superiority and attracted new supporters, while the weaker party's losses were much more serious than the military defeat alone. This is illustrated by current estimates of the Iraqi Kurdish parties' military strength.¹⁷ In 1981, the KDP had some 2000 *peshmergas* in Iraq, the SPKI and the ICP also around 2000 each, and the PUK some 3000; by 1985, the KDP's forces had grown to 6000, the SPKI's had dwindled to less than a thousand, the ICP's to just over a thousand, while the PUK could boast 5000 armed men. The PUK owed its growth to a large extent to its violent competition with its rivals, a tribal style of politics that was initially alien to this organization. It is not clear whether the PUK now has outside financial support. Syria seems at present to support the KDP instead, since the PUK had broken with Damascus in order to negotiate with Baghdad. To some extent it can finance itself with local contributions and taxation, especially surcharges on smuggling, but these sources of revenue are probably dwindling under the present wartime conditions. If it does not find a foreign sponsor, the PUK will soon have to demobilize its *peshmergas*, which will further strengthen the KDP.

The KDP depends even more on the Islamic Republic than Barzani ever depended on the shah. Mas'ud and Idris Barzani perceive an identity of interest with the Tehran government. The

KDP is the only Kurdish organization that agrees with Iran's determination to continue the war until the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. This is also why they give crucial military support to Iranian offensives in northern Iraq, even if this means that they have to relinquish control of parts of Iraqi Kurdistan to the Iranian army. This unconditional support earns the KDP sufficient financial support to recruit large numbers of *peshmergas* and sophisticated weaponry. The offensives towards Sulaimaniyya and Kirkuk (in the autumn of 1983 and most recently in February 1986) gave the KDP a foothold in Sorani-speaking territory. It hopes to reduce its single serious rival, the PUK, with Iranian support.

In strictly military terms, the KDP is in the best position among the Iraqi Kurdish groups, and it continues reinforcing itself.¹⁸ This recalls the position it had under Mustafa Barzani in the late 1960s. Barzani then could reach the most promising peace agreement the Kurds ever concluded with any government. It seems highly unlikely that his sons will be able to repeat that achievement.¹⁹ ■

Further Reading

On the history of the various Kurdish political formations: Chris Kutschera, *Le mouvement national kurde* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979). A survey of all Kurdish organizations as of 1983-84 (not without some factual mistakes): Christiane More, *Les Kurdes d'aujourd'hui. Mouvement national et partis politiques* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1984). The best (though inadequate) treatment in English is Gerard Chaliand, ed., *People Without a Country* (London: Zed Press, 1980).

Footnotes

1 Amnesty International. Urgent Action Appeal UA 363/85, December 20, 1985.

2 *Ibid.*, UA 09/86, January 20, 1986.

3 These are the names most frequently used for the two major dialect groups, but they are, strictly speaking, misnomers. There is no agreement among Kurds or scholars on the terms to be used. Apart from these two groups, there are still other dialects spoken in Kurdistan, and all these linguistic differences have at one time or another had political consequences. See my *Agha, Shaikh and State* (revised edition) (Berlin, 1986). Sections I.f and II.l.

4 See van Bruinessen, "Kurdish Tribes and the State of Iran: the Case of Simko's Revolt," in Richard Tapper, ed., *The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran and Afghanistan* (London and New York, 1983), pp.364-400.

5 By "control" I do not mean that there are "liberated areas" militarily controlled by Kurdish organizations, as existed in Iraqi Kurdistan until 1975 and in Iran from 1979 to 1983. In fact, the government holds all the towns, and can send patrols wherever it wishes. The *peshmergas* can, however, move around freely in their respective areas and prevent rival groups from operating there.

6 From the late 1960s on, Barzani's men had been coming and going through this area: several villages and camps had been assigned for refugees and for military liaison, and many Kurds from Bahdinan had continued living in the area (in the camp of Ziva and the town of Ushnuviya) after 1975. The Barzani's connection with Ushnuviya goes back even further: in 1945 Mullah Mustafa Barzani took refuge here with well over a thousand men and their families; some of these apparently never went back to Iraq.

7 Some of these conflicts were widely reported in the Iranian press; on Marvan see, for instance, *Ayandagon*, August 4, 1979, and the Komala's news bulletin (*Khabarnama-ye Komala*) of that period; on Urumiya: *Sazman-i Paykar, Mubaraza-i dihqani dar Urumiya* (1979); on the Mahabad region: A. Stein, *Iran. New Diktatur oder Frühling der Freiheit?* (Hamburg, 1979), pp.19-39; *Iran in der Iran Kurdistan: deirimi* (TKSP Yayınları, 1981), pp.22-26.

8 In November 1975, an Iraqi official spokesman said that approximately 50,000 Kurds had been sent to the southern districts of Nasriya and Diwaniya (*The Times* [London], November 27, 1975). Iraq grants citizenship to all Arabs and encourages their immigration. According to unofficial Egyptian estimates, there were over two million Egyptians living in Iraq in 1985. Most of them are workers, but quite a few also are peasants and have been granted land tenure.

9 For interesting observations on this resettlement, by an anthropologist working in a development project, see Leszek Dzięgiel, *Rural Community of Contemporary Iraqi Kurdistan Facing Modernization* (Kraków: Agricultural Academy, 1981). According to Kurdish sources, by 1983 over 20,000 Kurdish villages and hamlets had been destroyed and over 616,000 Kurds had been deported to central and southern Iraq (*Pesh Merga*, published in Sweden by the KDP, nos. 16/17, 1983). These figures may be inflated, but the Iraqi government itself admitted the deportation of 28,000 families (around 150,000 persons) from the border zone in two summer months in 1978 alone (*al-Thawra*, September 18, 1978).

10 Secret negotiations with the KDP, the SPKI and the PUK took place from the summer of 1982 on. Mahmud Osman of the SPKI, who visited Baghdad then, later said that he had been requested to provide proof that his party really controlled the area it claimed, which he interpreted as an exhortation to attack rival groups. He sees the PUK's attack against the ICP and SPKI headquarters as dictated by a similar request. This is only one of the many complex theories current among Kurds as explanations of the conflict.

11 Martin van Bruinessen, "Nationalismus und religiöser Konflikt: der kurdische Widerstand im Iran," in Kurt Grewing, ed., *Religion und Politik im Iran* (Frankfurt am Main, 1981).

12 Rough translation of the proposal, and Qasimlu's first reaction, in *Le Monde*, December 18, 1979. The text of the Kurdish counter-proposal to then-president Bani Sadr, made a week later, in *Les nouvelles du Kurdistan iranien*, May 1980 (published in France by the KDP). Negotiations, frequently interrupted, went on during the first half of 1980, without tangible result. See also Fred Halliday's interviews with Qasimlu in *MERIP Reports* #96 (July-August 1981), and with Izzaddin Husayni in *MERIP Reports* #113 (March-April 1983).

13 The methods of consolidation have been very different though. The KDP has never attempted to physically eliminate its rivals, and allowed all organizations to be active in the zones it controlled, provided they did not work against it. The war with the Komala is the only exception, and to all appearances the initiative here was with the Komala.

14 Both Idris and Mas'ud have married daughters of Shaikh Muhammad Khalid; many therefore believe that the shaikh's action was not without the connivance of the KDP leaders. On Muhammad Khalid and the other shaikhs of Barzan, see also my *Agha, Shaikh and State*, Appendix to Ch.IV.

15 This is according to all my Iraqi and Turkish Kurdish informants. According to press reports of May 30, 1983, the Iraqi ambassador in Ankara claimed that the Turkish troops had captured 1500 to 2000 "separatists," but this claim was apparently unfounded.

16 A forthcoming issue of *MERIP Middle East Report* will include my separate discussion of the PKK campaign in Turkish Kurdistan.

17 Based on interviews with well-informed Iraqi and Turkish Kurds. My informants' figures varied widely, depending on the areas they had travelled in and on their political sympathies, but they agreed on the relative strengths and the trends indicated by these figures.

18 See the reports by the only two journalists who recently visited KDP-held districts, Chris Kutschera in *Le Monde*, November 3-4, 1985, and Gwynne Roberts in the *Financial Times*, January 7 and 8, 1986. Both have visited Kurdistan many times before, which makes their reports more interesting. Roberts, always sympathetic to the Barzani, paints a picture that is altogether too rosy; Kutschera is more realistic about the prospects of the KDP's struggle, and shows how dependent it has become on Iran.

19 Most of the information on which this article is based was gathered during various visits to Iraqi and Iranian Kurdistan in the years 1974-1980, and in numerous interviews with Kurds who have travelled there in the following years, including members of all mentioned as well as several unmentioned organizations.

Turks tell of persecution



By JACK ANDERSON
and JOSEPH SPEAR

WASHINGTON — The barbaric treatment of Bulgaria's large Turkish minority by the communist government in Sofia is clearly designed with one goal in mind: to root out every vestige of Turkish culture, including language, characteristic names and the Moslem religion.

A classified State Department cable last month recounted the emotional testimony of ethnic Turkish eyewitnesses describing the horrors of life in Bulgaria to a committee of the Council of Europe meeting in Istanbul. The cable notes that some of the witnesses were "at times near hysteria" as they told of the primitive brutality practiced on their relatives and friends in the Turkish communities of Bulgaria.

Our associate Lucette Lagnado has seen the cable with the harrowing descriptions by the witnesses. Here are some excerpts:

- A woman named Gungordu, who was born in Bulgaria and left in 1978, returned in 1984 to visit her parents and other relatives. Her stay, in a hotel tightly controlled by Bulgarian police, was limited to seven days. It was more than enough.

Gungordu said her entire native province of Kurdzhali, which is 75 percent Turkish, seemed to be in mourning. "Names had been violently changed," she said. "They were beating people. They were wounding people. They were holding people by the neck on the ground, forcing them to sign (documents implementing the name changes)."

Old people were beaten, including a woman of 85, she testified, and when wounded ethnic Turks were taken to hospitals, "doctors and nurses forced people to sign." She quoted the authorities as telling the victims, "You are Turks no longer. ... You cannot speak Turkish any more."

Almost breaking down at one point, Gungordu cried out: "We cannot get letters. We cannot telephone. Our old people die calling out our names! They (the government) even removed tombstones from the graves to change names."

- A woman named Urtun recalled her 1983 visit to her family in Bulgaria. "My 63-year-old father (was) not served in stores because he does not speak Bulgarian. People (were) tied

with ropes and pulled by trucks for refusing to change their names. People (were) being beaten with guns and sticks for resisting the name-change campaign." She said she could "stand it only for one week."

- A man named Bilaloglu, also from a village in Kurdzhali, said the anti-Turkish campaign began in 1984. "There was genocide," he said. "There was torture." He remembered one chilling incident in particular: "Soldiers and dogs once surrounded my village. Then the soldiers, in teams of two or three, went to each house, forcing us to sign a document changing our names."

Bilaloglu, who later escaped into Greece, said that every one of the Turks' religious customs were outlawed, and special signs were posted at bus stops forbidding the use of the Turkish language.

Bilaloglu said his children were taken away by the Bulgarian government. "I have been told they will be returned in 10 years," he said, "but I do not know the situation now. I do not know what is happening."

- A man named Ozgur traced the anti-Turkish campaign back to 1982, when he fled because of the government's treatment. But he had to leave his two children behind — a 7-year-old son and an infant boy. "I have not seen them since," Ozgur said. "They are with my relatives, but we have learned that the Bulgarian government wants to take them to a government home."

- A woman named Kurtoglu collapsed in tears during her testimony. "I am terribly excited," she said. "My children are there. We are mothers. We want our children. I left them as Turks. They are not Bulgarians."

PENTAGON WATCH: Military inventory scandals are still occurring with depressing regularity. For example:

- A surplus dealer in Chicago bought \$50,000 worth of Army items from a man in North Carolina who had paid five civilians and three soldiers to steal the stuff from Fort Bragg warehouses.

- A surplus dealer at Fort Bragg paid an undercover FBI agent to exchange old helmets, canteens and tents for new equipment.

Auditors reported that the Army is frequently unaware of its losses until the items are recovered.

United Feature Syndicate



KURDS SENTENCED: A military court in Adana, Turkey, has sentenced 25 Kurds to death and 25 others to life imprisonment for killing 168 people. They were among 564 Kurds who were brought to a mass trial in connection with a series of slayings, bombings, arson attacks and hold-ups in southeastern Turkey.

Death Sentences Given to 25 Kurdish Dissidents in Turkey

ADANA, Turkey (AP)—A military court Tuesday sentenced 25 Kurds to death and 25 others to life imprisonment for killing 168 people, the Hurriyet news agency reported.

They were among 564 Kurds who were brought to a mass trial in connection with a series of slayings, bombings, arson attacks and holdups in southeastern Turkey.

The court ended the trial by giving 230 defendants jail terms ranging from one to 24 years and acquitting 284 others, the dispatch said.

The defendants belonged to the outlawed Apocular group, also known as the Kurdish Labor Party, which has been accused of trying to set up a separate Kurdish state in southeastern Turkey.

The defendants were convicted of killing 168 people in Adana, Gaziantep, Kahramanmaras and Icel provinces before and after Turkey's 1980 military takeover, the news agency said.

Guerrillas Complicate a Mideast War

By ROBERT D. KAPLAN

SARDASHT, Iran—While Iranian artillery units exchange fire with Iraqi forces from mountaintop outposts in the extreme north of their 730-mile war front, the tortuous deities between the two armies are in the hands of Kurdish guerrillas who owe allegiance to neither side. The Kurds control the no man's land in the war zone as well as territory deep inside both countries. While attention is focused on the six-year-old Iran-Iraq conflict centered in the south, the Kurds, armed with only rifles and rocket-propelled grenades, are doing more than any outside power to undermine the stability of two murderous regimes.

The guerrillas, known in their own Indo-European tongue as *pesh mergas* ("those who risk before death"), are able to penetrate 20 miles into Iran, and have put Sardasht and many other towns in the west of the country under siege. Though Massoud Rajavi's *mujahideen* have gotten most of the publicity for resisting the Ayatollah Khomeini, it is a Kurdish organization, the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran, known as the KDPI and headed by Dr. Abdul Rahman Qasemlu, that is now mounting the strongest armed resistance to Tehran. Dr. Qasemlu's 10,000 *pesh mergas* have killed several times that number of Iranian soldiers and revolutionary guards since the Ayatollah Khomeini came to power in 1979.

