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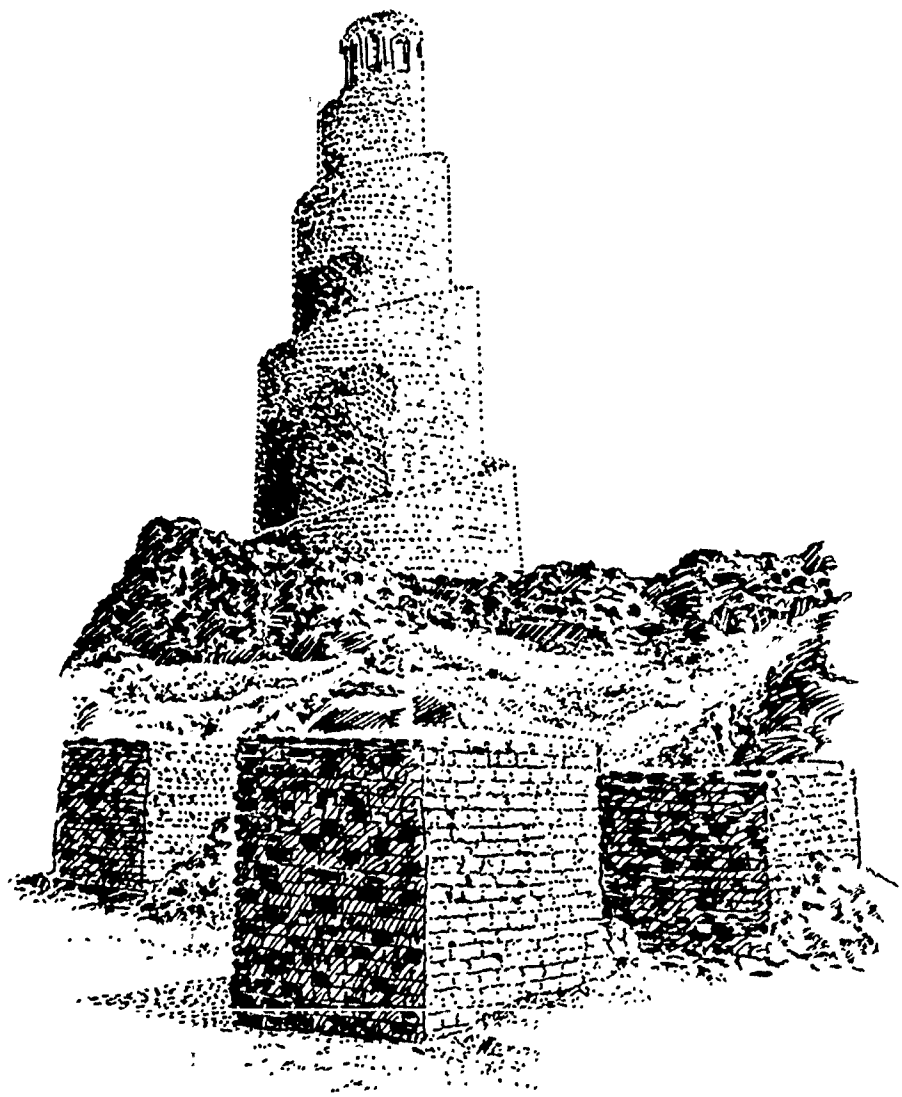


DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A
Approved for public release;
Distribution Unlimited

90 06 26 082

Iraq
a country study

Federal Research Division
Library of Congress
Edited by
Helen Chapin Metz
Research Completed
May 1988



On the cover: Samarra Mosque, built approximately A.D. 836 by the Abbasid caliph Al Muhtasim, who made Samarra his capital

Fourth Edition, 1990, First Printing, 1990.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Iraq: A Country Study

Area Handbook Series, DA Pam 550-31
Research completed May 1988.
Bibliography: pp. 269-280.
Includes index.
1. Iraq I. Metz, Helen Chapin, 1928- . II. Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. III. Area Handbook for Iraq. IV. Series: DA Pam 550-31.

DS70.6I734 1990 56.7—dc20 89-13940

Headquarters, Department of the Army
DA Pam 550-31

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

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Foreword

This volume is one in a continuing series of books now being prepared by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress under the Country Studies—Area Handbook Program. The last page of this book lists the other published studies.

Most books in the series deal with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its political, economic, social, and national security systems and institutions, and examining the interrelationships of those systems and the ways they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic understanding of the observed society, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal. Particular attention is devoted to the people who make up the society, their origins, dominant beliefs and values, their common interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward their social system and political order.

The books represent the analysis of the authors and should not be construed as an expression of an official United States government position, policy, or decision. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Corrections, additions, and suggestions for changes from readers will be welcomed for use in future editions.

Louis R. Mortimer
Acting Chief
Federal Research Division
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Washington, D.C. 20540

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals who wrote the 1979 edition of *Iraq: A Country Study:* Laraine Newhouse Carter, Angus MacPherson, Darrel R. Eglin, Rinn S. Shinn, and James D. Rudolph. Their work provided the organization of the present volume, as well as substantial portions of the text.

The authors are grateful to individuals in various government agencies and private institutions who gave their time, research materials, and expertise to the production of this book. The authors also wish to thank members of the Federal Research Division who contributed directly to the preparation of the manuscript. These people include Thomas Collelo, who reviewed all drafts and graphic material; Richard F. Nyrop, who reviewed all drafts and who served as liaison with the sponsoring agency; and Martha E. Hopkins, who managed editing and production. Also involved in preparing the text were editorial assistants Barbara Edgerton and Izella Watson.

Individual chapters were edited by Sharon Costello, Vincent Ercolano, Ruth Nieland, and Gage Ricard. Carolyn Hinton performed the final prepublication editorial review, and Shirley Kessel compiled the index. Diann Johnson of the Library of Congress Composing Unit prepared the camera-ready copy, under the supervision of Peggy Pixley.

Special thanks are owed to David P. Cabitto, who designed the cover artwork and the illustrations on the title page of each chapter. Invaluable graphics support also was provided by Sandra K. Cotugno and Kimberly A. Lord. Harriett R. Blood assisted in preparing the final maps.

The authors would like to thank several individuals who provided research and operational support. Arvies J. Staton supplied information on ranks and insignia, Ly H. Burnham assisted in obtaining demographic data, Afaf S. McGowan assisted in obtaining photographs, and Gwendolyn B. Batts assisted in word processing.

Finally, the authors acknowledge the generosity of the many individuals and public and private agencies who allowed their photographs to be used in this study.

Contents

Page

Foreword iii

Acknowledgments v

Preface xi

Country Profile xiii

Introduction xxiii

Chapter 1. Historical Setting 1
Mark Lewis

ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA 6
Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, and Assyria 6
Iranian and Greek Intrusions 12
THE ARAB CONQUEST AND THE COMING OF ISLAM 15
The Sunni-Shia Controversy 17
The Abbasid Caliphate, 750–1258 20
The Mongol Invasion 24
THE OTTOMAN PERIOD, 1534–1918 25
WORLD WAR I AND THE BRITISH MANDATE 31
IRAQ AS AN INDEPENDENT MONARCHY 40
REPUBLICAN IRAQ 49
COUPS, COUP ATTEMPTS, AND FOREIGN POLICY 53
THE EMERGENCE OF SADDAM HUSAYN, 1968–79 57
THE IRAN-IRAQ CONFLICT 63

Chapter 2. The Society and Its Environment 67
Stephen Pelletiere

GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION 70
Boundaries 70
Major Geographical Features 71
Settlement Patterns 75
Climate 77
Population 78
People 80
Kurds 82
Other Minorities 85

RELIGIOUS LIFE 86
Islam 86
Sunni-Shia Relations in Iraq 95
SOCIAL SYSTEMS 97
Rural Society 99
Impact of Agrarian Reform 103
Urban Society 105
Stratification and Social Classes 109
FAMILY AND SOCIETY 110
EDUCATION AND WELFARE 114
Education 114
Health 117
Welfare 118

Chapter 3. The Economy 121
Robert Scott Mason

GROWTH AND STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY 124
THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT 127
BANKING AND FINANCE 130
THE OIL SECTOR 133
Developments Through World War II 133
The Turkish Petroleum Company 133
Post-World War II Through the 1970s 136
Oil in the 1980s 142
INDUSTRIALIZATION 145
AGRICULTURE 153
Water Resources 153
Land Tenure and Agrarian Reform 156
Cropping and Livestock 159
TRANSPORTATION 162
Roads 163
Railroads 163
Ports 166
Airports 166
TELECOMMUNICATIONS 167
ELECTRICITY 167
FOREIGN TRADE 168

Chapter 4. Government and Politics 173
Eric Hooglund

CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK 177
GOVERNMENT 179
The Revolutionary Command Council 179
The National Assembly 181

The President and the Council of Ministers 182
The Judiciary 184
Local Government 185
Kurdish Autonomy 186
POLITICS 187
The Baath Party 187
The Politics of Alliance: The Progressive National Front 194
Political Opposition 197
MASS MEDIA 199
FOREIGN POLICY 200
The Soviet Union 203
The West 204
The Persian Gulf Countries 206
Iraq and Other Arab Countries 207
Relations with Other Countries 209
Participation in International Organizations 210

Chapter 5. National Security 213
Joseph A. Kechichian

NATIONAL SECURITY CONCERNS 215
THE REGULAR ARMED FORCES 217
Size, Equipment, and Organization 217
Manpower and Training 220
Conditions of Service and Morale 222
Military Justice System 223
Uniforms and Rank Insignia 224
PARAMILITARY FORCES 224
FOREIGN MILITARY TIES 228
Military Ties Prior to the Iran-Iraq War 228
The Iran-Iraq War and the Quest for New Sources of Arms 229
Arms from the Soviet Union 229
Arms from France 230
The Search for Nuclear Technology 231
THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR 232
Iraqi Offensives, 1980–82 233
Iraqi Retreats, 1982–84 234
The War of Attrition, 1984–87 235
The Tanker War, 1984–87 240
ARMED FORCES AND SOCIETY 241
Status in National Life 241
The Sociology of the Military 244
The Defense Burden 244

The Impact of Casualties on the Armed Forces 245
Treatment of Veterans and Widows 246
INTERNAL SECURITY 247
Internal Developments and Security 247
Internal Security in the 1980s 251
Incidence of Crime 253
Criminal Justice System 254

Appendix. Tables 257

Bibliography 269

Glossary 281

Index 285

List of Figures

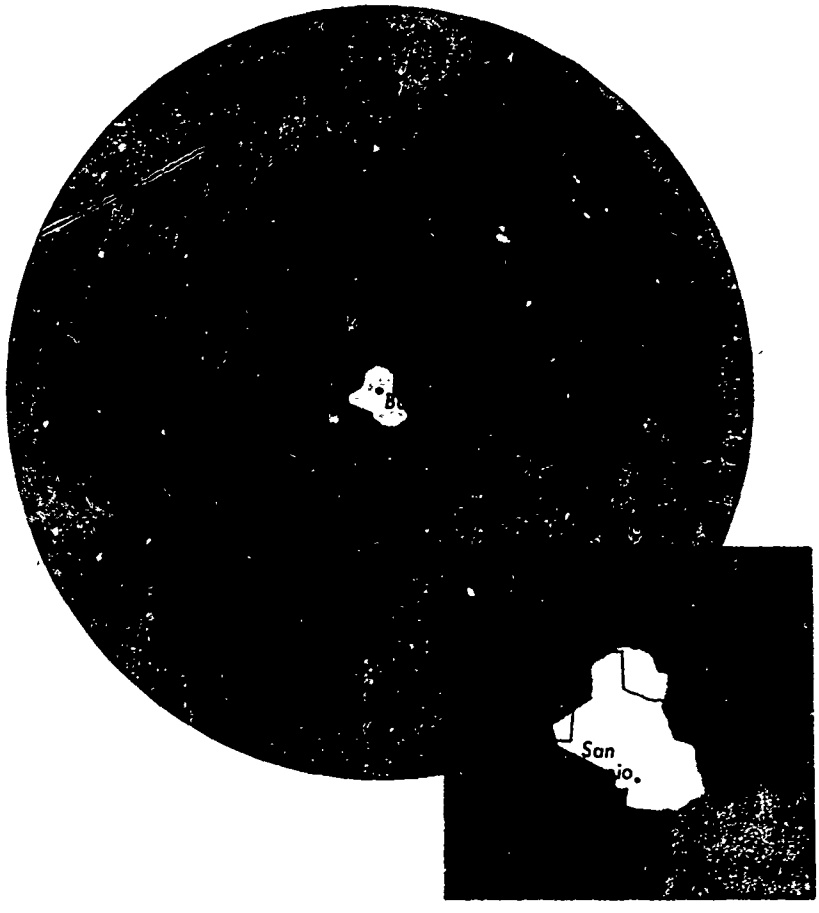
1 Administrative Divisions of Iraq, 1988 xx
2 Ancient Mesopotamia 8
3 The Abbasid Caliphate, A.D. 750 22
4 The Ottoman Empire in the Mid-Seventeenth Century 28
5 Topography and Drainage 72
6 Estimated Population Distribution by Age and Sex, 1987 .. 80
7 Ethnic and Religious Distribution, 1988 82
8 Petroleum Industry, 1988 138
9 Economic Activity, 1983 150
10 Transportation System, 1988 164
11 Government Organization, 1988 180
12 Officer Ranks and Insignia, 1987 226
13 Enlisted Ranks and Insignia, 1987 227
14 Initial Iraqi Attacks on Iran, 1980 236

Preface

Like its predecessor, this study is an attempt to treat in a concise and objective manner the dominant social, political, economic, and military aspects of contemporary Iraqi society. Sources of information included scholarly journals and monographs, official reports of governments and international organizations, newspapers, and numerous periodicals. Unfortunately there was a dearth of information from official Iraqi sources, as well as a lack of sociological data resulting from field work by scholars in Iraq in the 1980s. Chapter bibliographies appear at the end of the book; brief comments on some of the more valuable sources suggested as possible further reading appear at the end of each chapter. Measurements are given in the metric system; a conversion table is provided to assist those readers who are unfamiliar with metric measurements (see table 1, Appendix). A glossary is also included.

The transliteration of Arabic words and phrases follows a modified version of the system adopted by the United States Board on Geographic Names and the Permanent Committee on Geographic Names for British Official Use, known as the BGN/PCGN system. The modification is a significant one, however, in that diacritical markings and hyphens have been omitted. Moreover, some geographical locations, such as the cities of Babylon, Kirkuk, Mosul, and Nineveh, are so well known by these conventional names that their formal names—Babil, Karkuk, Al Mawsil, and Ninawa, respectively, are not used.

Country Profile



Country

Formal Name: Republic of Iraq.

Short Form: Iraq.

Term for Citizens: Iraqis.

Capital: Baghdad.

Geography

Size: Area of Iraq variously cited as between 433,970 (excluding Iraqi half of 3,520 square-kilometer Iraq-Saudi Arabia

Neutral Zone shared with Saudi Arabia), and 437,393 square kilometers.

Topography: Country divided into four major regions: desert in west and southwest; rolling upland between upper Euphrates and Tigris rivers; highlands in north and northeast; and alluvial plain in central and southeast sections.

Society

Population: Preliminary 1987 census figures give total of 16,278,000, a 35 percent increase over 1977. Annual rate of growth 3.1 percent; about 57 percent of population in 1987 under twenty.

Religious and Ethnic Divisions: At least 95 percent of population adheres to some form of Islam. Government gives number of Shias (see Glossary) as 55 percent but probably 60 to 65 percent is reasonable figure. Most Iraqi Shias are Arabs. Almost all Kurds, approximately 19 percent of population, are Sunnis (see Glossary), together with about 13 percent Sunni Arabs. Total Arab population in 1987 given by government as 76 percent. Remainder of population small numbers of Turkomans, mostly Sunni Muslims; Assyrians and Armenians, predominantly Christians; Yazidis, of Kurdish stock with a syncretistic faith; and a few Jews.

Languages: Arabic official language and mother tongue of about 76 percent of population; understood by majority of others. Kurdish official language in As Sulaymaniyah, Dahuk, and Irbil governorates. Minorities speaking Turkic, Armenian, and Persian.

Education: Rapidly growing enrollment in tuition-free public schools. Six years of primary (elementary), three years of intermediate secondary, and three years of intermediate preparatory education. Six major universities, forty-four teacher training schools and institutes, and three colleges and technical institutes, all government owned and operated. Dramatic increases since 1977 in numbers of students in technical fields (300 percent rise) and numbers of female primary students (45 percent rise). Literacy variously estimated at about 40 percent by foreign observers and 70 percent by government. Academic year 1985–86: number of students in primary schools 2,812,516; secondary schools (general) 1,031,560; vocational schools 120,090; teacher training schools and institutions 34,187; universities, colleges, and technical institutes 53,037.

Health: High incidence of trachoma, influenza, measles, whooping cough, and tuberculosis. Considerable progress has been made in control of malaria. Continuing shortage of modern trained

medical and paramedical personnel, especially in rural areas and probably in northern Kurdish areas.

Economy

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): estimated at US$35 billion in 1986; in 1987 GDP estimated to have a 1.7 percent real growth rate, after negative growth rates 1981–86. Following outbreak of war with Iran in 1980, oil production decreased sharply.

Currency: 1,000 fils = 20 dirhams = 1 Iraqi dinar (ID). (For value of Iraqi dinar—see Glossary). Data on financial status of Iraq are meager because Central Bank of Iraq, which is main source of official statistics, has not released figures since 1977.

Oil Industry: Contribution to GDP in 1986 variously estimated, but probably about 33.5 percent. Production of crude oil averaged nearly 2.1 million barrels per day (bpd—see Glossary) in 1987; estimated at nearly 2.5 million bpd in 1988; oil exports in 1987 estimated at 1.8 million bpd; oil revenues in 1987 estimated at US$11.3 billion. Oil reserves in late 1987 calculated at 100 billion barrels definite and 40 billion additional barrels probable. Natural gas production in 1987 estimated at 7 million cubic meters; an estimated 5 million cubic meters burned off and remainder marketed. Natural gas reserves of nearly 850 billion cubic meters.

Manufacturing and Services: Contribution of services (including construction, estimated at 12 percent; transportation and communications, estimated at 4.5 percent; utilities, estimated at 2 percent) to GDP in 1986 variously estimated at 52 percent; mining and manufacturing contributed about 7 percent. Government figures put value of industrial output in 1984 at almost ID2 billion, up from about ID300 million in 1968. Principal industries nonmetallic minerals, textiles, food processing, light manufacturing, with combination of government-owned and government- and private-owned plants. Construction is estimated to employ about 20 percent of civilian and military labor force (because much construction is defense related, figures are lacking). Government figures showed 1984 industrial labor force at 170,000, with 80 percent of workers in state factories, 13 percent in private sector, and 7 percent in mixed sector.

Agriculture: Accounted for about 7.5 percent of GDP in 1986; employed about 33 percent of the labor force in 1987. Cereal production increased almost 80 percent between 1975 and 1985;

wheat and barley main crops. Date production dropped sharply because of war damage to date palms.

Exports: Almost US$12 billion (including crude oil) in 1987. Crude oil, refined petroleum products, natural gas, chemical fertilizers, and dates were major commodities.

Imports: About US$10 billion in 1987. Government import statistics in 1984 showed 34.4 percent capital goods, 30 percent raw materials, 22.4 percent foodstuffs, and 12.5 percent consumer goods.

Major Trade Areas: Exports (in order of magnitude) in 1986 mainly to Brazil, Spain, and Japan. Imports (in order of magnitude) in 1986 mainly from Japan, Turkey, Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), Italy, and Britain.

Transportation

Roads: Paved road network almost doubled between 1979 and 1985, to 22,397 kilometers. Also 7,800 kilometers of unpaved secondary and feeder roads. In 1987 1,000-kilometer-long segment of international express highway from Mediterranean to Persian Gulf under construction.

Railroads: By 1985 2,029 kilometers of railroads, of which 1,496 were standard gauge, rest meter gauge.

Ports: Basra was main port, together with newer port at Umm Qasr. Oil terminals at Mina al Bakr, Khawr al Amayah, and Al Faw, latter recaptured from Iran in 1988, and industrial port at Khawr az Zubayr. War with Iraq damaged port facilities and prevented use of most ports.

Pipelines: Local lines to Persian Gulf and new spur line from Basra area to Saudi Arabia's Petroline (running from Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia to Red Sea port of Yanbu), with 500,000 bpd capacity, completed in 1985 because Syria cut off use of pipelines through Syria following outbreak of Iran-Iraq War. Further parallel pipeline to Saudi Arabia with 400,000 bpd capacity under construction in 1988. Pipeline from Baiji to Baghdad and from Baghdad to Khanaqin; pipeline also between Baiji and Turkish Mediterranean port of Dortyol opened in 1977 with 800,000 to 900,000 bpd capacity, expanded by 500,000 bpd capacity in 1987. Small pipelines distributed refined products to major consuming areas.

Airports: International airports at Baghdad and Basra, with new airport under construction at Baghdad. Also ninety-five airfields, sixty-one with permanent-surface runways.

Government and Politics

Government: In accordance with Provisional Constitution of July 16, 1970, executive and legislative powers exercised by Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), chairman of which is also president of country. First parliamentary elections held in June 1980, resulting in First National Assembly. Second National Assembly elected in October 1984; National Assembly has generally met twice annually as provided in Constitution and exercises legislative functions together with RCC, which has ultimate decision-making authority.

Politics: Political system was under firm control of Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party. Party's high command, called Regional Command, was headed in 1988 by President Saddam Husayn, who held title of secretary general of the Regional Command and was also chairman of the RCC; vice chairman of the RCC and presumably successor to Husayn was Izzat Ibrahim; vice president was Taha Muhy ad Din Maruf. Government and political leadership interchangeable because members of Regional Command also members of RCC. Political activities, where they existed, carried out within framework of Progressive National Front (PNF), of which Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) was a participant. Some Kurdish and independent progressive groups also included in PNF. Politics of opposition outside PNF banned for all practical purposes.

Administrative Divisions: In 1988 eighteen governorates or provinces, each divided into districts and subdistricts. Limited self-rule was granted to Kurds in three northern governorates officially known as Autonomous Region (see Glossary) and popularly known as Kurdistan (land of the Kurds).

Judicial System: Administratively under jurisdiction of Ministry of Justice but theoretically independent under the Constitution. All judges appointed by president. Court of Cassation, highest court of land; personal status disputes handled by religious community courts (Islamic law—or sharia—or other). Country divided into five appellate districts.

International Affairs: Major issue was war with Iran since 1980 and attempts at a peace settlement, which resulted in cease-fire in August 1988. In 1980s Iraq moved from close friendship with Soviet

Union to rapprochement with United States (diplomatic relations reestablished in 1984), cordial relations with Western Europe, especially France, and good relations with Persian Gulf states and Jordan. Iraqi relations with Syria, which supported Iran in the war, were cool.

National Security

Armed Forces (1987): Army—approximately 1 million (including about 480,000 active reserves); navy—about 5,000; air force—40,000 (including 10,000 in Air Defense Command). Compulsory two-year conscription for males was extended during war.

Combat Units and Major Equipment (1987) (Equipment estimates tentative because of wartime losses): Army—seven corps headquarters, five armored divisions (each with one armored brigade and one mechanized brigade), three mechanized divisions (each with one armored brigade and two or more mechanized brigades), thirty infantry divisions (including army, volunteer, and reserve brigades), one Presidential Guard Force (composed of three armored brigades, one infantry brigade, and one commando brigade), six Special Forces brigades; about 4,600 tanks, including advanced versions of T-72, about 4,000 armored vehicles, more than 3,000 towed and self-propelled artillery pieces; Air Defense Command—about 4,000 self-propelled antiaircraft guns, more than 300 SAMs; Army Air Corps—about 270 armed helicopters. Navy—one frigate, eight OSA-class patrol boats with Styx SSMs, other small patrol, minesweeping, and supply ships; (being held in Italy under embargo in 1988) four Lupo-class frigates, with Otomat-2 SSMs and Albatros/Aspide SAMs, six Assad-class corvettes with Otomat-2 SSMs. Air Force—about 500 combat aircraft in 2 bomber squadrons, 11 fighter-ground attack squadrons, 5 interceptor squadrons, 1 counterinsurgency squadron, and 2 transport squadrons.

Military Budget: Fiscal year (FY) 1986 estimated at US$11.58 billion.

Police, Paramilitary, and State Security Organizations (1987): People's Army—estimated 650,000 (constituted majority of paramilitary reserves); Security Forces—4,800 estimate; Frontier Guard, Futuwah (paramilitary youth organization), Department of General Intelligence, regular civil police force—sizes unknown.

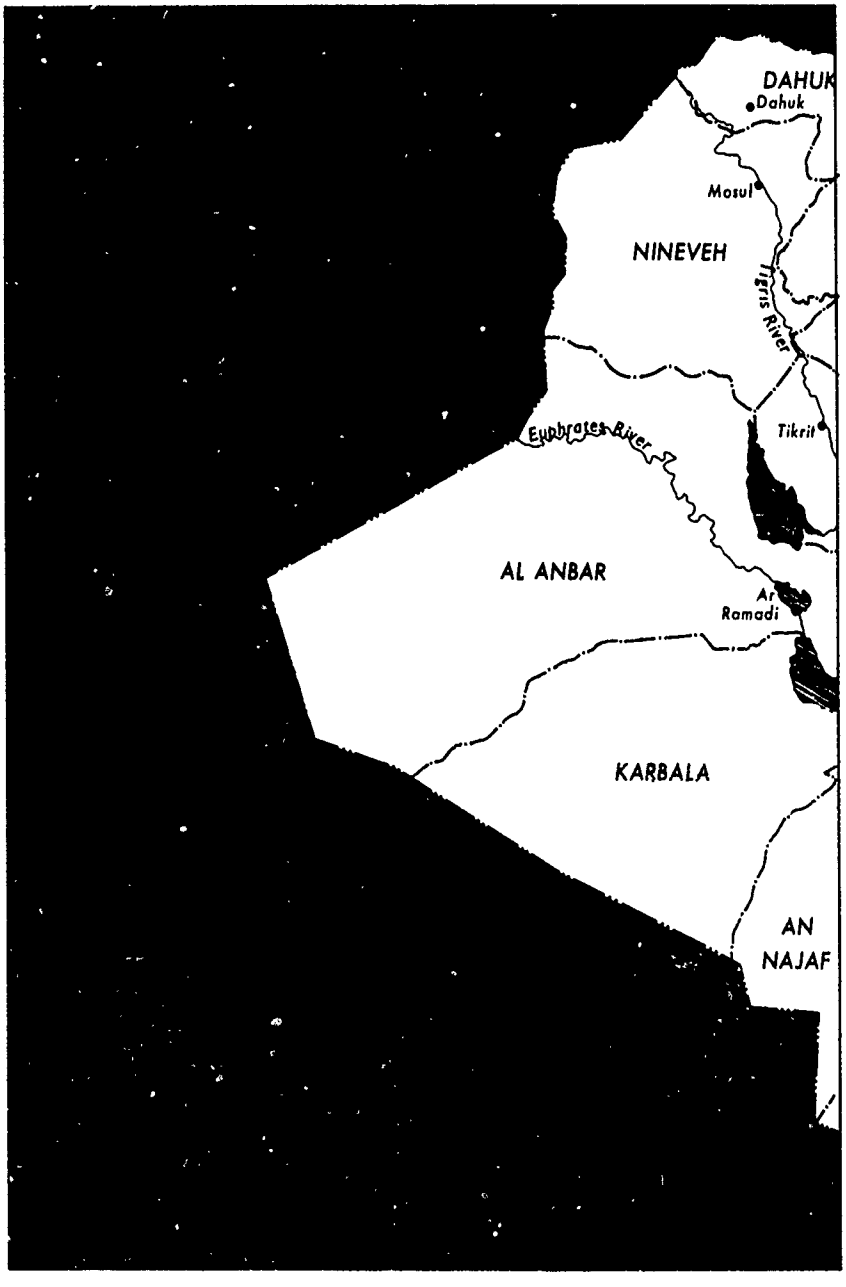
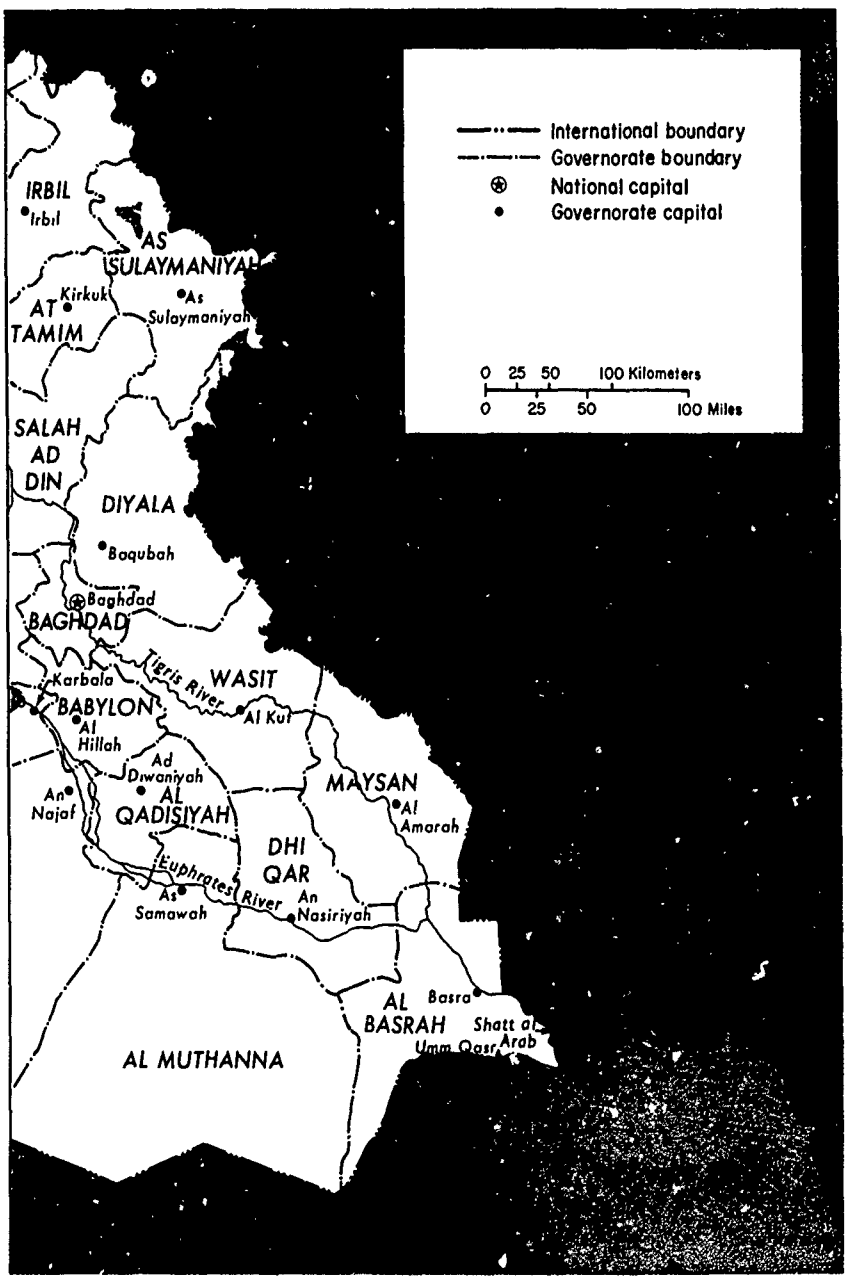


Figure 1. Administrative Divisions of Iraq, 1988


International boundary
Governorate boundary
National capital
Governorate capital
0 25 50 100 Kilometers
0 25 50 100 Miles
IRBIL
Irbil
AS SULAYMANIYAH
Kirkuk
As Sulaymaniyah
AT TAMIM
SALAH AD DIN
DIYALA
Baqubah
Baghdad
BAGHDAD
Karbala
Tigris River
WASIT
BABYLON
Al Hillah
Al Kut
Ad Diwaniyah
An Najaf
AL QADISIYAH
MAYSAN
Al Amarah
DHI QAR
Euphrates River
As Samawah
An Nasiriyah
AL BASRAH
Basra
Shatt al Arab
Umm Qasr
AL MUTHANNA

Introduction

IN THE LATE 1980s, Iraq became a central actor in Middle Eastern affairs and a force to reckon with in the wider international community. Iraq's growing role resulted from the way in which it was adapting the principles of Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party socialism to meet the country's needs and from its somewhat unexpected success in compelling Iran in August 1988 to request a cease-fire in the eight-year-old Iran-Iraq War.

Iraq's reassertion in the 1980s of its role in the region and in the world community evoked its ancient history. At one time Mesopotamia ("the land between the rivers"), which encompassed much of present-day Iraq, formed the center not only of the Middle East but also of the civilized world. The people of the Tigris and Euphrates basin, the ancient Sumerians, using the fertile land and the abundant water supply of the area, developed sophisticated irrigation systems and created what was probably the first cereal agriculture as well as the earliest writing, cuneiform. Their successors, the Akkadians, devised the most complete legal system of the period, the Code of Hammurabi. Located at a crossroads in the heart of the ancient Middle East, Mesopotamia was a plum sought by numerous foreign conquerors. Among them were the warlike Assyrians, from the tenth century through the seventh century B.C., and the Chaldeans, who in the sixth century B.C. created the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

In 539 B.C., Semitic rule of the area ended with the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus the Great. The successors of Cyrus paid little attention to Mesopotamia, with the result that the infrastructure was allowed to fall into disrepair. Not until the Arab conquest and the coming of Islam did Mesopotamia begin to regain its glory, particularly when Baghdad was the seat of the Abbasid caliphate between 750 and 1258.

Iraq experienced various other foreign rulers, including the Mongols, the Ottoman Turks, and the British under a mandate established after World War I. The British placed Faisal, a Hashimite claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad, on the throne in 1921. Popular discontent with the monarchy, which was regarded as a Western imposition, led in 1958 to a military revolution that overthrew the king.

Ultimately, the military regime installed a government ruled by the Baath's Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) and created

the Provisional Constitution of July 16, 1970, that institutionalized the RCC's role. Within the Baath, power lay primarily in the hands of Baathists from the town of Tikrit, the birthplace of Saddam Husayn, who played an increasingly prominent role in the government in the 1970s. (Tikrit was also the hometown of his predecessor, Ahmad Hasan al Bakr, who formally resigned the leadership in 1979).

The Baathist government in 1970 granted the Kurdish minority a degree of autonomy, but not the complete self-rule the Kurds desired, in the predominantly Kurdish regions of Dahuk, Irbil, and As Sulaymaniyah (see fig. 1). In the early 1970s, Iraqi casualties from the renewed warfare with the Kurds were such as to induce Saddam Husayn to sign an agreement with the shah of Iran in Algiers in March 1975 recognizing the thalweg, or the midpoint of the Shatt al Arab, as the boundary between the two countries. The agreement ended the shah's aid to the Kurds, thus eventually quelling the rebellion.

Saddam Husayn then turned his attention to domestic matters, particularly to the economy and to an industrial modernization program. He had notable success in distributing land, in improving the standard of living, and in increasing health and educational opportunities. Rural society was transformed as a result of large rural-to-urban migration and the decline of rural handicraft industries. Urban society witnessed the rise, particularly in the late 1970s and the 1980s, of a class of Baathist technocrats. In addition, the Shia (see Glossary) Muslims, who, although they constituted a majority, had been largely unrepresented in significant areas of Iraqi society, in which the minority Sunni (see Glossary) Muslims were the governing element, were integrated to a considerable degree into the government, into business, and into the professions.

Buoyed by domestic success, Saddam Husayn shifted his concentration to foreign affairs. Beginning in the late 1970s, Iraq sought to assume a more prominent regional role and to replace Egypt, which had been discredited from its position of Arab leadership because of signing the Camp David Accords in 1978. Iraq, therefore, gradually modified its somewhat hostile stance toward Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states, seeking to win their support. Relations with the Soviet Union, Iraq's major source of weapons, cooled, however, following the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan that began in December 1979. In contrast, Iraqi ties with France improved considerably, and France became Iraq's second most important arms supplier.

The overthrow of the monarchy in Iran and the coming to power in 1979 of Ayatollah Sayyid Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini—whom

Saddam Husayn had expelled from Iraq in 1978, reportedly at the shah's request—revived the historic hostility between the two countries. Saddam Husayn feared the impact on Iraqi Shias of Khomeini's Islamic fundamentalism and resented Iran's attempted hegemony in the Persian Gulf region. Believing Iran's military forces to be unprepared as a result of the revolutionary purges, in September 1980, following a number of border skirmishes, Iraq invaded Iranian territory. Thus began a bitter, costly, eight-year-long war in which the strength and the revolutionary zeal of Iran were clearly demonstrated.

From late 1980 to 1988, the war took precedence over other matters. The Baath high command succeeded in controlling Iraq's military institution to a degree that surprised foreign observers. One of the major instruments for accomplishing this control was the People's Army, which served as the Baath Party's militia.

The Baath could do little, however, to counter Iran's superiority in manpower and matériel. At times when Iraq considered its situation particularly desperate—for example, when Iranian forces appeared to be gaining control of substantial areas of Iraqi territory, such as Al Faw Peninsula in the south and the northern mountainous Kurdish area—Iraq unleashed a barrage of missiles against Iranian cities. Further, reliable reports indicated that Iraq used chemical warfare against the enemy, possibly in the hope of bringing Iran to the negotiating table.

To prevent domestic unrest as a result of the war, Saddam Husayn adopted a "guns and butter" economic policy, bringing in foreign laborers to replace those called to military service and striving to keep casualties low. After drawing down its own reserves, Iraq needed the financial support of its Gulf neighbors. Of the latter, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates all provided Iraq with loans to help it prosecute the war. Relations with Egypt also improved significantly after the war's outbreak. Meanwhile Iraqi hostility toward Syria, its fellow Baathist government but traditional rival, increased as a result of Syria's strong support of Iran.

As part of his wartime economic policies, Saddam Husayn in 1987 returned agricultural collectives to the private sector, and in 1988 he took measures to privatize more than forty state-run factories because of the inefficiency and unprofitability of agriculture and industry when under state control. These privatizing steps reflected a desire for greater economic efficiency rather than a change in economic ideology. Government controls on the economy were decreased by cutting subsidies, by allowing partial foreign

ownership, and by reducing bureaucratic regulation of enterprises, thus reducing labor costs.

Despite the introduction of more liberal economic policies in Iraq in the late 1980s, few indications suggested that the political system was becoming less rigid to any significant degree. Ultimate decisions in both the economic and the political realms apparently remained in the hands of Saddam Husayn rather than in those of the constitutionally designated RCC. According to a statement by Saddam Husayn to the Permanent Bureau of the Arab Jurists' Federation in Baghdad in November 1988, the Baath two years previously had approved steps toward democratization, but these had been delayed by the Iran-Iraq War. The measures included having a minimum of two candidates for each elective post, allowing non-Baathists to run for political office, and permitting the establishment of other political parties. In January 1989, following an RCC meeting chaired by Saddam Husayn, the formation of a special committee to draft a new constitution was reported; according to unconfirmed reports in November, the new constitution will abolish the RCC. Elections for the National Assembly were also announced, and this body was authorized to investigate government ministries and departments. The elections took place in early April and featured almost 1,000 candidates (among them 62 women, although none was elected) for the 250 seats; only 160 Baath Party members were elected. A number of Baathist candidates also were defeated in the September Kurdish regional assembly elections. The results of both elections indicated a gradual downgrading of the prominence of the Baath. The RCC, moreover, directed the minister of information to permit the public to voice complaints about government programs in the government-controlled press; and government officials were ordered to reply to such complaints. The role of Saddam Husayn's family in government affairs was somewhat muted as well. Following the helicopter crash in a sandstorm on May 5 that killed Saddam Husayn's brother-in-law and cousin, Minister of Defense Adnan Khayr Allah Talfah, a technocrat who did not come from Tikrit, replaced Talfah.

The internal security apparatus controlled by the Baath Party continued to keep a particularly close check on potential dissidents: these included Kurds, communists, and members of Shia revival movements. These movements, such as Ad Dawah al Islamiyah (the Islamic Call), commonly referred to as Ad Dawah, sought to propagate fundamentalist Islamic principles and were out of sympathy with Baath socialism. Furthermore, in 1988 in the final stages of the war, both before and after the cease-fire, Iraq was thought to have engaged in chemical warfare against the Kurds. Conceivably

the regime saw an opportunity to instill such fear in the Kurds, a significant percentage of whom had cooperated with Iran during the war, that their dissidence would be discouraged. In the spring of 1989 the government announced it would depopulate a border strip thirty kilometers wide along the frontier with Turkey and Iran on the northeast, moving all inhabitants, mainly Kurds, from the area; it began this process in May.

In December 1988, reports surfaced of dissidence within the army, in which Saddam Husayn lacked a power base. The projected annual Army Day celebrations on January 6, 1989, were cancelled and allegedly a number of senior army officers and some civilian Baathists were executed. In February the regime announced that all units of the People's Army would be withdrawn from the front by late March; in July a further announcement disbanded the three-division strong 1st Special Army Corps, formed in June 1986, but apparently some time would elapse before soldiers actually returned to civilian status. Such measures were probably occasioned by the continued success of the cease-fire, initiated in August 1988. The cease-fire held, although a number of border incidents occurred, of which the most serious was the Iranian flooding of a sixty-four-kilometer frontier area northeast of Basra. Informed observers considered the flooding designed to put pressure on Iraq to return a strip of approximately 1,000 square kilometers of Iranian territory on the steppe beyond Baqubah. On October 27, Iran stopped flooding the area, probably as a prelude to a new United Nations (UN) and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) mediation effort.

The peace talks under UN sponsorship, despite a score of face-to-face meetings, had made little progress as of mid-December. A few exchanges of prisoners of war (POWs), largely of those that were ill or wounded, had taken place, but both Iraq and Iran still held large numbers of each other's prisoners. Saddam Husayn, who had agreed on October 5, 1988, to the ICRC plan for prisoner repatriation, in March 1989 proposed in a letter to UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuellar that the UN guarantee the return of the freed POWs to civilian life. Saddam Husayn made his proposal in the hope that this guarantee would reassure Iran, which held approximately 70,000 Iraqi POWs—whereas Iraq held about half that number of Iranians—that the balance of power would not be disturbed. Iran has refused to exchange prisoners or to implement any of the ten points of UN Security Council Resolution 598 dealing with the dispute until Iraq returns all Iranian territory.

A major source of disagreement in the peace negotiations was Iraq's insistence on sovereignty over the Shatt al Arab, as opposed

to the divided ownership created under the 1975 Algiers Agreement. Failing such a settlement, Iraq threatened to divert the waters of the Shatt al Arab above Basra so that it would rejoin the Gulf at Umm Qasr, a port that Iraq had announced it would deepen and widen. Iraq was eager to have Iran allow the UN to begin clearing sunken ships from the Shatt al Arab so as to permit Iraqi access to the sea.

Iraq, meanwhile, had launched a diplomatic campaign to improve its relations with other countries of the region, particularly with Jordan and Egypt. In the last half of 1988, beginning even before he accepted the cease-fire, Saddam Husayn met five times with King Hussein and three times with Egyptian president Husni Mubarak. These high-level meetings included symbolic elements, such as Saddam Husayn's accompanying Hussein on a visit in Baghdad to the graves of Faisal and Ghazi, the Hashimite kings of Iraq, an indication of a considerably more moderate Iraqi Baathist attitude toward monarchy than had been evident in the past. The meetings were designed to bolster political and economic support for Iraq (in December 1988 Iraq concluded a US$800 million trade agreement with Jordan for 1989), as well as to coordinate Arab policy toward the Palestine Liberation Organization and toward Israel, a revision of Iraq's previous rejection of any Arab-Israeli settlement. In addition, Saddam Husayn sought to reassure Saudi Arabia, from which Iraq had received substantial financial support during the Iran-Iraq War, that Iraq had no intention of dominating or of overthrowing the Persian Gulf monarchies.