Locked In Mortal Combat

Iraq, meanwhile, is even more threatened by the Kurds. Uprisings by Masud Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan make it impossible for the Iraqi army to travel through much of northern Iraq except in convoys, and have necessitated the use of the Iraqi air force against not only the Iranians but the Kurds as well. At times, the Baghdad regime of Saddam Hussein has been so hard pressed by the Kurds that it has relied on the Turkish military for patrolling parts of northern Iraq. The mid-August Turkish air strike against the Kurdish rebels inside Iraq who have been active against Turkey is as much an indication of Turkish strength as it is of Iraqi weakness.

Neither Iraq nor Iran is about to be overrun by *pesh mergas*. But the story of

the Kurds illustrates the fragile political underpinnings of these two ethnically fractured states locked in mortal combat with each other.

A Sunni Moslem people who speak a language akin to Persian, the Kurds have lived for millenniums in the Zagros and Taurus Mountains that divide the deserts of the Middle East from the steppes of central Asia. A more strategically interesting bit of territory would be hard to imagine. The land between the southernmost Red

Building up the Kurds now would help guarantee that even if a cease-fire were called, Iraq and Iran would be kept sicwing in their own perverse juices.

Army units and the northernmost of the great Arabian oil fields is almost entirely populated by Kurds.

There are 15 million Kurds spread out over Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey and the Soviet Union. Half live in eastern Turkey, where a colonial-like policy of repression emanating from a strong central government in Ankara, since the time of Ataturk, has kept the Kurds from being a destabilizing force.

Such was also the case in Iran until the overthrow of the shah. Though the Shiite clergy may be consolidating its hold in the Farsi heartland, the border regions of Iran, particularly Kurdistan and Baluchistan, have been simmering with revolt for more than seven years. Ethnic minorities make up half of Iran's population of 44 million. And many of these Moslem groups, like the Kurds, are neither religious in outlook nor Shiite in faith. To them, Shiite fundamentalism is merely the whip hand of Farsi imperialism, no more.

Soaring inflation has increased anti-regime sentiments. In Sardasht and nearby Mahabad, the price of kerosene has reportedly risen seven times in one year. Bread has gone up 10 times, and the price of a simple pen 18 times in the same period. Sporadic street battles are said to have

taken place between groups of Kurds and revolutionary guards, or *pasdaran*, who are usually of Farsi descent. "The price of everything in Iran has gone up except the price of human beings," said Salam Azzizi, head of the KDPI's political committee in Sardasht.

The KDPI's presence in western Iran consists of guerrilla bases built into cliff-sides, from where raiding parties are sent out to attack Iranian positions. Towns such as Sardasht are filled with *pasdaran* by day and with *pesh mergas* by night. Captured Iranian soldiers and revolutionary guards told me that they were sent out to western Iran with the mistaken belief that they would be fighting Iraqis, not Kurds. In fact, many of the estimated 200,000 Iranian troops in the region are pinned down fighting this "other" war.

For this badly needed diversion, Iraq has provided diplomatic and logistical support to the KDPI. But the base inside Iraq from where the KDPI directs all its operations against Iran is not provided by Iraq, since the Iraqis don't even control this area within their own country. Jalal Talabani does. And since his Kurdish group is at war with Iraq, the KDPI has had to make separate deals with both sides.

The complex military situation in northern Iraq, in which each valley in some



areas seems to be held by a different Kurdish group (besides the main ones, there are smaller outfits as well), is symptomatic of a more fundamental ailment: the totally artificial nature of the Iraqi state.

The word Iraq in Arabic means "well rooted." Ironically, Iraq is anything but that. The country was created through an ad hoc process in the aftermath of World War I. In 1925, the oil-rich Turkish province of Mosul was attached to British Mesopotamia almost as an afterthought. The result was a country with a volatile Kurdish minority in the north, making up nearly 20% of the population, and an Arab majority split between Sunni and Shiites whose only real allegiance was to the Arab world at large.

The Same as Always

Successive Iraqi governments have compensated for these deficiencies with a policy of extreme repression. Kurdish villages have been razed, their drinking wells cemented over, and the men taken away from their families never to be seen again. While in central Mesopotamia, the most overbearing and efficient security apparatus in the Moslem Middle East has been put in place. Iraq is even more controlled and repressed a country than Syria. A Western diplomat in Baghdad described Iraqis as "the most cowed people in the Arab world."

The bloody style of President Hussein's rule inside Iraq has been lately obscured by his more moderate foreign policy, as shown by his alliance with Jordan and Egypt against Syria. The civilized world has only the war to thank for this: If it were to end, Iraq would likely revert to the hysterical Arab nationalism of its past. The relatively liberalized, Western outlook of the government officials in Jordan and Egypt is alien to Iraq. Though war has necessitated a change in tactics, political culture in Baghdad is the same as always.

The Kurds have the most to worry about from an end to the Iran-Iraq conflict. The war's end would enable both countries to launch an all-out offensive against them. Building up the Kurds now would help guarantee that even if a cease-fire were called, Iraq and Iran would be kept stewing in their own perverse juices. Helping the KDPI, in particular, is a way of hurting the mullahs without having to aid Iraq's almost equally unsavory rulers.

Mr. Kaplan is the Athens, Greece-based correspondent for the Atlantic Journal-Constitution and ABC Radio News.

Getting There



Enemy Mine

Iran and Iraq have been at war for five years now. There are at least 500,000 dead, 1.5 million disabled and 3 million refugees. The indiscriminate bombing of civilians has escalated. No one volunteers for military duty anymore; both governments have resorted to forced conscription. Yet immigrants to the U.S. still bring their blind nationalism and hatred with them — with the exception of the extraordinary Committee Against the Iran-Iraq War, made up of 12 Iranians and Iraqis who now live in L.A. and work together to bring an end to the devastating war on the other side of the globe.

This conflict isn't so far away, really; the U.S. is a silent party to it. "It is in the short-term interests of the U.S. that the war is maintained," points out committee co-founder Moussa Saleh, an Iranian. "Forty-eight percent of the arms sold worldwide are sold to the Middle East. There is no real end in sight unless there is a true understanding of the war by the international community."

It is on this front that the committee wages its campaign, pressuring Congress, for example, to look into the theft and sale of Navy aircraft parts to Iran. Though federal authorities were alerted as long ago as March 1983, an investigation into the theft has been slowed and the parts shipments continue. The committee also holds rallies, teach-ins and slide shows (one recently drew a crowd of 700), circulates literature, stays in touch with the press in their native countries, and joins forces with the peace and anti-nuclear movements here. "We want to appeal to the conscious and the unconscious people, to raise opposition to the sale of arms," says Saleh.

Saleh's political activism began at home, where he worked for the rights of women, religious minorities, the Kurds and political prisoners. "It's easy to overcome nationalistic pride when your cause is about basic human rights, about human beings," he says.

—Amy Gonzalez

Turkish Cops Question 100 On Massacre at Synagogue

Istanbul

Police have questioned more than 100 Arabs and Iranians in connection with the massacre at a synagogue here but have no clues to the identities of the attackers or who might have backed them, officials said yesterday.

Interior Minister Yildirim Akbulut said two terrorists, believed to be Arabs, carried out Saturday's assault. "But it would be illogical to think that, in such a well-planned terrorist action, they had no accomplices," he said.

Akbulut said that the terrorists, who blew themselves up after killing the worshippers with submachine guns, left no clues. Twenty-one worshippers died and four were wounded in the attack at Istanbul's Neve Shalom synagogue.

"They had no papers on them, no clothing labels, no other identification marks. We don't know who they were, where they came from or to which organization they belonged," Akbulut said in a telephone interview from Ankara.

He described as speculation Turkish press reports yesterday that the weapons used by the gunmen may have entered Turkey through diplomatic channels.

The body of one terrorist was blown to pieces and only the upper torso of the other terrorist's body remains intact, police said.

"With the lack of hard evidence we are unable to name any terrorist group or accuse any country," Akbulut said.

Turkey's police chief, Saffet Arıkan Bedük, said more than 100 people have been questioned. Other police officials said those questioned were citizens of Middle East countries.

Shiite Moslem and Palestinian groups have made conflicting claims of responsibility for the attack. Yesterday, a man speaking heavily accented Turkish called the Ankara bureau of the Associated Press claiming the attack was carried out by the North Arab Unity organization. It was the second claim made in the name of the group.

On Sunday, Premier Turgut Ozal said he did not believe Libya was involved, adding that "a Lebanon connection" appeared more likely to him. He did not explain the basis for his statement.

The gunmen, described as in their 20s, burst into the synagogue during morning prayers and locked it with an iron bar. They sprayed the congregation of about 30 men with bullets from Polish-made submachine guns, poured flammable liquid on some of them and set them on fire.

The Turkish government, meanwhile, informed Israel yesterday that it would not welcome the presence of a high-ranking Israeli government official at tomorrow's funeral of the Jews slain in the attack. It has been reliably reported that Israel hoped to be allowed to send a delegation headed by a top government leader, probably Religious Affairs Minister Yosef Burg.

"We did not object," the Turkish official said. "But we told them, 'We are grieved by their deaths, but first of all they are Turkish citizens.'"

Relations between Israel and Turkey are always sensitive because of persistent attempts by Arab nations to have Turkey join in a common Moslem front against Israel.

The government's warning was issued on the same day that Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and

former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon called for Israel to strike back at the terrorism responsible for the massacre.

Israeli officials doubted, however, that any attack would be launched before the meeting expected this week between Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Associated Press

Letters to the Editor

The Significance of the Kurds

Thank you for Robert Kaplan's fine evaluation of the military and political potential of the Kurds (editorial page, Aug. 29; see also letters, Sept. 9). It deserves attention for two reasons.

First, few Americans have any idea of the diversity of aims and ideologies among those who combined their efforts to overthrow the shah, and the extent to which their aspirations were disappointed and betrayed. Increased ethnic autonomy is among the most important of those aspirations.

Second, Mr. Kaplan's observations anticipate what may become a major policy issue. The U.S.S.R. has already planned one attempt (spilled by Khomeini's purge of the Iranian Communist Party, the Tudeh) to install a surrogate regime in Iran. Little more than the lives of one or two ayatollahs stand between Russia and a chance to pursue the old dream of a warm-water port. Mr. Kaplan's general comments on Iran's minorities were suggestive of how such an attempt might be anticipated or responded to.

I would like to read Mr. Kaplan's views on the potential of Iran's Azari Turks, should the moderating influence of Ayatollah Shariat-Madani cease; and on the state of affairs among the Turkomans, who have a notable history of guerrilla activity and straddle the borders of Iran, Afghanistan and the U.S.S.R.

RICHARD RUSSELL
Birmingham, Ill.

Kurds in Turkey, used Kurdish sheikhs to turn the Treaty of Sevres into a treaty more to his liking at Lausanne in 1923. The first document set the stage for Kurdish aspirations; the second defeated them. In 1946 the Soviet Union dumped the Kurds of the Mahabad Republic in favor of a deal with Iran for a natural-gas pipeline. The Soviets got their gas; the Kurds, the memory of their leaders hanging in the public square. The U.S. and the late shah used the Kurds fighting for autonomy in Iraq to force Saddam Hussein to a settlement over the Shatt al Arab with the Algiers Agreement in 1975. The Kurds are still trying to pick up the pieces of that betrayal in their current fighting.

Perhaps Mr. Kaplan chose to couch his appeal more in terms of utility than of conscience with good reason. To ask help for the Kurds on purely humanitarian grounds would—at least in official circles—raise more eyebrows than interest.

VERA BEAUDIN SAZEDPOUR
Director, Kurdish Program
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New York

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The Kurdish people are not the only persecuted minority in Turkey. The Greek Orthodox Christian minority is suffering extreme privation and is on the verge of extinction from confiscatory taxation, denial of meaningful employment, and expulsion.



Ataturk and the Kurds

There is far more to the built environment than meets the eye or the pocket-book. Walt Whitman once wrote: "All architecture is what you do when you look upon it. Did you think it was in the white or gray stones?"

Your cover story (ENR 8/7 p. 40) deals with the pragmatic aspects of building the Ataturk Dam and concludes that, so far, it is a successful project. But I read the story with sadness. Ostensibly a project to generate power in the region—the most underdeveloped in Turkey—the dam has another meaning to me, a meaning that will be submerged under millions of tons of water.

It is the ancient culture of the 8 million to 10 million indigenous Kurds that will be drowned by the dam, which takes its name from the "architect" of the decades-old policy to annihilate the Kurdish presence in Turkey. The dam is located in Northern Kurdistan. It, together with two earlier dams on the upper Euphrates, will form a crescent dividing the Kurdish population and facilitating the monitoring of Kurdish movement at dam checkpoints.

For most of the past 63 years, since the advent of Ataturk, the Kurds have been legally prohibited from wearing their costume, speaking, reading or writing in their native tongue, even identifying themselves in public as Kurds. The Kurdish region is the most underdeveloped in an underdeveloped Turkey. And the likelihood is that the dam's power will once more increase their victimization.

"Attaboy, Ataturk," begins your editorial. At a price, Ataturk, ends mine.

VERA BEAUDIN SALEDIKOUR

Director

*The Kurdish Program
New York, N.Y.*

ENR/September 18, 1966

IRAN-IRAQ CONFLICT

AN UNENDING WAR BETWEEN TWO DESPOTS

MANSOUR FARHANG

As the sixth year of the Iran-Iraq war comes to an end, the prospect for a settlement seems hopeless. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini continues to demand the ouster of President Saddam Hussein as a condition for negotiation, and Saddam Hussein appears determined to remain in power at all costs. During the first eighteen months of the conflict, when Iraq occupied part of Iran, Khomeini asked for an unconditional return to the status quo, while Saddam Hussein sought a military victory. In June 1982, when Iran recaptured virtually all its territory, the clerical rulers in Teheran debated the question of whether Iranian forces should pursue the Iraqi troops into their own country. After some hesitation Khomeini sided with the proponents of expansion and thus sealed the course of the war.

The Iraqi occupation of Iran had compelled the revolutionary regime to channel its energies into expelling the invaders. The psychological atmosphere of this widely popular mobilization tremendously benefited the religious extremists, who regarded the export of the Islamic revolution as their primary foreign policy objective. Since then the militarization of the state has steadily increased the extremists' base of support within the regime. When Iraq invaded Iran in September 1980, there were only 7,000 Revolutionary Guards and no irregular militias. Today there are 200,000 Guards and about 350,000 militiamen, who are generally more zealous than the clerics who lead them. The Islamic regime claims that an effort is under way to recruit another 300,000 men to be sent to the front before the end of the Persian year, next March 20.

(Continued on Page 244)

Unending War

(Continued From Front Cover)

Iran's advantages in the war are its large population (46 million and growing at the rate of more than a million a year) and the high motivation of its irregular fighters, who play a more significant role in the war than do the 300,000 soldiers of the Iranian Army. Iraq has clear superiority in all types of sophisticated weaponry, but it is disadvantaged by its small size and population (14 million) as well as by low morale all the way to the top. Iran has captured nearly 60,000 Iraqi troops on the battlefield, indicating that the Iraqi fighters have a tendency to surrender rather than risk their lives. The belligerents' offsetting advantages have yielded a situation in which neither has been able to score a decisive victory.

Even though geopolitical calculation and greed have shaped the orientation of the superpowers and their allies toward the war, neither the origin nor the prolongation of the conflict can be blamed on anyone but the belligerent regimes. Those industrial countries capable of using their influence with either nation to encourage a settlement have not done so. Indeed, they do not seem eager for the war to end. For the first time since World War II both the capitalist and communist strategists of global politics have taken a nonideological view of a war between two important Third World countries. The United States, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and the European countries have declared their neutrality in the conflict. Israel and Syria sell arms and ammunition to the Islamic Republic, even though they are contemptuous of what the ayatollahs symbolize. They are simply functional allies who want to see the Iraqi Baathists humiliated. Since the outbreak of the war nearly forty countries have sold arms to Iran and Iraq; ten

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of them have supplied weapons to both sides, some covertly. Most recently China joined in this traffic. Iran has purchased \$300 million worth of military equipment from Beijing in the past six months.

Washington's view of the war was summarized by one State Department official when he said, "We don't give a damn so long as the Iran-Iraq war carnage does not affect our allies in the region or alter the balance of power." Henry Kissinger has made the same point with more sarcasm: To serve "the ultimate American interest," he said, "both sides should lose." Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's Defense Minister, has stated Kissinger's position more straightforwardly: "We don't want a resolution of this war." That consideration has guided the Israelis in making periodic, indirect arms sales to Iran since the fighting began. Tel Aviv wants to keep the war not only stalemated but also as destructive as possible.

Because it is illegal for Israel to transfer American military equipment to a third country without Washington's permission, one wonders why there has not been an official call for an investigation, given all the evidence that Israel has been violating the law. In April, when the Justice Department charged seventeen people, including a retired Israeli general, Avraham Bar-Am, with conspiring to sell more than \$2.5 billion worth of U.S.-made weapons to Iran, not a word of concern or criticism was uttered in official Washington. According to U.S. authorities, the planned deal included antitank missiles, air-to-air missiles, five C-130 cargo planes, forty-six A-4 Skyhawk fighter-bombers and eighteen F-4 Phantom jet fighters. United States Attorney Rudolph Giuliani assured the press that the presence of Israeli citizens among the accused did not mean that the Israeli government was in any way involved. Giuliani did not explain what other source could have provided the alleged conspirators with such an extensive arsenal.

The Soviet leaders initially saw the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war as an opportunity to form an alliance with the Islamic Republic. They also hoped that the war would divert attention from their occupation of Afghanistan. Although the Soviet Union had a treaty of friendship with Iraq, Moscow provided Iran with arms and cooled its relations with Baghdad. However, once the Ayatollah's anticommunism proved to be unbending (particularly with regard to the Tudeh Party, through which the Russians attempted to subvert the Islamic regime), Moscow resumed arms sales to Iraq.

Until quite recently the Iranian mullahs believed that time was on their side, that a war of attrition would eventually topple Saddam Hussein and pave the way for Shiite fundamentalists in Iraq to seize power. That view was based on the assumptions that Iran would continue to export enough oil to finance its war efforts and that Iraq could be prevented from doing so. It was in pursuit of the latter objective that in 1982 Iran made a deal with Syria, Iraq's foremost Arab enemy, under which Syria shut down the Iraqi pipeline that ran through its territory on the way to the Mediterranean coast. In return Iran agreed to export 100,000 barrels of oil a day to Syria at discount prices and 20,000 barrels free. Over the past four years Syria has incurred a \$1.5 billion debt for

Iranian oil. In May, upon the expiration of the oil agreement between the two countries, Iran asked for payment as a condition for renewing the deal. Syrian President Hafez al-Assad responded by threatening to begin reconciliation talks with Iraq. Iran yielded, and the Iraqi-Syrian negotiations did not get off the ground.

Iran's expectation of an Iraqi economic collapse turned out to be illusory, however. The fear of Iran's revolutionary expansionism compelled the Arab states of the Persian Gulf region to give Iraq generous economic aid—nearly \$30 billion in grants and loans since June 1982. Furthermore, Iraq has managed to increase its oil production over the past three years. The opening of a new pipeline across Saudi Arabia has enabled Baghdad to compensate for the shutdown of the pipeline across Syria and the loss of Fao, its port at the northern tip of the Persian Gulf, which was closed on the first day of the war. Since January, Iraq has been producing 1.68 million barrels a day, compared with Iran's 1.7 million. Traditionally, Iran produced twice as much oil as Iraq.

For their part, the Iraqi rulers have long regarded the stalemate as a military and economic disadvantage. Consequently, they have concentrated on building strong defenses and minimizing casualties. They have also followed a counterstrategy of blockading Iran's main oil terminal on Kharg Island, located 125 miles from Iraq, in an attempt to curtail Iran's exports and pressure Teheran to accept a settlement.

Last year, following effective Iraqi air raids on Kharg Island as well as on the oil tankers approaching or leaving the island, Iran decided to make Sirri Island, 300 miles farther down the coast, the main terminal for loading crude oil. A fleet of tankers transported the oil from Kharg to Sirri, which was believed to be beyond the reach of the Iraqi Air



Force. On August 12, however, to the astonishment of the Iranians, Iraqi pilots in six French F-1 Mirages dropped laser-guided bombs on tankers anchored off Sirri and on the terminal itself. A number of ships were hit, and an Iranian supertanker was consumed in flames. The Sirri Island oil terminal was temporarily put out of commission.

The disruption of Iran's oil flow has aggravated an already critical situation arising out of the country's inability to sell oil at a profitable price. Oil accounts for about 95 percent of Iran's export earnings, and the drop in world prices has drastically reduced Teheran's financial capacity to import enough food, pharmaceuticals, raw materials and other essential products. Also, since oil is sold in U.S. dollars and Iran buys heavily from countries whose currencies have recently increased in value against the dollar, Iran has been paying more this year than last year for the same products. In 1985, Iran bought only \$74 million worth of goods from the United States.

Iran's oil revenues in the first half of this year were \$3.3 billion, compared with \$8.2 billion in the first half of last year and \$11 billion in the first half of 1982. Moreover, specialists maintain that one barrel of oil is now costing Iran as much as \$6 to produce, which includes the high cost of war-risk insurance. That means a 60 percent decrease in revenues. Iraq's revenues, by contrast, have fallen 30 percent, from \$5.1 billion to \$3.57 billion.

The fear of losing its hard currency revenues altogether forced Iran to agree to a Saudi demand to exempt Iraq from the recent decision by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to cut the cartel's oil production by 17 percent. The ayatollahs were also compelled to seek the resumption of natural gas exports to the Soviet Union after a seven-year hiatus. That move seems to have been linked to a serious effort by Iran to improve relations with Moscow. Yet neither the OPEC agreement to cut production nor improved relations with the Soviet Union can remedy the problems facing Iran's petroleum industry. In the first half of this year revenues of the thirteen OPEC states totaled \$33.8 billion, compared with \$54 billion in the first six months of last year. Iran has suffered the most of all OPEC members, and Iraq the least. Adding to Teheran's difficulties, the Saudis have systematically tried to steal Iran's oil customers by offering them discounts—an effort to reduce the country's oil income further and thus hamper its warfighting capabilities.

During the course of the conflict Iran has bombed selected maritime targets approaching or leaving the Saudi shores; it has also hit Kuwait at least twice. Such actions are intended to induce Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to restrain Iraq. In early August, Ali-Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Iranian parliament, warned, "If Iraq is to buy weapons and attack our oil centers with oil money from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, we will hit them."

Iran has repeatedly attacked Iraqi economic targets as well as ships on the Arab side of the Persian Gulf in the hope of forcing Iraq to stop its bombing raids. Last month Iran again fired long-range missiles at Kirkuk and Baghdad and then offered to halt the reprisals if the Iraqis ended their

attacks on Kharg and Sirri. Iraq rejected the offer and threatened to retaliate in kind. This latest outbreak of hostility could lead to the resumption of last year's "war of the cities," which saw the belligerents bombing each other's civilian areas.

The drastic decline in Iran's petroleum revenues, which is bound to increase the financial burden of the war, has produced no inclination toward a settlement. Instead, the rulers of Iran have hardened their rhetoric in recent weeks and seem to be preparing the Iranian public for an all-out offensive. Last month Mohsen Rezai, the commander of the Revolutionary Guards, claimed that Iran's "new strategy is to bring the war to a rapid end through the mobilization of resources and forces in the shortest possible time." Hashemi-Rafsanjani sought to project the same determination when he declared that "the Guards will prepare at least 500 newly equipped battalions." President Sayed Ali Khamenei's statement was more revealing: "We must break out of the stalemate, which is definitely harming us. There must be another blow like the Fao offensive." The latest call to "finish off" Saddam Hussein came from Khomeini himself. In an address to government officials and military commanders he said: "We should submit neither to imposed peace nor to imposed arbitration. We should continue the war until victory—and it is near."

Last year Iraq suffered two significant military defeats. The first was in February, when Iran captured the port of Fao. An estimated 300,000 Iranian troops are well dug-in on or near the peninsula, and Iraq seems to have given up the attempt to dislodge them. The second setback for Iraq took place in July, when the Iranian forces recaptured their border town of Mehran in the central sector of the Iran-Iraq front. The town had been occupied by the Iraqi Army since May of last year.

All signs indicate that Iran is planning a massive push against Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, fifty miles from Fao. The casualties from such an assault would be enormous. The roads to Basra are reportedly well defended, and Iraq's superiority in weapons, particularly in the number of aircraft and tanks, will make it extremely difficult for the Iranians to sustain their initial onslaught. And Iraq will certainly use poison gas again to stop the Iranian advance.

Iran does not appear to have the capacity to supply its troops for long in an offensive inside Iraq. Thus, the expected final push is unlikely to cause the fall of Basra; rather, in exchange for tens of thousands of lives Iran could conceivably extend its control a few more miles into Iraq. Such a dubious achievement would further drain Iran's resources and aggravate its already disastrous economic situation. The Iranian fundamentalists seem to believe that expansionist policies will help them solve their domestic problems. The ayatollahs are blind to the fact that the extension of their coercive apparatus will only produce more deprivation and frustration at home.

The Iran-Iraq war is absurd. It defies all rationality and violates every security and economic interest of the two countries. Over the past six years, many international mediators who tried to reach a compromise between the an-

agonists came away perceiving the war as an example of morbid behavior in contemporary politics. The late Olof Palme, after making repeated trips to Baghdad and Teheran to initiate a settlement, likened the conflict to a plague that had to run its course.

Yet Ayatollah Khomeini and Saddam Hussein continue to rule their respective countries with impunity, and as with other national leaders in the Middle East, resignation or retirement is alien to their ethos and temperament. Today's rulers of the Middle East strongly resemble the caliphs and sultans who ruled the region in the distant past. The contemporary despots have a greater capacity for repression, and they are no more concerned with human rights than their predecessors were. Automatic weapons and fighter bombers have replaced swords and horses, but the arbitrary and merciless exercise of power remains intact. New institutions and modern ideologies have had little impact on traditional political practices. The Marxist-Leninists in South Yemen, the monarchists in Saudi Arabia, the Baath-Socialists in Iraq and Syria, and the religious fundamentalists in Iran view dissent in their societies similarly. No citizen of those countries can criticize the government without risking arrest and torture.

The egos of Khomeini and Saddam Hussein are so infected with the fear of losing face in their tragic feud that anyone who questions the wisdom of continuing the conflict is dealt with ruthlessly. On May 16, Mehdi Bazargan, revolutionary Iran's first Prime Minister, and his associates were seized, blindfolded and beaten by state security agents because they had dared to sign a statement calling for a negotiated settlement of the war. In Iraq any criticism of the Baathist regime's conduct of the war is treated as treason. Thus, in spite of the intense unpopularity of the war in both Iran and Iraq, no nonviolent antiwar movement can emerge in either country. The brutal suppression of the war's critics at home is paralleled by incredible atrocities on the battlefields. Human wave tactics, poison gas, attacks on oil tankers and air raids on civilian targets have become commonplace. Both sides have endured horrible suffering. Perhaps a million have died, many of them civilians. Two million people have been made homeless. Material destruction is incalculable. Scores of border towns and villages are battered and lifeless. Major port facilities, pumping stations and important refining and petrochemical complexes have been bombed into ashes.

According to an informal report from Iran, a group of moderate clerics recently visited Khomeini in private and appealed to him to make peace with Iraq. Khomeini rejected the suggestion and said, "If you want peace with Saddam Hussein, pray for my death." Unfortunately, even the departure of the Ayatollah is unlikely to produce a settlement, unless he can take Saddam Hussein with him. The hatred of Iran's Revolutionary Guards and irregular militias is so completely directed at the person of Saddam Hussein that no successor to Khomeini would dare to negotiate with him. The end of the Iran-Iraq war can come only when both Khomeini and Saddam Hussein are removed from power, by natural or unnatural causes. □

INSENSITIVITY TO ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE NATION

In *The Nation* March 1, their regular contributors Koi Bird and Max Holland, in a column properly scolding Reagan officials' coddling of Duvalier, found it necessary to resort to a hoary anti-Semitic "joke" about Rabinowitz and Rappaport as arsonists. Among the letters of protest *The Nation* received was mine, printed in their April 19 issue. I reminded *The Nation* that in 1867, when insurance companies tried to stop sale of fire insurance to Jews, precipitating a nationwide discussion pro and con, *The Nation* was among the publications that sided with the insurance companies. "Bad Joke" was the headline *The Nation* put over my letter, and I was willing to let it go at that.