In its relations with the Western world, Iraq also exhibited greater moderation than it had in the 1970s or early 1980s. For example, the United States Department of State indicated in late March 1989 that Iraq had agreed to pay US$27.3 million compensation to relatives of the thirty-seven American naval personnel killed in the 1987 Iraqi attack on the USS *Stark*. During the war with Iran, Iraq had borrowed extensively from France, Britain, Italy, and to a lesser extent from the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and Japan. These countries would doubtless play significant roles in Iraq's reconstruction and rearmament; in view of their commercial interest, Iraq has succeeded in having its loan repayments rescheduled. For example, Iraq signed an agreement with France in September 1989 allowing it to repay its indebtedness, due in 1989, over a six- to nine-year period, and completing arrangements for Iraq's purchase of fifty Mirage 2000s.

Since the cease-fire in August 1988, Iraq has undertaken an extensive rearmament program involving foreign arms purchases and the intensified development of its domestic arms industry to generate

export income as well as to meet domestic needs. The First Baghdad International Exhibition for Military Production took place from April 28 to May 2, 1989, featuring numerous types of Iraqi arms. Among weapons Iraq produced in 1989 were a T-74 tank, called the Lion of Baghdad, and an Iraqi version of the airborne early warning and control (AWACS) aircraft, developed from the Soviet Ilyushin Il-76. Iraq named the plane the Adnan-1 after late Minister of Defense Adnan Khayr Allah Talfah. A military development that aroused considerable concern in Israel was Iraq's launching from its Al Anbar space research center in early December of a forty-eight-ton, three-stage rocket capable of putting a satellite into space orbit. The minister of industry and military industrialization also announced that Iraq had developed two 2,000-kilometer range surface-to-surface missiles.

Apart from the need to replace lost armaments, the war imposed a heavy reconstruction burden on Iraq. To rebuild the infrastructure and to prevent disaffection among the population of the south who had suffered particularly, the government gave a high priority to the rebuilding of Basra. On June 25, Iraq published the completion of the basic reconstruction of Basra at a cost of approximately US$6 billion, stating that work was then beginning on rebuilding Al Faw, which prior to wartime evacuation had about 50,000 inhabitants. The government has also announced programs to create heavy industry, such as new iron and steel and aluminum works, to build another petrochemical complex, to upgrade fertilizer plants, and to reconstruct the offshore oil export terminals at Khawr al Amayah and Mina al Bakr. In June 1989 Iraq reported its readiness to accommodate very large crude oil carriers at a new terminal at Mina al Bakr.

Iraq has taken other economic measures to stimulate oil production and to control inflation. Since the cease-fire, Iraq has pumped nearly its full OPEC quota of 2.8 billion barrels of oil per day. In September 1989, Iraq completed its second crude oil pipeline across Saudi Arabia, with a capacity of 1,650,000 barrels per day, terminating at the Red Sea just south of the Saudi port of Yanbu. These major economic ventures have led to inflation. To counter price rises, the regime has set weekly prices on fruit and vegetables and in late June instituted a price freeze for one year on state-produced goods and services. Concurrently it authorized an additional monthly salary of 25 Iraqi dinars (approximately US$80) for all civil servants and members of the police and military forces.

The negative economic consequences of the war extended beyond the reconstruction of cities and war-damaged infrastructure to include postponed development projects. For example, the massive

rural-to-urban migration, particularly in southern Iraq, caused by the war had intensified a process begun before the war and had created an urgent need for housing, educational, and health facilities in urban areas. The war also had serious effects on Iraqi society, exacerbating the strained relations of Iraqi Arabs with the leading minority, the Kurds. The war, however, exerted a positive influence by promoting a greater sense of national unity, by diminishing differences between Shias and Sunnis, and by improving the role of women. The aftermath of the war permitted modification of traditional Baathist socialist doctrines so as to encourage greater privatization of the economy, although the degree to which the government would maintain its reduced interference in the economic sphere remained to be seen.

The end of the war left a number of unknown factors facing the Iraqi economy and society. One was the size of the postwar world petroleum demand and whether Iraq could sell its potential increased output on the international market. An important unanswered social question was whether women who had found employment during the war would return to domestic pursuits and help increase the birthrate as the government hoped. Although women might remain in the work force, presumably, work permits of most foreign workers brought in during the war would be terminated.

An immediate result of the war was an attempt by the government at political liberalization in allowing multiple candidates for elected posts and by offering an amnesty for political, but not for military, offenders. A test of this liberalization will be whether the reforms promised by the end of 1989—the new constitution, legalization of political parties other than the Baath, and freedom of the press—occur. Measures taken as of mid-December reflected only minimal lessening of the personal control of President Saddam Husayn over the decision-making process in all spheres of the country's life.

The end of the war left many security issues unresolved. Although the regime had disbanded some armed forces units, would Iraq maintain a strong, well-trained army, posing a potential threat to its neighbors and to Israel? Also, what of the Iraqi POWs returning home after several years' indoctrination in POW camps in Iran—could the government of Saddam Husayn rely on their loyalty? Finally, Iraq faced the problem of its traditional Sunni Shia dichotomy. The war had demonstrated the ability of Iraqi Shias to put nationalist commitment above sectarian differences, but the influence of fundamentalist Shia Islam in the area, represented by the Iranian regime, would continue to threaten that loyalty.

December 15, 1989 Helen Chapin Metz

Chapter 1. Historical Setting



Calf's head that appears as an ornament on golden harp from Ur, ca. 2500 B.C.

IRAQ, A REPUBLIC since the 1958 coup d'état that ended the reign of King Faisal II, became a sovereign, independent state in 1932. Although the modern state, the Republic of Iraq, is quite young, the history of the land and its people dates back more than 5,000 years. Indeed, Iraq contains the world's richest known archaeological sites. Here, in ancient Mesopotamia (the land between the rivers), the first civilization—that of Sumer—appeared in the Middle East. Despite the millennium separating the two epochs, Iraqi history displays a continuity shaped by adaptation to the ebbings and flowings of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (in Arabic, the Dijlis and Furat, respectively). Allowed to flow unchecked, the rivers wrought destruction in terrible floods that inundated whole towns. When the rivers were controlled by irrigation dikes and other waterworks, the land became extremely fertile.

The dual nature of the Tigris and the Euphrates—their potential to be destructive or productive—has resulted in two distinct legacies found throughout Iraqi history. On the one hand, Mesopotamia's plentiful water resources and lush river valleys allowed for the production of surplus food that served as the basis for the civilizing trend begun at Sumer and preserved by rulers such as Hammurabi (1792–1750 B.C.), Cyrus (550–530 B.C.), Darius (520–485 B.C.), Alexander (336–323 B.C.), and the Abbasids (750–1258). The ancient cities of Sumer, Babylon, and Assyria all were located in what is now Iraq. Surplus food production and joint irrigation and flood control efforts facilitated the growth of a powerful and expanding state.

Mesopotamia could also be an extremely threatening environment, however, driving its peoples to seek security from the vicissitudes of nature. Throughout Iraqi history, various groups have formed autonomous, self-contained social units. Allegiance to ancient religious deities at Ur and Eridu, membership in the Shiat Ali (or party of Ali, the small group of followers that supported Ali ibn Abu Talib as rightful leader of the Islamic community in the seventh century), residence in the *asnaf* (guilds) or the *mahallat* (city quarters) of Baghdad under the Ottoman Turks, membership in one of a multitude of tribes—such efforts to build autonomous security-providing structures have exerted a powerful centrifugal force on Iraqi culture.

Two other factors that have inhibited political centralization are the absence of stone and Iraq's geographic location as the eastern flank of the Arab world. For much of Iraqi history, the lack of stone has severely hindered the building of roads. As a result, many parts of the country have remained beyond government control. Also, because it borders non-Arab Turkey and Iran and because of the great agricultural potential of its river valley, Iraq has attracted waves of ethnically diverse migrations. Although this influx of people has enriched Iraqi culture, it also has disrupted the country's internal balance and has led to deep-seated schisms.

Throughout Iraqi history, the conflict between political fragmentation and centralization has been reflected in the struggles among tribes and cities for the food-producing flatlands of the river valleys. When a central power neglected to keep the waterworks in repair, land fell into disuse, and tribes attacked settled peoples for precious and scarce agricultural commodities. For nearly 600 years, between the collapse of the Abbasid Empire in the thirteenth century and the waning years of the Ottoman era in the late nineteenth century, government authority was tenuous and tribal Iraq was, in effect, autonomous. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Iraq's disconnected, and often antagonistic, ethnic, religious, and tribal social groups professed little or no allegiance to the central government. As a result, the all-consuming concern of contemporary Iraqi history has been the forging of a nation-state out of this diverse and conflict-ridden social structure and the concomitant transformation of parochial loyalties, both tribal and ethnic, into a national identity.

Beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, the *tanzimat* reforms (an administrative and legal reorganization of the Ottoman Empire), the emergence of private property, and the tying of Iraq to the world capitalist market severely altered Iraq's social structure. Tribal shaykhs (see Glossary) traditionally had provided both spiritual leadership and tribal security. Land reform and increasing links with the West transformed many shaykhs into profit-seeking landlords, whose tribesmen became impoverished sharecroppers. Moreover, as Western economic penetration increased, the products of Iraq's once-prosperous craftsmen were displaced by machine-made British textiles.

During the twentieth century, as the power of tribal Iraq waned, Baghdad benefited from the rise of a centralized governmental apparatus, a burgeoning bureaucracy, increased educational opportunities, and the growth of the oil industry. The transformation of the urban-tribal balance resulted in a massive rural-to-urban migration. The disruption of existing parochial loyalties and the

rise of new class relations based on economics fueled frequent tribal rebellions and urban uprisings during much of the twentieth century.

Iraq's social fabric was in the throes of a destabilizing transition in the first half of the twentieth century. At the same time, because of its foreign roots, the Iraqi political system suffered from a severe legitimacy crisis. Beginning with its League of Nations mandate in 1920, the British government had laid out the institutional framework for Iraqi government and politics. Britain imposed a Hashimite (also seen as Hashemite) monarchy, defined the territorial limits of Iraq with little correspondence to natural frontiers or traditional tribal and ethnic settlements, and influenced the writing of a constitution and the structure of parliament. The British also supported narrowly based groups—such as the tribal shaykhs—over the growing, urban-based nationalist movement, and resorted to military force when British interests were threatened, as in the 1941 Rashid Ali coup.

Between 1918 and 1958, British policy in Iraq had far-reaching effects. The majority of Iraqis were divorced from the political proce- nd the process itself failed to develop procedures for resolving int- conflicts other than rule by decree and the frequent use of r- ive measures. Also, because the formative experiences of Iraq's 1958 political leadership centered around clandestine oppositi- activity, decision making and government activity in general have been veiled in secrecy. Furthermore, because the country lacks deeply rooted national political institutions, political power frequently has been monopolized by a small elite, the members of which are often bound by close family or tribal ties.

Between the overthrow of the monarchy in 1958 and the emergence of Saddam Husayn in the mid-1970s, Iraqi history was a chronicle of conspiracies, coups, countercoups, and fierce Kurdish uprisings. Beginning in 1975, however, with the signing of the Algiers Agreement—an agreement between Saddam Husayn and the shah of Iran that effectively ended Iranian military support for the Kurds in Iraq—Saddam Husayn was able to bring Iraq an unprecedented period of stability. He effectively used rising oil revenues to fund large-scale development projects, to increase public sector employment, and significantly to improve education and health care. This tied increasing numbers of Iraqis to the ruling Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party. As a result, for the first time in contemporary Iraqi history, an Iraqi leader successfully forged a national identity out of Iraq's diverse social structure. Saddam Husayn's achievements and Iraq's general prosperity, however, did not survive long. In September 1980, Iraqi troops

crossed the border into Iran, embroiling the country in a costly war (see fig. 1).

Ancient Mesopotamia

Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, and Assyria

Contemporary Iraq occupies the territory that historians traditionally have considered the site of the earliest civilizations of the ancient Middle East. Geographically, modern Iraq corresponds to the Mesopotamia of the Old Testament and of other, older, Middle Eastern texts. In Western mythology and religious tradition, the land of Mesopotamia in the ancient period was a land of lush vegetation, abundant wildlife, and copious if unpredictable water resources. As such, at a very early date it attracted people from neighboring, but less hospitable areas. By 6000 B.C., Mesopotamia had been settled, chiefly by migrants from the Turkish and Iranian highlands (see fig. 2).

The civilized life that emerged at Sumer was shaped by two conflicting factors: the unpredictability of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which at any time could unleash devastating floods that wiped out entire peoples, and the extreme fecundity of the river valleys, caused by centuries-old deposits of soil. Thus, while the river valleys of southern Mesopotamia attracted migrations of neighboring peoples and made possible, for the first time in history, the growing of surplus food, the volatility of the rivers necessitated a form of collective management to protect the marshy, low-lying land from flooding. As surplus production increased and as collective management became more advanced, a process of urbanization evolved and Sumerian civilization took root.

Sumer is the ancient name for southern Mesopotamia. Historians are divided on when the Sumerians arrived in the area, but they agree that the population of Sumer was a mixture of linguistic and ethnic groups that included the earlier inhabitants of the region. Sumerian culture mixed foreign and local elements. The Sumerians were highly innovative people who responded creatively to the challenges of the changeable Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Many of the great Sumerian legacies, such as writing, irrigation, the wheel, astronomy, and literature, can be seen as adaptive responses to the great rivers.

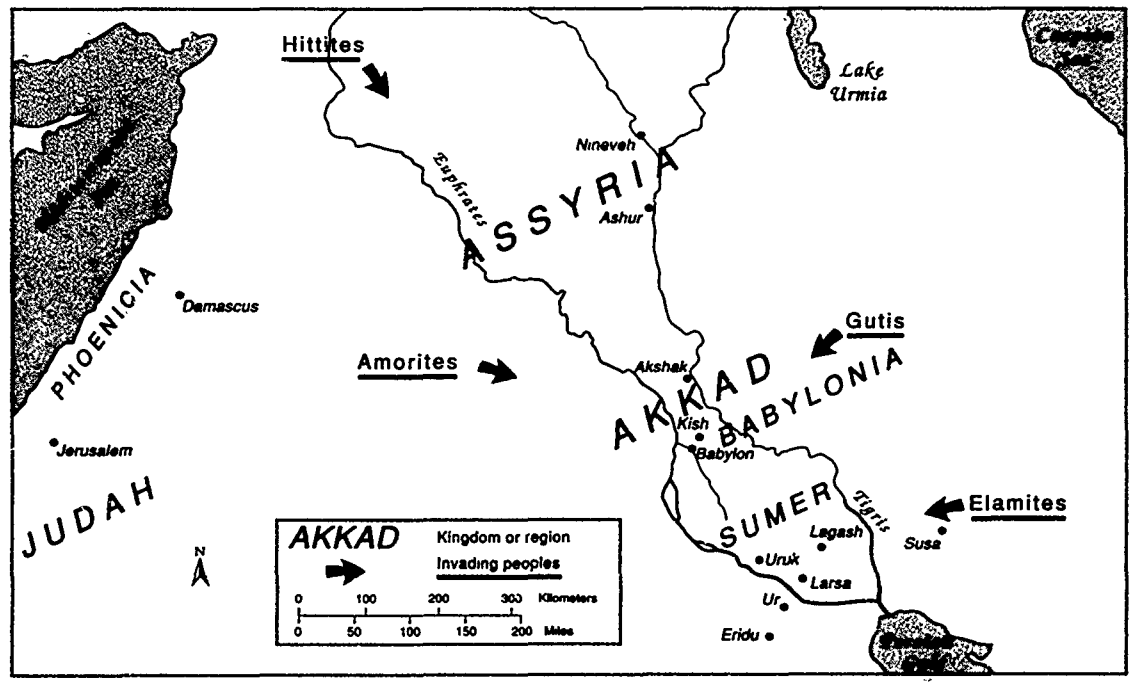
The Sumerians were the first people known to have devised a scheme of written representation as a means of communication. From the earliest writings, which were pictograms (simplified pictures on clay tablets), the Sumerians gradually created cuneiform—a way of arranging impressions stamped on clay by the wedge-like

section of a chopped-off reed. The use of combinations of the same basic wedge shape to stand for phonetic, and possibly for syllabic, elements provided more flexible communication than the pictogram. Through writing, the Sumerians were able to pass on complex agricultural techniques to successive generations; this led to marked improvements in agricultural production.

Another important Sumerian legacy was the recording of literature. The most famous Sumerian epic and the one that has survived in the most nearly complete form is the epic of Gilgamesh. The story of Gilgamesh, who actually was king of the city-state of Uruk in approximately 2700 B.C., is a moving story of the ruler's deep sorrow at the death of his friend and of his consequent search for immortality. Other central themes of the story are a devastating flood and the tenuous nature of man's existence. Laden with complex abstractions and emotional expressions, the epic of Gilgamesh reflects the intellectual sophistication of the Sumerians, and it has served as the prototype for all Middle Eastern inundation stories. The precariousness of existence in southern Mesopotamia also led to a highly developed sense of religion. Cult centers such as Eridu, dating back to 5000 B.C., served as important centers of pilgrimage and devotion even before the rise of Sumer. Many of the most important Mesopotamian cities emerged in areas surrounding the pre-Sumerian cult centers, thus reinforcing the close relationship between religion and government.

The Sumerians were pantheistic; their gods more or less personified local elements and natural forces. In exchange for sacrifice and adherence to an elaborate ritual, the gods of ancient Sumer were to provide the individual with security and prosperity. A powerful priesthood emerged to oversee ritual practices and to intervene with the gods. Sumerian religious beliefs also had important political aspects. Decisions relating to land rentals, agricultural questions, trade, commercial relations, and war were determined by the priesthood, because all property belonged to the gods. The priests ruled from their temples, called ziggurats, which were essentially artificial mountains of sunbaked brick, built with outside staircases that tapered toward a shrine at the top.

Because the well-being of the community depended upon close observation of natural phenomena, scientific or protoscientific activities occupied much of the priests' time. For example, the Sumerians believed that each of the gods was represented by a number. The number sixty, sacred to the god An, was their basic unit of calculation. The minutes of an hour and the notational degrees of a circle were Sumerian concepts. The highly developed agricultural system and the refined irrigation and water-control systems



Source: Based on information from George Roux, *Ancient Iraq,* Cleveland, 1965.

Figure 2. Ancient Mesopotamia

that enabled Sumer to achieve surplus production also led to the growth of large cities. The most important city-states were Uruk, Eridu, Kish, Lagash, Agade, Akshak, Larsa, and Ur (birthplace of the prophet Abraham). The emergence of urban life led to further technological advances. Lacking stone, the Sumerians made marked improvements in brick technology, making possible the construction of very large buildings such as the famous ziggurat of Ur. Sumer also pioneered advances in warfare technology. By the middle of the third millennium B.C., the Sumerians had developed the wheeled chariot. At approximately the same time, the Sumerians discovered that tin and copper when smelted together produced bronze—a new, more durable, and much harder metal. The wheeled chariot and bronze weapons became increasingly important as the Sumerians developed the institution of kingship and as individual city-states began to vie for supremacy.

Historians generally divide Sumerian history into three stages. In the first stage, which extended roughly from 3360 B.C. to 2400 B.C., the most important political development was the emergence of kings who, unlike the first priestly rulers, exercised distinct political rather than religious authority. Another important feature of this period was the emergence of warring Sumerian city-states, which fought for control of the river valleys in lower Mesopotamia. During the second phase, which lasted from 2400 B.C. to 2200 B.C., Sumer was conquered in approximately 2334 B.C. by Sargon I, king of the Semitic city of Akkad. Sargon was the world's first empire-builder, sending his troops as far as Egypt and Ethiopia. He attempted to establish a unified empire and to end the hostilities among the city-states. Sargon's rule introduced a new level of political organization that was characterized by an even more clear-cut separation between religious authority and secular authority. To ensure his supremacy, Sargon created the first conscripted army, a development related to the need to mobilize large numbers of laborers for irrigation and flood-control works. Akkadian strength was boosted by the invention of the composite bow, a new weapon made of strips of wood and horn.

Despite their military prowess, Akkadian hegemony over southern Mesopotamia lasted only 200 years. Sargon's great-grandson was then overthrown by the Guti, a mountain people from the east. The fall of the Akkadians and the subsequent reemergence of Sumer under the king of Ur, who defeated the Guti, ushered in the third phase of Sumerian history. In this final phase, which was characterized by a synthesis of Sumerian and Akkadian cultures, the king of Ur established hegemony over much of Mesopotamia. Sumerian supremacy, however, was on the wane.

By 2000 B.C. the combined attacks of the Amorites, a Semitic people from the west, and the Elamites, a Caucasian people from the east, had destroyed the Third Dynasty of Ur. The invaders nevertheless carried on the Sumero-Akkadian cultural legacy.

The Amorites established cities on the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers and made Babylon, a town to the north, their capital. During the time of their sixth ruler, King Hammurabi (1792-1750 B.C.), Babylonian rule encompassed a huge area covering most of the Tigris-Euphrates river valley from Sumer and the Persian Gulf in the south to Assyria in the north. To rule over such a large area, Hammurabi devised an elaborate administrative structure. His greatest achievement, however, was the issuance of a law code designed "to cause justice to prevail in the country, to destroy the wicked and the evil, that the strong may not oppress the weak." The Code of Hammurabi, not the earliest to appear in the Middle East but certainly the most complete, dealt with land tenure, rent, the position of women, marriage, divorce, inheritance, contracts, control of public order, administration of justice, wages, and labor conditions.

In Hammurabi's legal code, the civilizing trend begun at Sumer had evolved to a new level of complexity. The sophisticated legal principles contained in the code reflect a highly advanced civilization in which social interaction extended far beyond the confines of kinship. The large number of laws pertaining to commerce reflect a diversified economic base and an extensive trading network. In politics, Hammurabi's code is evidence of a more pronounced separation between religious and secular authority than had existed in ancient Sumer. In addition to Hammurabi's legal code, the Babylonians made other important contributions, notably to the science of astronomy, and they increased the flexibility of cuneiform by developing the pictogram script so that it stood for a syllable rather than an individual word.

Beginning in approximately 1600 B.C., Indo-European-speaking tribes invaded India; other tribes settled in Iran and in Europe. One of these groups, the Hittites, allied itself with the Kassites, a people of unknown origins. Together, they conquered and destroyed Babylon. Hittite power subsequently waned, but, in the first half of the fourteenth century B.C., the Hittites reemerged, controlling an area that stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf. The military success of the Hittites has been attributed to their monopoly in iron production and to their use of the chariot. Nevertheless, in the twelfth century B.C., the Hittites were destroyed, and no great military power occupied Mesopotamia until the ninth century B.C.

One of the cities that flourished in the middle of the Tigris Valley during this period was that of Ashur, named after the sun-god of the Assyrians. The Assyrians were Semitic speakers who occupied Babylon for a brief period in the thirteenth century B.C. Invasions of iron-producing peoples into the Middle East and into the Aegean region in approximately 1200 B.C. disrupted the indigenous empires of Mesopotamia, but eventually the Assyrians were able to capitalize on the new alignments of power in the region. Because of what has been called "the barbarous and unspeakable cruelty of the Assyrians," the names of such Assyrian kings as Ashurnasirpal (883–859 B.C.), Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.), Sennacherib (704–681 B.C.), and Ashurbanipal (669–626 B.C.) continue to evoke images of powerful, militarily brilliant, but brutally savage conquerors.

The Assyrians began to expand to the west in the early part of the ninth century B.C.; by 859 they had reached the Mediterranean Sea, where they occupied Phoenician cities. Damascus and Babylon fell to the next generations of Assyrian rulers. During the eighth century B.C., the Assyrians' control over their empire appeared tenuous, but Tiglath-Pileser III seized the throne and rapidly subdued Assyria's neighbors, captured Syria, and crowned himself king of Babylon. He developed a highly proficient war machine by creating a permanent standing army under the administration of a well-organized bureaucracy. Sennacherib built a new capital, Nineveh, on the Tigris River, destroyed Babylon (where citizens had risen in revolt), and made Judah a vassal state.

In 612 B.C., revolts of subject peoples combined with the allied forces of two new kingdoms, those of the Medes and the Chaldeans (Neo-Babylonians), effectively to extinguish Assyrian power. Nineveh was razed. The hatred that the Assyrians inspired, particularly for their policy of wholesale resettlement of subject peoples, was sufficiently great to ensure that few traces of Assyrian rule remained two years later. The Assyrians had used the visual arts to depict their many conquests, and Assyrian friezes, executed in minute detail, continue to be the best artifacts of Assyrian civilization.

The Chaldeans became heir to Assyrian power in 612 B.C., and they conquered formerly Assyrian-held lands in Syria and Palestine. King Nebuchadnezzar (605–562 B.C.) conquered the kingdom of Judah, and he destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Conscious of their ancient past, the Chaldeans sought to reestablish Babylon as the most magnificent city of the Middle East. It was during the Chaldean period that the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, famed as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, were created.

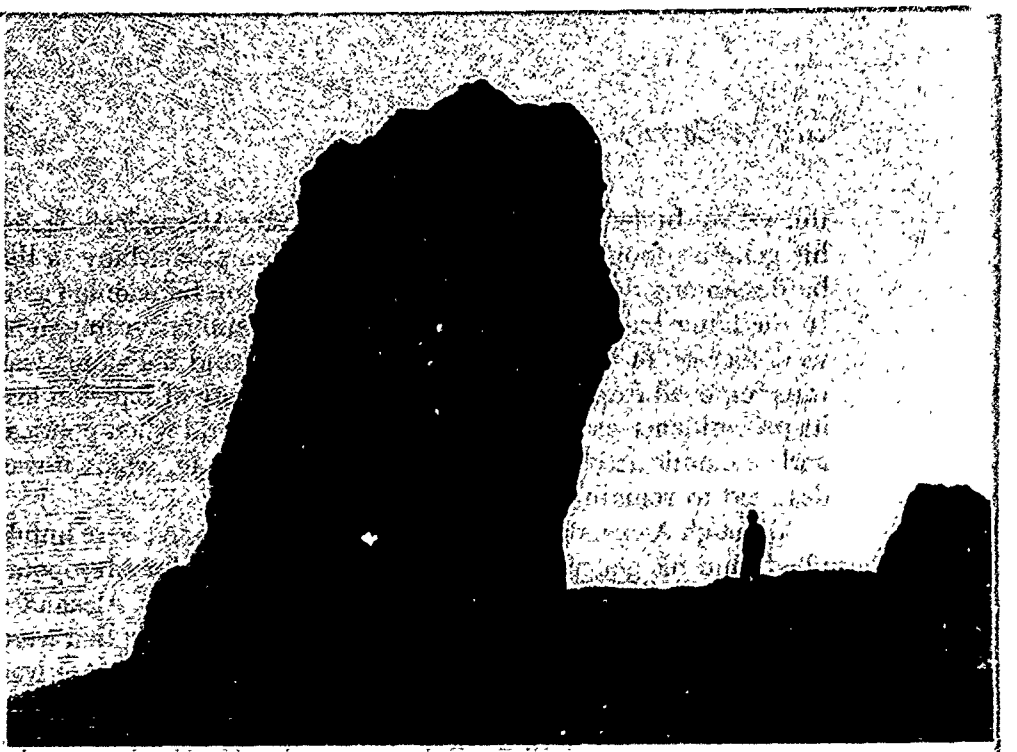
Because of an estrangement of the priesthood from the king, however, the monarchy was severely weakened, and it was unable to withstand the rising power of Achaemenid Iran. In 539 B.C., Babylon fell to Cyrus the Great (550–530 B.C.). In addition to incorporating Babylon into the Iranian empire, Cyrus the Great released the Jews who had been held in captivity there.

Iranian and Greek Intrusions

Mesopotamia, for 2,000 years a stronghold of Semitic-speaking peoples, now fell to Indo-European rule that persisted for 1,176 years. Cyrus, one of history's truly great leaders, ruled with a firm hand, but he was also well attuned to the needs of his subjects. Upon assuming power, he immediately replaced the savagery of the Assyrians with a respect for the customs and the institutions of his new subjects. He appointed competent provincial governors (the predecessors of the Persian satraps), and he required from his subjects only tribute and obedience. Following Cyrus's death, a brief period of Babylonian unrest ensued that climaxed in 522 B.C. with a general rebellion of Iranian colonies.

Between 520 and 485 B.C., the efficient and innovative Iranian leader, Darius the Great, reimposed political stability in Babylon and ushered in a period of great economic prosperity. His greatest achievements were in road building—which significantly improved communication among the provinces—and in organizing an efficient bureaucracy. Darius's death in 485 B.C. was followed by a period of decay that led to a major Babylonian rebellion in 482 B.C. The Iranians violently quelled the uprising, and the repression that followed severely damaged Babylon's economic infrastructure.

The first Iranian kings to rule Iraq followed Mesopotamian land-management practices conscientiously. Between 485 B.C. and the conquest by Alexander the Great in 331 B.C., however, very little in Babylon was repaired and few of its once-great cities remained intact. Trade also was greatly reduced during this period. The established trade route from Sardis to Susa did not traverse Babylonia, and the Iranian rulers, themselves much closer to the Orient, were able to monopolize trade from India and other eastern points. As a result, Babylonia and Assyria, which together formed the ninth satrapy of the Persian Empire, became economically isolated and impoverished. Their poverty was exacerbated by the extremely high taxes levied on them: they owed the Iranian crown 1,000 talents of silver a year, in addition to having to meet the extortionate demands of the local administrators, and they were responsible for feeding the Iranian court for four months every year.



Ruins of a tower at Nimrud, near Kirkuk, referred to as Tower of Babel
Courtesy Matson Collection

Iranian rule lasted for more than 200 years, from 551 B.C. to 331 B.C. During this time, large numbers of Iranians were added to Mesopotamia's ethnically diverse population. The flow of Iranians into Iraq, which began during the rein of the Achaemenids, initiated an important demographic trend that would continue intermittently throughout much of Iraqi history. Another important effect of Iranian rule was the disappearance of the Mesopotamian languages and the widespread use of Aramaic, the official language of the empire.

By the fourth century B.C., nearly all of Babylon opposed the Achaemenids. Thus, when the Iranian forces stationed in Babylon surrendered to Alexander the Great of Macedon in 331 B.C. all of Babylonia hailed him as a liberator. Alexander quickly won Babylonian favor when, unlike the Achaemenids, he displayed respect for such Babylonian traditions as the worship of their chief god, Marduk. Alexander also proposed ambitious schemes for Babylon. He planned to establish one of the two seats of his empire there and to make the Euphrates navigable all the way to the Persian Gulf, where he planned to build a great port. Alexander's grandiose plans, however, never came to fruition. Returning from an expedition to the Indus River, he died in Babylon—most probably from malaria contracted there in 323 B.C. at the age of

thirty-two. In the politically chaotic period after Alexander's death, his generals fought for and divided up his empire. Many of the battles among the Greek generals were fought on Babylonian soil. In the latter half of the Greek period, Greek military campaigns were focused on conquering Phoenician ports and Babylonia was thus removed from the sphere of action. The city of Babylon lost its preeminence as the center of the civilized world when political and economic activity shifted to the Mediterranean, where it was destined to remain for many centuries.

Although Alexander's major plans for Mesopotamia were unfulfilled, and his generals did little that was positive for Mesopotamia, the effects of the Greek occupation were noteworthy. Alexander and his successors built scores of cities in the Middle East that were modeled on the Greek city-states. One of the most important was Seleucia on the Tigris. The Hellenization of the area included the introduction of Western deities, Western art forms, and Western thought. Business revived in Mesopotamia because one of the Greek trade routes ran through the new cities. Mesopotamia exported barley, wheat, dates, wool, and bitumen; the city of Seleucia exported spices, gold, precious stones, and ivory. Cultural interchange between Greek and Mesopotamian scholars was responsible for the saving of many Mesopotamian scientific, especially astronomical, texts.

In 126 B.C., the Parthians (or Arsacids), an intelligent, nomadic people who had migrated from the steppes of Turkestan to northeastern Iran, captured the Tigris-Euphrates river valley. Having previously conquered Iran, the Parthians were able to control all trade between the East and the Greco-Roman world. For the most part, they chose to retain existing social institutions and to live in cities that already existed. Mesopotamia was immeasurably enriched by this, the mildest of all foreign occupations of the region. The population of Mesopotamia was enormously enlarged, chiefly by Arabs, Iranians, and Aramaeans. With the exception of the Roman occupation under Trajan (A.D. 98–117) and Septimius Severus (A.D. 193–211), the Arsacids ruled until a new force of native Iranian rulers, the Sassanids, conquered the region in A.D. 227.

Little information is available on the Sassanid occupation, which lasted until A.D. 636. The north was devastated by battles fought between Romans and Sassanids. For the most part, the Sassanids appear to have neglected Mesopotamia. By the time the enfeebled Sassanid Empire fell to Muslim Arab warriors, Mesopotamia was in ruins, and Sumero-Akkadian civilization was entirely extinguished. Sassanid neglect of the canals and irrigation ditches vital for agriculture had allowed the rivers to flood, and parts of the land

had become sterile. Nevertheless, Mesopotamian culture passed on many traditions to the West. The basic principles of mathematics and astronomy, the coronation of kings, and such symbols as the tree of life, the Maltese cross, and the crescent are part of Mesopotamia's legacy.

The Arab Conquest and the Coming of Islam

The power that toppled the Sassanids came from an unexpected source. The Iranians knew that the Arabs, a tribally oriented people, had never been organized under the rule of a single power and were at a primitive level of military development. The Iranians also knew of the Arabs through their mutual trading activities and because, for a brief period, Yemen, in southern Arabia, was an Iranian satrapy.

Events in Arabia changed rapidly and dramatically in the sixth century A.D. when Muhammad, a member of the Hashimite clan of the powerful Quraysh tribe of Mecca, claimed prophethood and began gathering adherents for the monotheistic faith of Islam that had been revealed to him (see Religious Life, ch. 2). The conversion of Arabia proved to be the most difficult of the Islamic conquests because of entrenched tribalism. Within one year of Muhammad's death in 632, however, Arabia was secure enough for the Prophet's secular successor, Abu Bakr (632-634), the first caliph and the father-in-law of Muhammad, to begin the campaign against the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanid Empire.

Islamic forays into Iraq began during the reign of Abu Bakr. In 634 an army of 18,000 Arab tribesmen, under the leadership of the brilliant general Khalid ibn al Walid (aptly nicknamed "The Sword of Islam"), reached the perimeter of the Euphrates delta. Although the occupying Iranian force was vastly superior in techniques and numbers, its soldiers were exhausted from their unremitting campaigns against the Byzantines. The Sassanid troops fought ineffectually, lacking sufficient reinforcement to do more. The first battle of the Arab campaign became known as the Battle of the Chains because Iranian soldiers were reputedly chained together so that they could not flee. Khalid offered the inhabitants of Iraq an ultimatum: "Accept the faith and you are safe; otherwise pay tribute. If you refuse to do either, you have only yourself to blame. A people is already upon you, loving death as you love life."

Most of the Iraqi tribes were Christian at the time of the Islamic conquest. They decided to pay the *jizya,* the tax required of non-Muslims living in Muslim-ruled areas, and were not further disturbed. The Iranians rallied briefly under their hero, Rustam, and

attacked the Arabs at Al Hirah, west of the Euphrates. There, they were soundly defeated by the invading Arabs. The next year, in 635, the Arabs defeated the Iranians at the Battle of Buwayb. Finally, in May 636 at Al Qadisiyah, a village south of Baghdad on the Euphrates, Rustam was killed. The Iranians, who outnumbered the Arabs six to one, were decisively beaten. From Al Qadisiyah the Arabs pushed on to the Sassanid capital at Ctesiphon (Madain).

The Islamic conquest was made easier because both the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanid Empire were culturally and socially bankrupt; thus, the native populations had little to lose by cooperating with the conquering power. Because the Muslim warriors were fighting a jihad (holy war), they were regulated by religious law that strictly prohibited rape and the killing of women, children, religious leaders, or anyone who had not actually engaged in warfare. Further, the Muslim warriors had come to conquer and settle a land under Islamic law. It was not in their economic interest to destroy or pillage unnecessarily and indiscriminately.

The caliph Umar (634–44) ordered the founding of two garrisoned cities to protect the newly conquered territory: Kufah, named as the capital of Iraq, and Basra, which was also to be a port. Umar also organized the administration of the conquered Iranian lands. Acting on the advice of an Iranian, Umar continued the Sassanid office of the divan (Arabic form *diwan*). Essentially an institution to control income and expenditure through record keeping and the centralization of administration, the divan would be used henceforth throughout the lands of the Islamic conquest. *Dihqans,* minor revenue collection officials under the Sassanids, retained their function of assessing and collecting taxes. Tax collectors in Iraq had never enjoyed universal popularity, but the Arabs found them particularly noxious. Arabic replaced Persian as the official language, and it slowly filtered into common usage. Iraqis intermarried with Arabs and converted to Islam.

By 650 Muslim armies had reached the Amu Darya (Oxus River) and had conquered all the Sassanid domains, although some were more strongly held than others. Shortly thereafter, Arab expansion and conquest virtually ceased. Thereafter, the groups in power directed their energies to maintaining the status quo while those outside the major power structure devoted themselves to political and religious rebellion. The ideologies of the rebellions usually were couched in religious terms. Frequently, a difference in the interpretation of a point of doctrine was sufficient to spark armed warfare. More often, however, religious disputes were the rationalization for underlying nationalistic or cultural dissatisfactions.

The Sunni-Shia Controversy

The most critical problem that faced the young Islamic community revolved around the rightful successor to the office of caliph. Uthman, the third caliph, had encountered opposition during and after his election to the caliphate. Ali ibn Abu Talib, the Prophet Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law (by virtue of his marrying the Prophet's only surviving child, Fatima), had been the other contender.

Ali's pietism was disquieting to certain vested-interest groups, who perceived the more conservative Uthman as more likely to continue the policies of the previous caliph, Umar. Discontent increased, as did Ali's formal opposition to Uthman based on religious grounds. Ali claimed that innovations had been introduced that were not consonant with Quranic directives. Economics was the key factor for most of the members of the opposition, but this, too, acquired religious overtones.

As a result of the rapid military expansion of the Islamic movement, financial troubles beset Uthman. Many beduins had offered themselves for military service in Iraq and in Egypt. Their abstemious and hard life contrasted with the leisured life of Arabs in the Hijaz (the western part of the Arabian Peninsula), who were enjoying the benefits of conquest. When these volunteer soldiers questioned the allocation of lands and the distribution of revenues and pensions, they found a ready spokesman in Ali.

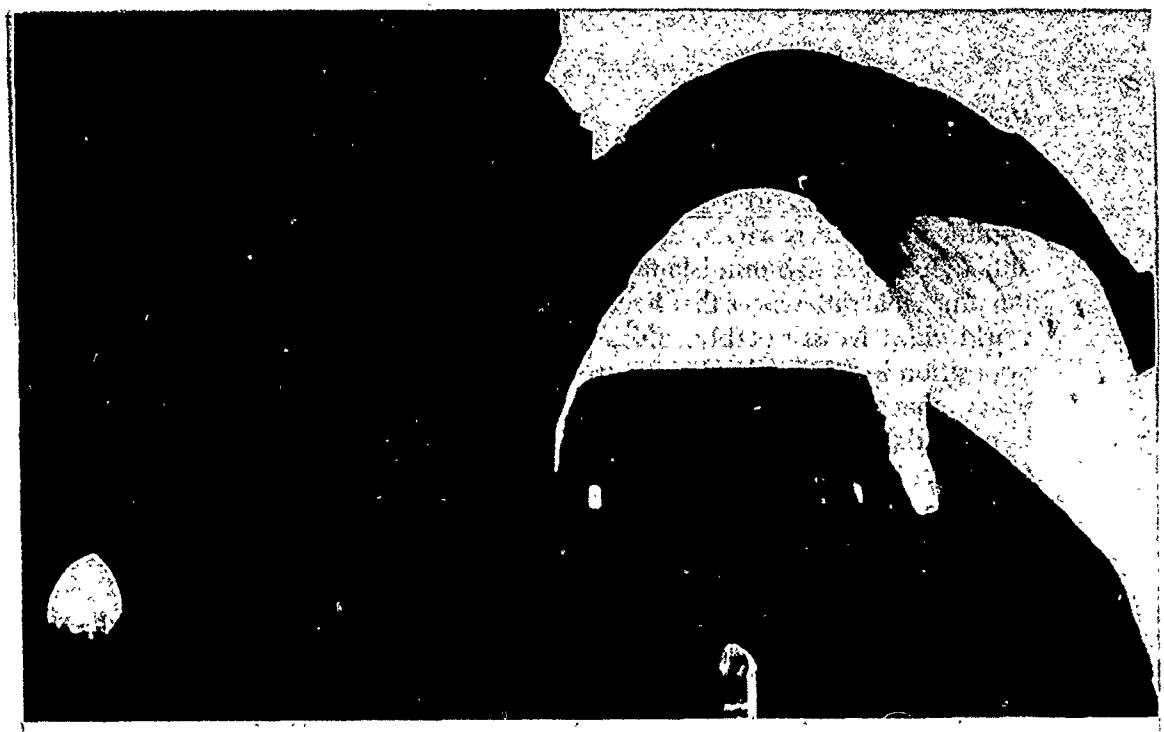
Groups of malcontents eventually left Iraq and Egypt to seek redress at Medina in the Hijaz. Uthman promised reforms, but on their return journey the rebels intercepted a message to the governor of Egypt commanding that they be punished. In response, the rebels besieged Uthman in his home in Medina, eventually slaying him. Uthman's slayer was a Muslim and a son of the first caliph, Abu Bakr. The Muslim world was shaken. Ali, who had not taken part in the siege, was chosen caliph.

Two opponents of Ali enlisted Aisha, a widow of the Prophet Muhammad, to join them in accusing Ali and demanding retribution for Uthman's death. When the three went to Iraq to seek support for their cause, Ali's forces engaged theirs near Basra. Aisha's two companions were killed, and Ali was clearly victorious. Muawiyah, a kinsman of Uthman and the governor of Syria, then refused to recognize Ali, and he demanded the right to avenge his relative's death. In what was perhaps the most important battle fought between Muslims, Ali's forces met Muawiyah's at the Plain of Siffin near the largest bend of the Euphrates River. Muawiyah's forces, seeing that they were losing, proposed arbitration.

Accordingly, two arbitrators were chosen to decide whether Uthman's death had been deserved. Such a decision would give his slayer status as an executioner rather than as a murderer and would remove the claims of Uthman's relatives. When the arbitrators decided against Ali, he protested that the verdict was not in accordance with sharia (Islamic law) and declared his intention to resume the battle.

Ali's decision, however, came too late for the more extreme of his followers. Citing the Quranic injunction to fight rebels until they obey, these followers insisted that Ali was morally wrong to submit to arbitration. In doing so, they claimed, he bowed to the judgment of men—as opposed to the judgment of God that would have been revealed by the outcome of the battle. These dissenters, known as Kharajites (from the verb *kharaja*—to go out), withdrew from battle, an action that had far-reaching political effects on the Islamic community in the centuries ahead. Before resuming his dispute with Muawiyah, Ali appealed to the Kharajites; when they rejected the appeal, he massacred many of them. Furious at his treatment of pious Muslims, most of Ali's forces deserted him. He was forced to return to Al Kufah—about 150 kilometers south of Baghdad—and to await developments within the Islamic community.

A number of Islamic leaders met at Adruh in present-day Jordan, and the same two arbitrators from Siffin devised a solution to the succession problem. At last it was announced that neither Ali nor Muawiyah should be caliph; Abd Allah, a son of Umar, was proposed. The meeting terminated in confusion, however, and no final decision was reached. Both Ali and Muawiyah bided their time in their separate governorships: Muawiyah, who had been declared caliph by some of his supporters, in newly conquered Egypt, and Ali, in Iraq. Muawiyah fomented discontent among those only partially committed to Ali. While praying in a mosque at Al Kufah, Ali was murdered by a Kharajite in 661. The ambitious Muawiyah induced Ali's eldest son, Hasan, to renounce his claim to the caliphate. Hasan died shortly thereafter, probably of consumption, but the Shias (see Glossary) later claimed that he had been poisoned and dubbed him "Lord of All Martyrs." Ali's unnatural death ensured the future of the Shia movement—Ali's followers returned to his cause—and quickened its momentum. With the single exception of the Prophet Muhammad, no man has had a greater impact on Islamic history. The Shia declaration of faith is: "There is no God but God; Muhammad is his Prophet and Ali is the Saint of God."