On March 22, however, in its 120th Anniversary Issue, *The Nation* published an article by Gore Vidal, "The Empire Lovers Strike Back," which, in taking out after neoconservatives Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decter, was smelly with anti-Semitism. Flooded with protests, *The Nation* April 26 and May 3 printed such letters by Joseph Wershba, Leonard Kriegel, Jack Stauder, Micah Morrison, Irving M. Levine, Floyd Abrams, Paul M. Weyrich, Evans Chan and Arthur Hertzberg. Appended to almost every letter was a vituperative comment by Vidal; the burden of his defense was that his "irony" had been misunderstood.

Particularly disturbing was *The Nation's* "Editors' Note" (April 26), repeating that Vidal was guilty only of "the intentionally provocative idiom of irony" and that "irony should not be read literally." Irony? Where is the irony in Vidal's statement that "in the Middle East another predatory people is busy stealing other people's land in the name of an alien theocracy"? This is not criticism of the State of Israel or the government of Israel but a libel against the people of Israel, a "predatory people." This is anti-Jewish, anti-Semitic. In our pages we frequently criticize Israeli government policies, domestic and foreign, as do other Jewish periodicals and organizations. But Vidal is damning a people, not a policy. We could detail other evidence of anti-Semitism in Vidal's article, but we are more distressed by *The Nation's* editors' failure to perceive it, even when so many alert readers so pointedly called attention to it.

Equally disturbing was the defense of his publishing the article by *Nation* editor Victor Navasky in *The New Republic* June 9 on the ground he wanted to raise "fundamental questions" about the American Jewish community's sensitivity to criticism of Israel. Vidal did not help.

—Morris U. Schappes, editor, *Jewish Currents*

The above reprimand appeared in the July/August issue of *JEWISH CURRENTS*. We admonished *THE NATION* as a devoted friend. Actually, during the past forty years of our existence our views and analyses of the world scene have closely paralleled *THE NATION's*, but our focus is principally with the world of Jews—after-effects of the Holocaust, betterment of relations with Arabs, blacks, and in fact with all the peoples on this troubled earth. Peace! No more wars! No more fascism! Reading *JEWISH CURRENTS* will be a memorable experience. Please subscribe!

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PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL O'NEILL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Faces of a war-weary nation: Survivors of the battles at Sirwan, with no end in sight for Persian Gulf conflict

COVER STORY

PART I

A Nation Stares into a Dark Abyss

SUMMARY: Iraq's war with Iran has killed one of every 10 Iraqi soldiers on the battle lines. The toll on the economy has been equally devastating: The 6-year-old conflict is costing the country \$8 billion annually. Despite the problems, President Hussein has maintained loyalty. Falling oil prices and blocked Persian Gulf shipping lanes have severely cut into the country's major source of revenue. Still, the nation that some regard as the cradle of civilization is holding together, due mostly to its determined people, made strong by centuries of conflict.

Shawnam Abdullah used to smile before the bombs fell, before his mother, father, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and grandparents were killed in the fire that rained on their home that Wednesday. Hours after the slaughter, the 5-year-old lies in a hospital bed, his eyes glazed, his shattered skull wrapped in a bandage.

In the next bed lies Juana Nuri, an 11-month-old girl who also stares blankly at the ceiling, her body frozen in mute shock from the burns she suffered when one of the rockets struck a fuel tank that exploded like napalm. Her mother died trying to protect her, covering the infant with her own body. Someone has stuck a pacifier in

the corner of the baby's mouth. It hangs loose.

They are the lucky ones, a soldier says, but then he stops in mid-sentence, not quite convinced of what he is saying. It is hard to think clearly in the wards of the hospital at Sulaimaniya, amid the sounds of pain of 129 elderly men, young women and babies. Eighty-six others died in the same attack, 25 of them children. They are just some of the latest victims of the war between Iran and Iraq that this month marks its sixth anniversary.

At a burned-out apartment building in Sirwan, a town of 6,000 on the northern border between the two countries, other soldiers are climbing through the rubble where they found young Shawnam buried

alive, the sole survivor of three generations. A brigadier points past trucks mounted with machine guns to a line of mountains in the east. Iranian positions hidden in the peaks had unleashed a dozen 155mm long-range artillery rockets at noon when most of the locals had left the fields where they grow sunflowers, corn and tobacco.

"You ask me why," says the brigadier with a look of astonishment. "What can I tell you? You should ask them." He waves toward the mountaintop artillery posts. "They are still there."

In his sprawling, well-furnished office suite in Baghdad, Latif Jassim, perhaps the most fearsome member of Iraq's ruling body, the nine-man Revolutionary Command Council, is glowering and talking tough about the enemy as he flicks an unseen speck of dirt from his freshly laundered green uniform.

"We will crash their heads on the border, and they will repent for every single day they added to the age of the war," says the man who officially is minister of culture and information but who some are saying is the crown prince behind strongman President Saddam Hussein. "We will inflict disasters on them that they cannot yet imagine."

Perhaps they will, but no one is saying when and how. Most knowledgeable observers inside Iraq — a secretive, generally unreported and sometimes chilling society — believe things are only going to get worse before they get better. And they're grim now.

The war that few have followed and fewer have worried about has now consumed a critical area of the Middle East for more time than any other conventional conflict in this century. The universal opinion of foreign diplomats in Baghdad is that possible defeat for Iraq cannot be dismissed and that such a victory for Iran would be disastrous for the region and, indeed, the Western world.

"It's worse than World War II," says a European ambassador. "By 1943, two years before the end of that war, the Allies knew they were going to win. They knew what they had to do. The war weariness alone in Iraq is worse. There is a real question whether Iraq can hold out."

Says a Western defense attache with significant combat experience in his own armed forces: "The Iranians are a constant threat of breaking out." Adds another diplomat with long experience in the Arab world: "It is amazing that the country's morale has not totally collapsed already."

Despite its own troubles, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Iran is threatening and preparing for a "final offensive" in which it hopes to break the will if not the back of Iraq and its people, recruiting 100 new brigades for the day that experts believe will come with cooler weather in the next few months. The long-stated Iranian goal has been to topple Hussein, something Iran believes could be done by economic as well as military means.

A four-week tour in Iraq, the first such trip by a U.S. journalist this year, reveals a nation and its people struggling to put on a brave face in a desperate situation. In interviews with three of the nine members of the Revolutionary Command Council, in discussions with other high-ranking and mid-level officials, in talks with military commanders and soldiers in the field, in briefings from almost a dozen veteran diplomats, a complex portrait emerges of a land struggling for its very survival.

Iraqis see themselves holding the line against the dangers of Islamic fundamentalism and fanaticism personified by Khomeini. That, certainly, is part of the story. So too is history. Iraq, the easternmost Arab country, has long feuded with the non-Arab, Persian nation of Iran.

When Iraq invaded Iran on Sept. 22, 1980, Hussein rallied his countrymen by reminding them of the time Iraq repelled the Persian invasion at the Battle of Kadisiya in 637.

Hussein, who has repeatedly called for an end to the war in recent years, maintained he only ordered the invasion in response to threats by Khomeini before and after he overthrew the shah in 1979. Iran also had instigated border skirmishes, but others believe Hussein's real objectives were the oil cities of Ahvaz and Dezful. Any hope he had that the Arabs who reside in southern Iran would rise up to join his forces quickly evaporated.

Iraq's armed forces of 1 million, stretched thin along the 733-mile front with Iran, already have sustained 100,000 deaths in combat. That death rate — one of every 10 soldiers — is staggeringly high.

Twenty thousand have died so far this year. In recent months alone, 2,500 Iraqi officers have been killed. In all, 1 million soldiers and civilians have been killed or wounded on both sides of the border, according to Western intelligence analysts.

The nation can ill afford any more casualties. Yet, day after day, homemade black



At Sirwan, (from top) a burned-out apartment building; a victim of the shelling; Juan Nuri, an 11-month-old burned by a fuel tank explosion.



Jassim (top), the most fearsome member of Iraq's ruling body; Hammadi (left), one of the regime's founders; Deputy Prime Minister Ramadan

flags daubed with white paint are hung out on fences in just about every neighborhood in every city, town and village to announce the names of new fatalities. In official announcements and interviews, government spokesmen euphemistically call the dead "martyrs."

Young men drafted six years ago for a two-year stint are still on the front line, many of them having been wounded, treated and returned to combat. Some 75,000 troops assigned to the Fao Peninsula on the Persian Gulf have now been on full alert and under fire for more than seven months. That time is broken up with one week's leave for every five served.

The hardships have permeated every segment of society. In a country with a population of 15 million, it is all but impossible to find an extended family that has not

lost sons, brothers or husbands in the fighting.

And there is now serious doubt that universities will open on schedule at the end of the summer break. The 110,000 male students and 15,000 teachers at Iraq's seven colleges and other tertiary schools have been drafted for ostensibly temporary military training. The command council recently ordered them to spend six months in uniform, says a West European analyst in Baghdad. Whether that is a sign of desperation or a signal that the privileged cannot escape their responsibilities is known only by the command.

International travel is virtually prohibited to Iraqis, and even travel within the country is restricted. There is a five-year wait to purchase a car. Repairmen are unavailable. News programs feature monotonous propaganda. Television entertainment tends to be a group of soldiers singing of their love for Hussein. None dares strike a different chord.

Dogs howl in the predawn hours, awakened by the sound of muezzins calling the faithful to the mosques that dot the landscape. Slick, new, white Mercedes-Benz sedans, the official vehicles of the secret police, cut past big, red, lumbering double-deck buses more reminiscent of Piccadilly Circus than Al Tahrir Square.

There is little laughter. There are few, if any, young men out of uniform. The older ones gather on neighborhood sidewalks in the evening, when the sun no longer melts the asphalt, when the incessant honking of car horns has died down, talking in small groups and staring suspiciously at strangers.

Motorists slow down for roadblocks where military police check the vehicles for draft dodgers, but strollers have long become accustomed to the hundreds of troops who surround public buildings and cordon off the headquarters of the government radio and television networks, their Soviet-made AK-47s hanging from their shoulders. Nor do they take a second look at the tanks, armored personnel carriers and anti-aircraft installations that are a permanent part of the landscape.

Fewer women are wearing chadors, the black veils meant to hide their features from the view of men. But more are wearing the black clothes of mourning. Unlike in many other Arab countries, women now play an active role in the society, albeit one necessitated by war. "Of course, the war has been an ironic benefit to women," says Ifukhar al-Samarraie, the second-most powerful woman in Iraq, citing figures that show women in the work force have increased from 7 percent in 1968 to 24 percent this year.

Dressed in a military uniform, the former high school teacher, now vice president of the General Federation of Iraqi Women, says: "We are training the women and pushing them to go to work. Since the war, most of the men are at the front, so women must take their places."

Past a half-dozen checkpoints, past soldiers carrying rocket-propelled grenade launchers on their backs, protected by his personal bodyguards in air-conditioned comfort, sits Taha Yassin Ramadan, the portly first deputy prime minister of Iraq, a veteran and key member of the Revolutionary Command Council and the nation's head of state.

Thinking back to eight years ago, he remembers Baghdad as "a big village." It now has impressive new housing complexes, fast freeways and ubiquitous government buildings. The success of new pro-

PHOTOS BY RICHARD MACKIN / INSIGHT

"It's worse than World War II. The Allies knew they were going to win. They knew what they had to do. The war weariness in Iraq is worse."

grams in the agricultural sector can be seen in the markets of Rashid Street, where some stalls overflow with vegetables in season.

The failures also are seen there when the passerby notes what is not for sale. The financial cost of the war has drastically cut the availability of such basic commodities as eggs, most fruit, potatoes, toilet paper and light bulbs, to name only a few.

Before the war, Iraq's future was as bright as a desert sunrise. It held \$35 billion in foreign exchange reserves, a formidable buffer for the worst of circumstances. The expenses of the war and a drop in income gobbled up that bank account in two years.

The country now is at least \$15 billion in debt to non-Arab countries, pays \$1.5 billion a year in interest on that debt and adds another \$4 billion to its deficit every 12 months. On top of that, it owes at least \$30 billion and perhaps as much as \$60 billion to other Arab countries.

Available cash is now kept for military equipment, 90 percent of which comes from the Soviet Union, most of the rest from France. Iraq's biggest supplier of merchandise, Turkey, puts \$1 billion a year on a tab, the payments for half of which are rescheduled in 12-month periods. Ten percent of that bill is paid in cash, the rest in oil. Brazil barter arms, cars and beef in return for oil. New Zealand recently cut off supplies of dairy products when Iraq fell \$30 million behind in payments.

Jordan sells Iraq \$200 million worth of goods ranging from vegetables to shoes and has given Iraq transit rights for its oil. Still, Jordan gets hard currency for only 20 percent of the bill. Some of the rest is paid in oil; the remainder goes on account. At the end of June the overdue amount of \$525 million had long surpassed Jordan's foreign exchange holdings of \$300 million.

Flanked by bodyguards as he takes his visitor on a tour of the Iraqi National Assembly building, the speaker of that parliamentarian body, Sadoon Hammadi, talks of the effects of the war. The former foreign minister and one of the founding members of the current regime, Hammadi is a graduate of the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, and did postgraduate work at the University of Wisconsin, earning his doctorate in 1957.

Hammadi, a disarmingly gentle man, says softly, "Our people lost their potential. Because of the war, the social trends and



welfare measures that were expected to come were stopped. We try to minimize the effects of the war."

The man at the helm of the country's economic future is Deputy Prime Minister Ramadan. A pearl-handled pistol hangs at his waist and, say his critics, he only really smiles when he hears about the misfortunes of others. During an hour-long conversation, he smiled twice — first, when he wondered if the smoke from his thick Cuban cigar was disturbing his visitor, and second, when he gave a hearty belly laugh to dismiss the suggestion that Iraq was nearly bankrupt.

As he talks in his office, Ramadan doodles triangles, linking them in an ever-larger triangle that spreads across the page as the conversation proceeds.

He is asked if Iraq's fall from benefactor (to countries in Africa, Asia and the Arab world) to debtor nation is a bitter pill to swallow. "Medicine may be bitter, but it is also necessary," he says. "The period of prosperity during which we extended easy loans to many countries was a time when we did not know our real friends and our real enemies. If Iraqis look at the two periods, they can now tell friends from opportunists."

For the five years from 1965 to 1969, says Ramadan, the country's development budget was \$2 billion. "The development plan for 1981 alone was \$25 billion," he says. "That was the peak and, obviously, it is now influenced by the pressure of expenses. We will continue with an austerity program considering not only the current situation but also the worst possibilities. The war has taught us many lessons in education, research, agriculture, industry and military affairs."

Samarraie: War has benefited women.

The director-general of external relations and investment in the Iraqi Ministry of Oil, Wajih al-Hadithi, smiles with enthusiasm as he rattles off statistics. With reserves of oil second only to Saudi Arabia's, Iraq has a proven capacity of 65 billion barrels, he says. Another 46 billion are expected to be added to that figure in the near future, and 40 billion more are "probable."

"There is a statement by Saddam Hussein that one of the last two barrels of oil produced in the world will be in Iraq," says





Antiaircraft guns point to the sky above the Tigris River and the skyline of Baghdad, capital of a besieged nation.

Hadithi, who also is Iraq's point man in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. He pauses and gazes through thick glasses at the listener to gauge a reaction.

Before the war, Iraq was producing about 4 million barrels a day and was exporting 3.7 million — at a time when oil sold for \$40 a barrel. Most of it went out through terminals in the Persian Gulf and via pipelines to Turkey and Syria. Only months after the war began, however, Iran cut off Iraq's gulf terminals and, in a gesture to Iran in 1982, Syria closed Iraq's pipeline to the Mediterranean.

His voice awash with sarcasm, Hadithi says, "Our Arab brothers in Syria closed the line at their end and we were left with only the Iraqi-Turkey line, then about 650,000 barrels a day. We learned lessons when we were in a critical situation, not to put all our eggs in one basket."

Iraq has since upgraded its pipeline to Turkey, boosting it to 1 million barrels a day. It is sharing a line with Saudi Arabia that allows it to export another 350,000 barrels a day. A consortium of French and Italian companies is building another line through Turkey, due to be completed in six months and promising to add another 500,000-barrel-per-day capacity. By the end of 1987, another pipeline through Saudi Arabia to the Red Sea also will be completed, adding 1.6 million a day.

As optimistic as that appears, the country is still at least partly crippled so long as

it has to spend \$8 billion a year on the war. With oil as its only source of income — apart from about \$500 million a year from dates, cement, sulfur, water and natural gas — the nation takes in a maximum of \$11 billion a year, says a respected economist with an intimate knowledge of Iraq.

To pay for the war, Iraq has cut its imports from \$11 billion a year to about \$6 billion for wheat, rice, canned goods, cars, machinery, industrial goods and industrial raw materials. Meanwhile, it is still wrestling with remittances of about \$1 billion sent abroad by a community of foreign workers whose immigration Iraq encouraged to flesh out the country's depleted labor market. "It means Iraq is mortgaging its future," says the economist. "But it means it can pull through."

Such is the gloom, however, that 200,000 of 1 million Egyptians have already left, in part because they now are

allowed to send only about \$75 a month out of the country. At the old Latin Church, now the Coptic Orthodox Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Egyptian sexton Nimer Kamel Abid offers his visitor tea in a back room where he sleeps on a ragged mattress amid buzzing flies. Most of the regular congregation of a hundred or so are Egyptians, he says. A few are Iraqis.

By the crumbling walls of the sanctuary, he grows excited when he talks of a church in Mosul where he says the Virgin Mary appears regularly in visions and miraculously heals the sick. Like his priest, the sexton has been in Baghdad for seven years. He is not sure what he will do in the future.

About 1,000 Filipino "bar girls," imported by the Iraqi government to service soldiers on leave, were deported from Baghdad in June, supposedly in deference to Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting and penance. Their departure also kept an extra \$182,000 a month in Iraq.

Given such figures and such an environment, the surprising fact is that the place is holding together at all. But so far, it is. Love or hate them, the Iraqis are hardy and determined, honed by centuries of conflict.

The nation has its geographic roots in Mesopotamia, the string of Sumerian city-states subdued, unified and governed by the Akkadian Empire from 2400 to 2200 B.C. By the 1500s the area fell under the control of the Ottoman Empire. It remained under Turkish dominance until Britain conquered the region at the beginning of World War I. Iraq was nominally given independence in 1932 but was again taken over by the British during World War II. A British sponsored monarchy from the Hashemite family, which also rules Jordan, headed the



Hadithi: Iraq's OPEC point man

“Our Arab brothers in Syria closed the line at their end. We learned lessons when we were in a critical situation, not to put all our eggs in one basket.”

country until King Faisal II and Prime Minister Nuri el-Said were assassinated in a coup engineered by the Arab Baath Party. The event was known as the July 14, 1958, Revolution. Fear of destabilization in the Middle East led President Dwight D. Eisenhower to dispatch 1,700 Marines to Lebanon the next day.

The current regime comes from that party, which was founded April 7, 1947, by Michel Aflaq. Baath means “renaissance,” and the party was first an underground, pan-Arabic political group that gleaned some of its ideas from postwar French socialism and was most popular among university and high school teachers. Its tenure after the first revolution was brief, and it was again driven underground in 1959. Until another revolution on July 17, 1968, its members were hunted, jailed and brutalized by the leadership of the despot Abdul Karim Kassem, who had allied himself with the Iraqi Communist Party.

Typical of the members at the time was Saddam Hussein. Born Saddam Hussein al-Tikriti, on April 28, 1937, the son of peasants, he was orphaned as a child and raised by an uncle, a melon farmer. He did well in school at Tikrit, a hotbed of political dissent under the British. He studied law in Egypt. At the age of 20 he joined the Baath Party and two years later took part in the attempt to assassinate Kassem. Wounded in an ensuing gun battle with police, he escaped and later supervised a friend who cut a bullet from his leg with a razor blade.

Sentenced in absentia to death, he fled to Syria and then to Egypt, by his own account riding a donkey across the desert. In Cairo, he studied the ways of Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser, then returned to Baghdad to take part in another attack on Kassem. That plot was aborted, and Hussein was again arrested during a dragnet for Baath Party members. Tortured and jailed for three years, he escaped on the way back from a court appearance when he persuaded his guards to let him and some other prisoners stop at a restaurant.

By then a respected member of the party, he joined in a 1968 tank assault on the Presidential Palace that led to the collapse of the government, then controlled by Maj. Gen. Abdul Rahman Muhammad Aref. As the right-hand man to Baathist President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, Hussein

Faithful are still called to the mosques.



Restoring Babylon despite war

exercised the real power and himself was named president in 1979. He also holds the titles of prime minister, field marshal and commander of the armed forces, chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council and regional secretary of the Baath Party.

Today, Hussein rules with an odd mixture of charisma and an unforgiving iron fist. So far he has managed a delicate balancing act between the country's majority Shiite Muslims and minority but more powerful Sunnis. Hussein is seen in posters and photographs on every block (such as the one shown on the cover), in every public building and every military establishment.

As he strode across the tarmac at a Baghdad airport in a rare semipublic appearance to greet the visiting king of Jordan, Hussein ibn Talal, the president seemed confident and relaxed despite rumors that days earlier he was the target of a coup — one of several such stories that

make the rounds each year. Despite such reports, Hussein seemed for the moment to have the loyalty of his party.

There is always the possibility, however unlikely, of a military coup. To take one example: During the underground years, First Deputy Prime Minister Ramadan was stripped of his captain's rank, cashiered out of the army and imprisoned for his outspoken support of the Baath Party. At the time, he had to turn to the charity of comrades such as Hussein to support his family. Ramadan now is also commander of the Popular Army, a militia of 500,000 volunteer troops similar to the National Guard in the United States. The Popular Army is an integral, if poorly trained and occasionally detrimental, segment of the fighting forces.

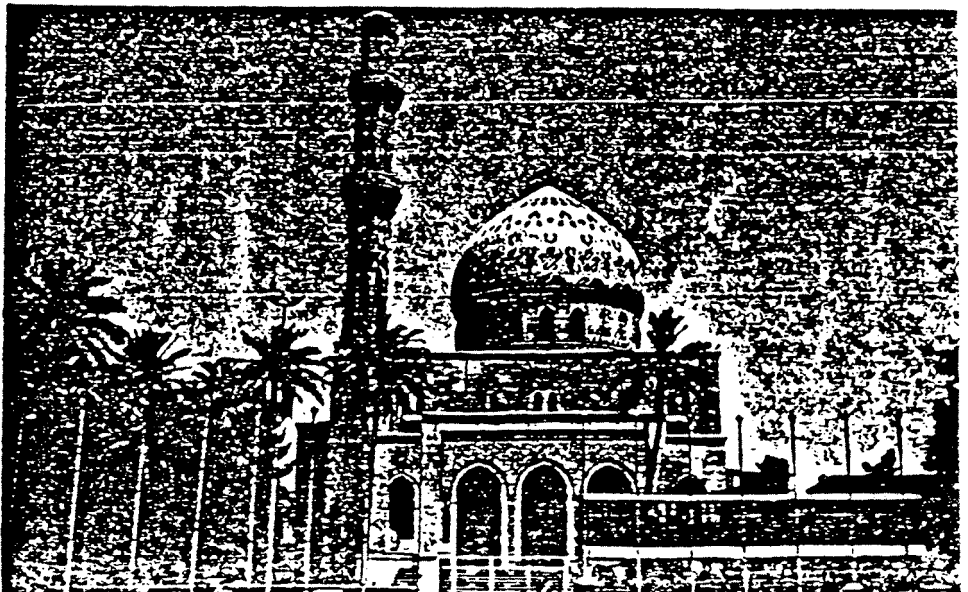
Far to the north of Ramadan's headquarters, and in another branch of the armed forces, a formation of Soviet-built Mi-17 helicopters sits on a tarmac at a military base in Kirkuk, a rich oil field city in southern Kurdistan. Each is armed with clusters of 76mm rocket pods on either side. A few dozen pilots, none of them past his mid-20s, stroll to the choppers, their jumpsuits zippered despite the blazing heat.

They take off in a swirl of sand and dead grass. At a couple of hundred feet, they turn toward Sulaimaniya.

In the cockpit, a pilot lights a cigarette and ponders his map. His partner flicks switches and shouts in Arabic into his headset. In the back, a 20-year-old sergeant hooks his elbow out a porthole and stares off at the horizon. The roar of the engines cuts out the possibility of idle conversation.

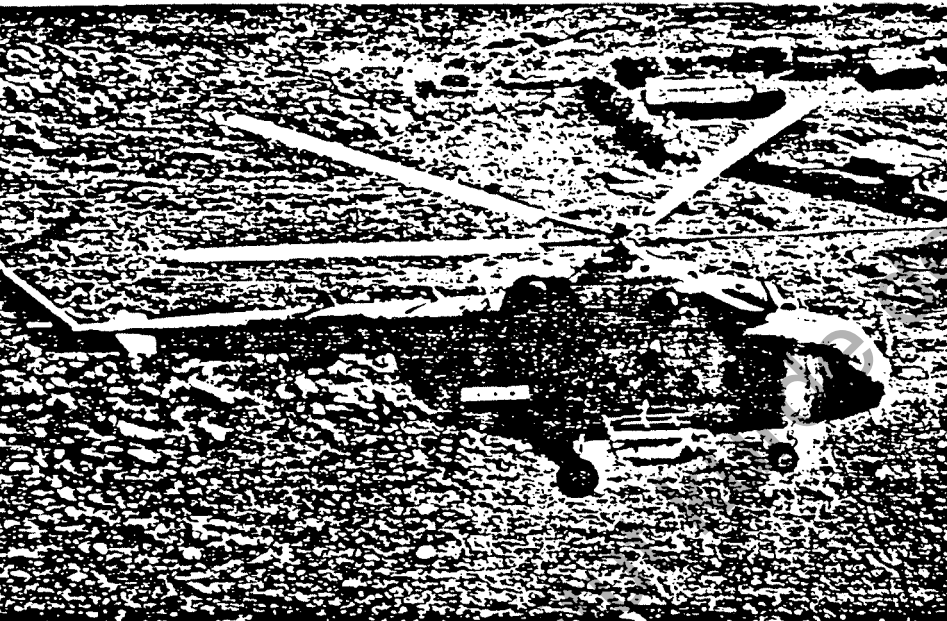
And, at that place and time, there is really nothing to say.

— Richard Mackenzie in Iraq



How Not to Wage a War: Iraq Does It by the Book

SUMMARY: For Iraq, this has been the worst year in its six-year war with Iran. Despite a sizable advantage in equipment and firepower, and the most seasoned army in the Arab world, Iraq's military has blundered into several serious defeats. Much of the problem lies with the apparent unwillingness of Iraq's political leaders to let their combat-hardened commanders make the battlefield decisions. Many analysts fear that an Iraqi defeat could radically alter the geopolitical realities of the Middle East, much to the disadvantage of the West.



Iraq's sophisticated arsenal includes Soviet-made helicopters and warplanes.

The surprises come too fast and too often.

From the invasion of the Fao Peninsula in February, to defeat in the battle of Mehran in July, to the temporary loss of its key observation posts in the Persian Gulf this month, this has been the worst year for Iraq in its six-year war with Iran. Iraq often confounds its friends with its seeming inability to prepare for Iranian onslaughts, especially at a time when its obsessed enemy has promised a "final offensive" before the end of the Islamic year in March.

While no one suggests that Iran could now press through to Baghdad and take the nation's capital, there are other distinct fears, expressed even by normally reticent Iraqi officials. They see Iran returning to its "human wave" tactics, sending ahead young zealots bent on earning their key to paradise by giving their lives for Islam.

Using these forces, Iran could cut off

Iraq's second-largest and already bombarded city of Basra in the south, sever the critical highway to Kuwait and isolate the vital oil refinery of Umm Qasr on the Kuwaiti border.

Such a victory would allow Iran to declare an Islamic Republic of Iraq in the south and would put an end to Iraq as a Persian Gulf power.

What Iraq needs to do, say military experts closely following the war's progress, is to take battlefield decisions out of the hands of politicians such as President Saddam Hussein, give autonomy to the now combat-hardened commanders and employ sophisticated strategies the likes of which they have rarely used since Iraqi troops first invaded Iran on Sept. 22, 1980.

The purpose of such a move would be to enable Iraq to employ an "active defense," one in which it takes a more aggressive position and one in which its troops do more than sit and wait.

At times its forces, now certainly the

most seasoned in the 22-nation Arab world, demonstrate fitness and bravery demanding of respect, yet they will follow that with indecision and hesitancy. "They have to be willing to take risks and suffer short-term consequences and casualties for longer-range victories," says one ranking military officer in a foreign government. "And they're not doing that."