Arch of Ctesiphon
Courtesy Ronald L. Kuipers

Subsequently, Muawiyah was declared caliph. Thus began the Umayyad Dynasty, which had its capital at Damascus. Yazid I, Muawiyah's son and his successor in 680, was unable to contain the opposition that his strong father had vigorously quelled. Husayn, Ali's second son, refused to pay homage and fled to Mecca, where he was asked to lead the Shias—mostly Iraqis—in a revolt against Yazid I. Ubayd Allah, governor of Al Kufah, discovered the plot and sent detachments to dissuade him. At Karbala, in Iraq, Husayn's band of 200 men and women refused to surrender and finally were cut down by a force of perhaps 4,000 Umayyad troops. Yazid I received Husayn's head, and Husayn's death on the tenth of Muharram (October 10, 680) continues to be observed as a day of mourning for all Shias. Ali's burial place at An Najaf, about 130 kilometers south of Baghdad, and Husayn's at Karbala, about 80 kilometers southwest of Baghdad, are holy places of pilgrimage for Shias, many of whom feel that a pilgrimage to both sites is equal to a pilgrimage to Mecca (see Religious Life, ch. 2).

The importance of these events in the history of Islam cannot be overemphasized. They created the greatest of the Islamic schisms, between the party of Ali (the Shiat Ali, known in the West as Shias or Shiites) and the upholders of Muawiyah (the Ahl as Sunna, the People of the Sunna—those who follow Muhammad's custom and example) or the Sunnis (see Glossary). The Sunnis believe they

are the followers of orthodoxy. The ascendancy of the Umayyads and the events at Karbala, in contrast, led to a Shia Islam which, although similar to Sunni Islam in its basic tenets, maintains important doctrinal differences that have had pervasive effects on the Shia world view. Most notably, Shias have viewed themselves as the opposition in Islam, the opponents of privilege and power. They believe that after the death of Ali and the ascension of the "usurper" Umayyads to the caliphate, Islam took the wrong path; therefore, obedience to existing temporal authority is not obligatory. Furthermore, in sacrificing his own life for a just cause, Husayn became the archetypal role model who inspired generations of Shias to fight for social equality and for economic justice.

During his caliphate, Ali had made Al Kufah his capital. The transfer of power to Syria and to its capital at Damascus aroused envy among Iraqis. The desire to regain preeminence prompted numerous rebellions in Iraq against Umayyad rule. Consequently, only men of unusual ability were sent to be governors of Al Basrah and Al Kufah. One of the most able was Ziyad ibn Abihi, who was initially governor of Al Basrah and later also of Al Kufah. Ziyad divided the residents of Al Kufah into four groups (not based on tribal affiliation) and appointed a leader for each one. He also sent 50,000 beduins to Khorasan (in northeastern Iran), the easternmost province of the empire, which was within the jurisdiction of Al Basrah and Al Kufah.

The Iraqis once again became restive when rival claimants for the Umayyad caliphate waged civil war between 687 and 692. Ibn Yusuf ath Thaqafi al Aajjay was sent as provincial governor to restore order in Iraq in 694. He pacified Iraq and encouraged both agriculture and education.

The Abbasid Caliphate, 750–1258

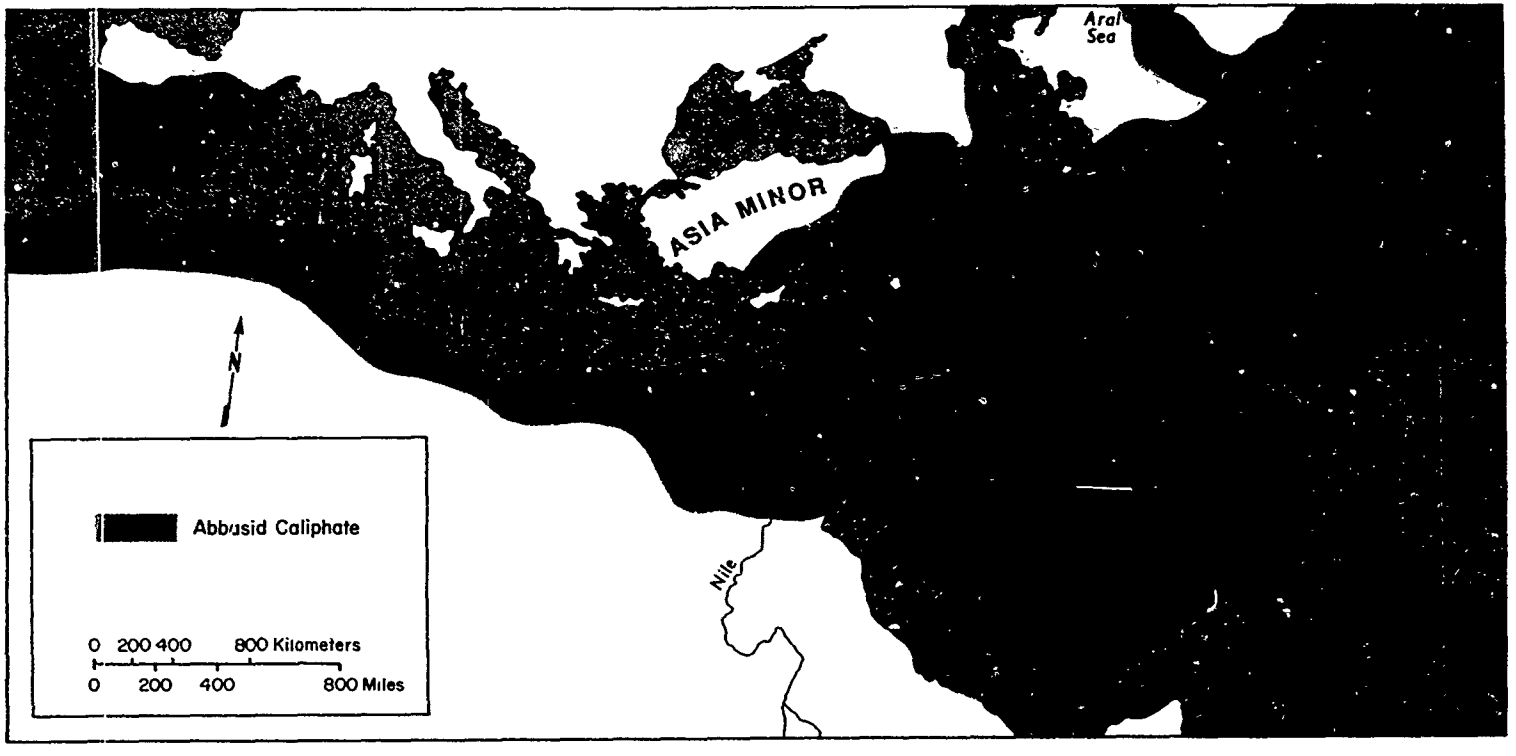
Many unsuccessful Iraqi and Iranian insurrectionists had fled to Khorasan, in addition to the 50,000 beduins who had been sent there by Ziyad. There, at the city of Merv (present-day Mary in the Soviet Union), a faction that supported Abd al Abbas (a descendant of the Prophet's uncle), was able to organize the rebels under the battle cry, "the House of Hashim." Hashim, the Prophet Muhammad's grandfather, was an ancestor of both the Shia line and the Abbas line, and the Shias therefore actively supported the Hashimite leader, Abu Muslim. In 747, Abu Muslim's army attacked the Umayyads and occupied Iraq. In 750, Abd al Abbas (not a Shia) was established in Baghdad as the first caliph of the Abbasid Dynasty. The Abbasids, whose line was called "the blessed dynasty" by it supporters, presented themselves to the people as

divine-right rulers who would initiate a new era of justice and prosperity. Their political policies were, however, remarkably similar to those of the Umayyads.

During the reign of its first seven caliphs, Baghdad became a center of power where Arab and Iranian cultures mingled to produce a blaze of philosophical, scientific, and literary glory. This era is remembered throughout the Arab world, and by Iraqis in particular, as the pinnacle of the Islamic past. It was the second Abbasid caliph, Al Mansur (754–75), who decided to build a new capital, surrounded by round walls, near the site of the Sassanid village of Baghdad. Within fifty years the population outgrew the city walls as people thronged to the capital to become part of the Abbasids' enormous bureaucracy or to engage in trade. Baghdad became a vast emporium of trade linking Asia and the Mediterranean (see fig. 3). By the reign of Mansur's grandson, Harun ar Rashid (786–806), Baghdad was second in size only to Constantinople. Baghdad was able to feed its enormous population and to export large quantities of grain because the political administration had realized the importance of controlling the flows of the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. The Abbasids reconstructed the city's canals, dikes, and reservoirs, and drained the swamps around Baghdad, freeing the city of malaria.

Harun ar Rashid, the caliph of the *Arabian Nights,* actively supported intellectual pursuits, but the great flowering of Arabic culture that is credited to the Abbasids reached its apogee during the reign of his son, Al Mamun (813–33). After the death of Harun ar Rashid, his sons, Amin and Al Mamun, quarreled over the succession to the caliphate. Their dispute soon erupted into civil war. Amin was backed by the Iraqis, while Al Mamun had the support of the Iranians. Al Mamun also had the support of the garrison at Khorasan and thus was able to take Baghdad in 813. Although Sunni Muslims, the Abbasids had hoped that by astute and stern rule they would be able to contain Shia resentment at yet another Sunni dynasty. The Iranians, many of whom were Shias, had hoped that Al Mamun would make his capital in their own country, possibly at Merv. Al Mamun, however, eventually realized that the Iraqi Shias would never countenance the loss of prestige and economic power if they no longer had the capital. He decided to center his rule in Baghdad.

Disappointed, the Iranians began to break away from Abbasid control. A series of local dynasties appeared: the Tahirids (821–873), the Suffarids (867–ca. 1495), and the Samanids (819–1005). The same process was repeated in the West: Spain broke away in 756, Morocco in 788, Tunisia in 800, and Egypt in 868. In Iraq there



Source: Based on information from Philip K. Hitti, *Makers of Arab History,* New York, 1968, 56.

Figure 3. The Abbasid Caliphate, A.D. 750

was trouble in the south. In 869, Ali ibn Muhammad (Ali the Abominable) founded a state of black slaves known as Zanj. The Zanj brought a large part of southern Iraq and southwestern Iran under their control and in the process enslaved many of their former masters. The Zanj Rebellion was finally put down in 883, but not before it had caused great suffering.

The Sunni-Shia split had weakened the effectiveness of Islam as a single unifying force and as a sanction for a single political authority. Although the intermingling of various linguistic and cultural groups contributed greatly to the enrichment of Islamic civilization, it also was a source of great tension and contributed to the decay of Abbasid power.

In addition to the cleavages between Arabs and Iranians and between Sunnis and Shias, the growing prominence of Turks in military and in political affairs gave cause for discontent and rivalry at court. Nomadic, Turkic-speaking warriors had been moving out of Central Asia into Transoxiana (i.e., across the Oxus River) for more than a millennium. The Abbasid caliphs began importing Turks as slave-warriors (Mamluks) early in the ninth century. The imperial palace guards of the Abbasids were Mamluks who were originally commanded by free Iraqi officers. By 833, however, Mamluks themselves were officers and gradually, because of their greater military proficiency and dedication, they began to occupy high positions at court. The mother of Caliph Mutasim (who came to power in 833) had been a Turkish slave, and her influence was substantial. By the tenth century, the Turkish commanders, no longer checked by their Iranian and Arab rivals at court, were able to appoint and depose caliphs. For the first time, the political power of the caliphate was fully separated from its religious function. The Mamluks continued to permit caliphs to come to power because of the importance of the office as a symbol for legitimizing claims to authority.

In 945, after subjugating western Iran, a military family known as the Buwayhids occupied Baghdad. Shias from the Iranian province of Daylam south of the Caspian Sea, the Buwayhids continued to permit Sunni Abbasid caliphs to ascend to the throne. The humiliation of the caliphate at being manipulated by Shias, and by Iranian ones at that, was immense.

The Buwayhids were ousted in 1055 by another group of Turkic speakers, the Seljuks. The Seljuks were the ruling clan of the Kinik group of the Oghuz (or Ghuzz) Turks, who lived north of the Oxus River. Their leader, Tughril Beg, turned his warriors first against the local ruler in Khorasan. He moved south and then west, conquering but not destroying the cities in his path. In 1055 the caliph

in Baghdad gave Tughril Beg robes, gifts, and the title, "King of the East." Because the Seljuks were Sunnis, their rule was welcomed in Baghdad. They treated the caliphs with respect, but the latter continued to be only figureheads.

There were several lines of Seljuks. The main line, ruling from Baghdad, controlled the area from the Bosporus to Chinese Turkestan until approximately 1155. The Seljuks continued to expand their territories, but they were content to let Iraqis and Iranians simply pay tribute while administering and ruling their own lands. One Seljuk, Malek Shah, extended Turkish rule to the countries of the eastern Mediterranean, Asia Minor, and to parts of Arabia. During his rule, Iraq and Iran enjoyed a cultural and scientific renaissance. This success is largely attributed to Malek Shah's brilliant Iranian vizier, Nizam al Mulk, one of the most skillful administrators in history. An astronomical observatory was established in which Umar (Omar) Khayyam did much of his experimentation for a new calendar, and religious schools were built in all the major towns. Abu Hamid al Ghazali, one of the greatest Islamic theologians, and other eminent scholars were brought to the Seljuk capital at Baghdad and were encouraged and supported in their work.

After the death of Malek Shah in 1092, Seljuk power disintegrated. Petty dynasties appeared throughout Iraq and Iran, and rival claimants to Seljuk rule dispatched each other. Between 1118 and 1194, nine Seljuk sultans ruled Baghdad; only one died a natural death. The atabegs (see Glossary), who initially had been majordomos for the Seljuks, began to assert themselves. Several founded local dynasties. An atabeg originated the Zangid Dynasty (1127–1222), with its seat at Mosul. The Zangids were instrumental in encouraging Muslims to oppose the invasions of the Christian Crusaders. Tughril (1177–94), the last Seljuk sultan of Iraq, was killed by the leader of a Turkish dynasty, the Khwarizm shahs, who lived south of the Aral Sea. Before his successor could establish Khwarizm rule in Iraq, however, Baghdad was overrun by the Mongol horde.

The Mongol Invasion

In the early years of the thirteenth century, a powerful Mongol leader named Temujin brought together a majority of the Mongol tribes and led them on a devastating sweep through China. At about this time, he changed his name to Chinggis (Genghis) Khan, meaning "World Conqueror." In 1219 he turned his force of 700,000 west and quickly devastated Bokhara, Samarkand, Balkh, Merv (all in what is now the Soviet Union), and Neyshabur (in present-day Iran), where he slaughtered every living thing. Before his death

in 1227, Chinggis Khan, pillaging and burning cities along the way, had reached western Azarbaijan in Iran. After Chinggis's death, the area enjoyed a brief respite that ended with the arrival of Hulagu Khan (1217–65), Chinggis's grandson. In 1258 he seized Baghdad and killed the last Abbasid caliph. While in Baghdad, Hulagu made a pyramid of the skulls of Baghdad's scholars, religious leaders, and poets, and he deliberately destroyed what remained of Iraq's canal headworks. The material and artistic production of centuries was swept away. Iraq became a neglected frontier province ruled from the Mongol capital of Tabriz in Iran.

After the death in 1335 of the last great Mongol khan, Abu Said (also known as Bahadur the Brave), a period of political confusion ensued in Iraq until a local petty dynasty, the Jalayirids, seized power. The Jalayirids ruled until the beginning of the fifteenth century. Jalayirid rule was abruptly checked by the rising power of a Mongol, Tamerlane (or Timur the Lame, 1336–1405), who had been atabeg of the reigning prince of Samarkand. In 1401 he sacked Baghdad and massacred many of its inhabitants. Tamerlane killed thousands of Iraqis and devastated hundreds of towns. Like Hulagu, Tamerlane had a penchant for building pyramids of skulls. Despite his showy display of Sunni piety, Tamerlane's rule virtually extinguished Islamic scholarship and Islamic arts everywhere except in his capital, Samarkand.

In Iraq, political chaos, severe economic depression, and social disintegration followed in the wake of the Mongol invasions. Baghdad, long a center of trade, rapidly lost its commercial importance. Basra, which had been a key transit point for seaborne commerce, was circumvented after the Portuguese discovered a shorter route around the Cape of Good Hope. In agriculture, Iraq's once-extensive irrigation system fell into disrepair, creating swamps and marshes at the edge of the delta and dry, uncultivated steppes farther out. The rapid deterioration of settled agriculture led to the growth of tribally based pastoral nomadism. By the end of the Mongol period, the focus of Iraqi history had shifted from the urban-based Abbasid culture to the tribes of the river valleys, where it would remain until well into the twentieth century.

The Ottoman Period, 1534–1918

From the sixteenth to the twentieth century, the course of Iraqi history was affected by the continuing conflicts between the Safavid Empire in Iran and the Ottoman Turks. The Safavids, who were the first to declare Shia Islam the official religion of Iran, sought to control Iraq both because of the Shia holy places at An Najaf and Karbala and because Baghdad, the seat of the old Abbasid

Empire, had great symbolic value. The Ottomans, fearing that Shia Islam would spread to Anatolia (Asia Minor), sought to maintain Iraq as a Sunni-controlled buffer state. In 1509 the Safavids, led by Ismail Shah (1502–24), conquered Iraq, thereby initiating a series of protracted battles with the Ottomans. In 1514 Sultan Selim the Grim attacked Ismail's forces and in 1535 the Ottomans, led by Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent (1520–66), conquered Baghdad from the Safavids. The Safavids reconquered Baghdad in 1623 under the leadership of Shah Abbas (1587–1629), but they were expelled in 1638 after a series of brilliant military maneuvers by the dynamic Ottoman sultan, Murad IV (see fig. 4).

The major impact of the Safavid-Ottoman conflict on Iraqi history was the deepening of the Shia-Sunni rift. Both the Ottomans and the Safavids used Sunni and Shia Islam respectively to mobilize domestic support. Thus, Iraq's Sunni population suffered immeasurably during the brief Safavid reign (1623–38), while Iraq's Shias were excluded from power altogether during the longer period of Ottoman supremacy (1638–1916). During the Ottoman period, the Sunnis gained the administrative experience that would allow them to monopolize political power in the twentieth century. The Sunnis were able to take advantage of new economic and educational opportunities while the Shias, frozen out of the political process, remained politically impotent and economically depressed. The Shia-Sunni rift continued as an important element of Iraqi social structure in the 1980s (see Religious Life, ch. 2).

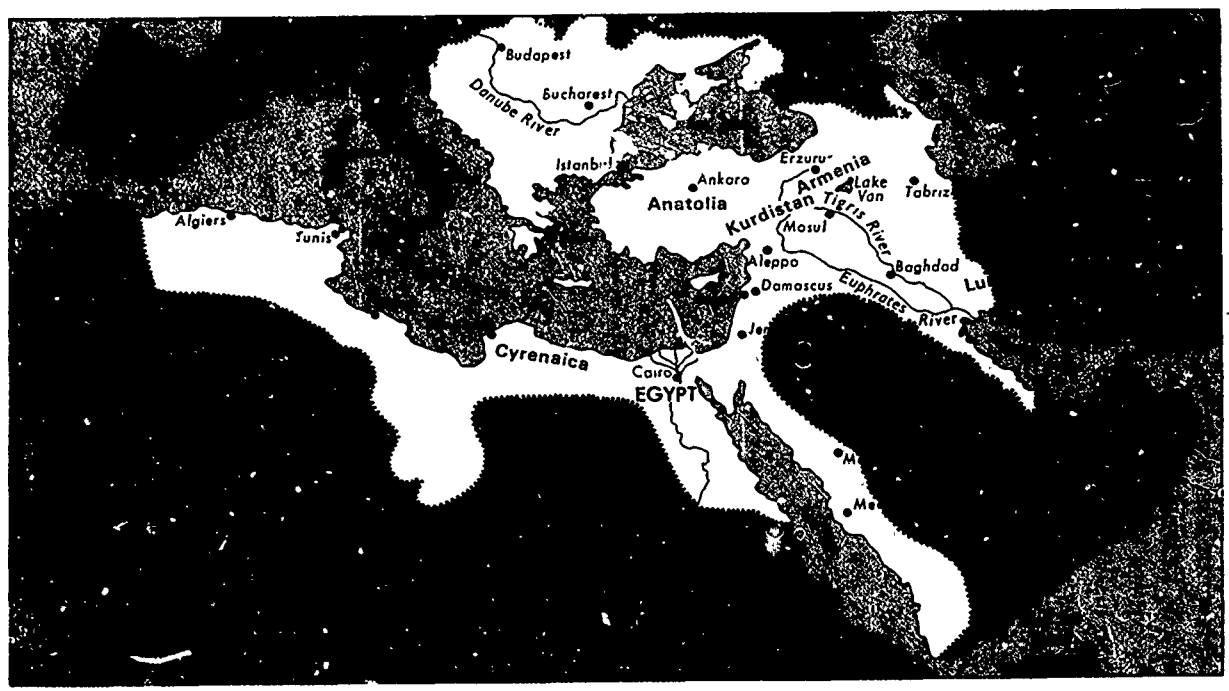
By the seventeenth century, the frequent conflicts with the Safavids had sapped the strength of the Ottoman Empire and had weakened its control over its provinces. In Iraq, tribal authority once again dominated; the history of nineteenth-century Iraq is a chronicle of tribal migrations and of conflict. The nomadic population swelled with the influx of beduins from Najd, in the Arabian Peninsula. Beduin raids on settled areas became impossible to curb. In the interior, the large and powerful Muntafiq tribal confederation took shape under the leadership of the Sunni Saadun family of Mecca. In the desert southwest, the Shammar—one of the biggest tribal confederations of the Arabian Peninsula—entered the Syrian desert and clashed with the Anayzah confederation. On the lower Tigris near Al Amarah, a new tribal confederation, the Bani Lam, took root. In the north, the Kurdish Baban Dynasty emerged and organized Kurdish resistance. The resistance made it impossible for the Ottomans to maintain even nominal suzerainty over Iraqi Kurdistan (land of the Kurds). Between 1625 and 1668, and from 1694 to 1701, local shaykhs ruled Al Basrah and the

marshlands, home of the Madan (Marsh Arabs). The powerful shaykhs basically ignored the Ottoman governor of Baghdad.

The cycle of tribal warfare and of deteriorating urban life that began in the thirteenth century with the Mongol invasions was temporarily reversed with the reemergence of the Mamluks. In the early eighteenth century, the Mamluks began asserting authority apart from the Ottomans. Extending their rule first over Basra, the Mamluks eventually controlled the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys from the Persian Gulf to the foothills of Kurdistan. For the most part, the Mamluks were able administrators, and their rule was marked by political stability and by economic revival. The greatest of the Mamluk leaders, Suleyman the II (1780–1802), made great strides in imposing the rule of law. The last Mamluk leader, Daud (1816–31), initiated important modernization programs that included clearing canals, establishing industries, training a 20,000-man army, and starting a printing press.

The Mamluk period ended in 1831, when a severe flood and plague devastated Baghdad, enabling the Ottoman sultan, Mahmud II, to reassert Ottoman sovereignty over Iraq. Ottoman rule was unstable; Baghdad, for example, had more than ten governors between 1831 and 1869. In 1869, however, the Ottomans regained authority when the reform-minded Midhat Pasha was appointed governor of Baghdad. Midhat immediately set out to modernize Iraq on the Western model. The primary objectives of Midhat's reforms, called the *tanzimat,* were to reorganize the army, to create codes of criminal and commercial law, to secularize the school system, and to improve provincial administration. He created provincial representative assemblies to assist the governor, and he set up elected municipal councils in the major cities. Staffed largely by Iraqi notables with no strong ties to the masses, the new offices nonetheless helped a group of Iraqis gain administrative experience.

By establishing government agencies in the cities and by attempting to settle the tribes, Midhat altered the tribal-urban balance of power, which since the thirteenth century had been largely in favor of the tribes. The most important element of Midhat's plan to extend Ottoman authority into the countryside was the 1858 TAPU land law (named after the initials of the government office issuing it). The new land reform replaced the feudal system of land holdings and tax farms with legally sanctioned property rights. It was designed both to induce tribal shaykhs to settle and to give them a stake in the existing political order. In practice, the TAPU laws enabled the tribal shaykhs to become large landowners; tribesmen, fearing that the new law was an attempt to collect taxes more effectively or to impose conscription, registered community-owned



Source: Based on information from Roderic H. Davidson, *Turkey,* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1968, 51; and Philip K. Hitti, *The Near East in History,* New York, 1961, 334.

Figure 4. The Ottoman Empire in the Mid-Seventeenth Century

tribal lands in their shaykhs' names or sold them outright to urban speculators. As a result, tribal shaykhs gradually were transformed into profit-seeking landlords while their tribesmen were relegated to the role of impoverished sharecroppers.

Midhat also attempted to replace Iraq's clerically run Islamic school system with a more secular educational system. The new, secular schools provided a channel of upward social mobility to children of all classes, and they led slowly to the growth of an Iraqi intelligentsia. They also introduced students for the first time to Western languages and disciplines.

The introduction of Western disciplines in the schools accompanied a greater Western political and economic presence in Iraq. The British had established a consulate at Baghdad in 1802, and a French consulate followed shortly thereafter. European interest in modernizing Iraq to facilitate Western commercial interests coincided with the Ottoman reforms. Steamboats appeared on the rivers in 1836, the telegraph was introduced in 1861, and the Suez Canal was opened in 1869, providing Iraq with greater access to European markets. The landowning tribal shaykhs began to export cash crops to the capitalist markets of the West.

In 1908 a new ruling clique, the Young Turks, took power in Istanbul. The Young Turks aimed at making the Ottoman Empire a unified nation-state based on Western models. They stressed secular politics and patriotism over the pan-Islamic ideology preached by Sultan Abd al Hamid. They reintroduced the 1876 constitution (this Ottoman constitution set forth the rights of the ruler and the ruled, but it derived from the ruler and has been called at best an "attenuated autocracy"), held elections throughout the empire, and reopened parliament. Although the Iraqi delegates represented only the well-established families of Baghdad, their parliamentary experience in Istanbul proved to be an important introduction to self-government.

Most important to the history of Iraq, the Young Turks aggressively pursued a "Turkification" policy that alienated the nascent Iraqi intelligentsia and set in motion a fledgling Arab nationalist movement. Encouraged by the Young Turks' Revolution of 1908, nationalists in Iraq stepped up their political activity. Iraqi nationalists met in Cairo with the Ottoman Decentralization Party, and some Iraqis joined the Young Arab Society, which moved to Beirut in 1913. Because of its greater exposure to Westerners who encouraged the nationalists, Basra became the center from which Iraqi nationalists began to demand a measure of autonomy. After nearly 400 years under Ottoman rule, Iraq was ill-prepared to form a nation-state. The Ottomans had failed to control Iraq's rebellious

tribal domains, and even in the cities their authority was tenuous. The Ottomans' inability to provide security led to the growth of autonomous, self-contained communities. As a result, Iraq entered the twentieth century beset by a complex web of social conflicts that seriously impeded the process of building a modern state.

The oldest and most deeply ingrained conflict was the competition between the tribes and the cities for control over the food-producing flatlands of the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. The centralization policies of the Sublime Porte (Ottoman government), especially in the nineteenth century, constituted a direct threat to the nomadic structure and the fierce fighting spirit of the tribes. In addition to tribal-urban conflicts, the tribes fought among themselves, and there was a fairly rigid hierarchy between the most powerful tribes, the so-called "people of the camel," and the weaker tribes that included the "people of the sheep," marshdwellers, and peasants. The cities also were sharply divided, both according to occupation and along religious lines. The various guilds resided in distinct, autonomous areas, and Shia and Sunni Muslims rarely intermingled. The territory that eventually became the state of Iraq was beset, furthermore, by regional differences in orientation; Mosul in the north had historically looked to Syria and to Turkey, whereas Baghdad and the Shia holy cities had maintained close ties with Iran and with the people of the western and southwestern deserts.

Although Ottoman weakness had allowed Iraq's self-contained communities to grow stronger, the modernization initiated by the Sublime Porte tended to break down traditional autonomous groupings and to create a new social order. Beginning with the *tanzimat* reforms in 1869, Iraq's mostly subsistence economy slowly was transformed into a market economy based on money and tied to the world capitalist market. Social status traditionally had been determined by noble lineage, by fighting prowess, and by knowledge of religion. With the advent of capitalism, social status increasingly was determined by property ownership and by the accumulation of wealth. Most disruptive in this regard was the TAPU land reform of 1858. Concomitantly, Western social and economic penetration increased; for example, Iraq's traditional crafts and craftsmen gradually were displaced by mass-produced British machine-made textiles.

The final Ottoman legacy in Iraq is related to the policies of the Young Turks and to the creation of a small but vocal Iraqi intelligentsia. Faced with the rapidly encroaching West, the Young Turks attempted to centralize the empire by imposing upon it the Turkish language and culture and by clamping down on newly won

political freedoms. These Turkification policies alienated many of the Ottoman-trained intelligentsia who had originally aligned themselves with the Young Turks in the hope of obtaining greater Arab autonomy. Despite its relatively small size, the nascent Iraqi intelligentsia formed several secret nationalist societies. The most important of these societies was Al Ahd (the Covenant), whose membership was drawn almost entirely from Iraqi officers in the Ottoman army. Membership in Al Ahd spread rapidly in Baghdad and in Mosul, growing to 4,000 by the outbreak of World War I. Despite the existence of Al Ahd and of other, smaller, nationalist societies, Iraqi nationalism was still mainly the concern of educated Arabs from the upper and the middle classes.

World War I and the British Mandate

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Ottoman territories had become the focus of European power politics. During the previous century, enfeebled Ottoman rule had invited intense competition among European powers for commercial benefits and for spheres of influence. British interest in Iraq significantly increased when the Ottomans granted concessions to Germany to construct railroad lines from Konya in southwest Turkey to Baghdad in 1899 and from Baghdad to Basra in 1902. The British feared that a hostile German presence in the Fertile Crescent would threaten vital lines of communication to India via Iran and Afghanistan, menacing British oil interests in Iran and perhaps even India itself.

In 1914 when the British discovered that Turkey was entering the war on the side of the Germans, British forces from India landed at Al Faw on the Shatt al Arab and moved rapidly toward Basra. By the fall of 1915, when British forces were already well established in towns in the south, General Charles Townshend unsuccessfully attempted to take Baghdad. In retaliation, the Turks besieged the British garrison at Al Kut for 140 days; in April 1916, the garrison was forced to surrender unconditionally. The British quickly regrouped their forces, however, and resumed their advance under General Stanley Maude in December 1916. By March 1917 the British had captured Baghdad. Advancing northward in the spring of 1918, the British finally took Mosul in early November. As a result of the victory at Mosul, British authority was extended to all the Iraqi *wilayat* (sing., *wilayah*-province) with the exception of the Kurdish highlands bordering Turkey and Iran, the land alongside the Euphrates from Baghdad south to An Nasiriyah, and the Shia cities of Karbala and An Najaf.

On capturing Baghdad, General Maude proclaimed that Britain intended to return to Iraq some control of its own affairs. He

stressed that this step would pave the way for ending the alien rule that the Iraqis had experienced since the latter days of the Abbasid caliphate. The proclamation was in accordance with the encouragement the British had given to Arab nationalists, such as Jafar al Askari; his brother-in-law, Nuri as Said; and Jamil al Midfai, who sought emancipation from Ottoman rule. The nationalists had supported the Allied powers in expectation of both the Ottoman defeat and the freedom many nationalists assumed would come with an Allied victory.

During the war, events in Iraq were greatly influenced by the Hashimite family of Husayn ibn Ali, sharif of Mecca, who claimed descent from the family of the Prophet Muhammad. Aspiring to become king of an independent Arab kingdom, Husayn had broken with the Ottomans, to whom he had been vassal, and had thrown in his lot with the British. Anxious for his support, the British gave Husayn reason to believe that he would have their endorsement when the war ended. Accordingly, Husayn and his sons led the June 1916 Arab Revolt, marching northward in conjunction with the British into Transjordan, Palestine, and Syria.

Anticipating the fulfillment of Allied pledges, Husayn's son, Prince Faisal (who was later to become modern Iraq's first king), arrived in Paris in 1919 as the chief spokesman for the Arab cause. Much to his disappointment, Faisal found that the Allied powers were less than enthusiastic about Arab independence.

At the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, under Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant, Iraq was formally made a Class A mandate entrusted to Britain. This award was completed on April 25, 1920, at the San Remo Conference in Italy. Palestine also was placed under British mandate, and Syria was placed under French mandate. Faisal, who had been proclaimed king of Syria by a Syrian national congress in Damascus in March 1920, was ejected by the French in July of the same year.

The civil government of postwar Iraq was headed originally by the high commissioner, Sir Percy Cox, and his deputy, Colonel Arnold Talbot Wilson. The British were confronted with Iraq's age-old problems, compounded by some new ones. Villagers demanded that the tribes be restrained, and tribes demanded that their titles to tribal territories be extended and confirmed. Merchants demanded more effective legal procedures, courts, and laws to protect their activities and interests. Municipal authorities appealed for defined powers and grants-in-aid in addition to the establishment of public health and education facilities. Landlords pressed for grants of land, for the building of canals and roads, and for the provision of tested seeds and livestock.



Entrance to the ruins of Babylon
Courtesy Ronald L. Kuipers

The holy cities of An Najaf and Karbala and their satellite tribes were in a state of near anarchy. British reprisals after the murder of a British officer in An Najaf failed to restore order. The Anayzah, the Shammar, and the Jubur tribes of the western desert were beset by violent infighting. British administration had yet to be established in the mountains of Kurdistan. Meanwhile, from the Hakkari Mountains beyond Iraq's northern frontier and from the plains of Urmia in Iran, thousands of Assyrians began to pour into Iraqi territory seeking refuge from Turkish savagery. The most striking problem facing the British was the growing anger of the nationalists, who felt betrayed at being accorded mandate status. The nationalists soon came to view the mandate as a flimsy disguise for colonialism. The experienced Cox delegated governance of the country to Wilson while he served in Persia between April 1918 and October 1920. The younger man governed Iraq with the kind of paternalism that had characterized British rule in India. Impatient to establish an efficient administration, Wilson used experienced Indians to staff subordinate positions within his administration. The exclusion of Iraqis from administrative posts added humiliation to Iraqi discontent.

Three important anticolonial secret societies had been formed in Iraq during 1918 and 1919. At An Najaf, Jamiyat an Nahda al Islamiya (The League of the Islamic Awakening) was organized;

its numerous and varied members included ulama (religious leaders), journalists, landlords, and tribal leaders. Members of the Jamiyat assassinated a British officer in the hope that the killing would act as a catalyst for a general rebellion at Iraq's other holy city, Karbala. Al Jamiya al Wataniya al Islamiya (The Muslim National League) was formed with the object of organizing and mobilizing the population for major resistance. In February 1919, in Baghdad, a coalition of Shia merchants, Sunni teachers and civil servants, Sunni and Shia ulama, and Iraqi officers formed the Haras al Istiqlal (The Guardians of Independence). The Istiqlal had member groups in Karbala, An Najaf, Al Kut, and Al Hillah.

Local outbreaks against British rule had occurred even before the news reached Iraq that the country had been given only mandate status. Upon the death of an important Shia *mujtahid* (religious scholar) in early May 1920, Sunni and Shia ulama temporarily put aside their differences as the memorial services metamorphosed into political rallies. Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting, began later in that month; once again, through nationalistic poetry and oratory, religious leaders exhorted the people to throw off the bonds of imperialism. Violent demonstrations and strikes followed the British arrest of several leaders.

When the news of the mandate reached Iraq in late May, a group of Iraqi delegates met with Wilson and demanded independence. Wilson dismissed them as a "handful of ungrateful politicians." Nationalist political activity was stepped up, and the grand *mujtahid* of Karbala, Imam Shirazi, and his son, Mirza Muhammad Riza, began to organize the effort in earnest. Arab flags were made and distributed, and pamphlets were handed out urging the tribes to prepare for revolt. Muhammad Riza acted as liaison among insurgents in An Najaf and in Karbala, and the tribal confederations. Shirazi then issued a *fatwa* (religious ruling), pointing out that it was against Islamic law for Muslims to countenance being ruled by non-Muslims, and he called for a jihad against the British.

By July 1920, Mosul was in rebellion against British rule, and the insurrection moved south down the Euphrates River valley. The southern tribes, who cherished their long-held political autonomy, needed little inducement to join in the fray. They did not cooperate in an organized effort against the British, however, which limited the effect of the revolt. The country was in a state of anarchy for three months; the British restored order only with great difficulty and with the assistance of Royal Air Force bombers. British forces were obliged to send for reinforcements from India and from Iran.

Ath Thawra al Iraqiyya al Kubra, or The Great Iraqi Revolution (as the 1920 rebellion is called), was a watershed event in contemporary Iraqi history. For the first time, Sunnis and Shias, tribes and cities, were brought together in a common effort. In the opinion of Hanna Batatu, author of a seminal work on Iraq, the building of a nation-state in Iraq depended upon two major factors: the integration of Shias and Sunnis into the new body politic and the successful resolution of the age-old conflicts between the tribes and the riverine cities and among the tribes themselves over the food-producing flatlands of the Tigris and the Euphrates. The 1920 rebellion brought these groups together, if only briefly; this constituted an important first step in the long and arduous process of forging a nation-state out of Iraq's conflict-ridden social structure.

The 1920 revolt had been very costly to the British in both manpower and money. Whitehall was under domestic pressure to devise a formula that would provide the maximum control over Iraq at the least cost to the British taxpayer. The British replaced the military regime with a provisional Arab government, assisted by British advisers and answerable to the supreme authority of the high commissioner for Iraq, Cox. The new administration provided a channel of communication between the British and the restive population, and it gave Iraqi leaders an opportunity to prepare for eventual self-government. The provisional government was aided by the large number of trained Iraqi administrators who returned home when the French ejected Faisal from Syria. Like earlier Iraqi governments, however, the provisional government was composed chiefly of Sunni Arabs; once again the Shias were underrepresented.

At the Cairo Conference of 1921, the British set the parameters for Iraqi political life that were to continue until the 1958 revolution; they chose Faisal as Iraq's first King; they established an indigenous Iraqi army; and they proposed a new treaty. To confirm Faisal as Iraq's first monarch, a one-question plebiscite was carefully arranged that had a return of 96 percent in his favor. The British saw in Faisal a leader who possessed sufficient nationalist and Islamic credentials to have broad appeal, but who also was vulnerable enough to remain dependent on their support. Faisal traced his descent from the family of the Prophet Muhammad, and his ancestors had held political authority in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina since the tenth century. The British believed that these credentials would satisfy traditional Arab standards of political legitimacy; moreover, the British thought that Faisal would be accepted by the growing Iraqi nationalist movement because of his role in the 1916 revolt against the Turks, his achievements as a

leader of the Arab emancipation movement, and his general leadership qualities.

As a counterforce to the nationalistic inclinations of the monarchy and as a means of insuring the king's dependence, the British cultivated the tribal shaykhs, whose power had been waning since the end of the nineteenth century. While the new king sought to create a national consciousness, to strengthen the institutions of the emerging state, and especially to create a national military, the tribal shaykhs supported a fragmented community and sought to weaken the coercive power of the state. A major goal of the British policy was to keep the monarchy stronger than any one tribe but weaker than a coalition of tribes so that British power would ultimately be decisive in arbitrating disputes between the two.

Ultimately, the British-created monarchy suffered from a chronic legitimacy crisis: the concept of a monarchy was alien to Iraq. Despite his Islamic and pan-Arab credentials, Faisal was not an Iraqi, and, no matter how effectively he ruled, Iraqis saw the monarchy as a British creation. The continuing inability of the government to gain the confidence of the people fueled political instability well into the 1970s.

The British decision at the Cairo Conference to establish an indigenous Iraqi army was significant. In Iraq, as in most of the developing world, the military establishment has been the best organized institution in an otherwise weak political system. Thus, while Iraq's body politic crumbled under immense political and economic pressure throughout the monarchic period, the military gained increasing power and influence; moreover, because the officers in the new army were by necessity Sunnis who had served under the Ottomans, while the lower ranks were predominantly filled by Shia tribal elements, Sunni dominance in the military was preserved.

The final major decision taken at the Cairo Conference related to the new Anglo-Iraqi Treaty. Faisal was under pressure from the nationalists and the anti-British *mujtahids* of An Najaf and Karbala to limit both British influence in Iraq and the duration of the treaty. Recognizing that the monarchy depended on British support—and wishing to avoid a repetition of his experience in Syria—Faisal maintained a moderate approach in dealing with Britain. The twenty-year treaty, which was ratified in October 1922, stated that the king would heed British advice on all matters affecting British interests and on fiscal policy as long as Iraq was in debt to Britain, and that British officials would be appointed to specified posts in eighteen departments to act as advisers and inspectors. A subsequent financial agreement, which significantly increased the financial

burden on Iraq, required Iraq to pay half the cost of supporting British resident officials, among other expenses. British obligations under the new treaty included providing various kinds of aid, notably military assistance, and proposing Iraq for membership in the League of Nations at the earliest moment. In effect, the treaty ensured that Iraq would remain politically and economically dependent on Britain. While unable to prevent the treaty, Faisal clearly felt that the British had gone back on their promises to him.

After the treaty had been signed, Iraq readied itself for the country-wide elections that had been provided for in the May 1922 Electoral Law. There were important changes in the government at this time. Cox resigned his position as high commissioner and was replaced by Sir Henry Dobbs; Iraq's aging prime minister, Abd ar Rahman al Gailani, stepped down and was replaced by Abd al Muhsin as Saadun. In April 1923, Saadun signed a protocol that shortened the treaty period to four years. As a result of the elections, however, Saadun was replaced by Jafar al Askari, a veteran of the Arab Revolt and an early supporter of Faisal.

The elected Constituent Assembly met for the first time in March 1924, and it formally ratified the treaty despite strong (and sometimes physical) opposition on the part of many in the assembly. The assembly also accepted the Organic Law that declared Iraq to be a sovereign state with a representative system of government and a hereditary constitutional monarchy. The newly ratified constitution—which, along with the treaty, had been hotly debated—legislated an important British role in Iraqi affairs. The major issue at stake in the constitutional debate revolved around the powers of the monarchy. In the final draft, British interests prevailed, and the monarchy was granted wide-ranging powers that included the right to confirm all laws, to call for a general election, to prorogue parliament, and to issue ordinances for the fulfillment of treaty obligations without parliamentary sanctions. Like the treaty, the constitution provided the British with a means of indirect control in Iraq.

After the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was ratified, the most pressing issue confronting the newly established constitutional monarchy was the question of boundaries, especially in the former Ottoman *wilayah* of Mosul, now known as Mosul Province. The status of Mosul Province was complicated by two factors, the British desire to gain oil concessions and the existence of a majority Kurdish population that was seeking independence apart from either Iraq or Turkey. According to the Treaty of Sèvres, concluded in 1920 with the Ottoman sultan, Mosul was to be part of an autonomous Kurdish state. The treaty was scrapped, however, when nationalist

leader Mustafa Kamal (1881-1938—also known as Atatürk) came to power in Turkey and established control over the Kurdish areas in eastern Turkey. In 1923, after two failed British attempts to establish an autonomous Kurdish province, London decided to include the Kurds in the new Iraqi state with the proviso that Kurds would hold government positions in Kurdish areas and that the Kurdish language would be preserved. The British decision to include Mosul in Iraq was based largely on their belief that the area contained large oil deposits.