From the rugged, raw, bronze mountains of Kurdistan in the north to the soggy marshes and the desert plains around the highway to Basra, where lines of fortifications feature tanks every 100 yards and the countryside is an endless military base, the Iraqi armed forces are distended along the border. At no point do they hold any Iranian territory, and in several places they have been forced to retreat on their own land. Iran now holds the Fao Peninsula, parts of the Majnun oil fields near Basra and strategic positions in the Haj Omran area near Mount Hassarost in the north.

The most disheartening moment of the war for many was the battle of Mehran, an encounter that international military students may well study as an experience not to be repeated.

In mid-May 25,000 members of the 2nd Iraqi Army Corps rolled up to the border near Mehran, once a town about one-third of a mile inside Iran. In the shadow of the Poshtkuh Mountains 100 miles east of Baghdad, the town had long been reduced to rubble by fighting and shelling. It held no strategic value.

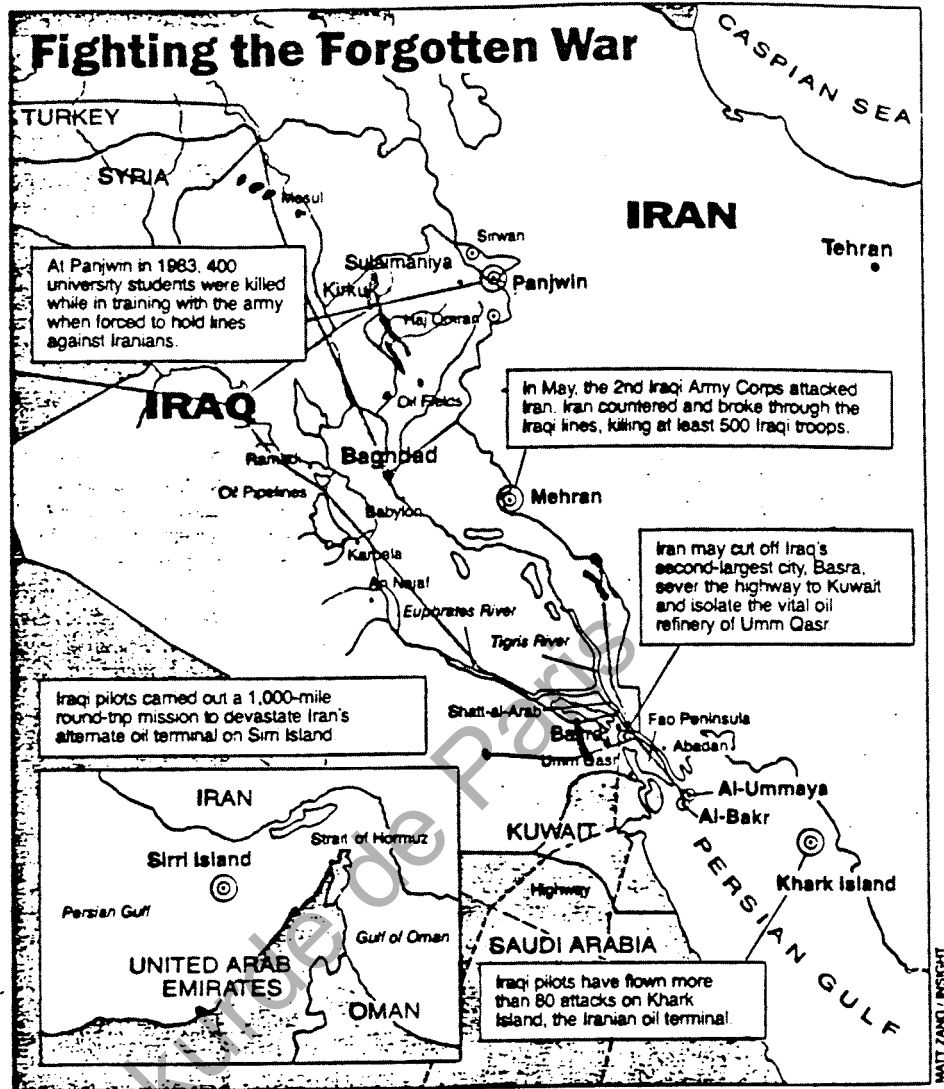
On orders from Baghdad, the two divisions, assisted by artillery, closed in on the site in a pincer maneuver. They encountered little resistance from 5,000 Iranian defenders and quickly took the area, grabbing 400 prisoners in the first few days.

That was step one of an active defense — to strike across the border and draw the enemy to the area. The second textbook stage was to withdraw from that zone and strike at another undefended, more vulnerable objective. "It's called hit 'em where they ain't," says a military analyst in Baghdad. "You make the first position a magnet but you get out when the battle heats up."

Instead, Baghdad decided to play Mehran for propaganda. Officials described the initial victory as a turning point. They announced that they would continue to hold the "city" but would consider swapping it for the Fao Peninsula, where 40,000 Iranian troops had been dug in for seven

PHOTOS BY RICHARD MACKENZIE / AEROSPACE

Fighting the Forgotten War



months despite intense Iraqi shelling.

It was then that Iraq added military idiocy to political foolery. For reasons no one can explain, it sent reconnaissance patrols only a little more than 12 miles to the first ridge line of the Poshtkuh Mountains, allowing Iran to build reinforcements in the mountains all around and above them. "There was no moment when the Iranians quit fighting," says a Western diplomat in Baghdad.

Nor, does it seem, was there a moment when the Iraqis did anything else right. More than a month after Iraqi troops rumbled across the border, at the height of the battle, the army called for air support, strikes that must come immediately to be effective. Because of the structure of the armed forces, and because the political leaders will not allow direct communication between its branches lest they work together to plot a coup, such requests must be made through Baghdad. They are often answered a day later.

Thus, on July 1, the army flew 33 helicopter sorties when it should have flown 533, says a military analyst. On the same day, the air force flew only 100 missions.

By the time the blood had stopped flowing, the Iranians had broken through the Iraqi lines and overrun their headquarters, killing a brigadier, Khidr Ali, the brother of Minister for Trade Hassan Ali, in the process. In all, at least 500 Iraqi troops were killed, 1,500 wounded and 1,100 taken prisoner. The only blame laid was on Maj. Gen. Adin Tawfiq, leader of the initial attack on the town. Tawfiq was recalled to Baghdad and has not been seen since, an ominous sign for his welfare.

A similar fate befell Maj. Gen. Shawkat

Ata, commander of the 7th Corps when the Fao Peninsula was invaded. Fao, a natural target on the strategically vital Shatt-al-Arab waterway dividing the two countries in the south, was defended by only two divisions of the Popular Army, the scantily trained and inexperienced volunteer militia that is more familiar with protecting public buildings. A similar failure at Panjwin in the north in 1983 saw university students in training with the Popular Army suddenly forced to hold the lines against advancing Iranians. Approximately 400 students were

killed before support arrived.

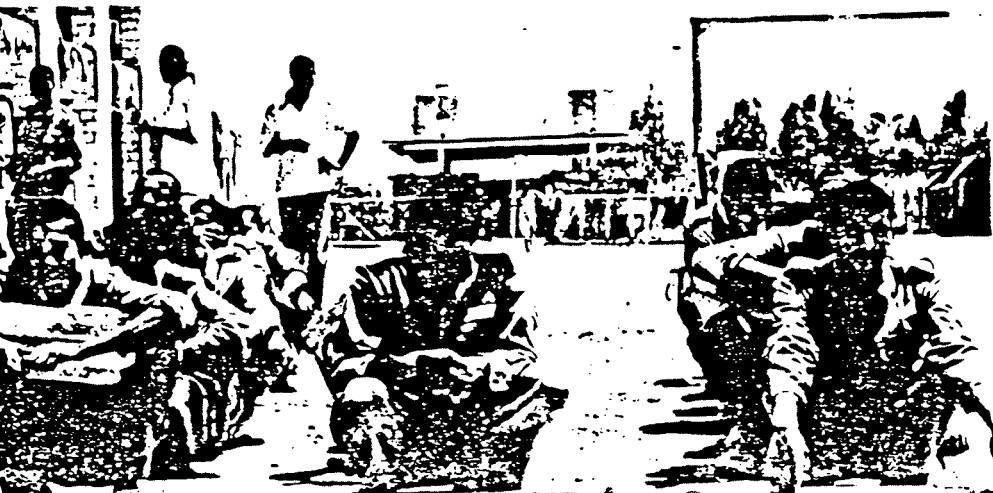
Ata apparently was held to blame for Fao, since he too has disappeared. Some rumors in Iraq say he was executed by Hussein himself; others declare he is in prison.

And this in the country that undeniably has the upper hand in overall military firepower. With most of its equipment coming from the Soviet Union and France, and such items as winter uniforms from India, Iraq has the advantage with an arsenal of sophisticated equipment. It includes Soviet T-72 tanks and missiles. Its air force has more than 500 planes, including an array of Soviet MiGs and Sukhois and French Mirage F-1s.

Iran, meanwhile, operates largely with U.S. equipment left over from the days of the shah. It now has only a handful of workable planes, evidenced by the fact that it flew about 60 fighters at an air show in Tehran in January, perhaps half of which reportedly had barely functioning equipment.

Iraqi officials constantly argue that one of Iran's biggest suppliers is Israel. At first, that seems a bizarre contention. But it has

Iranian prisoners await war's end



Flight of Protest



Ali Akhbar Muhammad

RICHARD MACKENZIE / INSIGHT

The second-in-command of the Iraqi air force, a member of the Revolutionary Command Council and a small crowd of other officials chat quietly as they sit in a terminal at a military airport in Baghdad. Occasionally, one glances out across the glaring tarmac.

A little after noon, a French-made Falcon jet, painted in English with the words "Iranian Asseman Airlines," touches down and taxis toward the building. An official from the Iraqi Foreign Ministry smiles warmly as he greets the pilot, a 35-year-old Iranian.

In a year when Iraqis have little to boast about, for once they have something. Ali Akhbar Muhammad, personal pilot to Hashemi Rafsanjani, speaker of the Iranian Consultative Assembly, was defecting to Iraq in protest of Iran's continuance of the war, one he says has virtually no support in his homeland.

Muhammad tells how he planned his departure, sending his wife and daughter ahead and taking two more relatives on the plane with him. Taking off from Rasht, an industrial city on the Caspian Sea, Muhammad had flown north to Turkey, then dropped to 200 feet to avoid radar as he headed south into Iraq.

His face tense and his hands clenched into fists, Muhammad says he left because he could not speak his mind against the war in Iran. He hopes he can in Iraq. As he walks to a waiting car, he is asked where he plans to live. "I don't know," he sighs. "I don't know." ■

some plausibility, since Israeli leaders first argued it was in the interest of the Jewish homeland to see both the warring factions keep at each other rather than be free to carry out aggression against Israel.

Asked for evidence of official Israeli complicity, Iraq's speaker of the National Assembly and former Foreign Minister Sadoon Hammadi cites diplomatic discussions with U.S. officials. "On more than one occasion they came back to us and said, 'We have told Israel not to do that. We have talked to them.' In no case did the U.S. officials say, 'This is not the case.' Never have they said it is not true."

Such talks only started again on Nov. 26, 1984, when diplomatic relations with the United States were resumed after being severed for 17 years in the wake of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

"It was not permissible to have relations severed endlessly," says Iraq's Culture and Information Minister Latif Jassim, the youngest member of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council. "Our political leadership was of the opinion that relations should be resumed but, when the war broke out, we did not want to reshuffle the cards. Maybe it could have been misunderstood. That's why we waited some years into the war. Our relations with the United States are now normal."

So why should Americans be concerned — let alone try to influence — this often forgotten war?

Because an Iranian victory would change the face of the Middle East, say critics of that philosophy. "Because there is a worst-case scenario involving an Iranian victory," says a military expert sympathetic to the Israeli cause. "Iraq cannot win. For Iraq, victory is merely bringing the war to a standstill. For them at this stage, winning is not losing."

If Iran were to defeat Iraq, the prospects would be devastating, say several analysts. They point to Iran's stated motive of spreading its fundamentalist revolution. "The Iranian army would then have Iraq's equipment and there would be no natural barriers between them and Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan. Even Syria might have to pause and think," says one.

At the same time, a pro-Iraqi argument suggests that this historically warlike but now beleaguered nation is already so weary of death and destruction that it would be a generation before its people would go along

with overt aggression anywhere, even toward Israel.

Today, Iraq is not without its enemies in the Arab world. Long-standing feuds between the Baath parties in Baghdad and Syria have Damascus supporting Iran. South Yemen also opposes Iraq. And Libya's Muammar Qaddafi sends weapons to Tehran.

But other Arab nations have made significant contributions to the Iraqi war effort. While Saudi Arabia supplies money, reliable sources say there are 10,000 North Yemeni troops fighting on the side of Iraq. Large numbers of Egyptian volunteers are part of the army, and even Jordan has several hundred advisers in Iraq. Soviet advisers help with the training for Soviet equipment.

With all this, however, much of the weight falls on a few Iraqis.

Of a little more than 1,000 pilots, perhaps 50 are considered truly excellent. It is those men who fly the tough missions, such as low-level attacks on Khark Island, the Iranian oil terminal that Iraq has bombed more than 80 times. And it was the same group that carried out the 1,000-mile round-trip mission to devastate Iran's alternate terminal on Sirri Island near the Strait of Hormuz last month.

Iran claims the planes touched down at another Arab country to refuel. Iraq says it has mastered midair refueling with a Soviet-built flying tanker.

Whatever the method, it is when Iraq is attacking Iran's economic targets that it is at its best. But even then, many of the air raid missions are flown at 20,000 feet and the bombing done blindly using map coordinates — a less effective method than visually sighting the target and bombing it from low altitude.

As they await the so-called final offensive, Iraqi officials put on a brave facade. "Through you," says Culture Minister Jassim, "I say to Khomeini and the Khomeinians, 'We want this year to be decisive.'"

Adds Hammadi: "We have an enlightened guess that this year will see the end of the war. The reason is that Iran is now suffering on a very serious economic level. All the literature points to that. We have no doubt about the outcome."

Others do. A West European analyst worries particularly about the prospect of Iraq cutting off Basra, a conquest that could lead to such instability that Hussein might be overthrown — and could change the geopolitical realities of the Middle East very much to the disadvantage of the West.