Before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the British-controlled Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC) had held concessionary rights to the Mosul *wilayah*. Under the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement—an agreement in 1916 between Britain and France that delineated future control of the Middle East—the area would have fallen under French influence. In 1919, however, the French relinquished their claims to Mosul under the terms of the Long-Berenger Agreement. The 1919 agreement granted the French a 25 percent share in the TPC as compensation.

Beginning in 1923, British and Iraqi negotiators held acrimonious discussions over the new oil concession. The major obstacle was Iraq's insistence on a 20-percent equity participation in the company; this figure had been included in the original TPC concession to the Turks and had been agreed upon at San Remo for the Iraqis. In the end, despite strong nationalist sentiments against the concession agreement, the Iraqi negotiators acquiesced to it. The League of Nations was soon to vote on the disposition of Mosul, and the Iraqis feared that, without British support, Iraq would lose the area to Turkey. In March 1925, an agreement was concluded that contained none of the Iraqi demands. The TPC, now renamed the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), was granted a concession for a period of seventy-five years.

In 1925 the League of Nations decided that Mosul Province would be considered a part of Iraq, but it also suggested that the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty be extended from four to twenty-five years as a protection for the Kurdish minority, who intensely distrusted the Iraqi government. The Iraqis also were to give due regard to Kurdish sensibilities in matters of culture and of language. Although reluctant to do so, the Iraqi assembly ratified the treaty in January 1926. Turkey was eventually reconciled to the loss by being promised one-tenth of any oil revenues that might accrue in the area, and a tripartite Anglo-Turco-Iraqi treaty was signed in July 1926. This settlement was to have important repercussions, both positive and negative, for the future of Iraq. Vast oil revenues would accrue from the Mosul Province, but the inclusion of a large number

of well-armed and restless Kurds in Iraqi territory would continue to plague Iraqi governments.

With the signing of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty and the settling of the Mosul question, Iraqi politics took on a new dynamic. The emerging class of Sunni and Shia landowning tribal shaykhs vied for positions of power with wealthy and prestigious urban-based Sunni families and with Ottoman-trained army officers and bureaucrats. Because Iraq's newly established political institutions were the creation of a foreign power, and because the concept of democratic government had no precedent in Iraqi history, the politicians in Baghdad lacked legitimacy and never developed deeply rooted constituencies. Thus, despite a constitution and an elected assembly, Iraqi politics was more a shifting alliance of important personalities and cliques than a democracy in the Western sense. The absence of broadly based political institutions inhibited the early nationalist movement's ability to make deep inroads into Iraq's diverse social structure. Thus, despite the widely felt resentment at Iraq's mandate status, the burgeoning nationalist movement was largely ineffective.

Nonetheless, through the late 1920s, the nationalists persisted in opposing the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty and in demanding independence. A treaty more favorable to the Iraqis was presented in December 1927. It remained unratified, however, because of nationalist demands for an unconditional promise of independence. This promise eventually was made by the new high commissioner, Sir Gilbert Clayton, in 1929, but the confusion occasioned by the sudden death of Clayton and by the suicide of Abd al Muhsin as Saadun, the most powerful Iraqi advocate of the treaty, delayed the writing of a new treaty. In June 1929, the nationalists received their first positive response from London when a newly elected Labour Party government announced its intention to support Iraq's admission to the League of Nations in 1932 and to negotiate a new treaty recognizing Iraq's independence.

Faisal's closest adviser (and soon-to-be Iraqi strongman), Nuri as Said, carried out the treaty negotiations. Despite widespread opposition, Nuri as Said was able to force the treaty through parliament. The new Anglo-Iraqi Treaty was signed in June 1930. It provided for a "close alliance," for "full and frank consultations between the two countries in all matters of foreign policy," and for mutual assistance in case of war. Iraq granted the British the use of air bases near Basra and at Al Habbaniyah and the right to move troops across the country. The treaty, of twenty-five years' duration, was to come into force upon Iraq's admission to the League of Nations. The terms of the treaty gained Nuri as Said

favor in British eyes but discredited him in the eyes of the Iraqi nationalists, who vehemently opposed its lengthy duration and the leasing of air bases. The Kurds and the Assyrians also opposed the treaty because it offered no guarantees for their status in the new country.

Iraq as an Independent Monarchy

On October 13, 1932, Iraq became a sovereign state, and it was admitted to the League of Nations. Iraq still was beset by a complex web of social, economic, ethnic, religious, and ideological conflicts, all of which retarded the process of state formation. The declaration of statehood and the imposition of fixed boundaries triggered an intense competition for power in the new entity. Sunnis and Shias, cities and tribes, shaykhs and tribesmen, Assyrians and Kurds, pan-Arabists and Iraqi nationalists—all fought vigorously for places in the emerging state structure. Ultimately, lacking legitimacy and unable to establish deep roots, the British-imposed political system was overwhelmed by these conflicting demands.

The Sunni-Shia conflict, a problem since the beginning of domination by the Umayyad caliphate in 661, continued to frustrate attempts to mold Iraq into a political community. The Shia tribes of the southern Euphrates, along with urban Shias, feared complete Sunni domination in the government. Their concern was well founded; a disproportionate number of Sunnis occupied administrative positions. Favored by the Ottomans, the Sunnis historically had gained much more administrative experience. The Shias' depressed economic situation further widened the Sunni-Shia split, and it intensified Shia efforts to obtain a greater share of the new state's budget.

The arbitrary borders that divided Iraq and the other Arab lands of the old Ottoman Empire caused severe economic dislocations, frequent border disputes, and a debilitating ideological conflict. The cities of Mosul in the north and Basra in the south, separated from their traditional trading partners in Syria and in Iran, suffered severe commercial dislocations that led to economic depression. In the south, the British-created border (drawn through the desert on the understanding that the region was largely uninhabited) impeded migration patterns and led to great tribal unrest. Also in the south, uncertainty surrounding Iraq's new borders with Kuwait, with Saudi Arabia, and especially with Iran led to frequent border skirmishes. The new boundaries also contributed to the growth of competing nationalisms; Iraqi versus pan-Arab loyalties would severely strain Iraqi politics during the 1950s and the 1960s, when Egyptian leader Gamal Abdul Nasser held emotional sway over the Iraqi masses.

Ethnic groups such as the Kurds and the Assyrians, who had hoped for their own autonomous states, rebelled against inclusion within the Iraqi state. The Kurds, the majority of whom lived in the area around Mosul, had long been noted for their fierce spirit of independence and separatism. During the 1922 to 1924 period, the Kurds had engaged in a series of revolts in response to British encroachment in areas of traditional Kurdish autonomy; moreover, the Kurds preferred Turkish to Arab rule. When the League of Nations awarded Mosul to Iraq in 1925, Kurdish hostility thus increased. The Iraqi government maintained an uneasy peace with the Kurds in the first year of independence, but Kurdish hostility would remain an intractable problem for future governments.

From the start, the relationship of the Iraqi government with the Assyrians was openly hostile. Britain had resettled 20,000 Assyrians in northern Iraq around Zakhu and Dahuk after Turkey violently quelled a British-inspired Assyrian rebellion in 1918. As a result, approximately three-fourths of the Assyrians who had sided with the British during World War I now found themselves citizens of Iraq. The Assyrians found this situation both objectionable and dangerous. Thousands of Assyrians had been incorporated into the Iraq Levies, a British-paid and British-officered force separate from the regular Iraqi army. They had been encouraged by the British to consider themselves superior to the majority of Arab Iraqis by virtue of their profession of Christianity. The British also had used them for retaliatory operations against the Kurds, in whose lands most of the Assyrians had settled. Pro-British, they had been apprehensive of Iraqi independence.

The Assyrians had hoped to form a nation-state in a region of their own. When no unoccupied area sufficiently large could be found, the Assyrians continued to insist that, at the very least, their patriarch, the Mar Shamun, be given some temporal authority. This demand was flatly refused by both the British and the Iraqis. In response, the Assyrians, who had been permitted by the British to retain their weapons after the dissolution of the Iraq Levies, flaunted their strength and refused to recognize the government. In retaliation the Iraqi authorities held the Mar Shamun under virtual house arrest in mid-1933, making his release contingent on his signing a document renouncing forever any claims to temporal authority. During July about 800 armed Assyrians headed for the Syrian border. For reasons that have never been explained, they were repelled by the Syrians. During this time, King Faisal was outside the country for reasons of health. According to scholarly sources, Minister of Interior Hikmat Sulayman had adopted a policy aimed at the elimination of the Assyrians. This policy apparently

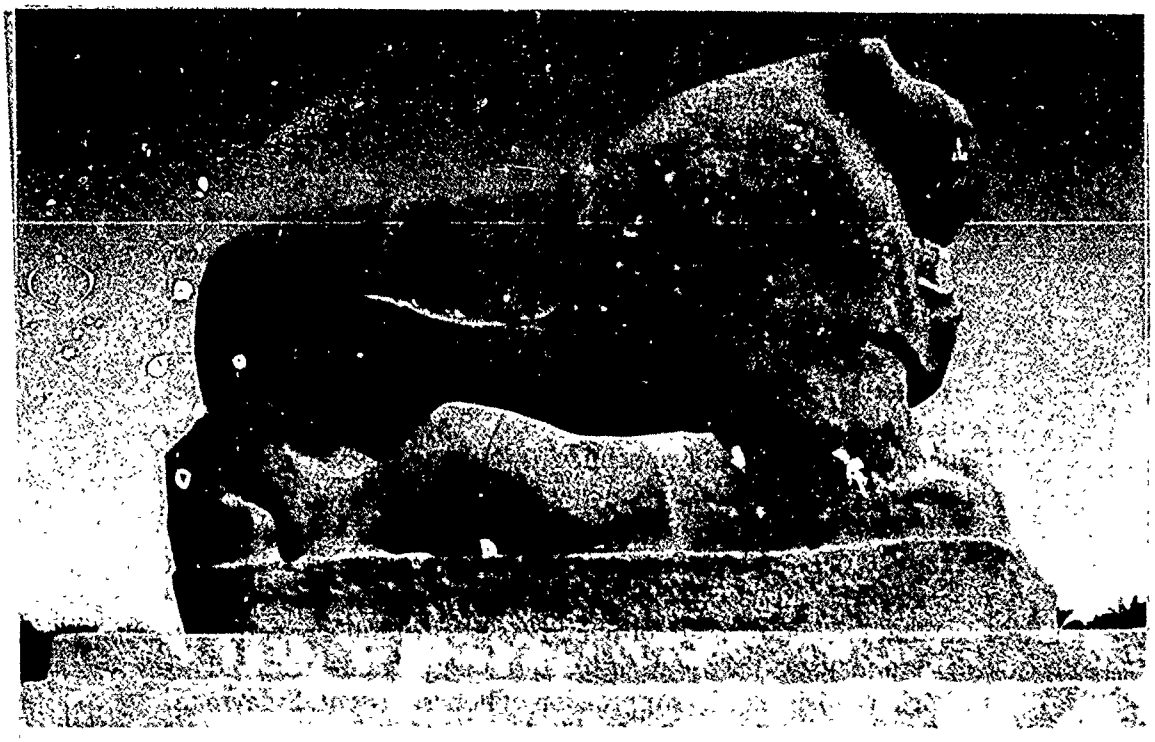
was implemented by a Kurd, General Bakr Sidqi, who, after engaging in several clashes with the Assyrians, permitted his men to kill about 300 Assyrians, including women and children, at the Assyrian village of Simel (Sumayyil).

The Assyrian affair marked the military's entrance into Iraqi politics, setting a precedent that would be followed throughout the 1950s and the 1960s. It also paved the way for the passage of a conscription law that strengthened the army and, as increasing numbers of tribesmen were brought into military service, sapped strength from the tribal shaykhs. The Assyrian affair also set the stage for the increased prominence of Bakr Sidqi.

At the time of independence, tribal Iraq was experiencing a destabilizing realignment characterized by the waning role of the shaykhs in tribal society. The privatization of property rights, begun with the *tanzimat* reforms in the late 1860s, intensified when the British-supported Lazmah land reform of 1932 dispossessed even greater numbers of tribesmen. While the British were augmenting the economic power of the shaykhs, however, the tribal-urban balance was rapidly shifting in favor of the cities. The accelerated pace of modernization and the growth of a highly nationalistic intelligentsia, of a bureaucracy, and of a powerful military, all favored the cities. Thus, while the economic position of the shaykhs had improved significantly, their role in tribal society and their status in relation to the rapidly emerging urban elite had seriously eroded. These contradictory trends in tribal structure and authority pushed tribal Iraq into a major social revolution that would last for the next thirty years.

The ascendancy of the cities and the waning power of the tribes were most evident in the ease with which the military, led by Bakr Sidqi, put down tribal unrest. The tribal revolts themselves were set off by the government's decision in 1934 to allocate money for the new conscription plan rather than for a new dam, which would have improved agricultural productivity in the south.

The monarchy's ability to deal with tribal unrest suffered a major setback in September 1933, when King Faisal died while undergoing medical treatment in Switzerland. Faisal's death meant the loss of the main stabilizing personality in Iraqi politics. He was the one figure with sufficient prestige to draw the politicians together around a concept of national interest. Faisal was succeeded by his twenty-one-year-old son, Ghazi (1933–39), an ardent but inexperienced Arab nationalist. Unlike his father, Ghazi was a product of Western education and had little experience with the complexities of Iraqi tribal life. Ghazi also was unable to balance nationalist and British pressures within the framework of the Anglo-Iraqi





A statue of a lion at Babylon
Courtesy Ronald L. Kuipers
Bas relief, Babylon
Courtesy Ronald L. Kuipers

alliance; increasingly, the nationalist movement saw the monarchy as a British puppet. Iraqi politics during Ghazi's reign degenerated into a meaningless competition among narrowly based tribal shaykhs and urban notables that further eroded the legitimacy of the state and its constitutional structures.

In 1936 Iraq experienced its first military coup d'état—the first coup d'état in the modern Arab world. The agents of the coup, General Bakr Sidqi and two politicians (Hikmat Sulayman and Abu Timman, who were Turkoman and Shia respectively), represented a minority response to the pan-Arab Sunni government of Yasin al Hashimi. The eighteen-month Hashimi government was the most successful and the longest lived of the eight governments that came and went during the reign of King Ghazi. Hashimi's government was nationalistic and pan-Arab, but many Iraqis resented its authoritarianism and its suppression of honest dissent. Sulayman, a reformer, sought to engineer an alliance of other reformers and minority elements within the army. The reformers included communists, orthodox and unorthodox socialists, and persons with more moderate positions. Most of the more moderate reformers were associated with the leftist-leaning *Al Ahali* newspaper, from which their group took its name.

The Sidqi coup marked a major turning point in Iraqi history; it made a crucial breach in the constitution, and it opened the door to further military involvement in politics. It also temporarily displaced the elite that had ruled since the state was founded; the new government contained few Arab Sunnis and not a single advocate of a pan-Arab cause. This configuration resulted in a foreign policy oriented toward Turkey and Iran instead of toward the Arab countries. The new government promptly signed an agreement with Iran, temporarily settling the question of boundary between Iraq and Iran in the Shatt al Arab. Iran maintained that it had agreed under British pressure to the international boundary's being set at the low water mark on the Iranian side rather than the usual international practice of the midpoint or thalweg.

After Bakr Sidqi moved against Baghdad, Sulayman formed an Ahali cabinet. Hashimi and Rashid Ali were banished, and Nuri as Said fled to Egypt. In the course of the assault on Baghdad, Nuri as Said's brother-in-law, Minister of Defense Jafar Askari, was killed.

Ghazi sanctioned Sulayman's government even though it had achieved power unconstitutionally; nevertheless, the coalition of forces that gained power in 1936 was beset by major contradictions. The Ahali group was interested in social reform whereas Sidqi and his supporters in the military were interested in expansion.

Sidqi, moreover, alienated important sectors of the population: the nationalists in the army resented him because of his Kurdish background and because he encouraged Kurds to join the army; the Shias abhorred him because of his brutal suppression of a tribal revolt the previous year; and Nuri as Said sought revenge for the murder of his brother-in-law. Eventually, Sidqi's excesses alienated both his civilian and his military supporters, and he was murdered by a military group in August 1937.

In April 1939, Ghazi was killed in an automobile accident and was succeeded by his infant son, Faisal II. Ghazi's first cousin, Amir Abd al Ilah, was made regent. The death of Ghazi and the rise of Prince Abd al Ilah and Nuri as Said—the latter one of the Ottoman-trained officers who had fought with Sharif Husayn of Mecca—dramatically changed both the goals and the role of the monarchy. Whereas Faisal and Ghazi had been strong Arab nationalists and had opposed the British-supported tribal shaykhs, Abd al Ilah and Nuri as Said were Iraqi nationalists who relied on the tribal shaykhs as a counterforce against the growing urban nationalist movement. By the end of the 1930s, pan-Arabism had become a powerful ideological force in the Iraqi military, especially among younger officers who hailed from the northern provinces and who had suffered economically from the partition of the Ottoman Empire. The British role in quelling the Palestine revolt of 1936 to 1939 further intensified anti-British sentiments in the military and led a group of disgruntled officers to form the Free Officers' Movement, which aimed at overthrowing the monarchy.

As World War II approached, Nazi Germany attempted to capitalize on the anti-British sentiments in Iraq and to woo Baghdad to the Axis cause. In 1939 Iraq severed diplomatic relations with Germany—as it was obliged to do because of treaty obligations with Britain. In 1940, however, the Iraqi nationalist and ardent anglophobe Rashid Ali succeeded Nuri as Said as prime minister. The new prime minister was reluctant to break completely with the Axis powers, and he proposed restrictions on British troop movements in Iraq.

Abd al Ilah and Nuri as Said both were proponents of close cooperation with Britain. They opposed Rashid Ali's policies and pressed him to resign. In response, Rashid Ali and four generals led a military coup that ousted Nuri as Said and the regent, both of whom escaped to Transjordan. Shortly after seizing power in 1941, Rashid Ali appointed an ultranationalist civilian cabinet, which gave only conditional consent to British requests in April 1941 for troop landings in Iraq. The British quickly retaliated by landing forces at Basra, justifying this second occupation of Iraq

by citing Rashid Ali's violation of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930. Many Iraqis regarded the move as an attempt to restore British rule. They rallied to the support of the Iraqi army, which received a number of aircraft from the Axis powers. The Germans, however, were preoccupied with campaigns in Crete and with preparations for the invasion of the Soviet Union, and they could spare little assistance to Iraq. As the British steadily advanced, Rashid Ali and his government fled to Egypt. An armistice was signed on May 30. Abd al Ilah returned as regent, and Rashid Ali and the four generals were tried in absentia and were sentenced to death. The generals returned to Iraq and were subsequently executed, but Rashid Ali remained in exile.

The most important aspect of the Rashid Ali coup of 1941 was Britain's use of Transjordan's Arab Legion against the Iraqis and their reimposition by force of arms of Abd al Ilah as regent. Nothing contributed more to nationalist sentiment in Iraq, especially in the military, than the British invasion of 1941 and the reimposition of the monarchy. From then on, the monarchy was completely divorced from the powerful nationalist trend. Widely viewed as an anachronism that lacked popular legitimacy, the monarchy was perceived to be aligned with social forces that were retarding the country's development.

In January 1943, under the terms of the 1930 treaty with Britain, Iraq declared war on the Axis powers. Iraq cooperated completely with the British under the successive governments of Nuri as Said (1941–44) and Hamdi al Pachachi (1944–46). Iraq became a base for the military occupation of Iran and of the Levant (see Glossary). In March 1945, Iraq became a founding member of the British-supported League of Arab States (Arab League), which included Egypt, Transjordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen. Although the Arab League was ostensibly designed to foster Arab unity, many Arab nationalists viewed it as a British-dominated alignment of pro-Western Arab states. In December 1945, Iraq joined the United Nations (UN).

World War II exacerbated Iraq's social and economic problems. The spiraling prices and shortages brought on by the war increased the opportunity for exploitation and significantly widened the gap between rich and poor; thus, while wealthy landowners were enriching themselves through corruption, the salaried middle class, including teachers, civil servants, and army officers, saw their incomes depreciate daily. Even worse off were the peasants, who lived under the heavy burden of the 1932 land reform that permitted their landlords (shaykhs) to make huge profits selling cash crops to the British occupying force. The worsening economic situation of the mass

of Iraqis during the 1950s and the 1960s enabled the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) to establish deep roots during this period.

In addition to its festering socioeconomic problems, post-World War II Iraq was beset by a leadership crisis. After the 1941 Rashid Ali coup, Iraqi politics had been dominated by the pro-British Nuri as Said. The latter's British orientation and autocratic manner increasingly were at variance with the liberal, reformist philosophy of Iraq's new nationalists. Even before the end of the war, nationalists had demanded the restoration of political activity, which had been banned during the war in the interest of national security. Not until the government of Tawfiq Suwaidi (February–March 1946), however, were political parties allowed to organize. Within a short period, six parties were formed. The parties soon became so outspoken in their criticism of the government that the government closed or curtailed the activities of the more extreme leftist parties.

Accumulated grievances against Nuri as Said and the regent climaxed in the 1948 Wathbah (uprising). The Wathbah was a protest against the Portsmouth Treaty of January 1948 and its provision that a board of Iraqis and British be established to decide on defense matters of mutual interest. The treaty enraged Iraqi nationalists, who were still bitter over the Rashid Ali coup of 1941 and the continued influence of the British in Iraqi affairs. The uprising also was fueled by widespread popular discontent over rising prices, by an acute bread shortage, and by the regime's failure to liberalize the political system.

The Wathbah had three important effects on Iraqi politics. First, and most directly, it led Nuri as Said and the regent to repudiate the Portsmouth Treaty. Second, the success of the uprising led the opposition to intensify its campaign to discredit the regime. This activity not only weakened the monarchy but also seriously eroded the legitimacy of the political process. Finally, the uprising created a schism between Nuri as Said and Abd al Ilah. The former wanted to tighten political control and to deal harshly with the opposition; the regent advocated a more tempered approach. In response, the British increasingly mistrusted the regent and relied more and more on Nuri as Said.

Iraq bitterly objected to the 1947 UN decision to partition Palestine and sent several hundred recruits to the Palestine front when hostilities broke out on May 15, 1948. Iraq sent an additional 8,000 to 10,000 troops of the regular army during the course of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War; these troops were withdrawn in April 1949. The Iraqis had arrived at the Palestine front poorly equipped and undertrained because of the drastic reduction in defense expenditures

imposed by Nuri as Said following the 1941 Rashid Ali coup. As a result, they fared very poorly in the fighting and returned to Iraq even more alienated from the regime. The war also had a negative impact on the Iraqi economy. The government allocated 40 percent of available funds for the army and for Palestinian refugees. Oil royalties paid to Iraq were halved when the pipeline to Haifa was cut off in 1948. The war and the hanging of a Jewish businessman led, moreover, to the departure of most of Iraq's prosperous Jewish community; about 120,000 Iraqi Jews emigrated to Israel between 1948 and 1952.

In 1952 the depressed economic situation, which had been exacerbated by a bad harvest and by the government's refusal to hold direct elections, triggered large-scale antiregime protests; the protests turned especially violent in Baghdad. In response, the government declared martial law, banned all political parties, suspended a number of newspapers, and imposed a curfew. The immense size of the protests showed how widespread dissatisfaction with the regime had become. The middle class, which had grown considerably as a result of the monarchy's expanded education system, had become increasingly alienated from the regime, in large part because they were unable to earn an income commensurate with their status. Nuri as Said's autocratic manner, his intolerance of dissent, and his heavy-handed treatment of the political opposition had further alienated the middle class, especially the army. Forced underground, the opposition had become more revolutionary.

By the early 1950s, government revenues began to improve with the growth of the oil industry. New pipelines were built to Tripoli, Lebanon, in 1949 and to Baniyas, Syria, in 1952. A new oil agreement, concluded in 1952, netted the government 50 percent of oil company profits before taxes. As a result, government oil revenues increased almost fourfold, from US$32 million in 1951 to US$112 million in 1952. The increased oil payments, however, did little for the masses. Corruption among high government officials increased; oil companies employed relatively few Iraqis; and the oil boom also had a severe inflationary effect on the economy. Inflation hurt in particular a growing number of urban poor and the salaried middle class. The increased economic power of the state further isolated Nuri as Said and the regent from Iraqi society and obscured from their view the tenuous nature of the monarchy's hold on power.

In the mid-1950s, the monarchy was embroiled in a series of foreign policy blunders that ultimately contributed to its overthrow. Following a 1949 military coup in Syria that brought to power Adib Shishakli, a military strongman who opposed union with Iraq, a

split developed between Abd al Ilah, who had called for a Syrian-Iraqi union, and Nuri as Said, who opposed the union plan. Although Shishakli was overthrown with Iraqi help in 1954, the union plan never came to fruition. Instead, the schism between Nuri as Said and the regent widened. Sensing the regime's weakness, the opposition intensified its antiregime activity.

The monarchy's major foreign policy mistake occurred in 1955, when Nuri as Said announced that Iraq was joining a British-supported mutual defense pact with Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey. The Baghdad Pact constituted a direct challenge to Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser. In response, Nasser launched a vituperative media campaign that challenged the legitimacy of the Iraqi monarchy and called on the officer corps to overthrow it. The 1956 British-French-Israeli attack on Sinai further alienated Nuri as Said's regime from the growing ranks of the opposition. In 1958 King Hussein of Jordan and Abd al Ilah proposed a union of Hashimite monarchies to counter the recently formed Egyptian-Syrian union. At this point, the monarchy found itself completely isolated. Nuri as Said was able to contain the rising discontent only by resorting to even greater oppression and to tighter control over the political process.

Republican Iraq

The Hashimite monarchy was overthrown on July 14, 1958, in a swift, predawn coup executed by officers of the Nineteenth Brigade under the leadership of Brigadier Abd al Karim Qasim and Colonel Abd as Salaam Arif. The coup was triggered when King Hussein, fearing that an anti-Western revolt in Lebanon might spread to Jordan, requested Iraqi assistance. Instead of moving toward Jordan, however, Colonel Arif led a battalion into Baghdad and immediately proclaimed a new republic and the end of the old regime. The July 14 Revolution met virtually no opposition and proclamations of the revolution brought crowds of people into the streets of Baghdad cheering for the deaths of Iraq's two "strong men," Nuri as Said and Abd al Ilah King Faisal II and Abd al Ilah were executed, as were many others in the royal family. Nuri as Said also was killed after attempting to escape disguised as a veiled woman. In the ensuing mob demonstrations against the old order, angry crowds severely damaged the British embassy.

Put in its historical context, the July 14 Revolution was the culmination of a series of uprisings and coup attempts that began with the 1936 Bakr Sidqi coup and included the 1941 Rashid Ali military movement, the 1948 Wathbah Uprising, and the 1952 and 1956 protests. The revolution radically altered Iraq's social structure,

destroying the power of the landed shaykhs and the absentee landlords while enhancing the position of the urban workers, the peasants, and the middle class. In altering the old power structure, however, the revolution revived long-suppressed sectarian, tribal, and ethnic conflicts. The strongest of these conflicts were those between Kurds and Arabs and between Sunnis and Shias.

Despite a shared military background, the group of Free Officers (see Glossary) that carried out the July 14 Revolution was plagued by internal dissension. Its members lacked both a coherent ideology and an effective organizational structure. Many of the more senior officers resented having to take orders from Arif, their junior in rank. A power struggle developed between Qasim and Arif over joining the Egyptian-Syrian union. Arif's pro-Nasserite sympathies were supported by the Baath Party, while Qasim found support for his anti-union position in the ranks of the communists. Qasim, the more experienced and higher ranking of the two, eventually emerged victorious. Arif was first dismissed, then brought to trial for treason and condemned to death in January 1959; he was subsequently pardoned in December 1962.

Whereas he implemented many reforms that favored the poor, Qasim was primarily a centrist in outlook, proposing to improve the lot of the poor while not dispossessing the wealthy. In part, his ambiguous policies were a product of his lack of a solid base of support, especially in the military. Unlike the bulk of military officers, Qasim did not come from the Arab Sunni northwestern towns nor did he share their enthusiasm for pan-Arabism: he was of mixed Sunni-Shia parentage from southeastern Iraq. Qasim's ability to remain in power depended, therefore, on a skillful balancing of the communists and the pan-Arabists. For most of his tenure, Qasim sought to counterbalance the growing pan-Arab trend in the military by supporting the communists who controlled the streets. He authorized the formation of a communist-controlled militia, the People's Resistance Force, and he freed all communist prisoners.

Qasim's economic policies reflected his poor origins and his ties with the communists. He permitted trade unions, improved workers' conditions, and implemented land reform aimed at dismantling the old feudal structure of the countryside. Qasim also challenged the existing profit-sharing arrangements with the oil companies. On December 11, 1961, he passed Public Law 80, which dispossessed the IPC of 99.5 percent of its concession area, leaving it to operate only in those areas currently in production. The new arrangement significantly increased oil revenues accruing to the government. Qasim also announced the establishment of an Iraq National Oil Company (INOC) to exploit the new territory.

In March 1959, a group of disgruntled Free Officers, who came from conservative, well-known, Arab Sunni families and who opposed Qasim's increasing links with the communists, attempted a coup. Aware of the planned coup, Qasim had his communist allies mobilize 250,000 of their supporters in Mosul. The ill-planned coup attempt never really materialized and, in its aftermath, the communists massacred nationalists and some well-to-do Mosul families, leaving deep scars that proved to be very slow to heal.

Throughout 1959 the ranks of the ICP swelled as the party increased its presence in both the military and the government. In 1959 Qasim reestablished diplomatic relations between Iraq and Moscow, an extensive Iraqi-Soviet economic agreement was signed, and arms deliveries began. With communist fortunes riding high, another large-scale show of force was planned in Kirkuk, where a significant number of Kurds (many of them either members of, or sympathetic to, the ICP) lived in neighborhoods contiguous to a Turkoman upper class. In Kirkuk, however, communist rallies got out of hand. A bloody battle ensued, and the Kurds looted and killed many Turkomans. The communist-initiated violence at Kirkuk led Qasim to crack down on the organization, by arresting some of the more unruly rank-and-file members and by temporarily suspending the People's Resistance Force. Following the events at Mosul and at Kirkuk, the Baath and its leader, Fuad Rikabi, decided that the only way to dislodge the Qasim regime would be to kill Qasim (see Coups, Coup Attempts, and Foreign Policy, this ch.). The future president, Saddam Husayn, carried out the attempted assassination, which injured Qasim but failed to kill him. Qasim reacted by softening his stance on the communists and by suppressing the activities of the Baath and other nationalist parties. The renewed communist-Qasim relationship did not last long, however. Throughout 1960 and 1961, sensing that the communists had become too strong, Qasim again moved against the party by eliminating members from sensitive government positions, by cracking down on trade unions and on peasant associations, and by shutting down the communist press.

Qasim's divorce from the communists, his alienation from the nationalists, his aloof manner, and his monopoly of power—he was frequently referred to as the "sole leader"—isolated him from a domestic power base. In 1961 his tenuous hold on power was further weakened when the Kurds again took up arms against the central government.

The Kurds had ardently supported the 1958 revolution. Indeed, the new constitution put forth by Qasim and Arif had stipulated that the Kurds and the Arabs would be equal partners in the new

state. Exiled Kurdish leaders, including Mullah Mustafa Barzani, were allowed to return. Mutual suspicions, however, soon soured the Barzani-Qasim relationship; in September 1961, full-scale fighting broke out between Kurdish guerrillas and the Iraqi army. The army did not fare well against the seasoned Kurdish guerrillas, many of whom had deserted from the army. By the spring of 1962, Qasim's inability to contain the Kurdish insurrection had further eroded his base of power. The growing opposition was now in a position to plot his overthrow.

Qasim's domestic problems were compounded by a number of foreign policy crises, the foremost of which was an escalating conflict with the shah of Iran. Although he had reined in the communists, Qasim's leftist sympathies aroused fears in the West and in neighboring Gulf states of an imminent communist takeover of Iraq. In April 1959, Allen Dulles, the director of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, described the situation in Iraq "as the most dangerous in the world." The pro-Western shah found Qasim's communist sympathies and his claims on Iranian Khuzestan (an area that stretched from Dezful to Ahvaz in Iran and that contained a majority of Iranians of Arab descent) to be anathema. In December 1959, Iraqi-Iranian relations rapidly deteriorated when Qasim, reacting to Iran's reopening of the Shatt al Arab dispute, nullified the 1937 agreement and claimed sovereignty over the anchorage area near Abadan. In July 1961, Qasim further alienated the West and pro-Western regional states by laying claim to the newly independent state of Kuwait. When the Arab League unanimously accepted Kuwait's membership, Iraq broke off diplomatic relations with its Arab neighbors. Qasim was completely isolated.

In February 1963, hemmed in by regional enemies and facing Kurdish insurrection in the north and a growing nationalist movement at home, Qasim was overthrown. Despite the long list of enemies who opposed him in his final days, Qasim was a hero to millions of urban poor and impoverished peasants, many of whom rushed to his defense.

The inability of the masses to stave off the nationalist onslaught attested to the near total divorce of the Iraqi people from the political process. From the days of the monarchy, the legitimacy of the political process had suffered repeated blows. The government's British legacy, Nuri as Said's authoritarianism, and the rapid encroachment of the military (who paid only scant homage to the institutions of state) had eroded the people's faith in the government; furthermore, Qasim's inability to stem the increasing ethnic, sectarian, and class-inspired violence reflected an even deeper

malaise. The unraveling of Iraq's traditional social structure upset a precarious balance of social forces. Centuries-old religious and sectarian hatreds now combined with more recent class antagonisms in a volatile mix.

Coups, Coup Attempts, and Foreign Policy

The Baath Party that orchestrated the overthrow of Qasim was founded in the early 1940s by two Syrian students, Michel Aflaq and Salah ad Din al Bitar. Its ideological goals of socialism, freedom, and unity reflected the deeply felt sentiments of many Iraqis who, during the monarchy, had suffered from the economic dislocation that followed the breakup of the old Ottoman domain, from an extremely skewed income distribution, and from the suppression of political freedoms. Beginning in 1952, under the leadership of Fuad Rikabi, the party grew rapidly, especially among the Iraqi intelligentsia. By 1958 the Baath had made some inroads into the military. The party went through a difficult period in 1959, however, after the Mosul and Kirkuk incidents, the failed attempt on Qasim's life, and disillusionment with Nasser. The Baath's major competitor throughout the Qasim period was the ICP; when Qasim was finally overthrown, strongly pitched battles between the two ensued. The Baath was able to consolidate its bid for power only with the emergence of Ali Salih as Saadi as leader.

Upon assuming power, the Baath established the National Council of Revolutionary Command (NCRC) as the highest policy-making body and appointed Ahmad Hasan al Bakr, one of the Free Officers, as prime minister and Arif as president. The real power, however, was held by the party leader, Saadi. Despite the dominance of the newly established NCRC, the Baath's hold on power was extremely tenuous. The organization was small, with an active membership of fewer than 1,000, and it was not well represented in the officer corps or in the army at large. Its leadership was inexperienced, and its ideology was too vague to have any immediate relevance to the deep-seated problems besetting Iraq in the early 1960s. Its ambiguity of purpose had served the party well during the Qasim era, enabling it to attract a diverse membership sharing only a common aversion for "the sole leader." In the post-Qasim period, that ambiguity was tearing the party asunder.

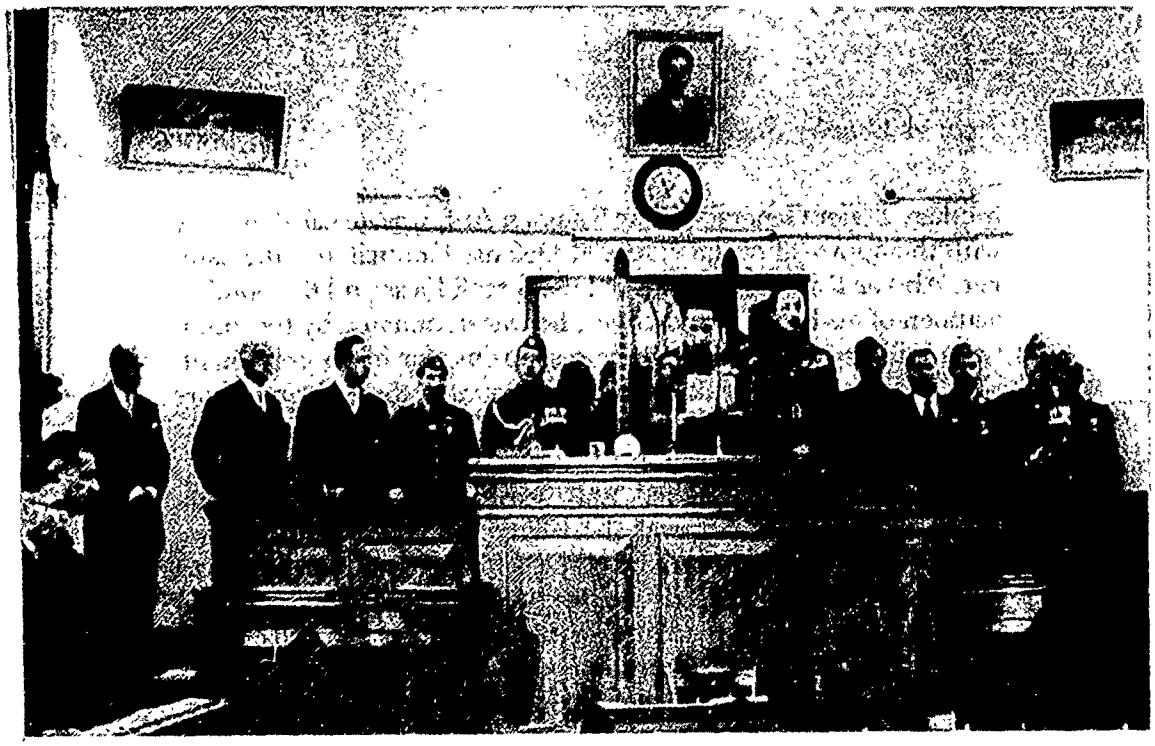
The party's lack of cohesion and lack of a coherent program had two major effects on Baath policy. First, it led party "strong man" Saadi to establish a one-party state that showed little tolerance for opposing views. Second, in the absence of strong ideological ties, the Baath increasingly was pervaded by cliques from the same

village, town, or tribe. This tendency became even more pronounced during the 1970s.

Troubled by internal dissension and unable to suppress a new wave of Kurdish unrest in the north, the Baath held power for less than a year. Most damaging was the foundering of unity talks with Nasser and the new Baathist regime in Syria. When the unity plan collapsed, Nasser launched a vituperative campaign challenging the legitimacy of the Baath in Iraq and in Syria. Nasser's attacks seriously eroded the legitimacy of a regime that had continually espoused pan-Arabism. Another factor contributing to the party's demise was Saadi's reliance on the National Guard—a paramilitary force composed primarily of Baath sympathizers—to counter the Baath's lack of support in the regular army. By bolstering the guard, Saadi alienated the regular army. Finally, the Baath was sharply divided between doctrinaire hard-liners, such as Saadi, and a more pragmatic moderate wing.

With its party ranks weakened, the Baath was overthrown by Arif and a coterie of military officers in a bloodless coup in November 1963. Upon assuming power, Arif immediately announced that the armed forces would manage the country. The governing core consisted of Arif; his brother, Abd ar Rahman Arif; and his trusted colleague, Colonel Said Slaibi. Arif was chairman of the NCRC, commander in chief of the armed forces, and president of the republic; his brother was acting chief of staff, and the colonel was commander of the Baghdad garrison. The Arif brothers, Slaibi, and the majority of Arif's Twentieth Brigade were united by a strong tribal bond as members of the Jumailah tribe.

Other groups who participated in the 1963 coup included Nasserites—an informal group of military officers and civilians who looked to Nasser for leadership and who desired some kind of unity with Egypt—and Baathists in the military. By the spring of 1964, Arif had adroitly outmaneuvered the military Baathists and had filled the top leadership posts with civilian Nasserites. Arif and the Nasserite officers took steps to integrate the military, economic, and political policies of Iraq with those of Egypt; this was expected to lead to the union of the two countries by 1966. (The United Arab Republic [UAR], was founded by Egypt and Syria in 1958; Syria withdrew in 1961 leaving Egypt alone. Arif proposed that Iraq join [partly as an anticommunist measure] but this union never occurred.) In May 1964, the Joint Presidency Council was formed, and in December the Unified Political Command was established to expedite the ultimate constitutional union of the two countries. In July 1964, Arif announced that henceforth all political parties would coalesce to form the Iraqi Arab Socialist Union. Most



King Faisal II inaugurating Parliament December 1956
Courtesy United States Information Agency

important for the future, Arif adopted Nasser's socialist program, calling for the nationalization of insurance companies, banks, and such essential industries as steel, cement, and construction—along with the tobacco industry, tanneries, and flour mills. Arif's nationalization program proved to be one of the few legacies of the proposed Egyptian-Iraqi union (see Industrialization, ch. 3).

By 1965 Arif had lost his enthusiasm for the proposed union, which had received only lukewarm support from Nasser. Arif began ousting Nasserite officers from the government. As a result, the newly appointed prime minister, Brigadier Arif Abd ar Razzaq, who was also a leading Nasserite, made an unsuccessful coup attempt on September 12, 1965. In response, President Arif curtailed Nasserite activities and appointed fellow tribal members to positions of power. Colonel Abd ar Razzaq an Nayif, a fellow Jumailah, became head of military intelligence. Arif also attempted to bring more civilians into the government. He appointed the first civilian prime minister since the days of the monarchy, Abd ar Rahman Bazzaz. Bazzaz strongly advocated the rule of law and was determined to end the erratic, military-dominated politics that had characterized Iraq since 1958. He also tried to implement the First Five-Year Economic Plan (1965–70) to streamline the bureaucracy and to encourage private and foreign investment.

In April 1966, Arif was killed in a helicopter crash and his

brother, Major General Abd ar Rahman Arif, was installed in office with the approval of the National Defense Council and the cabinet. Abd ar Rahman Arif lacked the forcefulness and the political acumen of his brother; moreover, he was dominated by the ambitious military officers who were responsible for his appointment. The government's weak hold on the country thus became more apparent. The most pressing issue facing the new government was a renewed Kurdish rebellion.

The 1964 cease-fire signed by Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani and Abd as Salaam Arif was short-lived; by April 1965, the two sides were again engaged in hostilities. This time military support provided by the shah of Iran helped the Kurds win important victories over the Iraqi army. Kurdish inroads in the north and escalating Iraqi-Iranian tensions prompted Iraq's prime minister Bazzaz to propose a more far-reaching settlement to the Kurdish problem. Some of the more salient points of Bazzaz's proposal included amnesty, use of the Kurdish language in Kurdish areas, Kurdish administration of their educational, health, and municipal institutions, and the promise of early elections by which the Kurds would gain proportional representation in national as well as in provincial assemblies. When Barzani indicated that he approved of these proposals, the Kurdish conflict appeared to have ended.

The army, however, which had opposed having Bazzaz as a civilian head of the cabinet, feared that he would reduce their pay and privileges; consequently, it strongly denounced reconciliation with the Kurds. President Arif yielded to pressure and asked for Bazzaz's resignation. This ended the rapprochement with the Kurds and led to a collapse of civilian rule. The new prime minister was General Naji Talib, a pro-Nasserite who had been instrumental in the 1958 Revolution and who strongly opposed the Kurdish peace plan.

Arif also sought to further the improved relations with Iran initiated by Bazzaz. This rapprochement was significant because it denied the Kurds access to their traditional place of asylum, which allowed recovery from Iraqi attacks. Arif visited Tehran in the spring of 1967; at the conclusion of his visit, it was announced that the countries would hold more meetings aimed at joint oil exploration in the Naft-e Shah and Naft Khaneh border regions. They also agreed to continue negotiations on toll collection and navigation rights on the Shatt al Arab and on the demarcation of the Persian Gulf's continental shelf.