— Richard Mackenzie in Baghdad

A State of Pervasive Control

SUMMARY: Other branches of Iraq's government may plod along, but the secret police work with ruthless efficiency. The internal security forces — along with the Baath Party's neighborhood snoops and the government's relentless control of access to information — have put Iraq firmly under the thumb of President Saddam Hussein. There are charges, vigorously denied by Iraq, that the police regularly torture prisoners and arrest children to retaliate against dissenters.

Earlier this year, the chief of Iraq's intelligence branch was singled out by President Saddam Hussein as a man who had served his country well. In a private ceremony, he was draped with one of the country's highest decorations. If nothing else, he had done a good job.

Indeed, while many other branches of the government are weighed down with frustrating bureaucracy and incessant inefficiency, Iraq's Mukhabarat (secret police force) operates with awesome skill, casting a shadow over the society.

"It is certainly one of the most chilling systems in the Arab world," says a veteran diplomat.

Whether in the way it controls access to information or the method of arrests or the regular executions, many for crimes that might be misdemeanors elsewhere, Iraq has what many consider a tough, even terrible, reputation. Its internal security, in part trained by Eastern bloc countries, is the most efficient in the Arab world.

Certainly a number of the controls now in place in Iraq are inherent to any country at war. As do some other countries, Iraq sends deserters to a firing squad. But other rules have been a part of the fabric of the nation since the overthrow of the monarchy in 1958.

At the same time, it must be said, Hussein's administration enforces the law in a fairly evenhanded, if totalitarian, manner. Close personal ties with the president, for example, are no safeguard against prosecution for crimes of corruption.

Such was the case with Abdul Wayahab al-Mufti, the mayor of Baghdad until two months ago. He was a close friend of the president and a man the administration enlisted when it needed to get things done in a hurry.

When crack troops from the Republican Guard, Iraq's elite fighting force similar to the U.S. airborne divisions, were inching their way against Iranian invaders in the Fao Peninsula, the country's leaders called on Mufti, known as a man who could get

Hussein controls with "iron discipline."

things done. They assigned him to arrange the building of roads for the movement of troops. He was so successful that he too was given a top civilian award for his efforts.

Less than six months later, however, Mufti was arrested and charged with corruption after he reportedly was caught with his hand in the state till. He has not been seen since, although there are reports that he is being held at "The Palace of the End," the Mukhabarat's huge, white, windowless building on the edge of Baghdad. "The case is still under investigation," says an Iraqi official.

Hussein has long been brutal, fostering Iraq as a launching pad and sanctuary for international terrorism in the 1970s. Even

now, Baghdad is one of the few cities in the Arab world where the Palestine Liberation Organization is still allowed to operate. Hussein once commented wryly that he could deal with Iranian terrorists because Iraqis taught them how to make car bombs in the first place.

Harsh regimes are not new to Iraq. Former rulers such as President Abdul Karim Kassem were probably worse. And the structure of the Baath Party itself makes for a system similar to that of the Soviet Union.

Divided into 21 branches, the party claims to have 2 million members, but most experts believe only 20,000 of those are full participants. Nonetheless, it has one branch for each province and three for Baghdad. Its cells have representatives on every block in every city, each one of them eager to report the actions of those who stray from the rules.

A senior executive in one of the government-owned hotels in Baghdad speaks of the security police with resignation as he explains that two rooms in his establishment are communications centers for bug-



J. HAVILAND / SYGMA

“They have a legal system which, on the face of it, has laws and procedures that are not so bad. The problem is these laws are never followed.”

ging other rooms and listening to telephone conversations.

“To be sure to understand the secrecy, the xenophobic iron discipline, you have to understand history,” says a foreign ambassador. “These men now in charge of the country lived their lives underground. They were brutally followed constantly and jailed. They are determined not to allow that to be repeated. Possibly, some of this will disappear in a generation.”

Attempts to form opposition groups, most of which have used some form of terrorism to express their views, have been aborted. One of the reasons for the award to the chief of intelligence was his success in squashing Iraq's underground Shia movement, the Islamic Call. Where once it was heard from with regular urban bombings, the organization has now disappeared from the scene.

Amnesty International Secretary-General Thomas Hammarberg calls Iraq one of the most difficult countries his organization has to deal with. Amnesty says it has documented hundreds of cases in which prisoners were beaten, electrocuted, raped, barked with cigarettes and otherwise mutilated. Amnesty has testimonials and photographs of victims' injuries to support its claims.

Hammarberg says he flew to Baghdad in 1982 to seek a meeting with Hussein to plead for an end to such torture, was unable to meet with the president and was repeatedly told by officials that Iraq did not allow such abuses.

“It's difficult,” he says, “because they

have a legal system which, on the face of it, has laws and procedures that are not so bad. The problem is these laws are never followed. There is another reality, the reality of the security police, that operates completely outside the framework.”

In Washington, Iraq's ambassador to the United States, Nizar Hamdoon, has become embroiled in a paper war with U.S. Amnesty officials.

Hamdoon hotly denies in letters to the editor of The New York Times the watchdog group's latest charge that 300 children 10 to 14 years old have been arrested by security police in Kurdistan, some of them to be held as hostages in retaliation for political activity or desertion from the army by their fathers.

What weight to give such claims must be measured by the sources of the information. “A lot of our information comes from political groups, especially those in exile,” says the secretary-general. “They don't actually help because they aren't always as careful with the information as they should be. The kind of climate they've created is perfect for rumors.”

As his car cruises across one of the half-dozen bridges across the Tigris River in Baghdad, an Iraqi official and member of the Baath Party describes details of the Iraqi death penalty. Capital offenses and those that carry life terms include having sex with the wife of a soldier away at the front, desertion from the army, rape, exchanging money on the black market and, he adds vehemently, practicing homosexuality.

Members of the armed forces face a firing squad, he says, while civilians are hanged. And the laws are applied equally to foreigners and Iraqis.

Ten Egyptians sentenced to death for forging passports to help them subvert Iraq's intense restrictions against sending money out of the country became the subject of an international incident earlier this year. Having been tried and convicted before a revolutionary tribunal, they were just some of 112 Egyptians arrested for “forgery and sabotaging the national economy.” They were headed for the gallows when Egypt's President Muhammad Hosni Mubarak appealed directly to Hussein, asking clemency.

Because Iraq is eager for whatever support it can get in the war from other countries, Hussein made a public statement that he had heeded the request of “a brother Arab” and commuted the Egyptians' sentence to life imprisonment. The incident also provided a perspective on the improving relationship between Egypt and Iraq, given the fact that Baghdad led the Arab boycott against Egypt seven years ago after Egypt signed the Camp David accord with Israel.

Still, foreign diplomats are confined to Baghdad and must ask permission to travel outside the city limits. In Eastern bloc fashion, they are forbidden to make contacts with local citizens. It is an accepted fact that telephones are tapped and that the secret police regularly follow foreigners.

Photographs are forbidden in more places than they are allowed, according to guidelines laid down by officials of the Ministry of Culture and Information. No camera may be pointed at government buildings, tall buildings, bridges, freeways or any military installation.

Lenses longer than 150 millimeters also are prohibited. So, too, typewriters or personal computers, said to be banned because the president remembers well how he used the written word to help foster support for the Baath Party during its underground years.

The daily press also is under his thumb and that of the Baath Party. The nation's most widely read Arabic newspaper is al-Thawra (the Revolution), with a declared daily circulation of 260,000. It is the official organ of the Baath Party. The government paper is al-Jumhuriya (the Republic). Neither one comes off the presses without a photograph of Hussein on the front page.

In such an atmosphere, access to information is difficult, if not sometimes impossible. Many of the restrictions long part of the Iraqi way were being eased a year or so before the war, says Ambassador Ham-

Baghdad: Under the Baath Party's eye



PHOTOS BY RICHARD MACKENZIE / INSIGHT

Fighting the 'War of Cultures'



Munir Bashir: Festival plans

doon. But the need for internal security brought them back.

And with a certain mad enthusiasm. "You must not take a picture of her," says an information ministry official, blocking a visitor from pointing a camera at an old woman selling cigarettes on the sidewalk. "What she is doing is illegal."

To some, it may not seem like much to choose from, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Iran or Hussein's Iraq. What is at issue for the West, however, involves much more than questions about the civil rights of the people of Iraq.

In a book published in Paris this month, the former longtime head of French intelligence, Alexandre de Marenches, explains why his country supplies arms to Iraq and why he was among the first Westerners to open the door to Baghdad by promoting stronger ties between France and Iraq. Expressing no illusions about Hussein's misdeeds, de Marenches says there is an alternative involving the spread of Khomeinistyle Islamic fundamentalism that scares him:

"If you look at the map — as one must constantly — and imagine a coup d'etat in Baghdad, and the Baghdad we know [becomes] a Shiite Baghdad, it will be at that very moment the beginning of a huge Shiite empire that will stretch from Pakistan to the Mediterranean.

"One of the greatest perils of our era is a Shiite explosion," he says. "It would, in effect, be the triumph of the irrational and of fanaticism. If Baghdad were to be governed by a second Khomeini, it would be the death knell."

— Richard Mackenzie
in Baghdad and London

of this war is to defend ourselves in the face of backwardness represented by the regime of [Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah] Khomeini."

In his office on an adjoining floor, Iraq's greatest modern musician, Munir Bashir, a composer and arranger known around the world for his excellence on the lute, chatters on about his plans. He is supervising the re-creation of a 2,000-year-old theater at Babylon in time for a Babylonian festival in September 1987. Guests will dress in the costumes of the civilization of 6,000 years ago and will even be issued Babylonian money to spend there.

At Babylon, teams of Egyptians and teenage Iraqis swarm over the reconstruction of the theater. Archaeologist Shafeka Mohammad Jaffar points to the site where the Hanging Gardens (one of the seven wonders of the ancient world) are believed to have been. They too are being restored. The Lion of Babylon still crouches over his victim, although small chunks of his face are missing.

At the Saddam Art Gallery, a massive new building opened in April, two artists sip Turkish coffee and talk about their work. The elder, Noori al-Rawi, began teaching art in 1941 and now is also director of art in the Ministry of Plastic Arts. His companion, Hashim al-Tawi, is an art teacher at the University of Baghdad.

The atmosphere inside the gallery is a rare, even surprising, break from the streets outside. Only one of its hundreds of paintings is of President Saddam Hussein. Nor is there evidence in the varied work of the propagandistic style seen in China and the Soviet Union. If there is one theme, it is of a continuing search for an Iraqi identity in the faces of the nation's people, in the look of its landscape.

In 1940, just before the school of modern Iraqi painters began to crystallize, there were perhaps 150 paintings on display in Baghdad, says al-Rawi. Now there are 2,000 new paintings on display every year, he says. In one such work of art at the Saddam gallery, a bird is perched on a woman, pecking at her eye. The artist is an amateur; his full-time job is as a plastic surgeon, repairing the wounds of victims of the war. ■

In 1401 a Mongol invader known as Timur the Lame led his hordes to Baghdad where, legend claims, he killed all but 100 people in the city, looted the libraries and threw all the books into the Tigris River.

"The water ran blue with ink for four days," says Muayad Said Damerji, president of Iraq's State Organization of Antiquities and Heritage, perhaps practicing more than his share of *mubalagha*, the Arabic word for exaggeration.

Exaggeration or not, it is certainly the case that various forms of Iraqi culture have weathered grave hardships through the centuries. Even today, with the country embroiled in a war that threatens its very future, the arts are not only surviving but are considered an integral part of Iraq's being.

Long one of the archaeological treasure chests of the world, Iraq is still the site of exciting exploration in that field. As construction begins on a \$1.5 billion water project in the north (called, not surprisingly, the Saddam Dam), teams of archaeologists are trying to discover what they can before the land is flooded.

Iraq's cold-eyed minister of culture and information, Latif Jassim, relishes a question about the emphasis placed and money spent on state-sponsored culture at a time of bloodshed and hardship. "Because this is a war of cultures," he says. "The basis

San Francisco Chronicle, September 22, 1986

Rebels Kill Police Chief

Ankara

Kurdish rebels killed a police chief and wounded a policeman in an attack on a police patrol in eastern Turkey, Turkish radio said yesterday.

Reuters

Institut kurde de Paris

A Homeless People Gain a Library to Call Their Own

By PHILIP S. GOLDBERG

Vera Saeedpour has devoted her life to a cause which may seem foreign and distant to many Americans — publicizing the plight of the Kurdish people. As founder of the Kurdish Program in 1981, the writer and educator recently opened the nation's first Kurdish library on Park Place and Underhill Avenue in Prospect Heights.

Until five years ago, Saeedpour, born Vera Fine in Vermont, was equally unaware of these countryless people. She stumbled upon a dictionary definition describing them as predatory and warlike, and since her then-husband was an Iranian of Kurdish descent, decided to research this further.

What she found is that the Kurds were not predatory, but preyed upon throughout history. Now 20 million in number, they are dispersed throughout many countries, including Turkey, Iran, Syria, Iraq and the Soviet Union. Their culture and history have been suppressed, especially in Turkey, where they are forbidden to speak or read in their native tongue. Saeedpour convinced three major publishers — Oxford, Random House, and Scribner's — to alter their dictionaries' definitions.

Saeedpour wanted to become still more active in her crusade to improve the treatment of the Kurds, but her husband forbade her. He was afraid for his family in Iran, fearing they might be harmed in retaliation for her actions.

Her life was to change entirely in 1981. "My husband died of leukemia," she says, "and I decided to dedicate my life and skills to informing the American people of the Kurdish situation, and that our government should not support a government like Turkey who denies the existence of these people." Saeedpour, a Columbia University fellow

are few Kurds known to be living in Brooklyn, but Saeedpour believes that over 1,000 Turkish natives living here are of Kurdish descent. "These people are monitored by the Turkish government and fearful of admitting their Kurdish background," she explains.

She managed to find a brownstone on Park Place, located near other cultural and educational facilities like the Brooklyn Museum and the Grand Army Plaza Library. She and a friend bought it, moved into the first floor and turned the parlor floor into the Kurdish Library. "There is nothing for the Kurds like this anywhere," says Saeedpour. "When they come to this country, they can have something. Kurds actually cry when they come to the library."

The library is both a receptacle of Kurdish culture, with a collection of Kurdish costumes and books, and a place of study for scholars and journalists. Saeedpour is now trying to reach out to the community and the city in an effort to make the Kurdish cause better understood. She is currently running a Sunday afternoon series of films and slide lectures. The acclaimed film *Yol* will be screened Sept. 28 at 2 p.m. The Library will be producing a Kurdish dance program, sponsored by BACA, at the Brooklyn Museum on Oct. 26.