During the winter of 1966-67, Arif faced a crisis emanating from a new source, Syria. The IPC transported oil from its northern fields to Mediterranean ports via pipelines in Syria. In 1966

Damascus claimed that the IPC had been underpaying Syria, based on their 1955 agreement. Syria demanded back payments and immediately increased the transit fee it charged the IPC. When the IPC did not accede to Syrian demands, Syria cut off the flow of Iraqi oil to its Mediterranean ports. The loss of revenue threatened to cause a severe financial crisis. It also fueled anti-Talib forces and increased public clamor for his resignation. In response, Talib resigned, and Arif briefly headed an extremely unsteady group of military officers.

In the opinion of Phebe Marr, a leading authority on Iraq, on the eve of the June 1967 War between Israel and various Arab states, the Arif government had become little more than a collection of army officers balancing the special interests of various economic, political, ethnic, and sectarian groups. The non-intervention of Iraqi troops while Israel was overtaking the Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian armies and was conquering large tracts of Arab territory discredited the Arif regime in the eyes of the masses. To stave off rising discontent, Arif reappointed strongman Tahir Yahya as prime minister (he had first been appointed by Arif in November 1963). Yahya's only accomplishment was to lessen Iraq's economic dependence on the Western-owned IPC: on August 6, his government turned over all exploitation rights in the oil-rich North Rumailah field to the state-controlled INOC (see Post-World War II Through the 1970s, ch. 3). The Arif government, however, had lost its base of power. Lacking a coherent political platform and facing increasing charges of corruption, the government was only hanging on.

Ultimately two disaffected Arif supporters—Colonel Abd ar Razzaq an Nayif and Ibrahim ad Daud—were able to stage a successful coup against Arif, and the Baath quickly capitalized on the situation. Nayif and Daud had been part of a small group of young officers, called the Arab Revolutionary Movement, that previously had been a major source of support for Arif. By July 1968, however, reports of corruption and Arif's increased reliance on the Nasserites (whom both Nayif and Daud opposed) had alienated the two officers. Nayif and Daud acted independently from the Baath in carrying out the coup, but lacked the organizational backing or the grass-roots support necessary to remain in power. In only a few weeks, the Baath had outmaneuvered Nayif and Daud, and, for the second time in five years, had taken over control of the government.

The Emergence of Saddam Husayn, 1968–79

The Baath of 1968 was more tightly organized and more determined to stay in power than the Baath of 1963. The demise of

Nasserism following the June 1967 War and the emergence of a more parochially oriented Baath in Syria freed the Iraqi Baath from the debilitating aspects of pan-Arabism. In 1963 Nasser had been able to manipulate domestic Iraqi politics; by 1968 his ideological pull had waned, enabling the Iraqi Baath to focus on pressing domestic issues. The party also was aided by a 1967 reorganization that created a militia and an intelligence apparatus and set up local branches that gave the Baath broader support. In addition, by 1968 close family and tribal ties bound the Baath's ruling clique. Most notable in this regard was the emergence of Tikritis—Sunni Arabs from the northwest town of Tikrit—related to Ahmad Hasan al Bakr. Three of the five members of the Baath's Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) were Tikritis; two, Bakr and Hammad Shihab, were related to each other. The cabinet posts of president, prime minister, and defense minister went to Tikritis. Saddam Husayn, a key leader behind the scenes, also was a Tikriti and a relative of Bakr. Another distinguishing characteristic of the Baath in 1968 was that the top leadership consisted almost entirely of military men. Finally, Bakr was a much more seasoned politician in 1968 than he had been in 1963.

Less than two months after the formation of the Bakr government, a coalition of pro-Nasser elements, Arif supporters, and conservatives from the military attempted another coup. This event provided the rationale for numerous purges directed by Bakr and Saddam Husayn. Between 1968 and 1973, through a series of sham trials, executions, assassinations, and intimidations, the party ruthlessly eliminated any group or person suspected of challenging Baath rule. The Baath also institutionalized its rule by formally issuing a Provisional Constitution in July 1970. This document was a modification of an earlier constitution that had been issued in September 1968. The Provisional Constitution, which with some modifications is still in effect, granted the party-dominated RCC extensive powers and declared that new RCC members must belong to the party's Regional Command—the top policy-making and executive body of the Baathist organization (see Constitutional Framework, ch. 4).

Two men, Saddam Husayn and Bakr, increasingly dominated the party. Bakr, who had been associated with Arab nationalist causes for more than a decade, brought the party popular legitimacy. Even more important, he brought support from the army both among Baathist and non-Baathist officers, with whom he had cultivated ties for years. Saddam Husayn, on the other hand, was a consummate party politician whose formative experiences were in organizing clandestine opposition activity. He was adept at

outmaneuvering—and at times ruthlessly eliminating—political opponents. Although Bakr was the older and more prestigious of the two, by 1969 Saddam Husayn clearly had become the moving force behind the party. He personally directed Baathist attempts to settle the Kurdish question and he organized the party's institutional structure.

In July 1973, after an unsuccessful coup attempt by a civilian faction within the Baath led by Nazim Kazzar, the party set out to reconsolidate its hold on power. First, the RCC amended the Provisional Constitution to give the president greater power. Second, in early 1974 the Regional Command was officially designated as the body responsible for making policy (see The Revolutionary Command Council, ch. 4). By September 1977, all Regional Command leaders had been appointed to the RCC. Third, the party created a more pervasive presence in Iraqi society by establishing a complex network of grass-roots and intelligence-gathering organizations. Finally, the party established its own militia, which in 1978 was reported to number close to 50,000 men.

Despite Baath attempts to institutionalize its rule, real power remained in the hands of a narrowly based elite, united by close family and tribal ties. By 1977 the most powerful men in the Baath thus were all somehow related to the triumvirate of Saddam Husayn, Bakr, and General Adnan Khayr Allah Talfah, Saddam Husayn's brother-in-law who became minister of defense in 1978. All were members of the party, the RCC, and the cabinet, and all were members of the Talfah family of Tikrit, headed by Khayr Allah Talfah. Khayr Allah Talfah was Saddam Husayn's uncle and guardian, Adnan Khayr Allah's father, and Bakr's cousin. Saddam Husayn was married to Adnan Khayr Allah's sister and Adnan Khayr Allah was married to Bakr's daughter. Increasingly, the most sensitive military posts were going to the Tikritis.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, Bakr was beset by illness and by a series of family tragedies. He increasingly turned over power to Saddam Husayn. By 1977 the party bureaus, the intelligence mechanisms, and even ministers who, according to the Provisional Constitution, should have reported to Bakr, reported to Saddam Husayn. Saddam Husayn, meanwhile, was less inclined to share power, and he viewed the cabinet and the RCC as rubber stamps. On July 16, 1979, President Bakr resigned, and Saddam Husayn officially replaced him as president of the republic, secretary general of the Baath Party Regional Command, chairman of the RCC, and commander in chief of the armed forces.

In foreign affairs, the Baath's pan-Arab and socialist leanings alienated both the pro-Western Arab Gulf states and the shah of

Iran. The enmity between Iraq and Iran sharpened with the 1969 British announcement of a planned withdrawal from the Gulf in 1971. In February 1969, Iran announced that Iraq had not fulfilled its obligations under the 1937 treaty and demanded that the border in the Shatt al Arab waterway be set at the thalweg. Iraq's refusal to honor the Iranian demand led the shah to abrogate the 1937 treaty and to send Iranian ships through the Shatt al Arab without paying dues to Iraq. In response, Iraq aided anti-shah dissidents, while the shah renewed support for Kurdish rebels. Relations between the two countries soon deteriorated further. In November 1971, the shah occupied the islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs, which previously had been under the sovereignty of Ras al Khaymah and Sharjah, both member states of the United Arab Emirates.

The Iraqi Baath also was involved in a confrontation with the conservative shaykhdoms of the Gulf over Iraq's support for the leftist People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf. The major contention between Iraq and the conservative Gulf states, however, concerned the Kuwaiti islands of Bubiyan and Warbah that dominate the estuary leading to the southern Iraqi port of Umm Qasr. Beginning in the early 1970s, Iraq's desire to develop a deep-water port on the Gulf led to demands that the two islands be transferred or leased to Iraq. Kuwait refused, and in March 1973 Iraqi troops occupied As Samitah, a border post in the northeast corner of Kuwait. Saudi Arabia immediately came to Kuwait's aid and, together with the Arab League, obtained Iraq's withdrawal.

The most serious threat facing the Baath was a resurgence of Kurdish unrest in the north. In March 1970, the RCC and Mustafa Barzani announced agreement to a fifteen-article peace plan. This plan was almost identical to the previous Bazzaz-Kurdish settlement that had never been implemented. The Kurds were immediately pacified by the settlement, particularly because Barzani was permitted to retain his 15,000 Kurdish troops. Barzani's troops then became an official Iraqi frontier force called the Pesh Merga, meaning "Those Who Face Death." The plan, however, was not completely satisfactory because the legal status of the Kurdish territory remained unresolved. At the time of the signing of the peace plan, Barzani's forces controlled territory from Zakhu in the north to Halabjah in the southeast and already had established de facto Kurdish administration in most of the towns of the area. Barzani's group, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), was granted official recognition as the legitimate representative of the Kurdish people.

The 1970 agreement unraveled throughout the early 1970s. After the March 1974 Baath attempt to assassinate Barzani and his son Idris, full-scale fighting broke out. In early 1974, it appeared that the Baath had finally succeeded in isolating Barzani and the KDP by coopting the ICP and by signing a treaty with the Soviet Union, both traditionally strong supporters of the KDP. Barzani, however, compensated for the loss of Soviet and ICP support by obtaining military aid from the shah of Iran and from the United States, both of which were alarmed by increasing Soviet influence in Iraq. When Iraqi forces reached Rawanduz, threatening to block the major Kurdish artery to Iran, the shah increased the flow of military supplies to the Kurdish rebels. Using antitank missiles and artillery obtained from Iran as well as military aid from Syria and Israel, the KDP inflicted heavy losses on the Iraqi forces. To avoid a costly stalemate like that which had weakened his predecessors, Saddam Husayn sought an agreement with the shah.

In Algiers on March 6, 1975, Saddam Husayn signed an agreement with the shah that recognized the thalweg as the boundary in the Shatt al Arab, legalized the shah's abrogation of the 1937 treaty in 1969, and dropped all Iraqi claims to Iranian Khuzestan and to the islands at the foot of the Gulf. In return, the shah agreed to prevent subversive elements from crossing the border. This agreement meant an end to Iranian assistance to the Kurds. Almost immediately after the signing of the Algiers Agreement, Iraqi forces went on the offensive and defeated the Pesh Merga, which was unable to hold out without Iranian support. Under an amnesty plan, about 70 percent of the Pesh Merga surrendered to the Iraqis. Some remained in the hills of Kurdistan to continue the fight, and about 30,000 crossed the border to Iran to join the civilian refugees, then estimated at between 100,000 and 200,000.

Even before the fighting broke out in March 1974, Saddam Husayn had offered the Kurds the most comprehensive autonomy plan ever proposed. The major provisions of the plan stated that Kurdistan would be an autonomous area governed by an elected legislative and an executive council, the president of which would be appointed by the Iraqi head of state. The Kurdish council would have control over local affairs except in the areas of defense and foreign relations, which would be controlled by the central government. The autonomous region did not include the oil-rich district of Kirkuk. To facilitate the autonomy plan, Saddam Husayn's administration helped form three progovernment Kurdish parties, allocated a special budget for development in Kurdish areas, and repatriated many Kurdish refugees then living in Iran.

In addition to the conciliatory measures offered to the Kurds, Saddam Husayn attempted to weaken Kurdish resistance by forcibly relocating many Kurds from the Kurdish heartland in the north, by introducing increasing numbers of Arabs into mixed Kurdish provinces, and by razing all Kurdish villages along a 1,300-kilometer stretch of the border with Iran. Saddam Husayn's combination of conciliation and severity failed to appease the Kurds, and renewed guerrilla attacks occurred as early as March 1976. At the same time, the failure of the KDP to obtain significant concessions from the Iraqi government caused a serious split within the Kurdish resistance. In June 1975, Jalal Talabani formed the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). The PUK was urban-based and more leftist than the tribally based KDP. Following Barzani's death in 1975, Barzani's sons, Idris and Masud, took control of the KDP. In October 1979, Masud officially was elected KDP chairman. He issued a new platform calling for continued armed struggle against the Baath through guerrilla warfare. The effectiveness of the KDP, however, was blunted by its violent intra-Kurdish struggle with the PUK throughout 1978 and 1979.

Beginning in 1976, with the Baath firmly in power and after the Kurdish rebellion had been successfully quelled, Saddam Husayn set out to consolidate his position at home by strengthening the economy. He pursued a state-sponsored industrial modernization program that tied an increasing number of Iraqis to the Baath-controlled government. Saddam Husayn's economic policies were largely successful; they led to a wider distribution of wealth, to greater social mobility, to increased access to education and health care, and to the redistribution of land. The quadrupling of oil prices in 1973 and the subsequent oil price rises brought on by the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran greatly enhanced the success of Saddam Husayn's program. The more equitable distribution of income tied to the ruling party many Iraqis who had previously opposed the central government. For the first time in modern Iraqi history, a government—albeit at times a ruthless one, had thus achieved some success in forging a national community out of the country's disparate social elements.

Success on the economic front spurred Saddam Husayn to pursue an ambitious foreign policy aimed at pushing Iraq to the forefront of the Arab world. Between 1975 and 1979, a major plank of Saddam Husayn's bid for power in the region rested on improved relations with Iran, with Saudi Arabia, and with the smaller Gulf shaykhdoms. In 1975 Iraq established diplomatic relations with Sultan Qabus of Oman and extended several loans to him. In 1978 Iraq sharply reversed its support for the Marxist regime in South

Yemen. The biggest boost to Saddam Husayn's quest for regional power, however, resulted from Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's signing the Camp David Accords in November 1978.

Saddam Husayn viewed Egypt's isolation within the Arab world as an opportunity for Iraq to play a leading role in Arab affairs. He was instrumental in convening an Arab summit in Baghdad that denounced Sadat's reconciliation with Israel and imposed sanctions on Egypt. He also attempted to end his long-standing feud with Syrian President Hafiz al Assad, and, in June 1979, Saddam Husayn became the first Iraqi head of state in twenty years to visit Jordan. In Amman, Saddam Husayn concluded a number of agreements with King Hussein, including one for the expansion of the port of Aqabah, regarded by Iraq as a potential replacement for ports in Lebanon and Syria.

The Iran-Iraq Conflict

In February 1979, Saddam Husayn's ambitious plans and the course of Iraqi history were drastically altered by the overthrow of the shah of Iran. Husayn viewed the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran as both a threat and an opportunity. The downfall of the shah and the confusion prevailing in postrevolutionary Iran suited Saddam Husayn's regional ambitions. A weakened Iran seemed to offer an opportunity to project Iraqi power over the Gulf, to regain control over the Shatt al Arab waterway, and to augment Iraqi claims to leadership of the Arab world. More ominously, the activist Shia Islam preached by the leader of the revolution in Iran, Ayatollah Sayyid Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini, threatened to upset the delicate Sunni-Shia balance in Iraq, and a hostile Iran would threaten Iraqi security in the Gulf. Furthermore, deep-seated personal animosities separated the two leaders. The two men held widely divergent ideologies, and in 1978 Husayn had expelled Khomeini from Iraq—reportedly at the request of the shah—after he had lived thirteen years in exile in An Najaf.

For much of Iraqi history, the Shias have been both politically impotent and economically depressed. Beginning in the sixteenth century, when the Ottoman Sunnis favored their Iraqi coreligionists in the matter of educational and employment opportunities, the Shias consistently have been denied political power. Thus, although the Shias constitute more then 50 percent of the population, they occupy a relatively insignificant number of government posts. On the economic level, aside from a small number of wealthy landowners and merchants, the Shias historically were exploited as sharecropping peasants or menially employed slum dwellers. Even the prosperity brought by the oil boom of the 1970s only trickled

down slowly to the Shias; however, beginning in the latter half of the 1970s, Husayn's populist economic policies had a favorable impact on them, enabling many to join the ranks of a new Shia middle class.

Widespread Shia demonstrations took place in Iraq in February 1977, when the government, suspecting a bomb, closed Karbala to pilgrimage at the height of a religious ceremony. Violent clashes between police and Shia pilgrims spread from Karbala to An Najaf and lasted for several days before army troops were called in to quell the unrest. It was the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, however, that transformed Shia dissatisfaction with the Baath into an organized religiously based opposition. The Baath leadership feared that the success of Iran's Islamic Revolution would serve as an inspiration to Iraqi Shias. These fears escalated in July 1979, when riots broke out in An Najaf and in Karbala after the government had refused Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir as Sadr's request to lead a procession to Iran to congratulate Khomeini. Even more worrisome to the Baath was the discovery of a clandestine Shia group headed by religious leaders having ties to Iran. Baqir as Sadr was the inspirational leader of the group, named Ad Dawah al Islamiyah (the Islamic Call), commonly referred to as Ad Dawah. He espoused a program similar to Khomeini's, which called for a return to Islamic precepts of government and for social justice.

Despite the Iraqi government's concern, the eruption of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran did not immediately destroy the Iraqi-Iranian rapprochement that had prevailed since the 1975 Algiers Agreement. As a sign of Iraq's desire to maintain good relations with the new government in Tehran, President Bakr sent a personal message to Khomeini offering "his best wishes for the friendly Iranian people on the occasion of the establishment of the Islamic Republic." In addition, as late as the end of August 1979, Iraqi authorities extended an invitation to Mehdi Bazargan, the first president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to visit Iraq with the aim of improving bilateral relations. The fall of the moderate Bazargan government in late 1979, however, and the rise of Islamic militants preaching an expansionist foreign policy soured Iraqi-Iranian relations.

The principal events that touched off the rapid deterioration in relations occurred during the spring of 1980. In April the Iranian-supported Ad Dawah attempted to assassinate Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz. Shortly after the failed grenade attack on Tariq Aziz, Ad Dawah was suspected of attempting to assassinate another Iraqi leader, Minister of Culture and Information Latif Nayyif Jasim. In response, the Iraqis immediately rounded up members and

supporters of Ad Dawah and deported to Iran thousands of Shias of Iranian origin. In the summer of 1980, Saddam Husayn ordered executions of the presumed Ad Dawah leader, Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Baqr as Sadr, and his sister.

In September 1980, border skirmishes erupted in the central sector near Qasr-e Shirin, with an exchange of artillery fire by both sides. A few weeks later, Saddam Husayn officially abrogated the 1975 treaty between Iraq and Iran and announced that the Shatt al Arab was returning to Iraqi sovereignty. Iran rejected this action and hostilities escalated as the two sides exchanged bombing raids deep into each other's territory. Finally, on September 23, Iraqi troops marched into Iranian territory, beginning what was to be a protracted and extremely costly war (see The Iran-Iraq War, ch. 5).

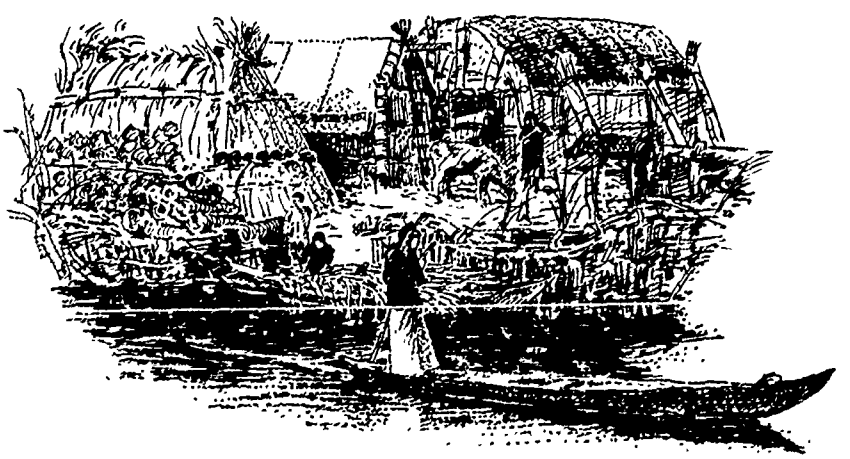
The Iran-Iraq War permanently altered the course of Iraqi history. It strained Iraqi political and social life, and led to severe economic dislocations (see Growth and Structure of the Economy, ch. 3). Viewed from a historical perspective, the outbreak of hostilities in 1980 was, in part, just another phase of the ancient Persian-Arab conflict that had been fueled by twentieth-century border disputes. Many observers, however, believe that Saddam Husayn's decision to invade Iran was a personal miscalculation based on ambition and a sense of vulnerability. Saddam Husayn, despite having made significant strides in forging an Iraqi nation-state, feared that Iran's new revolutionary leadership would threaten Iraq's delicate Sunni-Shia balance and would exploit Iraq's geostrategic vulnerabilities—Iraq's minimal access to the Persian Gulf, for example. In this respect, Saddam Husayn's decision to invade Iran has historical precedent; the ancient rulers of Mesopotamia, fearing internal strife and foreign conquest, also engaged in frequent battles with the peoples of the highlands.

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The most reliable work on the ancient history of Iraq is George Roux's *Ancient Iraq,* which covers the period from prehistory through the Hellenistic period. Another good source, which places Sumer in the context of world history, is J.M. Roberts's *The Pelican History of the World.* A concise and authoritative work on Shia Islam is Moojan Momen's *An Introduction to Shii Islam.* The article by D. Sourdel, "The Abbasid Caliphate," in *The Cambridge History of Islam,* provides an excellent overview of the medieval period. Stephen Longrigg's and Frank Stoakes's *Iraq* contains a historical summary of events before independence as well as a detailed

account of the period from independence to 1958. Majid Khadduri's *Republican Iraq* is one of the best studies of Iraqi politics from the 1958 revolution to the Baath coup of 1968. His *Socialist Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics since 1968* details events up to 1977. A seminal work on Iraqi socioeconomic movements and trends between the Ottoman period and the late 1970s is Hanna Batatu's *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq.* The most comprehensive study of Iraq in the modern period is Phebe Marr's *The Modern History of Iraq.* Another good study, which focuses on the political and the economic development of Iraq from its foundation as a state until 1977, is Edith and E.F. Penrose's *Iraq: International Relations and National Development.* An excellent recent account of the Iraqi Baath is provided by Christine Helms's *Iraq, Eastern Flank of the Arab World.* (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 2. The Society and Its Environment



Reed huts in the marshes of southern Iraq

IRAQI SOCIETY IS COMPOSED of sizable and distinct social groups with differences and divisions that have been only slowly and fitfully challenged by the emergence of a strong, centralized political regime and a state apparatus. There are, moreover, regional and environmental differences between the scattered mountain villages for which the economic base is rain-fed grain crops and the more densely populated riverine communities to the south that depend on intricate irrigation and drainage systems for their livelihood.

There are also linguistic and ethnic differences. The most important exception to the Arab character of Iraq is the large Kurdish minority, estimated at 19 percent of the population, or 3,092,820, in 1987. According to official government statistics, Turkomans and other Turkic-speaking peoples account for only 2 to 3 percent of the population. There was previously a large Iranian population settled around the Shia (see Glossary) holy cities of Karbala and An Najaf, and the southern port city of Basra; this element was largely expelled by government decree in 1971–72 and in 1979–80; by 1987 only an estimated 133,000 of the Iranian population remained.

Divisions along religious lines are deep-rooted. Although at least 95 percent of Iraq's population is Muslim, the community is split between Sunnis (see Glossary) and Shias; the latter group, a minority in the Arab world as a whole, constitutes a majority in Iraq. Of the non-Muslim communities, fragmented Christian sects do not constitute more than 1 or 2 percent, concentrated mainly in the governorates of Nineveh and Dahuk. A formerly extensive Jewish community is to all practical purposes defunct. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the defeat of the Arab armies in 1948 to 1949 rendered the situation of Iraqi Jews untenable and led to a mass exodus, both to Israel and to Iran, in 1950.

Just before the Iran-Iraq War (1980–88), the sharp cleavage between the rural and the urban communities that had formerly characterized Iraqi society had begun to break down as a result of policies instituted by the government. The war has accelerated this process. Large areas of the rural south have been devastated by continuous fighting, which in turn has triggered a massive rural migration to the capital. In the late 1980s, Iraqi and foreign observers agreed that, for the nation's economic health, this flight from the countryside would have to be reversed, and they anticipated that

the government would undertake measures to accomplish this reversal once the war ended.

Geography and Population

Boundaries

Iraq's border with Iran has been a continuing source of conflict, and it was partially responsible for the outbreak in 1980 of the present war. The terms of a treaty negotiated in 1937 under British auspices provided that in one area of the Shatt al Arab the boundary would be at the low water mark on the Iranian side. Iran subsequently insisted that the 1937 treaty was imposed on it by "British imperialist pressures," and that the proper boundary throughout the Shatt was the thalweg (midpoint). The matter came to a head in 1969, when Iraq, in effect, told the Iranian government that the Shatt was an integral part of Iraqi territory and that the waterway might be closed to Iranian shipping.

Through Algerian mediation, Iran and Iraq agreed in March 1975 to normalize their relations, and three months later they signed a treaty known as the Algiers Agreement. The document defined the common border for the entire length of the Shatt estuary as the thalweg. To compensate Iraq for the loss of what formerly had been regarded as its territory, pockets of territory along the mountain border in the central sector of its common boundary with Iran were assigned to it. Nonetheless, in September 1980, Iraq went to war with Iran, citing among other complaints the fact that Iran had not turned over to it the land specified in the Algiers Agreement. This problem has subsequently proved to be a stumbling block to a negotiated settlement of the ongoing conflict.

In 1988 the boundary with Kuwait was another outstanding problem. It had been fixed in a 1913 treaty between the Ottoman Empire and British officials acting on behalf of Kuwait's ruling family, which in 1899 had ceded control over foreign affairs to Britain. The boundary was accepted by Iraq when it became independent in 1932, but, in the 1960s and again in the mid-1970s, the Iraqi government advanced a claim to parts of Kuwait. Kuwait made several representations to the Iraqis during the Iran-Iraq War to fix the border once and for all, but Baghdad has repeatedly demurred, claiming that the issue is a potentially divisive one that could enflame nationalist sentiment inside Iraq. Hence, in early 1988, it was likely that a solution would have to wait until the war ended.

In 1922 British officials concluded the Treaty of Mohammara with Abd al Aziz ibn Abd ar Rahman Al Saud, who in 1932 formed

the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The treaty provided the basic agreement for the boundary between the eventually independent nations. Also in 1922, the two parties agreed to the creation of the diamond-shaped Iraq-Saudi Arabia Neutral Zone of approximately 3,520 square kilometers adjacent to the western tip of Kuwait in which neither Iraq nor Saudi Arabia would build permanent dwellings or installations (see fig. 1). Beduins from either country could utilize the limited water and seasonal grazing resources of the zone. In April 1975, an agreement signed in Baghdad fixed the borders of the countries. Despite a rumored agreement providing for the formal division of the Neutral Zone, as of early 1988 such a document had not been published. Instead, Saudi Arabia was continuing to control oil wells in the offshore Neutral Zone and had been allocating proceeds from Neutral Zone oil sales to Iraq as a contribution to the war costs.

Major Geographical Features

Most geographers, including those of the Iraqi government, discuss the country's geography in terms of four main zones or regions: the desert in the west and southwest; the rolling upland between the upper Tigris and Euphrates rivers (in Arabic, the Dijlis and Furat, respectively); the highlands in the north and in the northeast; and the central and southeastern alluvial plain through which the Tigris and Euphrates flow (see fig. 5). Iraq's total land area is variously given as 433,970 and 437,520 square kilometers.

The desert zone, an area lying west and southwest of the Euphrates River, is a part of the Syrian Desert, which covers sections of Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. The region, sparsely inhabited by pastoral nomads, consists of a wide, stony plain interspersed with rare sandy stretches. A widely ramified pattern of wadis—watercourses that are dry most of the year—runs from the border to the Euphrates. Some wadis are more than 400 kilometers long, and they carry brief but torrential floods during the winter rains.

The uplands region, between the Tigris north of Samarra and the Euphrates north of Hit, is known as Al Jazirah (Arabic for the *island*), and it is part of a larger area that extends westward into Syria, between the two rivers, and into Turkey. Water in the area flows in deeply cut valleys, and irrigation is much more difficult than it is in the lower plain. Much of this zone may be classified as desert.

The northeastern highlands begin just south of a line drawn from Mosul to Kirkuk, and they extend to Iraq's borders with Turkey and Iran. High ground, separated by broad, undulating steppes,

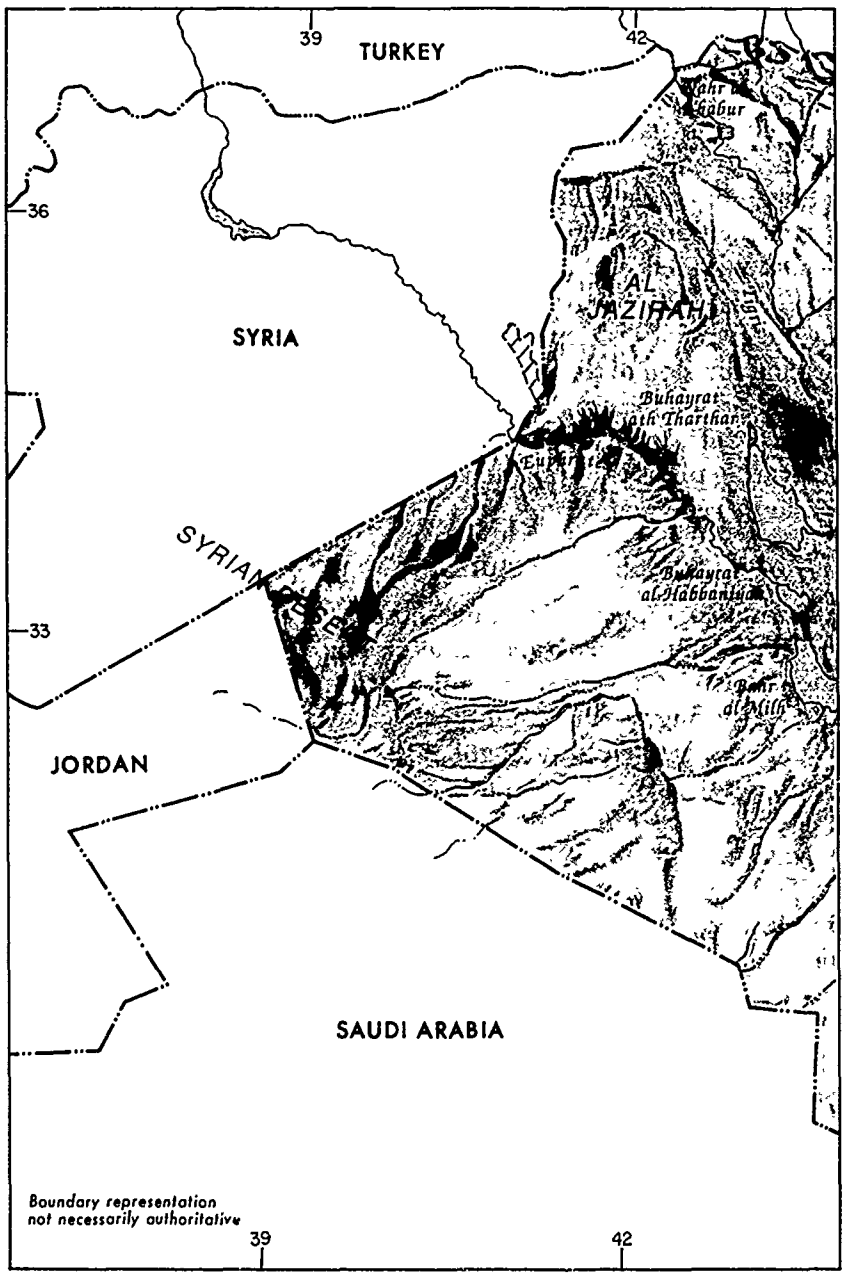
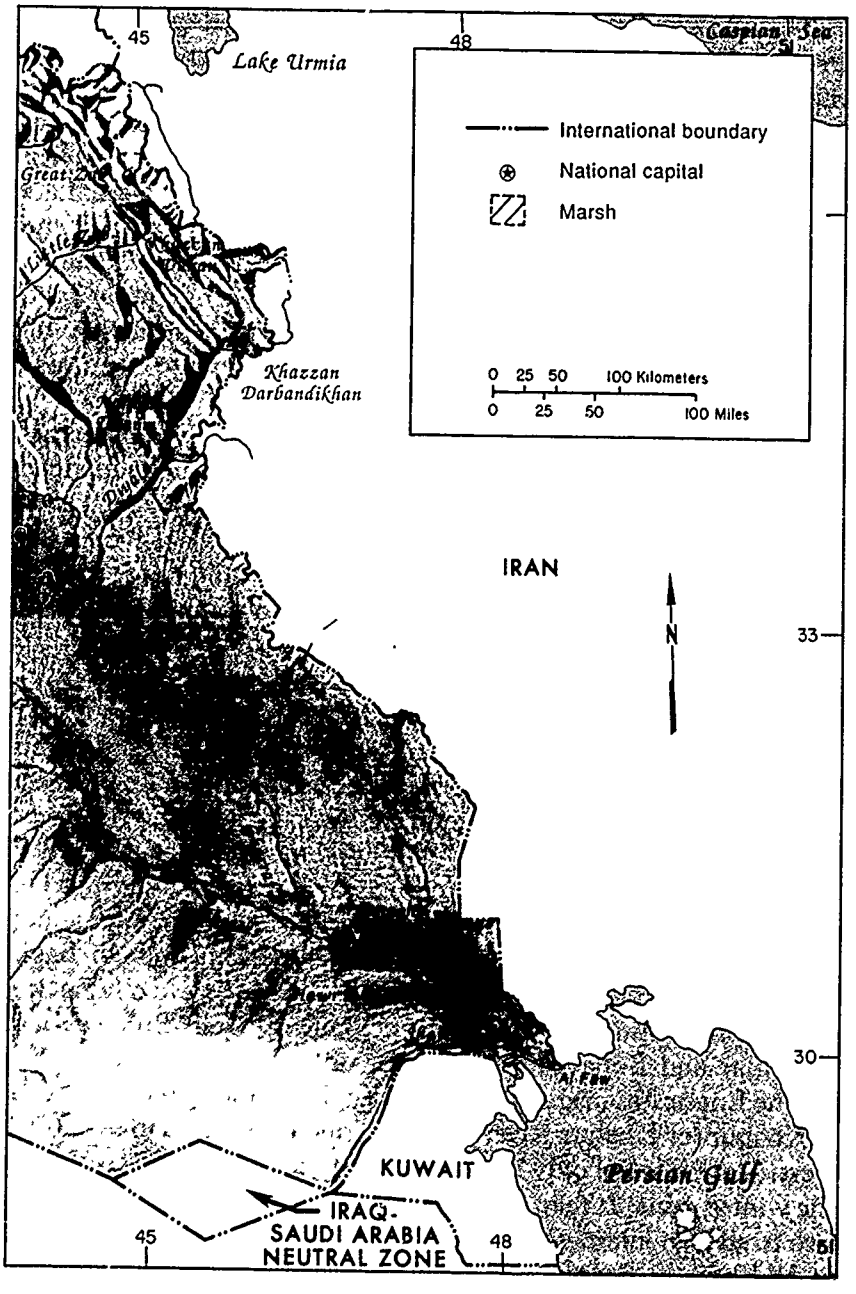


Figure 5. Topography and Drainage

gives way to mountains ranging from 1,000 to nearly 4,000 meters near the Iranian and Turkish borders. Except for a few valleys, the mountain area proper is suitable only for grazing in the foothills



and steppes; adequate soil and rainfall, however, make cultivation possible. Here, too, are the great oil fields near Mosul and Kirkuk. The northeast is the homeland of most Iraqi Kurds.

The alluvial plain begins north of Baghdad and extends to the Persian Gulf. Here the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers lie above the level of the plain in many places, and the whole area is a delta interlaced by the channels of the two rivers and by irrigation canals. Intermittent lakes, fed by the rivers in flood, also characterize southeastern Iraq. A fairly large area (15,000 square kilometers) just above the confluence of the two rivers at Al Qurnah and extending east of the Tigris beyond the Iranian border is marshland, known as Hawr al Hammar, the result of centuries of flooding and inadequate drainage. Much of it is permanent marsh, but some parts dry out in early winter, and other parts become marshland only in years of great flood.

Because the waters of the Tigris and the Euphrates above their confluence are heavily silt laden, irrigation and fairly frequent flooding deposit large quantities of silty loam in much of the delta area. Windborne silt also contributes to the total deposit of sediments. It has been estimated that the delta plains are built up at the rate of nearly twenty centimeters in a century. In some areas, major floods lead to the deposit in temporary lakes of as much as thirty centimeters of mud.

The Tigris and the Euphrates also carry large quantities of salts. These, too, are spread on the land by flooding and by sometimes excessive irrigation. A high water table and poor surface and subsurface drainage tend to concentrate the salts near the surface of the soil. In general, the salinity of the soil increases from Baghdad south to the Persian Gulf, a condition which severely limits productivity in the region south of Al Amarah. The high degree of salinity is reflected in the large lake in central Iraq, southwest of Baghdad, known as Bahr al Milh (Sea of Salt). There are two other major lakes in the country to the north of Bahr al Milh, Buhayrat ath Tharthar and Buhayrat al Habbaniyah.

The Euphrates originates in Turkey, is augmented by the Nahr al Khabur (or Khabur River) in Syria, and enters Iraq in the northwest. Here it is fed only by the wadis of the western desert during the winter rains. It then winds through a gorge, which varies from two to sixteen kilometers in width, until it flows out onto the plain at Ar Ramadi. Beyond there the Euphrates continues to the Hindiyah Barrage, which was constructed in 1914 to divert the river into the Hindiyah Channel (the present-day Shatt al Hillah had been the main channel of the Euphrates before 1914). Below Al Kifl, the river follows two channels to As Samawah, where it reappears as a single channel to join the Tigris at Al Qurnah.

The Tigris also rises in Turkey, but it is significantly augmented by several rivers in Iraq, the most important of which are the

Khabur, the Great Zab, the Little Zab, and the Uzaym, all of which join the Tigris above Baghdad, and the Diyala, which joins it about thirty-six kilometers below the city. At the Kut Barrage much of the water is diverted into the Shatt al Gharraf, which was once the main channel of the Tigris. Water from the Tigris thus enters the Euphrates through the Shatt al Gharraf well above the confluence of the two main channels at Al Qurnah.

Both the Tigris and the Euphrates break into a number of channels in the marshland area, and the flow of the rivers is substantially reduced by the time they come together at Al Qurnah. Moreover, the swamps act as silt traps, and the Shatt al Arab is relatively silt free as it flows south. Below Basra, however, the Karun River enters the Shatt al Arab from Iran, carrying large quantities of silt that present a continuous dredging problem in maintaining a clear channel to enable ocean-going vessels to reach the port at Basra. This problem has been superseded by a greater obstacle to river traffic, however, namely the presence of several sunken hulks that have been rusting in the Shatt al Arab since early in the war.

The waters of the Tigris and Euphrates are essential to the life of the country, but they may also threaten it. The rivers are at their lowest level in September and in October and are at flood in March, April, and May, when they may carry forty times as much water as at low mark. Moreover, one season's flood may be ten or more times as great as another's. In 1954, for example, Baghdad was seriously threatened, and dikes protecting it were nearly topped by the flooding Tigris. Since Syria built a dam on the Euphrates, the flow of water has been considerably diminished, and flooding was no longer a problem in the mid-1980s. In 1988 Turkey was also constructing a dam on the Euphrates that would further restrict the water flow.

Until the mid-twentieth century, most efforts to control the waters were primarily concerned with irrigation. Some attention was given to problems of flood control and drainage before the July 14 Revolution in 1958, but development plans in the 1960s and the 1970s were increasingly devoted to these matters, as well as to irrigation projects on the upper reaches of the Tigris and the Euphrates and the tributaries of the Tigris in the northeast. During the war, government officials stressed to foreign visitors that, with the conclusion of a peace settlement, problems of irrigation and flooding would receive top priority from the government.

Settlement Patterns

In the rural areas of the alluvial plain and in the lower Diyala region, settlement almost invariably clusters near the rivers,

streams, and irrigation canals. The bases of the relationship between watercourse and settlement have been summarized by Robert McCormick Adams, director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. He notes that the levees laid down by streams and by canals provide advantages for both settlement and agriculture. Surface water drains more easily on the levees' backslope, and the coarse soils of the levees are easier to cultivate and permit better subsurface drainage. The height of the levees gives some protection against floods and the frost that often affect low-lying areas and may kill winter crops. Above all, those living or cultivating on the crest of a levee have easy access to water for irrigation and for household use in a dry, hot country.

Although there are some isolated homesteads, most rural communities are nucleated settlements rather than dispersed farmsteads; that is, the farmer leaves his village to cultivate the fields outside it. The pattern holds for farming communities in the Kurdish highlands of the northeast as well as for those in the alluvial plain. The size of the settlement varies, generally with the volume of water available for household use and with the amount of land accessible to village dwellers. Sometimes, particularly in the lower Tigris and Euphrates valleys, soil salinity restricts the area of arable land and limits the size of the community dependent upon it, and it also usually results in large unsettled and uncultivated stretches between the villages.

Fragmentary information suggests that most farmers in the alluvial plain tend to live in villages of more than 100 persons. For example, in the mid-1970s a substantial number of the residents of Baqubah, the administrative center and major city of Diyala Governorate, were employed in agriculture.

The Marsh Arabs (the Madan) of the south usually live in small clusters of two or three houses kept above water by rushes that are constantly being replenished. Such clusters often are close together, but access from one to another is possible only by small boat. Here and there a few natural islands permit slightly larger clusters. Some of these people are primarily water buffalo herders, and they lead a seminomadic life. In the winter, when the waters are at a low point, they build fairly large temporary villages; in the summer, they move their herds out of the marshes to the river banks.

The war has had its effect on the lives of these denizens of the marshes. With much of the fighting concentrated in their areas, they have either migrated to settled communities away from the marshes or have been forced by government decree to relocate within the marshes. Also, in early 1988, the marshes had become the refuge of deserters from the Iraqi army, who attempted to

maintain life in the fastness of these overgrown, desolate areas while hiding out from the authorities. These deserters in many instances have formed into large gangs that raid the marsh communities. For this reason, many of the marsh dwellers have abandoned their villages.

The war has also affected settlement patterns in the northern Kurdish areas. There, the persistence of a stubborn rebellion by Kurdish guerrillas has goaded the government into applying steadily escalating violence against the local communities. Starting in 1984, the government launched a scorched-earth campaign to drive a wedge between the villagers and the guerrillas in the remote areas of two provinces of Kurdistan in which Kurdish guerrillas were active. In the process, whole villages were torched and subsequently bulldozed, which resulted in the Kurds' flocking into the regional centers of Irbil and As Sulaymaniyah. Also as a military precaution, the government has cleared a broad strip of territory in the Kurdish region along the Iranian border of all its inhabitants, hoping in this way to interdict the movement of Kurdish guerrillas back and forth between Iran and Iraq. The majority of Kurdish villages, however, remained intact in early 1988.

In the arid areas of Iraq to the west and to the south, cities and large towns are almost invariably situated on watercourses, usually on the major rivers or their larger tributaries. In the south, this dependence has had its disadvantages. Until the recent development of flood control, Baghdad and other cities were subject to the threat of inundation. The dikes needed for protection, moreover, have effectively prevented the expansion of the urban areas in some directions. The growth of Baghdad, for example, was restricted by dikes on its eastern edge. The diversion of water to the Milhat ath Tharthar and the construction of a canal transferring water from the Tigris north of Baghdad to the Diyala River have facilitated both the irrigation of land outside the limits of the dikes and the expansion of settlement.

Climate

Roughly 90 percent of the annual rainfall occurs between November and April, most of it in the winter months from December through March. The remaining six months, particularly the hottest ones of June, July, and August, are dry.