Another goal of the library is to make Kurdish culture part of the educational curriculum. It currently offers a slide and lecture program to any interested school.

She hopes better awareness of the Kurdish plight will persuade the American people to demand a suspension of foreign aid to Turkey, as a way of putting pressure on the Turkish government to end its suppression of the Kurds, who comprise one fourth of that country's population.

She is currently looking for volunteers to help run the library, and for donations of books on the Middle East. The library is open by appointment only. Call 783-7930 or 212-764-1133 for an appointment or a schedule of the library's special events.



Vera Saeedpour with some artifacts of Kurdish life, on display at the library in Prospect Heights. "There is nothing like this for the Kurds anywhere." Photo by Mike Stern.

permanent."

She had spent three years in Brooklyn as a teenager, since her father believed that only there could she receive a proper Jewish education. It was a time of Steeplechase, Ebbetts Field and the Brooklyn Paramount, and she began a love affair with Brooklyn that never ended. When it came time to decide where to open the Kurdish Library, she could only think of one place.

"There are so many wonderful things in Brooklyn, and so many ethnic groups here. I felt that the Kurds would also want to make their home here," she says. Currently, there

and Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Vermont, was taken under the umbrella of a Harvard-based organization of anthropologists, and formed the Kurdish Program. The nonprofit group, whose board of directors includes Elie Weisel and Dean James Parks Morton of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, began by presenting various Kurdish programs at the Museum of Natural History.

However, she began to realize that the Kurdish program needed a location to house itself. "I feared that the work would not continue if we didn't have something

Iran, Iraq escalate war, prepare for 'final' battle as coffers run low

By CHARLES P. WALLACE
LA Times-Washington Post Service

MANAMA, Bahrain — As Iraq and Iran gear up for what many predict will be a climactic battle on land, a sharp escalation of fighting is also taking place in the sea lanes of the Persian Gulf, through which much of the world's oil passes.

Both Iran and Iraq have stepped up their attacks on shipping in the gulf in an effort to bring economic ruin to the other side — Iraq by destroying Iran's oil export capability and Iran by threatening the Arab states in the gulf region that provide most of Iraq's military budget.

One result, according to a Western diplomat here, has been a "major escalation of tension" in the past month. "Anxiety is quickly turning into something approaching panic," he said.

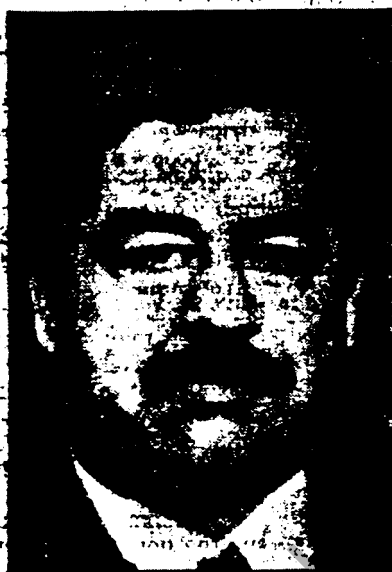
According to diplomats and Arab analysts, the attempt at economic strangulation may force a showdown battle in the Iran-Iraq war, as both sides grapple with collapsing economies that prevent them from sustaining a long-term fight.

In Washington, Reagan administration officials said last week that they were convinced a major offensive was imminent and that it might open what one State Department analyst called "a new phase in the war."

U.S. intelligence agencies have confirmed reports that Iran has moved troops and equipment to the front and virtually emptied its arsenals of spare parts, the officials said.

"They have troops massing along both the southern and central fronts," a State Department official said, speaking on condition that he not be identified. "The army is mostly in the center, the Revolutionary Guard in the south. The consensus here is that the attack is probably going to come in both places."

Meanwhile, according to diplomats here, the past month has seen two significant developments in the



SADDAM HUSSEIN
Raids aimed at economy

fighting: bold attacks by Iran against shipping near the gulf states and a major expansion of targets by Iraq.

In the first nine months of the year, 73 ships have been attacked, compared to about 40 last year and about the same number the year before, according to shipping industry sources.

In the past, Iraq has concentrated its attacks on Iran's Kharg Island oil terminal and ships nearby. In mid-September, Iraqi warplanes reduced loading facilities at the Kharg terminal to those on one jetty, but oil was still believed to be flowing.

In an effort to escape the Iraqi warplanes, Iran had set up a shuttle service to move crude oil by tanker from Kharg to Sirri Island, about 350 miles down the gulf. In that way, it was thought, foreign tankers could take on oil out of range of Iraqi warplanes. But last month Iraqi planes attacked Sirri, setting the terminal ablaze and damaging three tankers.

According to Western diplomats, the Iraqis were able to reach Sirri by using recently acquired French

Mirage F1-E fighter-bombers that were refueled in the air with Soviet-supplied AN-12 tanker planes.

The Iraqis are also believed to be equipped with laser-guided "smart bombs," which have greatly increased the accuracy of their bombing.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, acknowledged that the recent raids were part of a new strategy aimed at crippling Iran's economy, a tacit admission that the war could not be ended on the battlefield alone.

"We will be forced to destroy the structure of their economy so that their hungry people will press them to end the war," Saddam said.

Iran is now believed to be shutting oil from Kharg to Larak Island, another 120 miles down the gulf from Sirri and virtually in the Strait of Hormuz. Iran has frequently threatened to close the strait if it is denied free access to the gulf.

On Aug. 21, a 160,000-ton Kuwaiti-registered tanker, the Al Funtas, was attacked at night by a gunboat presumed to be Iranian off Saudi Arabia.

In the past, Iran has used a combination of jet aircraft and helicopter gunships equipped with missiles — both provided by the United States before the 1979 revolution — to attack shipping in the gulf. Never before had the Iranians ventured out with their navy to attack shipping or carried out a raid at night, and both developments caused concern along the gulf.

As recently as Sept. 21, Iranian gunboats halted eight foreign vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf, searched them and then released them.

Iran maintains that under international law, it has the right to search cargo vessels in the gulf that may be carrying war material to Iraq. Since the beginning of the war, Iraq has received considerable cargo through Kuwait.

Iranian commandos, Kurds destroyed Iraqi oil refinery, Iran says

New York Times

CAIRO, Egypt — The official Iranian press agency said Saturday that Iranian commandos, linking up with Kurdish rebels, had destroyed a major Iraqi oil installation in a raid deep in Iraqi territory.

The raid Friday night destroyed the oil refinery at Kirkuk, the main northern oil center, along with pipelines, storage tanks at a thermal power plant, three surface-to-air missile sites and other installations, the Iranian national press agency said.

On Saturday night, the Iraqis denied the Iranian reports of the attack and said there had been no damage to the Kirkuk oil center.

In Geneva, a spokesman for the Iraqi minister of oil, Qassim Taki al-Oraibi, who is attending a meeting of ministers of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, said: "These are just claims, nothing but Iranian claims. As far as we know, everything is normal." He added, "We have been in permanent contact with Baghdad."

If the Iranian report is true — and it was not possible to obtain independent confirmation of the action — it would be a severe blow not only to Iraq's vital oil production but also to its morale at what could be a crucial point in the Iran-Iraq war.

After a major Iranian breakthrough in February, when volunteer irregulars stormed across the waters of the Shatt al-Arab and captured Iraqi territory at the disused oil terminal city of Fao, the Iraqis have been thrown on the defensive.

In the six years that the war has been fought, both sides have repeatedly issued extravagant casualty counts, in what one experienced Western military officer in the region has termed "a war of communiqués." Experience has tended to show that the general outlines of attacks reported by the Iranians have usually been more accurate than the frequent assertions of victories by the Iraqis.

Letters

Geopolitics: Kurdish enemy No. 1

Martin Sieff wrote in his Oct. 17 news article that "the Kurds have traditionally been their own worst enemies, feuding among themselves." Not so. The Kurds are caught in a desperate struggle for cultural survival in a sea of enemies, not any of them Kurdish.

Geopolitics continues to be Kurdish enemy No. 1. Straddling Iran, Iraq, and Turkey inside boundaries they never made, the Kurds are being forcibly assimilated or annihilated by those nations, with the tacit approval of the governments of the West and the Soviet bloc, all of which receive, or hope to receive, tangible benefits from the perpetrators of this crime against the fourth largest ethnic group in the Middle East.

The initial crime against the Kurds was the Treaty of Lausanne that institutionalized their division by the victorious Allies following World War I. Its byproduct was dispossession. Born in an ancient land rich in water and resources, the Kurds now fight to survive in what are today the most underdeveloped

regions of these underdeveloped countries. That underdevelopment is deliberate. The only improvements made in Kurdish regions serve the movement of government troops for the purpose of controlling or "pacifying" the Kurds.

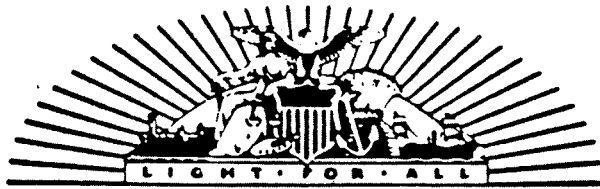
The Kurds also were dispossessed of the oil from which Iraq derives its wealth and its favored position in the world. The oil of Kirkuk has always been Kurdish. A single glance at the maps drawn by the Royal Geographic Society in 1910, which the Committee of the League of Nations later used to decide the fate of Kirkuk, provides unimpeachable evidence of that fact. Kurdish oil, say the Kurds, has become a Kurdish curse.

Mr. Sieff reported that Turkey, seeking to regain a lost empire, will try once more to steal the wealth of Mosul, an aggression "welcomed by some Western intelligence agencies." Having smothered with force, for more than six decades, any visible vestige of Kurdishness among its

10 million Kurds, an oil-powered Turkey could put an end once and for all to the main Kurdish opposition forces and the 3.2 million Kurds in Iraq. Bent on containing radical Islam and reinforcing what it considers an impeccable NATO ally, the West would thus foolishly empower and unleash an uncontrollable Turkish force that history has shown to have deprived more human beings of their lives than any other nation on earth.

Perhaps the saddest crime of all against the Kurdish people is the indifference of other peoples of the world, not politicians. It is an indifference promoted by ignorance, not only of geopolitics, but of history. And that ignorance is compounded by the fatal flaw of self-deception, the stubborn refusal to see what is a basic tenet of human survival: that indifference to the sacrifice of one people to the vicissitudes of geopolitics only enhances the probability that in other times other peoples will be its victims.

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Kurdish Turkey

Editor: In "Violence Born of Impotence," (Opinion • Commentary, Oct. 31) William Pfaff's omissions clearly compromise his conclusions.

A Turkey vulnerable in the wake of the Iran-Iraq war would be justified in taking over the Kirkuk oilfields in the event of an Iraqi defeat, Mr. Pfaff concludes. His rationale: Turkey needs the oil and has "an historical claim to the Kirkuk region, which has a Turkish population."

What he neglects to mention is that the "claim" is based, not on prior ownership, but on the prior conquest that culminated in the Ottoman Empire's occupation of a region which, for several millennia, was already homeland to the indigenous Kurds.

Detailed maps drawn in 1910 by the Royal Geographic Society used by a committee of the League of Nations to decide the fate of the Mosul province after World War I, indicate that the greater part of the province, including the oil region of Kirkuk, is Kurdish.

A slightly smaller southern region was populated by Arabs with Turks scattered in small enclaves throughout the province. Having conquered the region by the sword, the Turks were in turn forced by the victorious Allied powers to vacate in the same manner.

If today we should accept the premise that conquest and occupation is a legitimate basis for "historical claim" to coveted territory, we shall have difficulty defending our condemnation of the Soviet Union as it pursues a similar ra-

tionale in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

According to Mr. Pfaff, Turkey's external problems justify its maintenance of the largest NATO force outside the U.S. What he fails to mention is that two-thirds of this force, ostensibly supporting NATO, is actually stationed in Southeastern Turkey, the northernmost region of the Kurdish homeland, where it acts as an internal occupation force to continue a 60-year policy of suppression of Kurdish ethnic identity in Turkey.

American support for Turkey's policies vis-a-vis NATO rests on a foundation eroded by recent history. Less than a decade ago, Iran, which Mr. Pfaff now brands an "avowed enemy" of the United States, was a "friendly ally," a status he currently reserves for Turkey.

Had the American government resisted the temptation to ignore Iran's internal oppression under the shah, such might not be the case today. There is still time to restrain Turkey's internal suppression of things Kurdish and dreams of empire revisited.

"How darkly and largely the United States looms in the imaginations... of people in that part of the world," of which Mr. Pfaff complains, is largely a product of the failure to draw conclusions and to generate current policy based on past experience.

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TUESDAY

NOVEMBER 11, 1986

U.S., Turkey Extend Pact On Defense

San Francisco Chronicle

Saturday, December 13, 1986

Ankara

Turkey and the United States signed an accord yesterday extending their defense cooperation pact for four years and giving U.S. forces continued access to a dozen military posts in this nation bordering the Soviet Union.

The agreement, a supplement to a 1980 defense pact, was reached after three days of marathon negotiations. It was initialed by U.S. Ambassador Robert Strausz-Hupe and Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Nuzhet Kandemir.

Also present for the signing was Richard Perle, an assistant secretary of defense, who led the U.S. negotiating team.

The text will remain confidential until the two governments review and approve it, officials said.

Turkey requested negotiations to revise the 1980 agreement, demanding increased American aid — as much as \$1.2 billion annually — and removal of trade restrictions on its exports.

The United States has allocated \$490 million in military assistance to Turkey for 1987, down from \$739 million this year. It apparently promised to deliver surplus military equipment to Turkey under the new accord, government and diplomatic sources said.

Turkish officials have said they expect this equipment will include two squadrons of F-4E Phantom jets, worth about \$300 million.

Perle told a news conference after the signing ceremony that although Turkey's military needs are "great" and its contribution to the NATO alliance "enormous," the United States cannot meet Ankara's request fully.

Turkey has a standing armed forces of 700,000, the largest in NATO after the United States. But its military is equipped largely with obsolete weapons of Korean War vintage.

Turkey also demanded its military debt to the United States be reduced by \$3.5 billion, and Perle said: "We are actively looking at ways we can diminish that debt."