Except in the north and in the northeast, mean annual rainfall ranges between ten and seventeen centimeters. Data available from stations in the foothills and in the steppes south and southwest of the mountains suggest that there is mean annual rainfall of between thirty-two and fifty-seven centimeters for that area. Rainfall in the

mountains is more abundant and may reach 100 centimeters a year in some places, but the terrain precludes extensive cultivation. Cultivation on nonirrigated land is limited essentially to the mountain valleys, foothills, and steppes, which have thirty or more centimeters of rainfall annually. Even in this zone, however, only one crop a year can be grown, and shortages of rain have often led to crop failures.

Mean minimum temperatures in the winter range from near freezing (just before dawn) in the northern and northeastern foothills and the western desert to 2°C–3°C and 4°C–5°C in the alluvial plains of southern Iraq. They rise to a mean maximum of about 15.5°C in the western desert and in the northeast and of 16.6°C in the south. In the summer mean minimum temperatures range from about 22.2°C to about 29°C and rise to maximums between roughly 37.7°C and 43.3°C. Temperatures sometimes fall below freezing, and they have fallen as low as −14.4°C at Ar Rutbah in the western desert. They are more likely, however, to go over 46°C in the summer months, and several stations have records of more than 48°C.

The summer months are marked by two kinds of wind. The southerly and southeasterly *sharqi,* a dry, dusty wind with occasional gusts of eighty kilometers an hour, occurs from April to early June and again from late September through November. It may last for only a day at the beginning and at the end of the season but for several days at other times. This wind is often accompanied by violent duststorms that may rise to heights of several thousand meters and that may close airports for brief periods. From mid-June to mid-September, the prevailing wind, called the *shamal,* is from the north and northwest. It is a steady wind, absent only occasionally during this period. The very dry air brought by this *shamal* permits intensive heating of the land surface by the sun, but the breeze has some cooling effect.

The combination of rain shortage and extreme heat makes much of Iraq a desert. Because of very high rates of evaporation, soil and plants rapidly lose the little moisture obtained from the rain, and vegetation could not survive without extensive irrigation. Some areas, however, although arid, do have natural vegetation in contrast to the desert. For example, in the Zagros Mountains in northeastern Iraq there is permanent vegetation, such as oak trees, and date palms are found in the south.

Population

Although a census occurred in late 1987, only overall population totals and some estimates were available in early 1988. The

latest detailed census information was that from the 1977 census. The total population increased from 12,029,000 in 1977 to 16,278,000 in 1987, an increase of 35.3 percent.

The population has fluctuated considerably over the region's long history. Between the eighth century and the twelfth century A.D., Iraq—particularly Baghdad—was the flourishing center of a burgeoning Arab civilization. At the height of the region's prosperity it may have supported a population much larger than the present society. (Some estimates range as high as 15 to 29 million people.) Decline came swiftly in the late thirteenth century, however, when Mongol conquerors massacred the populace, destroyed the cities, and ravaged the countryside. The elaborate irrigation system that had made possible agricultural production capable of supporting a large population was left in ruins.

A pattern of alternating neglect and oppression characterized the Ottoman rule that began in the sixteenth century, and for hundreds of years the three *wilayat* (sing., *wilayah,* province) of Baghdad, Al Basrah, and Mosul—which the British joined to form Iraq in the aftermath of World War I—remained underpopulated backward outposts of the Ottoman Empire. In the mid-1800s, the area had fewer than 1.3 million inhabitants.

When Iraq became independent in 1932, the departing British officials estimated the population at about 3.5 million. The first census was carried out in 1947; it showed a population of approximately 4.8 million. The 1957 census gave a population figure of about 6.3 million, and the 1965 census returned a count of slightly above 8 million.

The October 1977 census gave the annual rate of population growth as 3.2 percent. According to the October 1987 census, the annual population growth rate was 3.1 percent, which placed Iraq among those countries with high population growth rates (2.8 to 3.5 percent per year). In common with many developing countries, Iraq's population was young; in 1987 approximately 57 percent of the population was under the age of twenty. The government has never sought to implement a birth control program, a policy reinforced by the war in order to offset losses in the fighting and to mitigate the threat from Iran, the population of which is roughly three times that of Iraq (see fig. 6).

In 1977 about 64 percent of the population was listed as living in urban areas; this was a marked change from 1965, when only 44 percent resided in urban centers. In the 1987 government estimates, the urban population was given as 70 percent. The increase resulted in large measure from the migrations to the cities after the start of the war. The partial destruction of Basra by Iranian

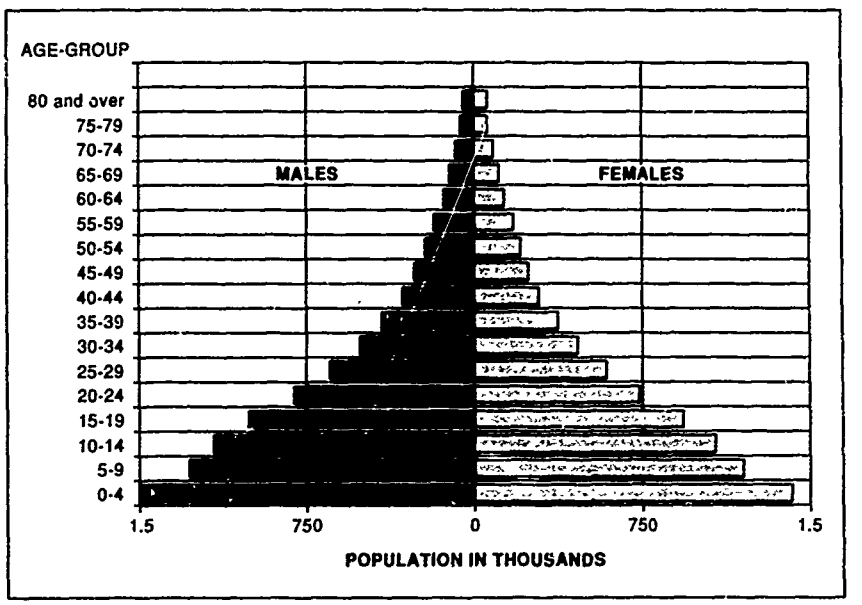


Figure 6. Estimated Population Distribution by Age and Sex, 1987

artillery barrages has had a particularly devastating effect; by 1988, according to some well informed accounts, almost half the residents of the city—its population formerly estimated at 800,000—had fled. At the same time, approximately 95,000 persons were identified in the 1977 census as nomadic or seminomadic beduins; the apparent increase from the 57,000 listed in the 1957 census probably reflects either an improved counting procedure or a change in classification. Overall, nomads and seminomads constituted less than 1 percent of the population, whereas in 1867 they had been estimated at about 500,000 or 35 percent of the population (see table 2, Appendix).

The population remains unevenly distributed. In 1987 the Baghdad Governorate had a population density of about 745 persons per square kilometer; the Babylon Governorate, of 211 persons per square kilometer; and the Al Muthanna Governorate, of only 6.1 persons per square kilometer. In general the major cities are located on the nation's rivers, and the bulk of the rural population lives in the areas that are cultivated with water taken from the rivers (see table 3, Appendix).

People

Although the data are not absolutely reliable, the government

estimates that 76 percent of the people are Arab; 19 percent are Kurds; while Turkomans, Assyrians, Armenians, and other relatively small groups make up the rest. All but a small percentage adhere to Islam. The Islamic component is split into two main sects, Sunni and Shia; the Shias are in the majority by far. Officially the government sets the number of Shias at 55 percent. In the 1980s, knowledgeable observers began to question this figure, regarding it as low. Because the government does not encourage birth control and the Shias, the least affluent in society, have traditionally had the highest birthrate, a more reasonable estimate of their numbers would seem to be between 60 and 65 percent. All but a few of the estimated 3,088,000 Kurds are Sunni, and thus the Sunni Arabs—who historically have been the dominant religious and ethnic group—constitute a decided minority of only about 13 percent vis-à-vis the Shia majority (see fig. 7).

Almost all Iraqis speak at least some Arabic, the mother tongue for the Arab majority. Arabic, one of the more widely spoken languages in the world, is the mother tongue claimed in 1988 by over 177 million people from Morocco to the Arabian Sea. One of the Semitic languages, it is related to Aramaic, Phoenician, Syriac, Hebrew, various Ethiopic languages, and the Akkadian of ancient Babylonia and Assyria.

Throughout the Arab world, the language exists in three forms: the Classical Arabic of the Quran; the literary language developed from the classical and referred to as Modern Standard Arabic, which has virtually the same structure wherever used; and the spoken language, which in Iraq is Iraqi Arabic. Educated Arabs tend to be bilingual—in Modern Standard Arabic and in their own dialect of spoken Arabic. Even uneducated Arabic speakers, who in Iraq constitute about 60 percent of the population, can comprehend the meaning of something said in Modern Standard Arabic, although they are unable to speak it. Classical Arabic, apart from Quranic texts, is known chiefly to scholarly specialists.

Most of the words of Arabic's rich and extensive vocabulary are variations of triconsonantal roots, each of which has a basic meaning. The sounds of Arabic are also rich and varied; they include some made in the throat and back of the larynx which do not occur in the major Indo-European languages. Structurally there are important differences between Modern Standard Arabic and spoken Arabic, such as the behavior of the verb: the voice and the tense of the verb are indicated by different internal changes in the two forms. In general the grammar of spoken Arabic is simpler than that of Modern Standard Arabic, having dropped many noun declensions and different forms of the relative pronoun for the

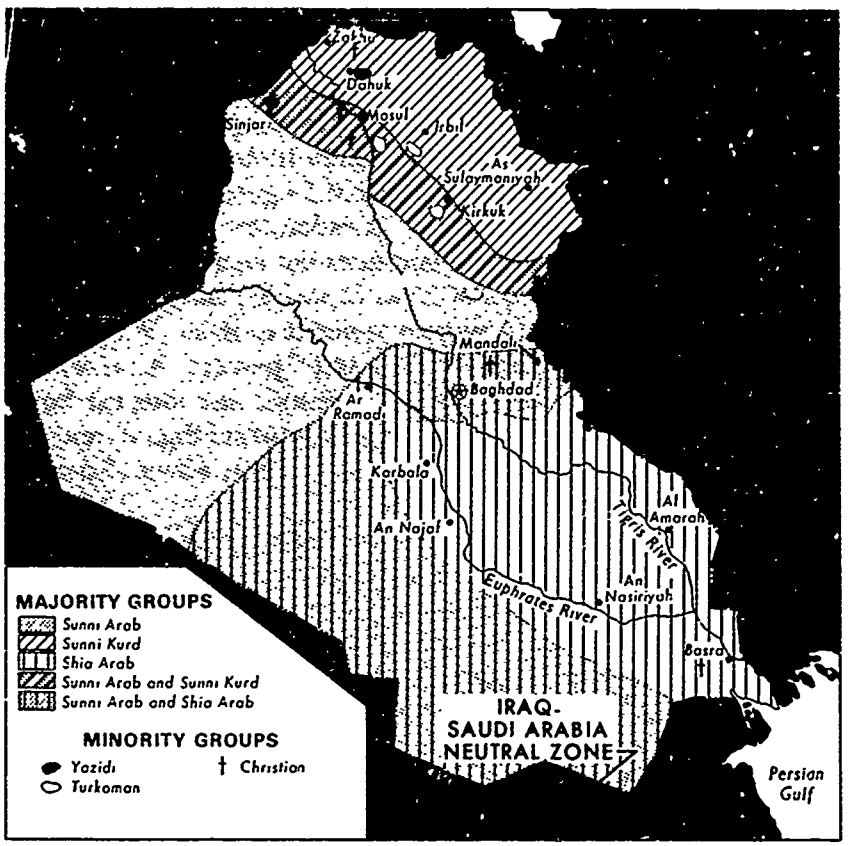


Figure 7. Ethnic and Religious Distribution, 1988

different genders. Some dialects of spoken Arabic do not use special feminine forms of plural verbs.

Dialects of spoken Arabic vary greatly throughout the Arab world. Most Iraqis speak one common to Syria, Lebanon, and parts of Jordan and—as is true of people speaking other dialects—they proudly regard theirs as the best. Although they converse in Iraqi Arabic, there is general agreement that Modern Standard Arabic, the written language, is superior to the spoken form. Arabs generally believe that the speech of the beduins resembles the pure classical form most closely and that the dialects used by the settled villagers and townspeople are unfortunate corruptions.

Kurds

Kurds represent by far the largest non-Arab ethnic minority, numbering about 3.1 million in 1987. They are the overwhelming

majority in the governorates of As Sulaymaniyah, Irbil, and Dahuk. Although the government hotly denies it, the Kurds are almost certainly also a majority in the region around Kirkuk, Iraq's richest oil-producing area. Kurds are settled as far south as Khanaqin. Ranging across northern Iraq, the Kurds are part of the larger Kurdish population (probably numbering close to 16 million) that inhabits the wide arc from eastern Turkey and the northwestern part of Syria through Soviet Azarbaijan and Iraq to the northwest of the Zagros Mountains in Iran. Although the largest numbers (variously estimated at between 3 and 10 million) live in Turkey, they are most active politically in Iraq.

The Kurds inhabit the highlands and mountain valleys, and traditionally they have been organized on a tribal basis. In the past, it was correct to distinguish the various communities of Kurds according to their tribal affiliation. To a large extent this was still true in the 1980s; tribes like the Herkki, the Sorchi, and the Zibari have maintained a powerful cohesion. Increasingly, however, groups of Kurds organized along political lines have grown up alongside the tribal units. Hence, the most northern and northeastern areas of Iraq are heavily infiltrated by elements of the so-called Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP—see The Emergence of Saddam Hasayn, 1968–79, ch. 1). The area surrounding Kirkuk and extending south to Khanaqin is the preserve of the Faili Kurds, who, unlike the majority of Kurds, are Shias. Many of the Faili Kurds belong to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). The far northwestern region of Iraq around Sinjar is spotted with enclaves claimed by the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), and the majority of its cadres are composed of Kurds.

Once mainly nomadic or seminomadic, Kurdish society was characterized by a combination of urban centers, villages, and pastoral tribes, from at least the Ottoman period. Historical sources indicate that, from the eighteenth century onward, Kurds in Iraq were mainly peasants engaged in agriculture and arboriculture. By the nineteenth century, about 20 percent of Iraqi Kurds lived in historic Kurdish cities such as Kirkuk, As Sulaymaniyah, and Irbil. The migration to the cities, particularly of the young intelligentsia, helped develop Kurdish nationalism.

Since the early 1960s, the urban Kurdish areas have grown rapidly. Kurdish migration—in addition to being part of the general trend of urban migration—was prompted by the escalating armed conflict with the central authorities in Baghdad, the destruction of villages and land by widespread bombing, and such natural disasters as a severe drought in the 1958 to 1961 period. In addition to destroying traditional resources, the severe fighting has

hindered the development of education, health, and other services.

The historic enmity between the Kurds and the central Arab government has contributed to the tenacious survival of Kurdish culture. The Kurds' most distinguishing characteristic, and the one that binds them to one another, is their language. There are several Kurdish dialects, of which Kirmanji (also seen as Karamanji) tends to be the standard written form as well as the language spoken by the northern group of Kurds (Kurdi or Sorani is spoken by the central group of Kurds.) Kurdish is not a mere dialect of Farsi or Persian, as many Iranian nationalists maintain, but one of the three major Iranian languages. The other two are Persian and Pashto (the Pathan language of eastern Afghanistan and parts of West Pakistan). It is not a variant of the Semitic or Turkic tongues but a separate language, part of the Indo-European family.

The Kurds have been locked in an unremittingly violent struggle with the central government in Baghdad almost since the founding of the Iraqi republic in 1958 (see Internal Developments and Security, ch. 5). It appeared in the early 1970s that the dissident Kurds—under the generalship of the legendary leader Mullah Mustafa Barzani—might actually carve out an independent Kurdish area in northern Iraq. In 1975, however, the shah of Iran—the Kurds' principal patron—withdrew his support of the Kurds as part of the Algiers Agreement between Tehran and Baghdad, leading to a sharp decline in the Kurdish movement. The signing of the Algiers Agreement caused a breakaway faction to emerge from the KDP, led by Masud Barzani, the son of Mullah Mustafa Barzani. The faction that left the KDP in opposition to the agreement formed the PUK under Jalal Talabani. The PUK continued to engage in low-level guerrilla activity against the central government in the period from 1975 to 1980. The war between Iraq and Iran that broke out in 1980 afforded the PUK and other Iraqi Kurdish groups the opportunity to intensify their opposition to the government.

The future of the Kurds in Iraq is uncertain because of the war. In 1983 the KDP spearheaded an Iranian thrust into northern Iraq, and later its cadres fanned out across the border area adjacent to Turkey where they established a string of bases. Meanwhile, Talabani's PUK has maintained a fighting presence in the Kirkuk region, despite ruthless attempts by the central government to dislodge them. Thus, as of early 1988, most of the northern areas of Iraq—outside the major cities—were under the control of the guerrillas. On the one hand, if the present government in Iraq survives the war—which in early 1988 seemed likely—it is almost certain



A Kurd from Salah ad Din
Courtesy Mokhless Al-Hariri

to punish those Kurds who collaborated with the Iranians. On the other hand, a number of large and powerful Kurdish tribes as well as many prominent Kurds from nontribal families have continued to support the central government throughout the war, fighting against their fellow Kurds. These loyal Kurds will expect to be rewarded for their allegiance once the war ends.

Other Minorities

The Yazidis are of Kurdish stock but are distinguished by their unique religious fusion of elements of paganism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam. They live in small and isolated groups, mostly in the Sinjar Mountains west of Mosul. They are impoverished cultivators and herdsmen, who have a strictly graded religiopolitical hierarchy and who tend to maintain a more closed community than other ethnic or religious groups. Historically, they have been subject to sharp persecution because of their heretical beliefs and practices.

The Turkomans, who are believed to constitute somewhat less than 2 percent of the population, are village dwellers in the northeast, along the border between the Kurdish and Arab regions. A number of Turkomans live in the city of Irbil. The Turkomans, who speak a Turkish dialect, have preserved their language, but they are no longer tribally organized. Most are Sunnis who were brought in by the Ottomans to repel tribal raids. These early

Turkomans were settled at the entrances of the valleys that gave access to the Kurdish areas. This historic pacification role has led to strained relations with the Kurds. By 1986 the Turkomans numbered somewhere around 222,000, and they were being rapidly assimilated into the general population.

The Assyrians are considered to be the third largest ethnic minority in Iraq. Although official Iraqi statistics do not refer to them as an ethnic group, they are believed to represent about 133,000 persons, or less than 1 percent of the population. Descendants of ancient Mesopotamian peoples, they speak Aramaic. The Assyrians live mainly in the major cities and in the rural areas of northeastern Iraq, where they tend to be professionals and businessmen or independent farmers. They are Christians, belonging to one of four churches: the Chaldean (Uniate), the Nestorian, the Jacobite or Syrian Orthodox, and the Syrian Catholic. There is also a small number of Armenians.

Religious Life

Although members of the ruling Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party generally are ideologically committed to secularism, about 95 percent of Iraqis are Muslim, and Islam is the officially recognized state religion. Islam came to the region with the victory of the Muslim armies, under Caliph Umar, over the Sassanids, in A.D. 637 at the battle of Al Qadisiyah. The majority of inhabitants, including the Kurds, soon became Muslim, although small communities of Christians and Jews remained intact in the area of present-day Iraq. Iraq has been the scene of many important events in the early history of Islam, including the schism over the rightful successor to the Prophet Muhammad.

Islam

Islam is a system of religious beliefs and an all-encompassing way of life. Muslims believe that God (Allah) revealed to the Prophet Muhammad the rules governing society and the proper conduct of society's members. It is incumbent on the individual, therefore, to live in a manner prescribed by the revealed law and incumbent on the community to build the perfect human society on earth according to holy injunctions. Islam recognizes no distinctions between church and state. The distinction between religious and secular law is a recent development that reflects the more pronounced role of the state in society, and Western economic and cultural penetration. The impact of religion on daily life in Muslim countries is far greater than that found in the West since the Middle Ages.

The Ottoman Empire organized society around the concept of the *millet,* or autonomous religious community. The non-Muslim "People of the Book" (Christians and Jews) owed taxes to the government; in return they were permitted to govern themselves according to their own religious law in matters that did not concern Muslims. The religious communities were thus able to preserve a large measure of identity and autonomy.

The Iraqi Baath Party has been a proponent of secularism. This attitude has been maintained despite the fact that the majority of Iraqis are deeply religious. At the same time, the Baathists have not hesitated to exploit religion as a mobilizing agent, and from the first months of the war with Iran, prominent Baathists have made a public show of attending religious observances. Iraq's President Saddam Husayn is depicted in prayer in posters displayed throughout the country. Moreover, the Baath has provided large sums of money to refurbish important mosques; this has proved a useful tactic in encouraging support from the Shias.

Islam came to Iraq by way of the Arabian Peninsula, where in A.D. 610, Muhammad—a merchant of the Hashimite branch of the ruling Quraysh tribe in the Arabian town of Mecca—began to preach the first of a series of revelations granted him by God through the angel Gabriel. A fervent monotheist, Muhammad denounced the polytheism of his fellow Meccans. Because the town's economy was based in part on a thriving pilgrimage business to the shrine called the Kaaba and to numerous other pagan religious sites in the area, his censure earned him the enmity of the town's leaders. In 622 he and a group of followers accepted an invitation to settle in the town of Yathrib, later known as Medina (the city), because it was the center of Muhammad's activities. The move, or hijra (see Glossary), known in the West as the hegira, marks the beginning of the Islamic era and of Islam as a force in history; the Muslim calendar begins in 622. In Medina, Muhammad continued to preach, and he eventually defeated his detractors in battle. He consolidated the temporal and the spiritual leadership in his person before his death in 632. After Muhammad's death, his followers compiled those of his words regarded as coming directly from God into the Quran, the holy scriptures of Islam. Others of his sayings and teachings, recalled by those who had known him, became the hadith (see Glossary). The precedent of Muhammad's personal behavior is called the sunna. Together they form a comprehensive guide to the spiritual, ethical, and social life of the orthodox Sunni Muslim.

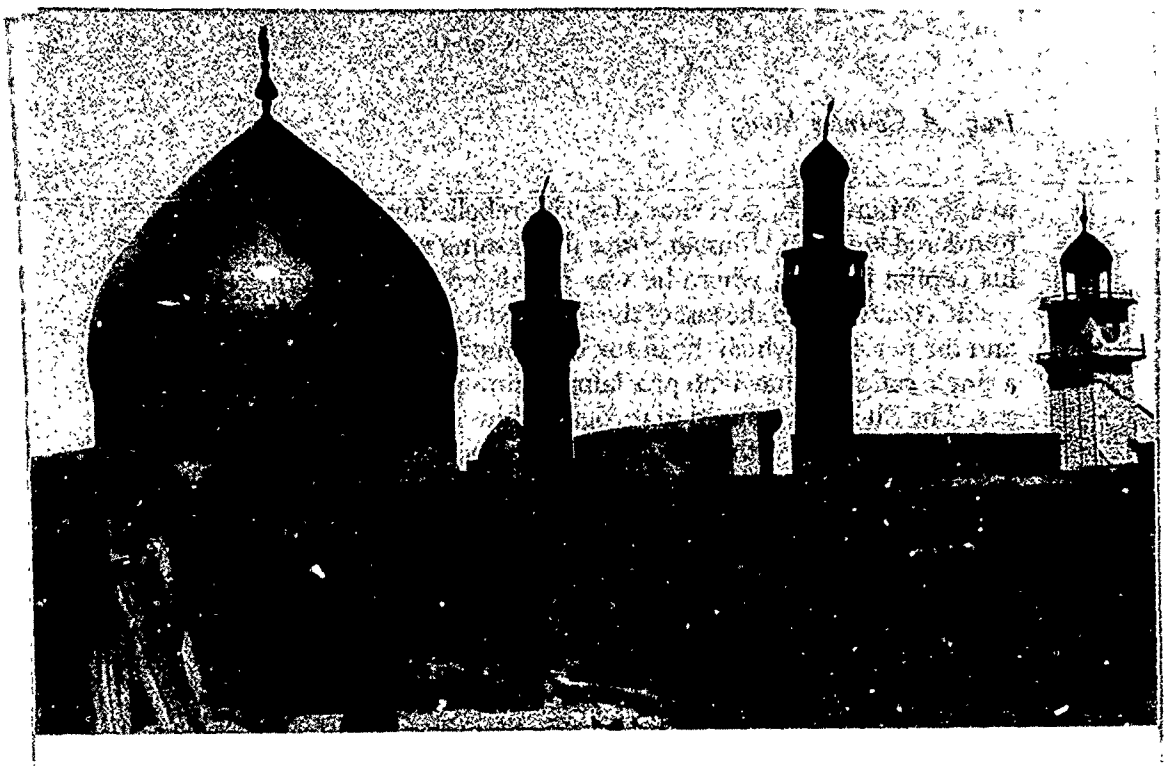
The duties of Muslims form the five pillars of Islam, which set forth the acts necessary to demonstrate and reinforce the faith. These

are the recitation of the *shahada* ("There is no God but God [Allah], and Muhammad is his prophet"), daily prayer (*salat*), almsgiving (*zakat*), fasting (*sawm*), and pilgrimage (hajj). The believer is to pray in a prescribed manner after purification through ritual ablutions each day at dawn, midday, midafternoon, sunset, and nightfall. Prescribed genuflections and prostrations accompany the prayers, which the worshiper recites facing toward Mecca. Whenever possible, men pray in congregation at the mosque with an imam (see Glossary), and on Fridays they make a special effort to do so. The Friday noon prayers provide the occasion for weekly sermons by religious leaders. Women may also attend public worship at the mosque, where they are segregated from the men, although most frequently women pray at home. A special functionary, the muezzin, intones a call to prayer to the entire community at the appropriate hour. Those out of earshot determine the time by the sun.

The ninth month of the Muslim calendar is Ramadan, a period of obligatory fasting in commemoration of Muhammad's receipt of God's revelation. Throughout the month, all but the sick and the weak, pregnant or lactating women, soldiers on duty, travelers on necessary journeys, and young children are enjoined from eating, drinking, smoking, or sexual intercourse during the daylight hours. Those adults excused are obliged to endure an equivalent fast at their earliest opportunity. A festive meal breaks the daily fast and inaugurates a night of feasting and celebration. The pious well-to-do usually do little or no work during this period, and some businesses close for all or part of the day. Since the months of the lunar year revolve through the solar year, Ramadan falls at various seasons in different years. A considerable test of discipline at any time of the year, a fast that falls in summertime imposes severe hardship on those who must do physical work.

All Muslims, at least once in their lifetimes, should make the hajj to Mecca to participate in special rites held there during the twelfth month of the lunar calendar. Muhammad instituted this requirement, modifying pre-Islamic custom, to emphasize sites associated with God and Abraham (Ibrahim), founder of monotheism and father of the Arabs through his son, Ismail.

The lesser pillars of the faith, which all Muslims share, are jihad, or the crusade to protect Islamic lands, beliefs, and institutions; and the requirement to do good works and to avoid all evil thoughts, words, and deeds. In addition, Muslims agree on certain basic principles of faith based on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad: there is one God, who is a unitary divine being in contrast to the trinitarian belief of Christians; Muhammad, the last of a line of



Great Mosque in the Shia holy city of An Najaf
Courtesy Matson Collection

prophets beginning with Abraham and including Moses and Jesus, was chosen by God to present His message to humanity; and there is a general resurrection on the last, or judgment, day.

During his lifetime, Muhammad held both spiritual and temporal leadership of the Muslim community. Religious and secular law merged, and all Muslims have traditionally been subject to sharia, or religious law. A comprehensive legal system, sharia developed gradually through the first four centuries of Islam, primarily through the accretion of interpretations and precedents set by various judges and scholars. During the tenth century, legal opinion began to harden into authoritative rulings, and the figurative *bab al ijtihad* (gate of interpretation) closed. Thereafter, rather than encouraging flexibility, Islamic law emphasized maintenance of the status quo.

After Muhammad's death, the leaders of the Muslim community consensually chose Abu Bakr, the Prophet's father-in-law and one of his earliest followers, to succeed him. At that time some persons favored Ali ibn Abu Talib, Muhammad's cousin and the husband of his daughter Fatima, but Ali and his supporters (the Shiat Ali, or party of Ali) eventually recognized the community's choice. The next two caliphs (successors)—Umar, who succeeded in 634, and Uthman, who took power in 644—enjoyed the recognition of the entire community. When Ali finally succeeded to the caliphate

in 656, Muawiyah, governor of Syria, rebelled in the name of his murdered kinsman Uthman. After the ensuing civil war, Ali moved his capital to Iraq, where he was murdered shortly thereafter.

Ali's death ended the last of the so-called four orthodox caliphates and the period in which the entire community of Islam recognized a single caliph. Muawiyah proclaimed himself caliph from Damascus. The Shiat Ali refused to recognize him or his line, the Umayyad caliphs, and withdrew in the great schism to establish the dissident sect, known as the Shias, who supported the claims of Ali's line to the caliphate based on descent from the Prophet. The larger faction, the Sunnis, adhered to the position that the caliph must be elected, and over the centuries they have represented themselves as the orthodox branch.

Sunnis

Originally political, the differences between Sunni and Shia interpretations rapidly took on theological and metaphysical overtones. In principle, a Sunni approaches God directly: there is no clerical hierarchy. Some duly appointed religious figures, however, exert considerable social and political power. Imams usually are men of importance in their communities, but they need not have any formal training; among the beduins, for example, any tribal member may lead communal prayers. Committees of socially prominent worshipers usually administer mosque-owned land and gifts. In Iraq, as in many other Arab countries, the administration of waqfs (religious endowments) has come under the influence of the state. Qadis (judges) and imams are appointed by the government.

The Muslim year has two religious festivals—Id al Adha, a sacrificial festival on the tenth of Dhu al Hijjah, the twelfth, or pilgrimage, month; and Id al Fitr, the festival of breaking the fast, which celebrates the end of Ramadan on the first of Shawwal, the tenth month. To Sunnis these are the most important festivals of the year. Each lasts three or four days, during which people put on their best clothes and visit, congratulate, and bestow gifts on each other. In addition, cemeteries are visited. Id al Fitr is celebrated more joyfully, as it marks the end of the hardships of Ramadan. Celebrations also take place, although less extensively, on the Prophet's birthday, which falls on the twelfth of Rabi al Awwal, the third month, and on the first of Muharram, the beginning of the new year.

With regard to legal matters, Sunni Islam has four orthodox schools that give different weight in legal opinions to prescriptions in the Quran, to the hadith or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad,

to the consensus of legal scholars, to analogy (to similar situations at the time of the Prophet), and to reason or opinion. Named for their founders, the Hanafi school of Imam Abu Hanifa, born in Al Kufah about 700, is the major school of Iraqi Sunni Arabs. It makes considerable use of reason or opinion in legal decisions. The dominant school for Iraqi Sunni Kurds is that of Imam Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Shafii of the Quraysh tribe of the Prophet, who was born in 767, was brought up in Mecca, and later taught in both Baghdad and Cairo. He followed a somewhat eclectic legal path, laying down the rules for analogy that were later adopted by other legal schools. The other two legal schools in Islam, the Maliki and the Hanbali, lack a significant number of adherents in Iraq.

Shias

Shia Muslims hold the fundamental beliefs of other Muslims (see Islam, this ch.). In addition to these tenets, however, Shias believe in the distinctive institution of Shia Islam, the Imamate. Whereas Sunni Muslims view the caliph as a temporal leader only, and consider an imam to be a prayer leader, Shia Muslims have a hereditary view of Muslim leadership. They believe the Prophet Muhammad designated Ali to be his successor as Imam, exercising both spiritual and temporal leadership. Such an Imam must have knowledge, both in a general and a religious sense, as well as spiritual guidance or *walayat,* the ability to interpret the inner mysteries of the Quran and the sharia. Only those who have *walayat* are free from error and sin and have been chosen by God through the Prophet. Each Imam in turn designated his successor—through twelve Imams—each holding the same powers.

The Imamate began with Ali, who is also accepted by Sunni Muslims as the fourth of the "rightly guided caliphs" to succeed the Prophet. Shias revere Ali as the First Imam, and his descendants, beginning with his sons Hasan and Husayn, continue the line of the Imams until the twelfth, who is believed to have ascended into a supernatural state to return to earth on Judgment Day. Shias point to the close lifetime association of the Prophet with Ali. When Ali was six years old, he was invited by the Prophet to live with him, and Shias believe Ali was the first person to make the declaration of faith in Islam. Ali also slept in the Prophet's bed on the night of the hijra, when it was feared that the house would be attacked by unbelievers and the Prophet stabbed to death. He fought in all the battles the Prophet did, except one, and the Prophet chose him to be the husband of his favorite daughter, Fatima.

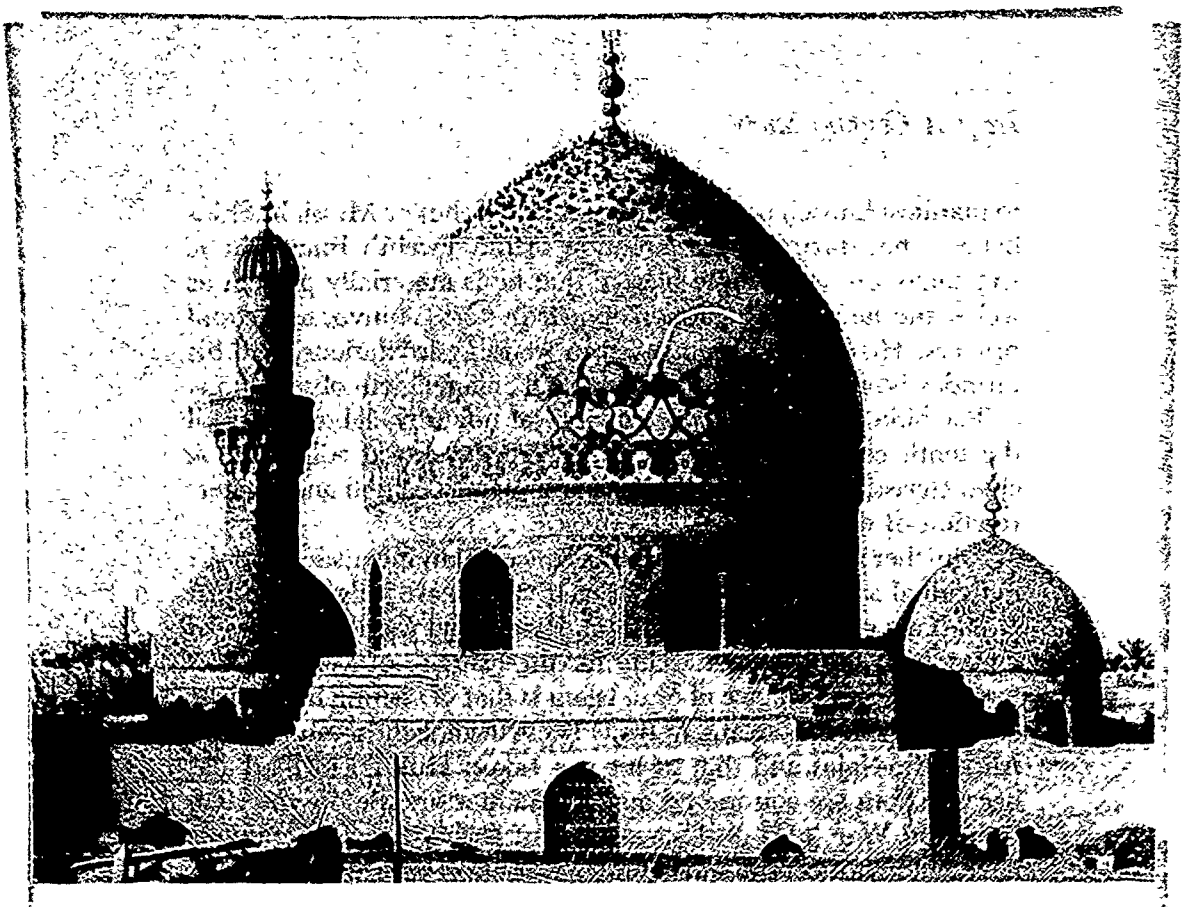
Among Shias the term *imam* traditionally has been used only for Ali and his eleven descendants. None of the twelve Imams, with the exception of Ali, ever ruled an Islamic government. During their lifetimes, their followers hoped that they would assume the rulership of the Islamic community, a rule that was believed to have been wrongfully usurped. Because the Sunni caliphs were cognizant of this hope, the Imams generally were persecuted under the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties. Therefore, the Imams tried to be as unobtrusive as possible and to live as far as was reasonable from the successive capitals of the Islamic empire.

During the eighth century, the Caliph Al Mamun, son and successor to Harun ar Rashid, was favorably disposed toward the descendants of Ali and their followers. He invited Imam Reza, the Eighth Imam (765–816), to come from Medina (in the Arabian Peninsula) to his court at Marv (Mary in the present-day Soviet Union). While Reza was residing at Marv, Al Mamun designated him as his successor in an apparent effort to avoid conflict among Muslims. Reza's sister Fatima journeyed from Medina to be with her brother, but took ill and died at Qom, in present-day Iran. A major shrine developed around her tomb and over the centuries Qom has become a major Shia pilgrimage and theological center.

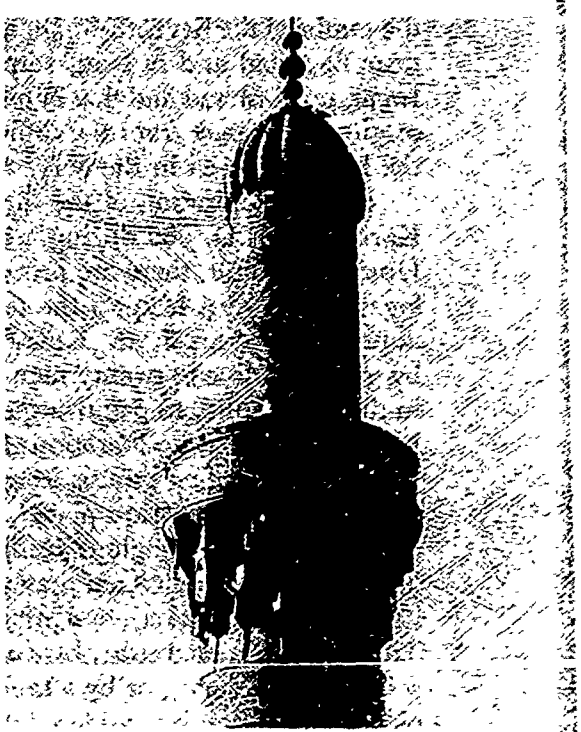
Al Mamun took Reza on his military campaign to retake Baghdad from political rivals. On this trip, Reza died unexpectedly in Khorasan. Reza was the only Imam to reside in, or die in, what in now Iran. A major shrine, and eventually the city of Mashhad, grew up around his tomb, which has become the most important pilgrimage center in Iran. Several important theological schools are located in Mashhad, associated with the shrine of the Eighth Imam.

Reza's sudden death was a shock to his followers, many of whom believed that Al Mamun, out of jealousy for Reza's increasing popularity, had had the Imam poisoned. Al Mamun's suspected treachery against Imam Reza and his family tended to reinforce a feeling already prevalent among his followers that the Sunni rulers were untrustworthy.

The Twelfth Imam is believed to have been only five years old when the Imamate descended upon him in 874 at the death of his father. Because his followers feared he might be assassinated, the Twelfth Imam was hidden from public view and was seen only by a few of his closest deputies. Sunnis claim that he never existed, or that he died while still a child. Shias believe that the Twelfth Imam never died, but disappeared from earth in about 939. Since that time, the greater occultation of the Twelfth Imam has been in force, which will last until God commands the Twelfth Imam



The Haidar Khana Mosque, Baghdad
Courtesy Matson Collection



Close-up of the minaret of the Haidar Khana Mosque, Baghdad
Courtesy Matson Collection

to manifest himself on earth again as the Mahdi or Messiah. Shias believe that during the occultation of the Twelfth Imam, he is spiritually present—some believe that he is materially present as well—and he is besought to reappear in various invocations and prayers. His name is mentioned in wedding invitations, and his birthday is one of the most jubilant of all Shia religious observances.

The Shia doctrine of the Imamate was not fully elaborated until the tenth century. Other dogmas were developed still later. A characteristic of Shia Islam is the continual exposition and reinterretation of doctrine.

A further belief of Shia Muslims concerns divine justice and the individual's responsibility for his acts, which are judged by a just God. This contrasts with the Sunni view that God's creation of man allows minimal possibility for the exercise of free will.

A significant practice of Shia Islam is that of visiting the shrines of Imams both in Iraq and in Iran. These include the tomb of Imam Ali in An Najaf and that of his son Imam Husayn in Karbala, because both are considered major Shia martyrs. Before the 1980 Iran-Iraq War, tens of thousands went each year The Iranians have made it a central aim of their war effort to wrest these holy cities from the Iraqis. Other principal pilgrimage sites in Iraq are the tombs of the Seventh Imam and the Ninth Imam at Kazimayn near Baghdad and in Iran, respectively, the tomb of the Eighth Imam in Mashhad and that of his sister in Qom. Such pilgrimages originated in part from the difficulty and the expense of making the hajj to Mecca in the early days.

In commemoration of the martyrdom of Husayn, killed near Karbala in A.D. 680 during a battle with troops supporting the Umayyad caliph, there are processions in the Shia towns and villages of southern Iraq on the tenth of Muharram (Ashura), the anniversary of his death. Ritual mourning (*taaziya*) is performed by groups of five to twenty men each. Contributions are solicited in the community to pay transportation for a local group to go to Karbala for *taaziya* celebrations forty days after Ashura. There is great rivalry among groups from different places for the best performance of the passion plays.

In the villages, religious readings occur throughout Ramadan and Muharram. The men may gather in the *mudhif* (tribal guesthouse), the *suq* (market), or a private house. Women meet in homes. The readings are led either by a *mumin* (a man trained in a religious school in An Najaf), or by a mullah who has apprenticed with an older specialist. It is considered the duty of shaykhs (see Glossary), elders, prosperous merchants, and the like to sponsor these readings, or *qirayas*. Under the monarchy these public manifestations

were discouraged, as they emphasized grievances against the Sunnis.

Two distinctive and frequently misunderstood Shia practices are *mutah,* temporary marriage, and *taqiyah,* religious dissimulation. *Mutah* is a fixed-term contract that is subject to renewal. Practiced by the first community of Muslims at Medina, it was banned by the second caliph. *Mutah* differs from permanent marriage in that it does not require divorce to terminate it. It can be for a period as short as an evening or as long as a lifetime. The offspring of such an arrangement are the legitimate heirs of the man.

Taqiyah, condemned by the Sunnis as cowardly and irreligious, is the hiding or disavowal of one's religion or its practices in order to escape the danger of death from those opposed to the faith. Persecution of Shia Imams during the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates reinforced the need for *taqiyah.*

Shia practice differs from that of Sunnis concerning both divorce and inheritance in that it is more favorable to women. The reason for this reputedly is the high esteem in which Fatima, the wife of Ali and the daughter of the Prophet, was held.

Like Sunni Islam, Shia Islam has developed several sects. The most important of these is the Twelver or Ithna-Ashari sect, which predominates not only in Iraq but in the Shia world generally. Broadly speaking, the Twelvers are considered political quietists as opposed to the Zaydis, who favor political activism, and the Ismailis, who are identified with esoteric and gnostic religious doctrines. Within Twelver Shia Islam there are two major legal schools, the Usuli and the Akhbari. Akhbaris constitute a very small group and are found primarily around Basra and in southern Iraq as well as around Khorramshahr in Iran. The dominant Usuli school is more liberal in its legal outlook; it allows greater use of interpretation (*ijtihad*) in reaching legal decisions; and it considers that one must obey a *mujtahid* (learned interpreter of the law) as well as an Imam.

Sunni-Shia Relations in Iraq

Until the 1980s, the dominant view of contemporary political analysts held that Iraq was badly split along sectarian lines. The claim was that the Sunnis—although a minority—ran Iraq and subjected the majority Shias to systematic discrimination. According to the prevailing belief, the Shias would drive the Sunnis from power, if once afforded an opportunity to do so.

There was some basis to this notion. For many years Iraq was ruled by and large by Arab Sunnis who tended to come from a restricted area around Baghdad, Mosul, and Ar Rutbah—the

so-called Golden Triangle. In the 1980s, not only was President Saddam Husayn a Sunni, but he was the vice chairman of the ruling Baath Party. One of the two deputy prime ministers and the defense minister were also Sunnis. In addition, the top posts in the security services have usually been held by Sunnis, and most of the army's corps commanders have been Sunnis. It is also true that the most depressed region of the country is the south, where the bulk of the Shias reside.

Nonetheless, the theory of sectarian strife was undercut by the behavior of Iraq's Shia community during Iran's 1982 counter-invasion and the fighting thereafter. Although about three-quarters of the lower ranks of the army was composed of Shias, as of early 1988 no general insurrection of Iraqi Shias had occurred.

Even in periods of major setbacks for the Iraqi army—such as the Al Faw debacle in 1986—the Shias have continued to defend their nation and the Baath regime staunchly. They have done so despite intense propaganda barrages mounted by the Iranians, calling on them to join the Islamic revolution.

It appears, then, that, however important sectarian affiliation may have been in the past, in the latter 1980s nationalism was the basic determinant of loyalty. In the case of Iraq's Shias, it should be noted that they are Arabs, not Persians, and that they have been the traditional enemies of the Persians for centuries. The Iraqi government has skillfully exploited this age-old enmity in its propaganda, publicizing the war as part of the ancient struggle between the Arab and Persian empires. For example, Baathist publicists regularly called the war a modern day "Al Qadisiyah." Al Qadisiyah was the battle in 637 in which the Arabs defeated the pagan hosts of Persia, enabling Islam to spread to the East.

The real tension in Iraq in the latter 1980s was between the majority of the population, including Sunnis as well as Shias, for whom religious belief and practice were significant values, and the secular Baathists, rather than between Sunnis and Shias. Although the Shias were underrepresented in government posts in the period of the monarchy, they made substantial progress in the education, business, and legal fields. Their advancement in other areas, such as the opposition parties, was such that in the years from 1952 to 1963, before the Baath Party came to power, Shias held the majority of party leadership posts. Observers believed that in the late 1980s Shias were represented at all levels of the party roughly in proportion to government estimates of their numbers in the population. For example, of the eight top Iraqi leaders who in early 1988 sat with Saddam Husayn on the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC)—Iraq's highest governing body—three were Arab Shias

(of whom one had served as minister of interior), three were Arab Sunnis, one was an Arab Christian, and one a Kurd. On the Regional Command Council—the ruling body of the party—Shias actually predominated (see The Baath Party, ch. 4). During the war, a number of highly competent Shia officers had been promoted to corps commanders. The general who turned back the initial Iranian counterinvasions of Iraq in 1982 was a Shia.

The Shias continued to make good progress in the economic field as well during the 1980s. Although the government did not publish statistics that give breakdowns by religious affiliation, qualified observers noted that many Shias migrated from rural areas, particularly in the south, to the cities, so that not only Basra but other cities including Baghdad acquired a Shia majority. Many of these Shias prospered in business and the professions as well as in industry and the service sector. Even those living in the poorer areas of the cities were generally better off than they had been in the countryside. In the rural areas as well, the educational level of Shias came to approximate that of their Sunni counterparts.

In summary, prior to the war the Baath had taken steps toward integrating the Shias. The war created inordinate demands for manpower that could be met only by levying the Shia community, and this strengthened the regime's resolve to further the integration process. In early 1988, it seemed likely that when the war ended, the Shias would emerge as full citizens—assuming that the Baath survived the conflict.

Social Systems

The impact of Western penetration on the indigenous social and demographic structure in the nineteenth century was profound. Western influence initially took the form of transportation and trading links and encouraged the switch from tribal-based subsistence agriculture to cash crop production—mostly dates—for export (see Agriculture, ch. 3). As this process accelerated, the nomadic population decreased both relatively and in absolute numbers and the rural sedentary population increased substantially, particularly in the southern region. This was accompanied by a pronounced transformation of tenurial relations: the tribal, communal character of subsistence production was transformed on a large scale into a landlord-tenant relationship; tribal shaykhs, urban merchants, and government officials took title under the open-ended terms of the newly promulgated Ottoman land codes. Incentives and pressures on this emerging landlord class to increase production (and thus exports and earnings) resulted in expanded cultivation and simultaneously absorbed the "surplus" labor of the tribal, pastoral, and

nomadic people of Iraqi society. This prolonged process of sedentarization was disrupted by the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire during and after World War I, but it resumed with renewed intensity in the British mandate period, when the political structure of independent Iraq was formed (see World War I and the British Mandate, ch. 1). This threefold transformation of rural society—pastoral to agricultural, subsistence to commercial, tribal-communal to landlord-peasant—was accompanied by important shifts in urban society as well. There was a general increase in the number of market towns and in the size of their populations, but the destruction of handicraft industries, especially in Baghdad, by the import of cheap manufactured goods from the West, led to an absolute decline in the population of urban centers. It also indelibly stamped the subsequent urban growth with a mercantile and bureaucratic-administrative character that is still a strong feature of Iraqi society.

Thus, the general history of Iraqi population dynamics in the modern era can be described as a period extending from the middle of the nineteenth century to World War II, characterized chiefly by urbanization, with a steady and growing movement of people from the rural (especially southern) region to the urban (especially central) region. Furthermore, the basic trends of the 1980s are rooted in the particularly exploitive character of agricultural practices in regard to both the land itself and the people who work it. Declining productivity of the land, stemming from the failure to develop drainage along the irrigation facilities and from the wretched condition of the producers, has resulted in a potentially harmful demographic trajectory—the depopulation of the countryside—that in the late 1980s continued to thwart government efforts to reverse the decades-long pattern of declining productivity in the agricultural sector.

The accelerated urbanization process since World War II is starkly illustrated in the shrinking proportion of the population living in rural areas: 61 percent in 1947, decreasing to 56 percent in 1965, then 36 percent in 1977, and an estimated 29.5 percent in 1987; concurrently, between 1977 and 1987, the urban population rose from 7,646,054 to an estimated 11,483,000. The rural exodus has been most severe in Al Basrah and Al Qadisiyah governorates. The proportion of rural to urban population was lowest in the governorates of Al Basrah (37 percent in 1965, and 12 percent in 1987) and Baghdad (48 percent in 1965 and 7 percent in 1987). It was highest in Dhi Qar Governorate where it averaged 49 percent in 1987, followed closely by Al Muthanna and Diyala governorates, each with a rural population of 48 percent of total



Christian church, Baghdad
Courtesy Ronald L. Kuipers

population. Between 1957 and 1987, the population of Baghdad and Al Basrah governorates grew by 73 percent and 41 percent respectively. During the same years, the city of Baghdad grew by 87 percent, and the city of Basra grew by 64 percent.

Because of the war, the growth of Al Basrah Governorate has been reversed while that of Baghdad Governorate has accelerated alarmingly to the 1987 census figure for urban Baghdad of 3,600,000. Iranian forces have mounted an offensive each year of the war since 1980, except for early 1988, seeking to capture Basra and the adjoining area and subjecting the city to regular bombardment. As a result, large numbers of the population have fled northward from Basra and other southern areas, and many have entered Baghdad, which was already experiencing overcrowding. The government has attempted to deal with this situation by moving war refugees out of the capital and resettling them in other smaller cities in the south, out of the range of the fighting.

Rural Society

Rural Iraq contains aspects of the largely tribal mode of social organization that prevailed over the centuries and still survived in the 1980s—particularly in the more isolated rural areas, such as the rugged tableland of the northwest and the marshes of the south. The tribal mode probably originated in the unstable social conditions that resulted from the protracted decline of the Abbasid

Caliphate (A.D. 750–1258) and the subsequent cycles of invasion and devastation.

In the absence of a strong central authority and of the urban society of a great civilization, society developed into smaller units under conditions that placed increasing stress on prowess, decisiveness, and mobility. Under these conditions, the tribal shaykhs emerged as a warrior class, and this development facilitated the ascendancy of the fighter-nomad over the cultivator.

The gradual sedentarization that began in the mid-nineteenth century brought with it an erosion of the power of shaykhs and a disintegration of the tribal system. Under the British mandate, and the monarchy that was its creation, a reversal took place. Despite the continued decline of the tribe as a viable and organic social entity, the enfeebled power of the shaykhs was restored and was enhanced by the British. This was done to develop a local ruling class that could maintain security in the countryside and could otherwise head off political challenges to British access to Iraq's mineral and agricultural resources and Britain's paramount role in the Persian Gulf shaykhdoms (see World War I and the British Mandate, ch. 1). Specifically, through the implementation of land registration, the traditional pattern of communal cultivation and pasturage—with mutual rights and duties between shaykhs and tribesmen—was superseded in some tribal areas by the institution of private property and by the shaykhs' expropriation of tribal lands as private estates. The status of the tribesmen was in many instances reduced drastically, to that of sharecroppers and laborers. The additional ascription of judicial and police powers to the shaykh and to his retinue left the tribesmen-cum-peasants as virtual serfs, continuously in debt and in servitude to the shaykh turned landlord and master. The social basis for the shaykhs' power had been transformed from military valor and moral rectitude to the possession of wealth as embodied in vast landholdings and in a claim to the greater share of the peasants' production.

This change was the social dimension of the transformation from a subsistence, pastoral economy to an agricultural economy linked to the world market. It was, of course, an immensely complicated process, and conditions varied in different parts of the country. The main impact was in the southern half—the riverine economy—more than in the sparsely populated, rain-fed northern area. A more elaborate analysis of this process would have to look specifically at the differences between Kurdish and Arab shaykhs, between political and religious leadership functions, between Sunni and Shia shaykhs, and between nomadic and riverine shaykhs, all within their ecological settings. In general the biggest estates developed

in areas restored to cultivation through dam construction and by pump irrigation after World War I. The most autocratic examples of shaykhly power were in the rice-growing region near Al Amarah, where the need for organized and supervised labor and the rigorous requirements of rice cultivation generated the most oppressive conditions.

The role of the tribe as the chief politico-military unit was already well eroded by the time the monarchy was overthrown in July 1958. The role of some tribal shaykhs had been abolished by the central government. The tribal system survived longest in the mid-Euphrates area, where many tribesmen had managed to register small plots in their own names and had not become mere tenants of the shaykh. In such settings, an interesting amalgam developed of the traditional customs of the tribes and the more modern practices of the civil servants sent to rural regions by the central government—both influenced by the expanded government education system. For example, the government engineer responsible for the water distribution system, although technically not a major administrator, in practice became the leading figure in rural areas. He would set forth req. nents for the cleaning and the maintenance of the canals (see culture, ch. 3), and the tribal shaykh would see to it that the n ary manpower was provided. This service, in the minds of trib ien, replaced the old customary obligation of military service that they owed to the shaykh and was not unduly onerous. It could readily be combined with work on their own grazing or producing lands, and it benefited the tribe as a whole. The government administrators usually avoided becoming involved in legal disputes that might result from water rights, leaving the disputes to be settled by the shaykh in accordance with traditional tribal practices. Thus, despite occasional tensions in such government-tribe relationships, the power of the central government gradually expanded into regions where Baghdad's influence had previously been slight or absent.

Despite the erosion of the historic functions of tribal organization, the prolonged absence of alternative social links has helped to preserve the tribal character of individual and group relations. The complexity of these relations is impressive. Even in the southern, irrigated part of the country there are notable differences between the tribes along the Tigris, subject to Iranian influences, and those of the Euphrates, whose historic links are with the Arab beduin tribes of the desert. Since virtually no ethnographic studies on the Tigris peoples existed in the late 1980s, the following is based chiefly on research in the Euphrates region.

The tribe represents a concentric social system linked to the classical nomadic structure but modified by the sedentary environment and limited territory characteristic of the modern era. The primary unit within the tribe is the named agnatic lineage several generations deep to which each member belongs. This kinship unit shares responsibilities in feuds and in war; it restricts and controls marriage within itself; and it jointly occupies a specified share of tribal land. The requirements of mutual assistance preclude any significant economic differentiation, and authority is shared among the older men. The primary family unit rests within the clan, composed of two or more lineage groups related by descent or adoption. The clans are units of solidarity in disputes with other clans in the tribe, although there may be intense feuding among the lineage groups within the clan. The clan also represents a shared territorial interest, because the land belonging to the component lineage groups customarily is adjacent. A clan, nevertheless, can switch its allegiance from its ancestral tribal unit to a stronger, ascendant tribe.

Several clans united under a single shaykh form a tribe (*ashira*). This traditionally has been the dominant politico-military unit although, because of unsettled conditions, tribes frequently band together in confederations under a paramount shaykh. The degree of hierarchy and of centralization operative in a given tribe seems to correlate with the length of time it has been sedentary: the Bani Isad, for example, which has been settled for several centuries, is much more centralized than the Ash Shabana, which has been sedentary only since the end of the nineteenth century.

In the south, only the small hamlets scattered throughout the cultivated area are inhabited solely by tribesmen. The most widely spread social unit is the village, and most villages have resident tradesmen (*ahl as suq*—people of the market) and government employees. The lines between these village dwellers and the tribespeople, at least until just before the war, were quite distinct, although the degree varied from place to place. As the provision of education, health, and other social services to the generally impoverished rural areas increases, the number and the social influence of these nontribal people increase. Representatives of the central government take over roles previously filled by the shaykh or by his representatives. The government school competes with the religious school. The role of the merchants as middlemen—buyers of the peasants' produce and providers of seeds and implements as well as of food and clothing—has not yet been superseded in most areas by government-sponsored cooperatives and extension agencies. Increasingly in the 1980s, government employees

were of local or at least rural origin, whereas in the 1950s they usually were Baghdadis who had no kinship ties in the region, who wore Western clothing, and who viewed their assignments as exile and as punishment. In part, the administrators initially provoked the mutual antagonism that later flourished between them and the peasants, particularly as Sunni officials were often assigned to Shia villages. The merchants, however, were from the some region—if not from the same village—and were usually the sons of merchants.

Despite some commercial developments in rural areas, in the late 1980s the economic base was still agriculture and, to a lesser but increasing extent, animal husbandry. Failure to resolve the technical problem of irrigation drainage contributed to declining rural productivity, however, and accentuated the economic as well as the political role of the central government. The growth of villages into towns—and whatever other signs of recent prosperity there were—should be viewed, therefore, more as the result of greater government presence than as locally developed economic viability. The increased number of government representatives and employees added to the market for local produce and, more important, promoted the diffusion of state revenues into impoverished rural areas through infrastructure and service projects. Much remained to be done to supply utilities to rural inhabitants; just before the war, the government announced a campaign to provide such essentials as electricity and clean water to the villages, most of which still lacked these (see Electricity, ch. 3). The government has followed through on several of these projects—particularly in the south—despite the hardships caused by the war. The regime apparently felt the need to reward the southerners, who had suffered inordinately in the struggle.

Impact of Agrarian Reform

One of the most significant achievements of the fundamentally urban-based revolutionary regime of Abd al Karim Qasim (1958-63) was the proclamation and partial implementation of a radical agrarian reform program. The scope of the program and the drastic shortage of an administrative cadre to implement it, coupled with political struggles within the Qasim regime and its successor regimes, limited the immediate impact of the program to the expropriation stage. The largest estates were easily confiscated, but distribution lagged owing to administrative problems and to the wasted, saline character of much of the land expropriated; moreover, landlords could choose the best of the lands to keep for themselves.

The impact of the reforms on the lives of the rural masses can only be surmised on the basis of uncertain official statistics and

of rare observations and reports by outsiders, such as officials of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. The development of cooperatives, especially their capacity as marketing agents, was one of the most obvious failures of the program, although there were isolated instances of success. In some of these instances, traditional elders were mobilized to serve as cooperative directors, and former *sirkals,* clan leaders who functioned as foremen for the shaykhs, could bring a working knowledge of local irrigation needs and practices to the cooperative.

The continued impoverishment of the rural masses was evident, however, in the tremendous migration that continued, through the 1960s, 1970s, and into the 1980s, from rural to urban areas. According to the Ministry of Planning, the average rate of internal migration from the countryside increased from 19,600 a year in the mid-1950s to 40,000 a year in the 1958 to 1962 period. A study of 110 villages in the Nineveh and Babylon governorates concluded that depressed rural conditions and other variables—rather than job opportunities in the modern sector—accounted for most of the migration.

There was little doubt that this massive migration and land reform reduced the number of landless peasants. The most recent comprehensive tenurial statistics available before the war broke out—the Agricultural Census of 1971—put the total farmland (probably meaning cultivable land, rather than land under cultivation) at more than 5.7 million hectares, of which more than 98.2 percent was privately owned. About 30 percent of this had been distributed under the agrarian reform. The average size of the holdings was about 9.7 hectares, but 60 percent of the holdings were smaller than 7.5 hectares, which accounted for less than 14 percent of the total area. At the other end of the scale, 0.2 percent of the holdings were 250 hectares or larger, which amounted to more than 14 percent of the total. Fifty-two percent of the total was owner-operated, 41 percent was farmed under rental agreements, 4.8 percent was worked by squatters, and only 0.6 percent was sharecropped. The status of the remaining 1.6 percent was uncertain. On the basis of limited statistics released by the government in 1985, the amount of land distributed since the inception of the reform program totaled 2,271,250 hectares (see Land Tenure and Agrarian Reform, ch. 3).

Political instability throughout the 1960s hindered the implementation of the agrarian reform program, but after seizing power in 1968 the Baath regime made a considerable effort to reactivate it. Law No. 117 (1970) further limited the maximum size of holdings, eliminated compensation to the landowner, and abolished payments by beneficiaries, thus acknowledging the extremity of peasant indebtedness and poverty.

The reform created a large number of small holdings. Given the experience of similar efforts in other countries, foreign observers have surmised that a new stratification has emerged in the countryside, characterized by the rise of middle-level peasants who, either directly or through their leadership in the cooperatives, control much of the agricultural machinery and its use. Membership in the ruling Baath Party is an additional means of securing access to, and control over, such resources. Prior to the war, the party seemed to have few roots in the countryside, but, after the ascent of Saddam Husayn to the presidency in 1979, a determined effort was made to build bridges between the party cadre in the capital and in the provinces. It is noteworthy that practically all party officials promoted to the second echelon of leadership at the 1982 party congress had distinguished themselves by mobilizing party support in the provinces.

Even before the war, migration created serious labor shortages. In the 1980s, as the war has driven whole communities to seek refuge in the capital, this shortage has been exacerbated. The government has attempted to compensate for this shortage by importing turnkey projects with foreign professionals. In the Kurdish areas of the north, however—and to a degree in the southern region infested by deserters—the safety of foreign personnel has been difficult to guarantee; therefore, many projects have had to be temporarily abandoned. Another government strategy for coping with the labor shortage caused by the war has been to import Egyptian workers. It has been estimated that as many as 1.5 million Egyptians have found employment in Iraq since the war began.

Urban Society

Iraq's society just before the outbreak of the war was undergoing profound and rapid social change that had a definite urban focus. The city has historically played an important economic and political role in the life of Middle Eastern societies, and this was certainly true in the territory that is present-day Iraq. Trade and commerce, handicrafts and small manufactures, and administrative and cultural activities have traditionally been central to the economy and to the society, notwithstanding the overwhelmingly rural character of most of the population. In the modern era, as the country, and particularly its commercial and administrative sectors, witnessed a growing involvement with the world market, the growth of a few urban centers, notably Baghdad and Basra, has been astounding. The war, however, has altered this pattern of growth remarkably—in the case of Baghdad accelerating it, and in the case of Basra shrinking it considerably.

Demographic estimates based on the 1987 census reflected an increase in the urban population of from 5,452,000 in 1970, to 7,646,054 in 1977 and to 11,483,000 in 1987—or to 70.5 percent of the population. Census data show the remarkable growth of Baghdad, in particular, from just over 500,000 in 1947 to 1,745,000 in 1965; and from 3,226,000 in 1977 to 3,600,000 in 1987.

The population of other major cities, according to the 1977 census, was 1,540,000 for Basra, 1,220,000 for Mosul, and 535,000 for Kirkuk (detailed information from the October 1987 census was lacking in early 1988). The port of Basra presents a more complex picture of accelerated growth up to the time the war erupted, then a sharp deceleration once the war started and the effects of the fighting around the city began to be felt. Between 1957 and 1965, Basra actually had a higher growth rate than Baghdad—90 percent in Basra compared with Baghdad's 65 percent. When the Iranians managed to sink several tankers in the Shatt al Arab, however, the waterway was effectively blocked, and the economy of the port city began to deteriorate. By 1988 repeated attempts by Iran to capture Basra had further eroded the strength of the city's commercial sector, and the heavy bombardment had rendered some quarters of Basra virtually uninhabitable. Reliable statistics were unavailable because of the war but the city's population in early 1988 was probably less than half that in 1977.

In the extreme north, the picture was somewhat different. There, a number of middle-sized towns have experienced very rapid growth—triggered by the unsettled conditions in the region. Early in the war, the government determined to fight Kurdish guerrilla activity by targeting the communities that allegedly sustained the rebels. It therefore cleared the local inhabitants from whole tracts of this mountainous region. The residents of the cleared areas fled to regional urban centers like Irbil, As Sulaymaniyah, and Dahuk; by and large they did not move to the major urban centers such as Mosul and Kirkuk.

Statistical details of the impact of overcrowding on the cities were generally lacking in the 1980s. According to accounts by on-the-spot observers, in Baghdad—and presumably in the other cities as well—there appeared to have been no systematic planning to cope with the growth of slum areas. Expansion in the capital until the mid-1970s had been quite haphazard. As a result, there were many open spaces between buildings and quarters. Thus, the squatter settlements that mushroomed in those years were not confined to the city's fringes. By the late 1950s, the *sarifahs* (reed and mud huts) in Baghdad were estimated to number 44,000, or almost 45 percent of the total number of houses in the capital.



A cafe in Baghdad
Courtesy Mokhless Al-Hariri

These slums became a special target of Qasim's government. Efforts were directed at improving the housing and living conditions of the *sarifah* dwellers. Between 1961 and 1963, many of these settlements were eliminated, and their inhabitants were moved to two large housing projects on the edge of the city—Madinat ath Thawra and An Nur. Schools and markets were also built, and sanitary services were provided. In time, however, Madinat ath Thawra and An Nur, too, became dilapidated, and just before the war Saddam Husayn ordered Madinat ath Thawra rebuilt as Saddam City. This new area of low houses and wide streets has radically improved the life-styles of the residents, the overwhelming majority of whom were Shias who had migrated from the south.

Another striking feature of the initial waves of migration to Baghdad and to other urban centers is that the migrants have tended to stay, bringing with them whole families. The majority of migrants were peasant cultivators, but shopkeepers, petty traders, and small craftsmen came as well. Contacts with their points of rural origin were not totally severed, and return visits were fairly common, but reverse migration was extremely rare. At least initially, there was a pronounced tendency for migrants from the same village to relocate in clusters to ease the difficulties of transition and to maintain traditional patterns of mutual assistance. Whether this pattern has continued into the war years is not known, but it seems likely. A

number of observers have reported neighborhoods in the capital that have been formed on the basis of village or even tribal origin.

An instance of the abrupt population shifts—although in the reverse direction—was that of the Iraqi Jews. The establishment of the state of Israel led to the mass exodus of this community in 1950, to be replaced by Shia merchants and traders, many of whom were descendants of Iranian immigrants from the heavily Shia populated areas of the south.

The urban social structure has evolved gradually over the years. In prerevolutionary Iraq it was dominated by a well-defined ruling class that was concentrated in Baghdad. This was an internally cohesive group, distinguished from the rest of the population by its considerable wealth and political power. The economic base of this class was landed wealth, but during the decades of the British mandate and of the monarchy, as landlords acquired commercial interests and merchants and government officials acquired real estate, a considerable intertwining of families and interests occurred. The result was that the Iraqi ruling class could not be easily separated into constituent parts: the largest commercial trading houses were controlled by families owning vast estates; the landowners were mostly tribal shaykhs but included many urban notables, government ministers, and civil servants. Moreover, the landowning class controlled the parliament, which tended to function in the most narrowly conceived interest of these landlords.

There was a small but growing middle class in the 1950s and the 1960s that included a traditional core of merchants, shopkeepers, craftsmen, professionals, and government officials, their numbers augmented increasingly by graduates from the school system. During the monarchy education had been the only area that was relatively independent of British advisers, and thus it was expanded as a conspicuous manifestation of government response to popular demand. It was completely oriented toward preparing people for white-collar, middle-class occupations. Within this middle class, and closely connected to the commercial sector, was a small industrial bourgeoisie whose interests were not completely identical with those of the more traditional sector.

Iraq's class structure at midcentury was characterized by great instability. In addition to the profound changes occurring in the countryside, there were the economic and social disruptions caused by the shortages and the spiraling inflation brought on by World War II. A few people made fortunes, but for most there was deprivation and, as a consequence, there was great social unrest. Longtime Western observers compared the situation of the urban masses unfavorably with conditions in the last years of Ottoman rule.

The trend of urban growth, which had begun in the days immediately preceding the revolution, took off in the mid-1970s, when the effects of the sharp increases in the world price of oil began to be felt. Oil revenues poured into the cities, where they were invested in construction and in real estate speculation. The dissatisfied peasantry then found even more cause to move to the cities because jobs—mainly in construction—were available, and even part-time, unskilled labor was an improvement over conditions in the countryside.

As for the elite, the oil boom of the 1970s brought greater diversification of wealth, some of which went to those attached to the land, and some to those involved in the regime, in commerce, and, increasingly, in manufacturing. The working class grew, but it was largely fragmented. Only a relatively small number were employed in businesses with ten or more workers, including those in the service sector. Between the elite and the working masses was the lower middle class of petite bourgeoisie. This traditional component consisted of the thousands of employees of small handicraft shops, which made up a huge part of the so-called manufacturing sector, and the even more numerous owners of one-man stores. The newer and more rapidly expanding part of this class consisted of professionals and semiprofessionals who were employed in the service and public sectors, including the officer corps, and the thousands of students looking for jobs. This class became particularly significant in the 1980s because former members of it have become the nation's elite. Perhaps the most important aspect of the growth of the public sector was the expansion of education facilities, which put pressure on the regime to find white-collar jobs for graduates in the noncommodity sectors.

Stratification and Social Classes

The prerevolutionary political system, with its parliament of landlords and hand-picked government supporters, was increasingly incompatible with the changing social reality that accompanied growing urban-based economic activity fueled by oil revenues. The faction of the elite investing in manufacturing, the petite bourgeoisie, and the working classes pressured the state to represent their interests. As the armed forces came to reflect this shift in the balance of social forces, radical political change became inevitable. The social origins and the political inclinations of the Free Officers (see Glossary) who carried out the 1958 overthrow of the monarchy as well as the various ideological parties that supported and succeeded them clearly reflect the middle-class character of the Iraqi revolution. Both the agrarian reform program and the protracted

campaign against the foreign oil monopoly were aimed at restructuring political and eonomic power in favor of the urban-based middle and lower classes. The political struggle between the self-styled radicals and the moderates in the 1960s chiefly concerned the role of the state and of the public sector in the economy: the radicals promoted a larger role for the state, and the moderates wanted to restrict it to the provision of basic services and of physical infrastructure.

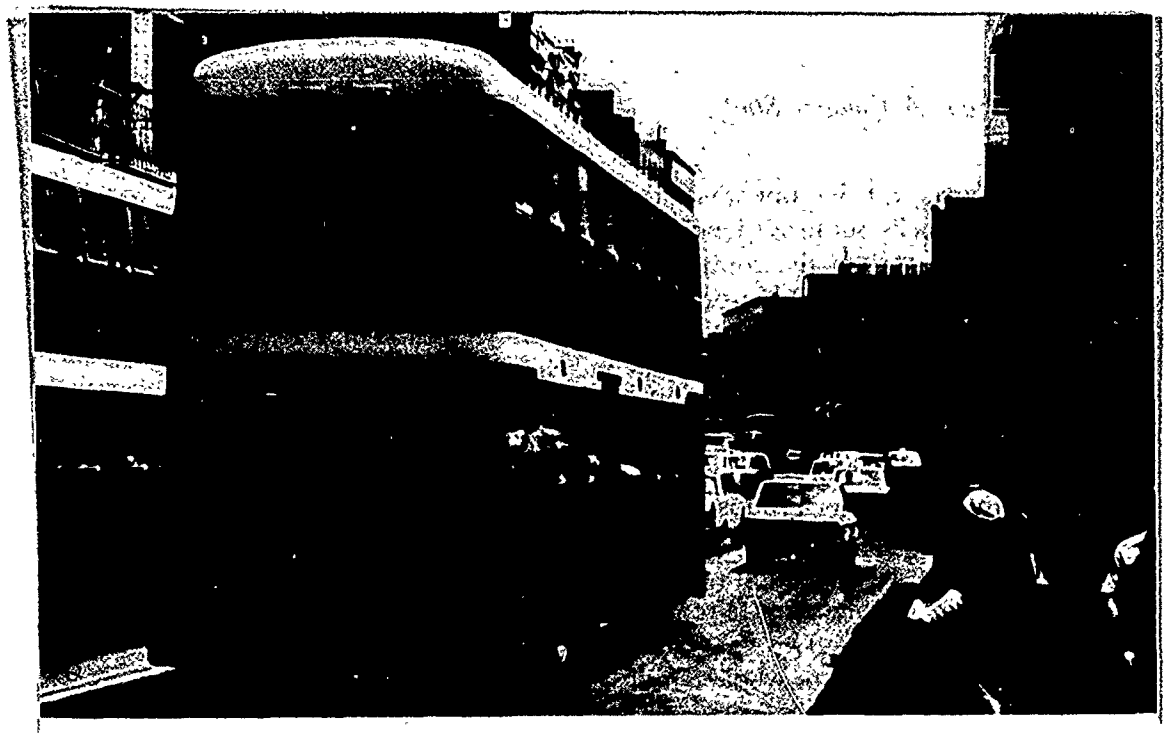
There was a shift in the distribution of income after 1958 at the expense of the large landowners and the businessmen and in favor of the salaried middle class and, to a lesser degree, the wage earners and small farmers. The Baath Party, in power since July 1968, represented the lower stratum of the middle class, the sons of small shopkeepers and of petty officials, and the graduates of training schools, law schools, and military academies. In the 1980s, the ruling class tended to be composed of high- and middle-echelon bureaucrats who either had risen through the ranks of the party or who had been coopted into the party because of their technical competence, i.e., technocrats. The elite also consisted of army officers, whose wartime loyalty the government has striven to retain by dispensing material rewards and gifts.

The government's practice of lavishing rewards on the military has also affected the lower classes. Martyrs' benefits under the Baath have been extremely generous. Thus, the families of youths killed in battle could expect to receive at least an automobile and more likely a generous pension for life.

Family and Society

Kinship groups are the fundamental social units, regulating many activities that in Westernized societies are the functions of political, economic, religious, or neighborhood groups. Rights and obligations center on the extended family and on the lineage. The family remains the primary focus of loyalty; and it is in its context, rather than in the broader one of corporate loyalties defined by sectarian, ethnic, or economic considerations, that the majority of Iraqis find the common denominators of their everyday lives. A mutually protective attitude among relatives is taken as a matter of course. Relatives tend to be preferred as business partners because they are believed to be more reliable than people over whom one does not have the hold of kinship ties. Deeply ingrained family loyalty also manifests itself at higher levels of business and public life.

The characteristic form of family organization involves a large group of kinsmen who are related to one another through descent and marriage, that is, an extended family usually consisting of three



Public transportation in Baghdad
Courtesy Mokhless Al-Hariri

generations. The members of such an extended family may all live together, which is the more traditional pattern, or they may reside in separate nuclear families, but still share the values and functions of an extended family, such as depending upon one another and deferring to the older generations. As Iraqi society has become increasingly urbanized, however, the tendency toward nuclear family social organization, as opposed to mere nuclear family residence, has become more prevalent. The status of an individual is traditionally determined by the position of his or her family in society and the individual's position within that group. The family transmits the values and the standards of behavior of the society to its members, and it holds them responsible for each other's conduct. It traditionally determines occupations and selects marriage partners. Kinsmen also cooperate in economic endeavors, such as farming or trade, and ownership of land and other assets frequently is vested in the group as a whole. The sharpest degree of divergence from these patterns occurs among educated, urban Iraqis, an ever-increasing proportion of the society.

Until 1959, family life was subject only to the regulation of religious law and of tradition. All Muslims were brought under a single body of family law for the first time in 1959 with the enactment of a secular law on personal status, based on sharia, statutes from other Islamic countries, and legal precedents established in Iraqi

courts; a brief amendment of the law was enacted in 1963. The law spells out provisions governing the right to contract marriage, the nature of the contract, the economic rights of the partners, divorce and child custody, as well as bequests and inheritance.

The basic structural unit of the family consists of a senior couple, their sons, the sons' wives and children, and unmarried daughters. Other dependent relatives may also be attached to the group. The senior male is the head of the family; he manages its properties and has the final voice in decisions. Kinsmen are organized into still larger groups. The next level of organization is the lineage, composed of all persons, male and female, who trace their descent from a common ancestor. The number of generations by which this ancestor is removed from the oldest living one varies; a depth of four to six generations is usual.

Individuals or whole families of other descent sometimes attach themselves to a particular lineage in an arrangement of mutual advantage, becoming recognized after several generations as full members of the lineage on equal terms with those born into it. In small villages, most people are likely to belong to the same lineage; in larger ones, two or more lineages may be represented, but lineage ties are tempered by economic cooperation, by intermarriage, and by the authority of the village leadership or elders. Among nontribal Iraqis, kinship organization and traditions of common descent do not go beyond the lineage. Awareness of distant ties is keen among recent migrants to the cities and among the rural population.

In rural areas, new households are not usually set up until many years after the initial recognition of a marriage. In general, the wife moves in with her husband's parents, where the young couple remains for some time. Often this arrangement is maintained until the death of the father. Even when the father dies, the brothers sometimes stay together, forming joint family households that include themselves, their wives, and their children.

The actual number of persons who make up the household is determined by the family's economic circumstances, its pattern of living, and its mode of habitation. In an agricultural setting, as long as ownership of land and other possessions is vested in the family as a whole, the possibilities for a young man's being able to set up an independent household are limited. In urban centers, on the other hand, young men can avail themselves of wage-earning employment.

Authority within the family is determined by seniority and by gender. The father, in theory, has absolute authority over the activities of the members of the household, both within the confines of

the house and outside it. He decides what education his children will receive, what occupations his sons will enter, and, usually in consultation with his wife, whom his children will marry. These authority patterns also have been greatly weakened in the urban environment and by the shift of more and more responsibilities from the family to larger social institutions, such as the schools.

An even greater change in the traditional pattern of male dominance has been brought about by the war. Because Iraq is numerically a much smaller nation than Iran, it has experienced considerable difficulty in maintaining an adequate defense on the battlefront. In order to field a sufficient force, it has had to draw down the available labor pool on the home front, and, to compensate for this, it has mobilized women. In the mid-1980s, observers reported that in many ministries the overwhelming proportion of employees were women. Foreign contractors have encountered women supervisors on huge construction projects, women doctors in the hospitals, and even women performing law enforcement roles. This emancipation—extraordinary for an Arab country—was sanctioned by the government, which issued a significant amount of propaganda publicizing the role of women in helping to win the war. The government further maintained that after the war women would be encouraged to retain their newfound work roles; this was doubtful, however, because in the same breath the government declared its determination to increase the birthrate.

The Muslim majority has traditionally regarded marriage as primarily a civil contract between two families, arranged by parents after negotiations that may be prolonged and conducted by an intermediary. The arrangement of a marriage is a family matter in which the needs and the position of the corporate kin group are primary considerations. Prospective partners are often known to each other, and they frequently come from the same village and the same kin group. Among educated urban dwellers, the traditional pattern of contracting marriage is giving way to a pattern in which the young people make their own choices, but parents must still approve.

With regard to marriage and to divorce, the 1959 Law of Personal Status, amended in 1963, liberalized various provisions that affected the status of women; in practice, however, the Iraqi judiciary up until the revolution tended to be conservative in applying the provisions of the law. Specifically, Iraqi law required that divorce proceedings be initiated in a court of law, but the husband still had the controlling role in dissolving the marriage. A man who wanted to marry a second wife was required first to get approval from the court. Provision was also made for the custody

of children to be based on consideration of the welfare of the child.

Economic motivation and considerations of prestige and of family strength all contribute to the high value placed on large families. The greater the number of children, especially sons, the greater the prestige of the father, and, through him, that of the family as a whole. Boys are especially welcome because they are the carriers of the family tradition, and because their economic contribution in an agricultural society is greater than that of girls.

Between the ages of three and of six, children are given freedom to learn by imitating older siblings. Strong emphasis is then placed on conformity with elders' patterns and on loyalty and obedience. Family solidarity is stressed. The passage from adolescence to maturity is swift. Upon reaching puberty, there traditionally is a separation of sexes, and girls are excluded from male society except that of their close kin. Great emphasis is placed on premarital chastity, and this is one reason for early marriages. Boys have greater freedom during adolescence than girls, and at this time they begin to be drawn into the company of their fathers and into the world of men.

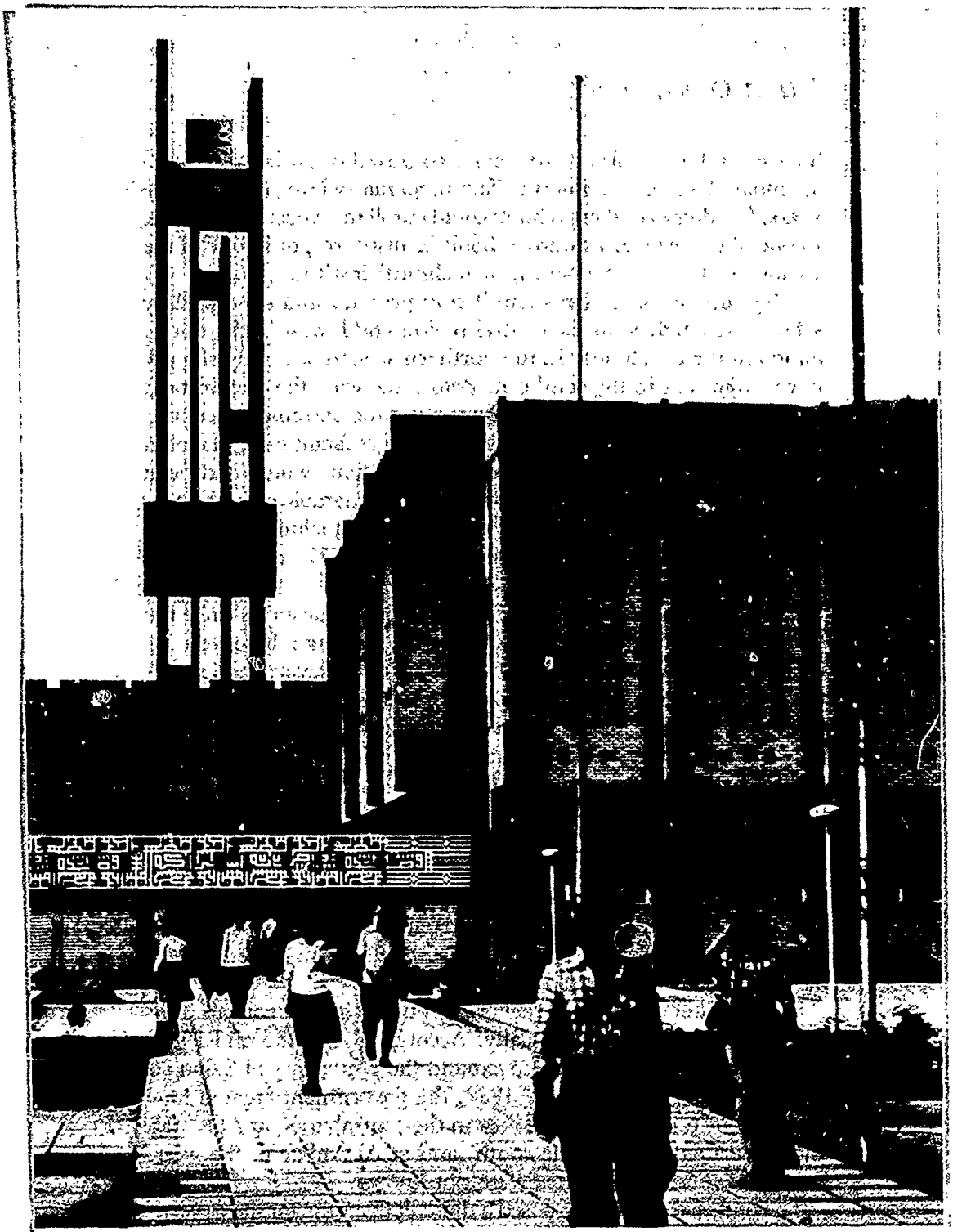
Education and Welfare

Education

The impact of government policies on the class structure and on its stratification patterns can be imputed from available statistics on education and training as well as on employment and wage structures. Owing to the historic emphasis on the expansion of education facilities, the leaders of the Baath Party and, indeed, much of Iraq's urban middle class were able to move from rural or urban lower class origins to middle and even to top positions in the state apparatus, the public sector, and the society at large.

This social history is reflected in the efforts of the government to generalize opportunities for basic education throughout the country. Between the 1976–77 and the 1985–86 school years, the number of primary-school students increased 44 percent, and the number of female students increased from 35 to 45 percent of the total. The number of primary-school teachers grew 67 percent during this period. At the secondary level, the number of students increased 87 percent, and the number of female students increased from 30 to 36 percent of the total (see table 4, Appendix).

Education was provided by the government through a centrally organized school system. In the early 1980s, the system included a six-year primary (or elementary) level known as the first level.



University of Baghdad
Courtesy Mokhless Al-Hariri

The second level, also of six years, consisted of an intermediate-secondary level and an intermediate-preparatory level, each of three years. Graduates of these schools could enroll in a vocational school, in one of the teacher training schools or institutes, or in one of the various colleges, universities, or technical institutes.

The number of students enrolled in primary and in secondary schools was highest in the central region and lowest in the north, although the enrollment in the northern schools was only slightly lower than that in the southern. Before the war, the government had made considerable gains in lessening the extreme concentration of primary and of secondary educational facilities in the main cities, notably Baghdad. Vocational education, which had been notoriously inadequate in Iraq, received considerable official attention in the 1980s. The number of students in technical fields has increased more than 300 percent since 1976–77, to more than 120,090 in the academic year 1985–86.

The Baath regime also seemed to have made progress since the late 1960s in reducing regional disparities, although these were far from being eliminated and no doubt were more severe than statistics would suggest. Baghdad, for example, was the home of most education facilities above the secondary level; it was the site not only of the University of Baghdad, which in the academic year 1985–86 (the most recent year for which statistics were available in early 1988) had 44,307 students, but also of the Foundation of Technical Institutes with 34,858 students, the University of Al Mustansiriyah with 14,886 students, and the University of Technology with 7,378 students. The University of Basra, the University of Mosul, and the University of Salah ad Din in Irbil, taken together, enrolled 28 percent of all students in higher education in the academic year 1985–86.

The number of students seeking to pursue higher education in the 1980s increased dramatically. Accordingly, in the mid-1980s the government made plans to expand the University of Salah ad Din. In addition, in January 1988, the government created four more public universities, at Tikrit in the central area, at Al Kufah and at Al Qadisiyah in the south, and at Al Anbar in the west. Details of these universities were not known.

The outbreak of the war posed a difficult dilemma for the government regarding education. Despite the shortage of wartime manpower, the regime was unwilling to tap the pool of available university students, arguing that these young people were Iraq's hope for the future. As of early 1988, therefore, the government routinely exempted students from military service until graduation, a policy it has adhered to rigorously. This policy, however,

has probably caused resentment among the poorer classes and among those forced to serve multiple tours at the front because of continuing manpower shortages.

Health

In the 1980s, almost all medical facilities continued to be controlled by the government, and most physicians were Ministry of Health officials. Curative and preventive medical services in government-controlled hospitals and dispensaries as well as the services of government physicians were free of charge. The ministry included the directorates of health, preventive medicine, medical supplies, rural health services, and medical services. The inspector general of health, under the ministry, was charged with the enforcement of health laws and regulations. Private medical practice and private hospitals and clinics were subject to government supervision. In each province, Ministry of Health functions were carried out by a chief medical officer who, before the war, frequently had a private practice to supplement his government salary. Provincial medical officers were occupied mainly with administrative duties in hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries. The work of medical officers in the rural areas before the war was seriously curtailed by lack of transportation.

One of the most serious problems facing the Ministry of Health in the prewar period was its shortage of trained personnel. The shortage was accentuated by the fact that most medical personnel tended to be concentrated in the major cities, such as Baghdad and Basra. Physicians trained at government expense were required to spend four years in the public health service, but they strongly resisted appointments to posts outside the cities and made every effort to return to Baghdad.

In 1985, the latest year for which detailed statistics were available in early 1988, Baghdad Governorate, which had about 24 percent of the population, had just over 36 percent of the country's hospital beds, 18 percent of the government clinics, and 31 percent of the paramedical personnel. The increasing number of clinics in the provinces brought some rudimentary health care within reach of the rural population. At the same time, given the unsettled conditions in the Kurdish areas, it was likely that health care in the northern provinces had deteriorated since the start of the war (see table 5, Appendix).

Published information concerning sanitation and endemic diseases was scanty. Reportedly, in the mid-1980s Iraq had a high incidence of trachoma, influenza, measles, whooping cough, and tuberculosis; it had, however, made substantial progress in

controlling malaria. Prior to the war, poor sanitation and polluted water sources were principal factors in the spread of disease. A large percentage of the population lived in villages and in towns that were along irrigation canals and along rivers polluted with human and animal wastes. These waterways, together with the stagnant pools of water that sometimes constituted the village reservoir, were the major sources of drinking water and of water for bathing, laundering, and washing food. The periodic flooding of rivers contaminated water supplies and spread waterborne diseases.

The Tigris and Euphrates rivers and their tributaries serve as water sources for Baghdad and for some of the major provincial towns. Irbil and As Sulaymaniyah, located in the northern mountains, have adequate supplies of spring water. In Basra, Mosul, and Kirkuk the water is stored in elevated tanks and is chemically treated before distribution. In Baghdad, the water is filtered, chlorinated, and piped into homes or into communal fountains located throughout the city. In the smaller towns, however, the water supply is unprotected and is only rarely tested for potability.

Welfare

Iraq, with its socialist economy, pays considerable attention to welfare. This regard for social benefits has been increased by the war. No statistics were available in early 1988 by which to judge the scope of benefits paid by the government to its servicemen and to their families. Nonetheless, journalistic reports indicated that martyrs' benefits—for the families of war dead—and subsidies for young men who volunteer for service tended to be extremely generous. A family that had lost a son in the fighting could expect to be subsidized for life; in addition, it was likely to receive loans from the state bank on easy terms and gifts of real estate.

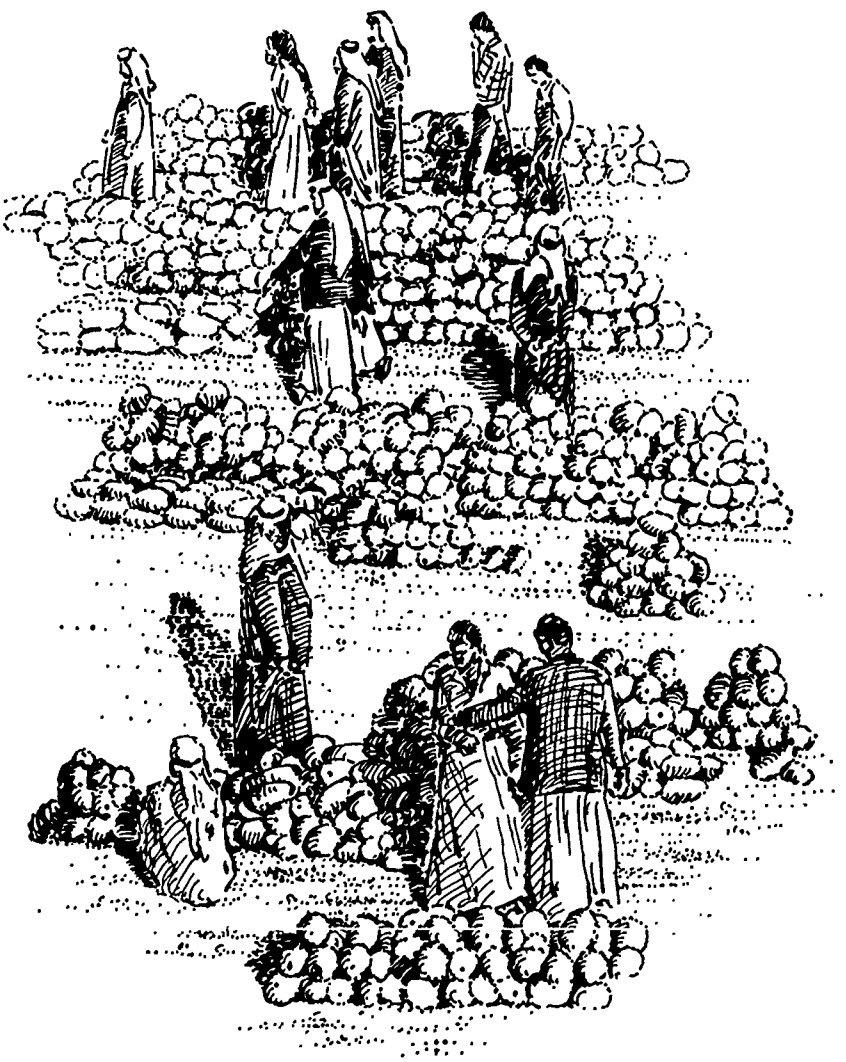
Minimal information was available in early 1988 concerning social welfare coverage. The most recent published data was that for 1985, when the government gave a figure of 703,776 workers. In addition, pensions were paid to retirees and to disabled persons, and compensation was given to workers for maternity and for sick leave. Observers anticipated that once the war with Iran ended, the government would devote greater attention to improving health and social welfare services.

* * *

Although a number of first rate military analyses of Iraq and of the war have appeared since 1980, there has been little useful research on social change. Much of the information that would make

up such studies has been withheld by the government because of wartime censorship, and in some cases material that has been made available appears to be untrustworthy. A number of classics, therefore, continue to be required reading for those interested in the society of Iraq. Wilfred Thesiger's *The Marsh Arabs* graphically depicts life among the southern Shias in the mid-and late 1950s. Robert Fernea's *Shaykh and Effendi* describes social conditions in the central Euphrates valley and Elizabeth Fernea's *Guests of the Sheik* deals with the role of women particularly. A classic historical treatment of the Kurdish question is found in Edmund Ghareeb's *The Kurdish Question in Iraq*. The latest work on the subject is *The Kurds: An Unstable Element in the Gulf* by Stephen Pelletiere. For an excellent treatment of the Baathist elite see *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* by Hanna Batatu. Also on the same topic is *Iraq, Eastern Flank of the Arab World* by Christine Helms. For the best all-around treatment of Iraq in the recent period, see Phebe Marr's *The Modern History of Iraq*. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 3. The Economy



Watermelons for sale in the marketplace

FOLLOWING THE 1968 Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party revolution, Iraq's government pursued a socialist economic policy. For more than a decade, the economy prospered, primarily because of massive infusions of cash from oil exports. Despite a quadrupling of imports between 1978 and 1980, Iraq continued to accrue current account surpluses in excess of US$10 billion per year. In 1980 on the eve of the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq held reserves estimated at US$35 billion. When Iraq launched the war against Iran in 1980, the Iraqis incorrectly calculated that they could force a quick Iranian capitulation and could annex Iranian territory at little cost in either men or money. Using a number of means, Iraq opted to keep the human costs of the war as low as possible, both on the battlefield and on the home front. In battle, Iraq attempted to keep casualties low by expending and by losing vast amounts of matériel. Behind the lines, Iraq attempted to insulate citizens from the effects of the war and to head off public protest in two ways. First, the government provided a benefits package worth tens of thousands of dollars to the surviving relatives of each soldier killed in action. The government also compensated property owners for the full value of property destroyed in the war. Second, the government adopted a "guns and butter" strategy. Along with the war, the government launched an economic development campaign of national scope, employing immigrant laborers to replace Iraqi fighting men.

In 1981, foreign expenditures not directly related to the war effort peaked at an all-time high of US$23.6 billion, as Iraq continued to import goods and services for the development effort, and construction continued unabated. Additionally, Iraq was paying an estimated US$25 million per day to wage the war. Although the Persian Gulf states contributed US$5 billion toward the war effort from 1980 to 1981, Iraq raised most of the money needed for war purposes by drawing down its reserves over several years. Iraq could not replenish its reserves because most of its oil terminals were destroyed by Iran in the opening days of the war. Iraqi exports dropped by 60 percent in 1981, and they were cut further in 1982 when Syria, acting in accord with Iran, closed the vital Iraqi oil export pipeline running through Syrian territory.

The total cost of the war to Iraq's economy was difficult to measure. A 1987 study by the Japanese Institute of Middle Eastern Economies estimated total Iraqi war losses from 1980 to 1985 at

US$226 billion. This figure was disaggregated into US$120.8 billion in gross domestic product (GDP—see Glossary) lost in the oil sector, US$64 billion GDP lost in the nonoil sector, US$33 billion lost in destroyed matériel, and US$8.2 billion lost in damage to non-oil sector fixed capital investment. Included in the lost GDP was US$65.5 in lost oil revenues and US$43.4 billion in unrealized fixed capital investment.

As the 1980s progressed, the Iran-Iraq conflict evolved into a protracted war of attrition, in which Iran threatened to overwhelm Iraq by sheer economic weight and manpower. Although Iraq implemented some cost-cutting measures, the government feared that an austerity plan would threaten its stability, so it turned to outside sources to finance the war. Iraq's Persian Gulf neighbors assumed a larger share of the economic burden of the war, but as the price of oil skidded in the mid-1980s, this regional support of Iraq diminished. For the first time, Iraq turned to Western creditors to finance its deficit spending. Iraq's leadership calculated correctly that foreign lenders, both government and private, would be willing to provide loans and trade credit to preserve their access to the Iraqi economy, which would emerge as a major market and an oil supplier after the war. But the sustained slump in oil prices made foreign creditors more skeptical of Iraq's long-term economic prospects, and some lenders apparently concluded that providing more loans to Iraq amounted to throwing good money after bad. Some creditors were also wary of Iraq's postwar prospects because of Iranian demands for tens of billions of dollars in reparations as the price for any peace settlement. Although Iraq would probably pay only a fraction of the reparations demanded (and that, most likely, with the help of other Persian Gulf countries), a large settlement would nonetheless delay Iraq's postwar economic recovery.

In 1988, as the war entered its eighth year and Iraq's debt topped US$50 billion, the government was implementing comprehensive economic reforms it had announced in 1987. Iraq's new economic policy was designed to reverse twenty years of socialism by relinquishing considerable state control over the economy to the private sector. It was not immediately clear if this move would result in a fundamental and enduring restructuring of Iraq's economy, or if it was merely a stopgap measure to boost productivity, to cut costs, to tap private sector savings, and to reassure Western creditors.

Growth and Structure of the Economy

In the 1960s, investment in industry accounted for almost one-quarter of the development budget, about twice the amount spent

under the monarchy in the 1950s. After the 1968 Baath revolution, the share allocated to industrial development grew to about 30 percent of development spending. With the advent of the Iran-Iraq War, however, this share decreased to about 18 percent. Development expenditure on agriculture fell from about 40 percent under the prerevolutionary regime to about 20 percent under the Baath regime in the early 1970s. By 1982, investment in agriculture was down to 10 percent of the development budget.

Total Iraqi GDP, as well as sectoral contribution to GDP, could only be estimated in the 1980s. On the eve of the Iran-Iraq War, the petroleum sector dominated the economy, accounting for two-thirds of GDP. The outbreak of war curtailed oil production, and by 1983 petroleum contributed only one-third of GDP. The nonpetroleum sector of the economy also shrank, and, as a consequence, total real GDP dropped about 15 percent per year from 1981 to 1983. To a lesser extent, nominal GDP also shrank, from about US$20 billion to US$18 billion, an indication of high wartime inflation. The decline in GDP was reversed between 1984 and 1986, when oil production grew at about 24 percent per year as the government secured outlets and resumed exports. But over the same period, the nonpetroleum sector of the economy continued to contract by about 6 percent per year, offsetting gains from increased oil production. In 1986, the petroleum sector revived to the extent that it contributed about 33.5 percent of GDP, while the nonpetroleum sector, including services, manufacturing, and agriculture, accounted for the remainder. Business services, the largest component of nonpetroleum GDP, amounted to about 23 percent of GDP. Agriculture accounted for about 7.5 percent of GDP, mining and manufacturing for slightly less than 7 percent, construction for almost 12 percent, transportation and communications for about 4.5 percent, and utilities for between 1 and 2 percent. The total estimated GDP for 1986 was equivalent to US$35 billion.

Projections based on economic trends indicated that total GDP would grow about 6 percent annually over the five-year period from 1987 to 1991. In fact, however, 1987 GDP was estimated at a 1.7 percent real growth rate. The petroleum sector would continue to grow, although at a slower rate of about 8 percent per year, and it would account for more than half of GDP. The nonpetroleum sector was expected to resume modest growth in 1987. Construction would be the fastest growing sector, at about 7 percent per year. Agriculture would grow only marginally, and therefore its share of overall GDP would decline from 1986 levels. Other nonpetroleum sectors would grow at a rate of between 3 and 4 percent per year and, because these projected growth rates were smaller

than the overall GDP growth rate, would likewise decline as a percentage of total GDP.

In early 1988, Iraq's total external liabilities were difficult to determine accurately because the Iraqi government did not publish official information on its debt. Moreover, Iraqi debt was divided into a number of overlapping categories according to the type of lender, the terms of disbursement or servicing, and the disposition of the funds. For example, some loans were combined with aid grants in mixed credits, and some loans were authorized but never disbursed. And, in a process of constant negotiation with its creditors, Iraq had deferred payment by rescheduling loans. Finally, some loans were partially repaid with oil in counter-trade and barter agreements. Nevertheless, experts estimated that Iraqi debt in 1986 totaled between US$50 billion and US$80 billion. Of this total, Iraq owed about US$30 billion to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the other Gulf states. Most of this amount was derived from crude oil sales on Iraq's behalf. Iraq promised to provide reimbursement in oil after the war, but the Gulf states were expected to waive repayment.

A second important category of debt was that owed to official export credit agencies. The authoritative Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates estimated in 1986 that Iraqi debt guaranteed by export credit agencies totalled US$9.3 billion, of which US$1.6 billion was short-term debt and US$7.7 billion was medium-term debt.

In the category of private sector debts, Iraq owed up to US$7 billion to private companies that had not secured the trade credit they extended to Iraq with their government export credit agencies. The firms that were owed the most were based in Turkey, in the Republic of Korea (South Korea), and in India, which lacked access to official export credit guarantees. European companies were also owed large amounts. By the late 1980s, Iraq had placed a priority on settling these private sector debts. In addition, Iraq owed an estimated US$6.8 billion to commercial banks as of mid-1986, although much of this sum was guaranteed by government export credit agencies.

In the realm of government debts, Iraq had accrued considerable debts to Western governments for its purchases of military matériel. Iraq owed France more than US$1.35 billion for weapons, which it was repaying by permitting Elf-Aquitaine and Compagnie Française des Pétroles-Total (CFP)—two oil companies affiliated with the French government—to lift 80,000 barrels of oil per day from the Dortyol terminal near Iskenderun, Turkey. Finally, Iraq owed money to the Soviet Union and to East European nations.

Iraq's debt to the Soviet Union was estimated at US$5 billion in 1987.

The Role of Government

Following the Baath Party's accession to power in 1968, the government began using central planning to manage the national economy. The government separated its expenditures into three categories: an annual expenditure budget for government operations, an annual investment budget to achieve the goals of the five-year plans, and an annual import budget. Economic planning was regarded as a state prerogative, and thus economic plans were considered state secrets. The government rarely published budget or planning information, although information on specific projects, on total investment goals, and on productivity was occasionally released.

Extremely high revenues from oil exports in the 1970s made budgeting and development planning almost irrelevant in Iraq. The responsibility of the state was not so much to allocate scarce resources as to distribute the wealth, and economic planning was concerned more with social welfare and subsidization than with economic efficiency. One consistent and very costly development goal was to reduce the economy's dependence on a single extractive commodity—oil—and, in particular, to foster heavy industry. Despite this objective, in 1978 the government began an attempt to rationalize the non-oil sector. The process of cost-cutting and streamlining entailed putting a ceiling on subsidization by making state-run industries and commercial operations semiautonomous. The expenditures of such public entities were not aggregated into the governmental expenditure budget. Instead, state-run companies were given their own budgets in an attempt to make them more efficient.

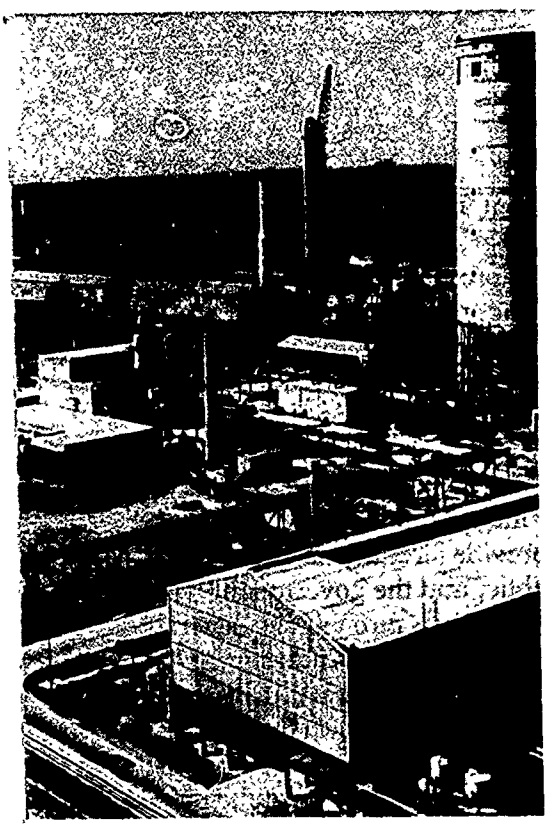
Because Iraqi economic development planning was predicated on massive expenditure, the onset of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980 brought central planning to an impasse. Despite an effort to maintain the momentum of its earlier development spending, the government was forced to revert to ad hoc planning as it adjusted to limited resources and to deficit spending. Economic planning became not just a perceived national security issue, but a real one, as the government devoted its attention and managerial resources to obtaining credits. The Fourth Five-Year Plan (1981–85) was suspended, and as of early 1988, the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1986–90) had not been formulated.

In early 1987, President Saddam Husayn abruptly reversed the course of Iraq's economic policy, deviating sharply from the

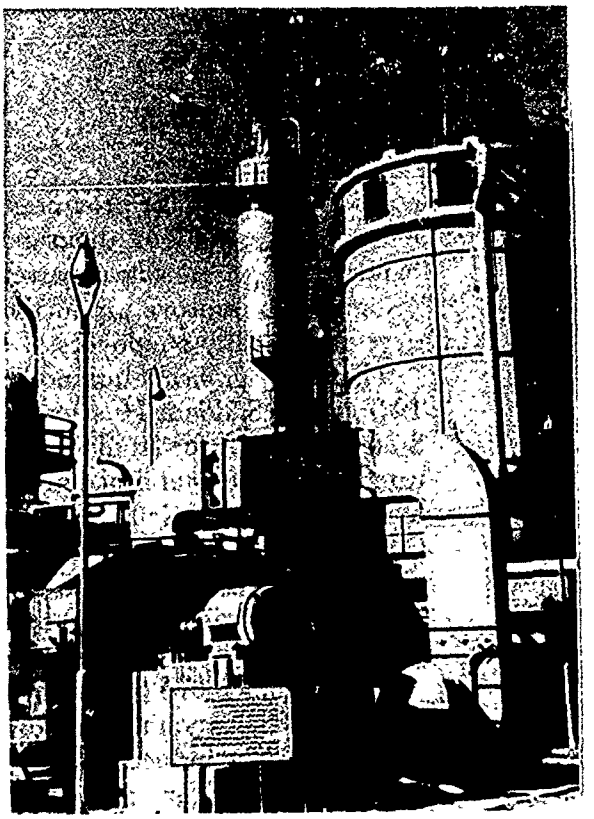
socialist economic ideology that the government had propounded since the 1968 Baath revolution. Saddam Hussayn advocated a more open, if not free, market, and he launched a program of extensive reform. Because the liberalization was aimed primarily at dealing with the nation's mounting and increasingly unmanageable war debt, Saddam Husayn's motivation was more strategic than economic. He had four related goals—to conserve money by cutting the costs of direct and of indirect government subsidies, to tap private sector savings and to stem capital outflow by offering credible investment opportunities to Iraqi citizens, to reduce the balance of payments deficit by fostering import substitution and by promoting exports, and to use the reforms to convince Western commercial creditors to continue making loans to Iraq.

The reform process began with Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) Decree Number 652, which in May 1987 abolished Iraq's labor law. This law had institutionalized the differences among white-collar, blue-collar, and peasant workers. Under the law, every adult had been guaranteed lifetime employment, but workers had almost no freedom to choose or to change their jobs or places of employment, and they had little upward mobility. One result was that labor costs in Iraq accounted for 20 percent to 40 percent of output, compared to about 10 percent in similar industries in nonsocialist economies. Nonproductive administrative staff accounted for up to half the personnel in state-run enterprises, a much higher proportion than in private sector companies in other countries. The government immediately laid off thousands of white-collar workers, most of whom were foreign nationals. Thousands of other white-collar civil servants were given factory jobs. Previously, all state blue-collar workers had belonged to government-sponsored trade unions, while unions for private sector employees were prohibited. After the labor law was abolished, the situation was reversed. Government workers could no longer be union members, whereas private sector employees were authorized to establish and to join their own unions. To compensate state blue-collar workers for their lost job security, Saddam Husayn established an incentive plan that permitted state-enterprise managers to award up to 30 percent of the value of any increase in productivity to workers.

Decree Number 652 aroused resentment and controversy among government bureaucrats, many of whom were stalwart Baath Party members, not only because it contradicted party ideology, but also because it imperiled their jobs. Feeling compelled to justify his new economic thinking and to reconcile it to Baathist ideology, Saddam Husayn wrote a long article in *Ath Thawrah,* the major government-run newspaper, criticizing the labor law for perpetuating a caste



Fertilizer plant in Basra
Courtesy Embassy of Iraq, Washington



Cement factory in Basra
Courtesy Embassy of Iraq, Washington

and class system that prevented people from being rewarded according to merit and from using their capacities fully. Perhaps writing with intentional irony, Saddam Husayn stated that unless people were rewarded for producing more, some might start to regard the capitalist system as superior because it permitted the growth of wealth and the improvement of workers' lives.

In June 1987, Saddam Husayn went further in attacking the bureaucratic red tape that entangled the nation's economy. In a speech to provincial governors, he said, "From now on the state should not embark on uneconomic activity. Any activity, in any field, which is supposed to have an economic return and does not make such a return, must be ignored. All officials must pay as much attention to economic affairs as political ideology."

To implement this policy, Saddam Husayn announced a move toward privatization of government-owned enterprises. Several mechanisms were devised to turn state enterprises over to the private sector. Some state companies were leased on long terms, others were sold outright to investors, and others went public with stock offerings. Among the state enterprises sold to the public were bus

companies serving the provinces, about 95 percent of the nation's network of gas stations, thousands of agricultural and animal husbandry enterprises, state department stores, and factories. In many instances, to improve productivity the government turned stock over to company employees.

The most significant instance of privatization occurred in August 1987, when Saddam Husayn announced a decree to abolish the State Enterprise for Iraqi Airways by early 1988. Two new ventures were to be established instead: the Iraqi Aviation Company, to operate commercially as the national airline, and the National Company for Aviation Services, to provide aircraft and airport services. Stock was to be sold to the public, and the government was to retain a minority share of the new companies through the General Federation of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

In a further move consistent with the trend toward privatization, the RCC announced in November 1987 that the government would offer new inducements for foreign companies to operate in Iraq by loosening direct investment restrictions. Details of the new proposal were not specified, but it was expected to entail modification of Resolution Number 1646 of the RCC, enacted in November 1980, which forbade foreign capital participation in private sector companies. Changes in the long-standing government policy of preventing foreign ownership of state institutions might also occur. According to the new regulations, all foreign firms engaged in development projects would also be exempt from paying taxes and duties, and foreign nationals who were employees of these companies would pay no income tax. At the same time, Saddam Husayn announced that development projects would no longer be paid for on credit. The new legislation indicated that Iraq was encountering difficulty paying for or obtaining credits for turnkey projects and was therefore willing to permit foreign companies to retain partial ownership of the installations that they built. Previously, Iraq had rejected exchanging debt for equity in this manner as an infringement on its sovereignty.

Banking and Finance

When Iraq was part of the Ottoman Empire, a number of European currencies circulated alongside the Turkish pound. With the establishment of the British mandate after World War I, Iraq was incorporated into the Indian monetary system, which was operated by the British, and the rupee became the principal currency in circulation. In 1931, the Iraq Currency Board was established in London for note issue and maintenance of reserves for the new Iraqi dinar (ID—for value of the dinar—see Glossary).

The currency board pursued a conservative monetary policy, maintaining very high reserves behind the dinar. The dinar was further strengthened by its link to the British pound. In 1947 the government-owned National Bank of Iraq was founded, and in 1949 the London-based currency board was abolished as the new bank assumed responsibility for the issuing of notes and the maintenance of reserves. The National Bank of Iraq continued the currency board's conservative monetary policy, maintaining 100 percent reserves behind outstanding domestic currency.

Initiated during the last years of Ottoman rule, commercial banking became a significant factor in foreign trade during the British mandate. British banks predominated, but traditional money dealers continued to extend some domestic credit and to offer limited banking services. The expansion of banking services was hampered by the limited use of money, the small size of the economy, and the small amount of savings; banks provided services for foreign trade almost exclusively. In the mid-1930s, the Iraqi government decided to establish banks in order to make credit available to other sectors of the economy. In 1936, the government formed the Agricultural and Industrial Bank. In 1940, this bank was divided into the Agricultural Bank and the Industrial Bank, each with substantially increased capital provided by the government. The government established the Rafidayn Bank in 1941 as both the primary commercial bank and the central bank, but the National Bank of Iraq became the government's banker in 1947. The Real Estate Bank was established in 1948, primarily to finance the purchase of houses by individuals. The Mortgage Bank was established in 1951, and the Cooperative Bank in 1956. In addition to these government-owned institutions, branches of foreign banks and private Iraqi banks were opened as the economy expanded.

In 1956 the National Bank of Iraq became the Central Bank of Iraq. Its responsibilities included the issuing and the management of currency, control over foreign exchange transactions, and the regulation and supervision of the banking system. It kept accounts for the government, and it handled government loans. Over the years, legislation has considerably enlarged the Central Bank's authority.

On July 14, 1964, all banks and insurance companies were nationalized, and, during the next decade, banking was consolidated. By 1987 the banking system consisted of the Central Bank, the Rafidayn Bank, and the Agricultural, Industrial, and Real Estate banks.

In the 1980s, the Rafidayn Bank was in the contradictory position of trying to maintain its reputation as a viable commercial bank

while acting on behalf of the government as an intermediary in securing loans from private foreign banks. With deposits of more than US$17 billion in 1983, the Rafidayn was reportedly the largest commercial bank in the Arab world. It managed to maintain a relatively sound commercial reputation for the five years of the war, and in 1985 its total assets stood at about ID10.4 billion and its total deposits, at more than ID9.5 billion—both figures having tripled since the Iran-Iraq War began in 1980. This huge increase in deposits was attributed to increased saving by the public because of the scarcity of consumer products. Profits of ID290 million in 1985 represented an increase of nearly 50 percent over 1980 levels. By 1985 the Rafidayn had established 215 branches in Iraq, 104 of which were in Baghdad; according to the Iraqi government, it also had seven branches abroad. In 1986, however, the bank started to delay payment of letters of credit owed to foreign exporters, and its failure to make installment payments on a syndicated loan of 500 million Eurodollars forced rescheduling of the debt payments. In 1987, with the exception of the Baghdad office of a Yugoslav bank, the Rafidayn was Iraq's only commercial bank. In this same year, the government ordered the Rafidayn Bank to double its capital to ID100 million. This increase was to enable the bank to improve and to extend its commercial services, so that it could tap the public for the increased deposits that would enable the bank to offer more loans. To the extent that new loans could bolster the emerging private sector, the move appeared consistent with other government efforts to make state-run operations more fiscally efficient.

The other three banks in Iraq were so-called special banks that provided short- to long-term credit in their respective markets. Since its establishment in 1936, the Agricultural Bank had grown to forty-five branches, of which four were in Baghdad. In 1981, its capital stood at ID150 million and its loans totaled ID175 million. The Agricultural Bank had also started a project whose objective was to encourage rural citizens to establish savings accounts. Meanwhile, the Industrial Bank had grown to nine branches and offered loans both to private and to public sector industrial and manufacturing companies. The Real Estate Bank was composed of twenty-five branches and provided loans for construction of housing and tourist facilities. The Iraq Life Insurance Company, the Iraq Reinsurance Company, and the National Life Insurance Company conducted the nation's insurance business. Post offices maintained savings accounts for small depositors.

The Oil Sector

Developments Through World War II

Natural seepage aroused an early interest in Iraq's oil potential. After the discovery of oil at Baku (in what is now the Soviet Union, on the west side of the Caspian Sea) in the 1870s, foreign groups began seeking concessions for exploration in Iran and in the area of the Ottoman Empire that became Iraq after World War I. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company (later renamed the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and still later British Petroleum) was granted a concession in Iran and discovered oil in 1908. Shortly before World War I, the British government purchased majority ownership of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

The discovery of oil in Iran stimulated greater interest in potential Iraqi oil resources, and financial groups from several major nations engaged in protracted negotiations and in considerable intrigue with the Ottoman Empire in order to obtain concessions to explore for oil in Mosul and in Kirkuk, two locations in what later was north-central Iraq. Although a few concessions were granted prior to World War I, little surveying or exploration was done.

The Turkish Petroleum Company

In 1912, several rival groups banded together to establish the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC), which would seek a concession to explore for Iraqi oil. The original purpose of the TPC was to eliminate rivalry among the partners and to outflank American concession seekers. The TPC's guiding hand was Calouste Gulbenkian, who had been hired by British banking interests because of his knowledge and his ability to influence the decisions of the Turkish government. His 5 percent holdings in TPC reputedly made him the richest individual in the world for many years, and were the source of his nickname, "Mr. Five Percent."

Establishment of the TPC did not eliminate the rivalry among the shareholders representing various national interests. Britain had a long-standing strategic interest in Mesopotamia because of its location in relation to Britain's military and commercial routes to India. The British government's decision before World War I to convert its naval fleet from coal to oil increased the importance of the area. By 1914, the British-government-controlled Anglo-Persian Oil Company had bought 50 percent of the shares of TPC and was exerting pressure on the Turkish government to grant the Anglo-Persian Oil Company a concession, but World War I delayed negotiations.

World War I demonstrated to the major powers the importance of securing their own sources of oil. The British-French San Remo

Conference of 1920 provided for permanent British control of any company established to develop Mesopotamian oil, but allocated Iraqi interests 20 percent if they chose to invest. France claimed the German shares of TPC that had been seized as enemy property and formed the CFP to hold the French shares in TPC. The Italian and United States governments protested their exclusion. After prolonged and sharp diplomatic exchanges, American oil companies were permitted to buy into TPC, although negotiations were not completed until 1928.

Although Iraq became a British mandate in 1920, that did not guarantee TPC an exclusive concession. Using the promise of a concession from the prewar Turkish government, TPC began negotiating for one in 1921. A major point of contention was Iraq's 20 percent share of any oil development company, a condition stipulated at the San Remo Conference. By the early 1920s, TPC consisted almost entirely of oil companies that did not want Iraq's representation or its interference in the management of TPC. They successfully resisted Iraqi efforts to participate despite pressure by the British government to accept Iraqi shareholders.

A concession was granted to TPC in March 1925. Many Iraqis felt cheated from the beginning of the concession. Its term was for seventy-five years, and it covered twenty-four plots selected by TPC. The Iraqi government was to receive royalties at a flat fee per ton to be paid in English pounds sterling, but with a gold clause to guard against devaluation of the pound. Royalty payments were linked to oil company profits, but this clause became effective only after twenty years. The Iraqi government had the right to tax TPC at the same rate levied on other industrial concerns. TPC was to build a refinery to meet Iraq's domestic needs and a pipeline for the export of crude oil. The Iraqi government had the right to lease other plots for oil exploration and development, and TPC was not excluded from bidding on these additional plots.

TPC began exploratory drilling after the concession was ratified by the Iraqi government. Oil was discovered just north of Kirkuk on October 15, 1927. Many tons of oil were spilled before the gushing well was brought under control. This indication of a large, valuable field soon proved well-founded.

The discovery of oil hastened negotiations over the composition and the functions of TPC. The shareholders signed a formal agreement in July 1928. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the Dutch Shell Group, the CFP, and the Near East Development Corporation (which represented the interests of five large American oil companies) each held 23.7 percent of the shares, and Gulbenkian the remaining, but nonvoting, 5 percent. TPC was organized as a

nonprofit company registered in Britain that produced crude oil for a fee for its parent companies, based on their shares. TPC was limited to refining and marketing for Iraq's internal needs to prevent any competition with the parent companies. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company was awarded a 10 percent royalty on the oil produced, as compensation for its reduced share in TPC.

A major obstacle facing United States firms had been a clause in the 1914 reorganization of the TPC that stipulated that any oil activity in the Ottoman Empire by any shareholder would be shared by all partners. Gulbenkian had insisted on the clause so that the oil companies could not circumvent his interests by establishing other companies without him. This arrangement, continued in the 1928 reorganization, came to be known as the Red Line Agreement because the TPC partners were forbidden to act independently within the boundaries of the now-defunct Ottoman Empire. This "red line" effectively precluded the United States and other TPC partners from concession hunting and from oil development in much of the Persian Gulf region until after World War II.

In 1929 the TPC was renamed the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC). IPC represented oil companies that had diverse and sometimes conflicting interests. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company and Standard Oil of New Jersey (also known as Esso and subsequently known as Exxon), for example, had access to major sources of crude oil outside Iraq, and they therefore wished to hold the Iraqi concessions in reserve. CFP and other companies, in contrast, pushed for rapid development of Iraqi oil to augment their short crude oil supplies.

IPC's parent companies delayed development of the Iraqi fields, and IPC's concession expired because the companies failed to meet certain performance requirements, such as the construction of pipelines and of shipping terminals. IPC's concession was renegotiated in 1931. The new contract gave IPC a seventy-year concession on an enlarged 83,200-square-kilometer area, all east of the Tigris River. In return, however, the Iraqi government demanded and received additional payments and loans as well as the promise that IPC would complete two oil pipelines to the Mediterranean by 1935.

Iraqi politicians remained suspicious of IPC's motives. Many Iraqis believed that IPC was deliberately withholding Iraqi crude from the market to boost the price of the parent companies' oil produced elsewhere. In 1932 Iraq granted a seventy-five-year concession to the British Oil Development Company (BODC), created by a group of Italian and British interests, to 120,000 square kilometers west of the Tigris River. The terms were more favorable to the Iraqi government than those of earlier agreements. BODC

financing was insufficient, however, and the company was bought out by IPC in 1941 and was renamed the Mosul Petroleum Company (MPC). IPC shareholders asserted their monopoly position again when they won the concession rights to southern Iraq and in 1938 founded the Basrah Petroleum Company (BPC) as their wholly owned subsidiary to develop the region.

Transport remained the main obstacle to the efficient export of Iraqi oil. When France joined IPC after World War I, it wanted the Iraqi pipeline to transit its mandate in Syria to a coastal terminal at Tripoli, Lebanon. The Iraqis and the British preferred a terminal at Haifa, in Palestine. In 1934, a pipeline was completed from the Kirkuk fields to Al Hadithah, where it divided, one branch going to Tripoli (the Tripoli branch was closed by Syria—which supported Iran—in 1982 after the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980) and the other to Haifa (the Haifa line was closed in 1948). In 1938, nine years after the discovery of oil, Iraq began to export oil in significant quantities. Iraqi production averaged 4 million tons per year until World War II, when restricted shipping in the Mediterranean forced production down sharply (see fig. 8).

Post-World War II Through the 1970s

With the end of World War II, IPC and its affiliates undertook repair and development of facilities in Iraq as rapidly as financing and materials became available. Exploration and drilling were pressed, particularly in the Basra and the Mosul areas, to meet concession terms. Although considered a priority, the elimination of transport constraints was set back when a larger second, nearly completed pipeline to Haifa was abandoned in 1948 as a result of the first Arab-Israeli war. Use of the existing Haifa line was also discontinued. In 1951, however, commercial exports by the BPC of good quality crude began via a new pipeline to Al Faw, on the Persian Gulf. Exports were boosted further with the completion in 1952 of a thirty-inch pipeline linking the Kirkuk fields to the Syrian port of Baniyas, which had a throughput capacity of 13 million tons per year. In that year, production from Basra and Mosul approached 2.5 million tons while the Kirkuk fields increased production to more than 15 million tons. In the space of a year (1951–52), total Iraqi oil production had doubled to almost 20 million tons.

Iraqi officials still harbored ambitions, dating back to the 1920 San Remo Conference, to take control of their nation's oil resources. The elimination of transportation bottlenecks and the subsequent rapid growth of exports encouraged Iraqi assertiveness. IPC's costly, irretrievable investments in Iraq's oil infrastructure gave the government even greater leverage.

One particularly sore point among the Iraqis concerned IPC's contractual obligation to meet Iraq's domestic requirements for gasoline and other petroleum products. An IPC subsidiary operated a small refinery and distribution company based near Kirkuk that supplied two-thirds of Iraq's needs. But IPC imported the remaining third from a large refinery in Abadan, Iran. Iraq considered this arrangement politically imprudent, a judgment that was vindicated when, in the early 1950s, Iranian production was cut during that country's oil industry nationalization crisis. In 1951 the Iraqi government took over, with compensation, the small Kirkuk refinery and hired a United States contractor to build a refinery near Baghdad. This represented Iraq's first concrete step toward taking control of the oil industry.

In 1952 Iraq followed the examples of Venezuela and of Saudi Arabia by demanding and receiving a 50 percent tax on all oil company profits made in the country. The tax more than doubled Iraqi profits per ton on exported oil.

The 1958 Iraqi revolution had little effect at first on the government's attitude toward IPC. The government needed the oil revenues generated by IPC; moreover, Iran's experience when it nationalized its oil industry was a vivid reminder to the Iraqis of the power the oil companies still wielded. In 1959 and in 1960, surpluses led the international oil companies to reduce the posted price for Middle Eastern oil unilaterally, which reduced government revenues significantly. IPC's policy of exploiting and developing only .5 percent of the total concessions it held in Iraq and of holding the remainder in reserve also reduced Iraqi revenues. Perhaps in response to the general situation, Iraq convened a meeting in Baghdad of the major oil-producing nations, which resulted in the September 1960 formation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). In December 1961, the Iraqi government enacted Law No. 80, which resulted in the expropriation of all of the IPC group's concession area that was not in production. The expropriation locked the government and the oil companies in a controversy that was not resolved for more than a decade. The companies had two paramount objectives in seeking to mitigate the law's effect. One was to regain control of the concession to the North Rumaylah field in southern Iraq, which was expected to be a major source of oil. In particular, the companies did not want competitors to gain access to it. The companies' second major objective was to limit the impact of Iraq's actions on IPC concession agreements in other oil-exporting nations.

In February 1964, the government established the state-owned Iraq National Oil Company (INOC) to develop the concession areas

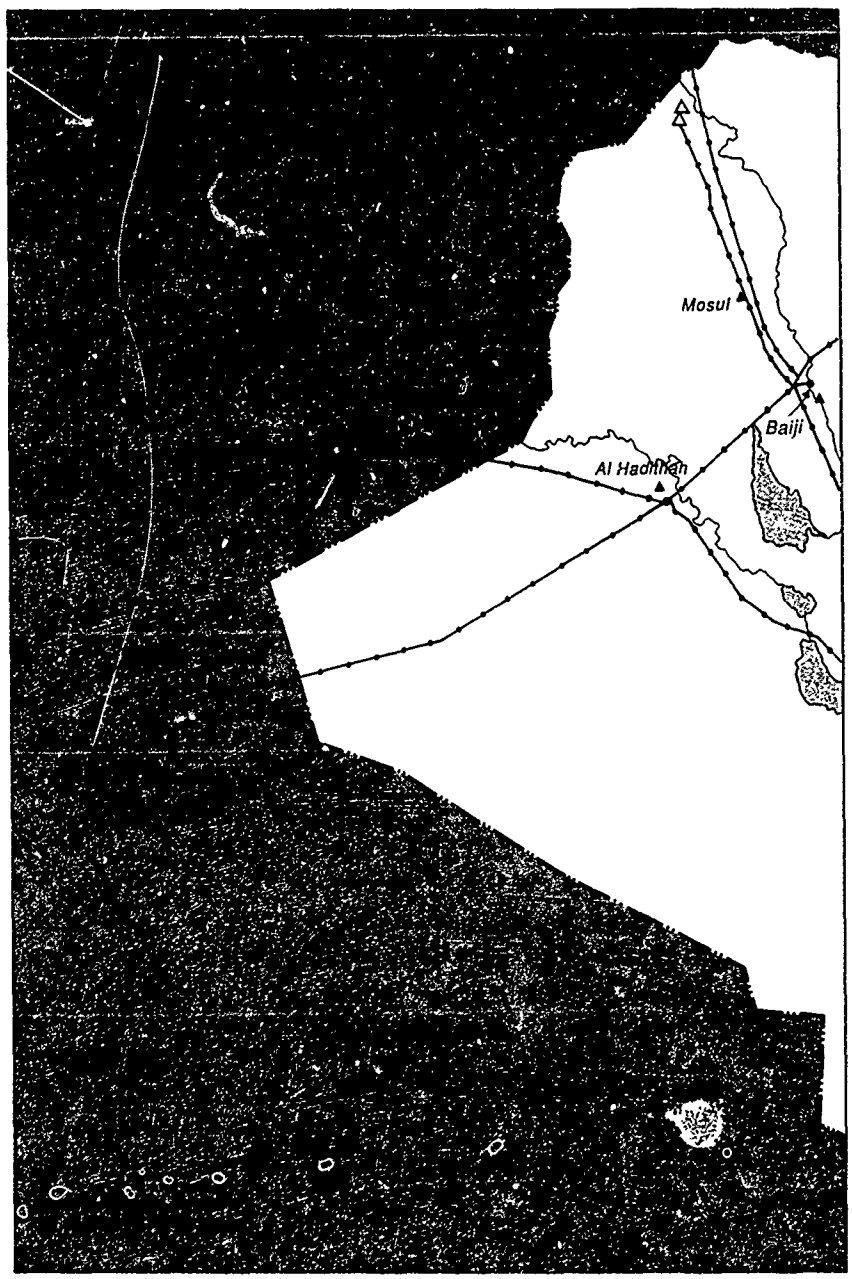
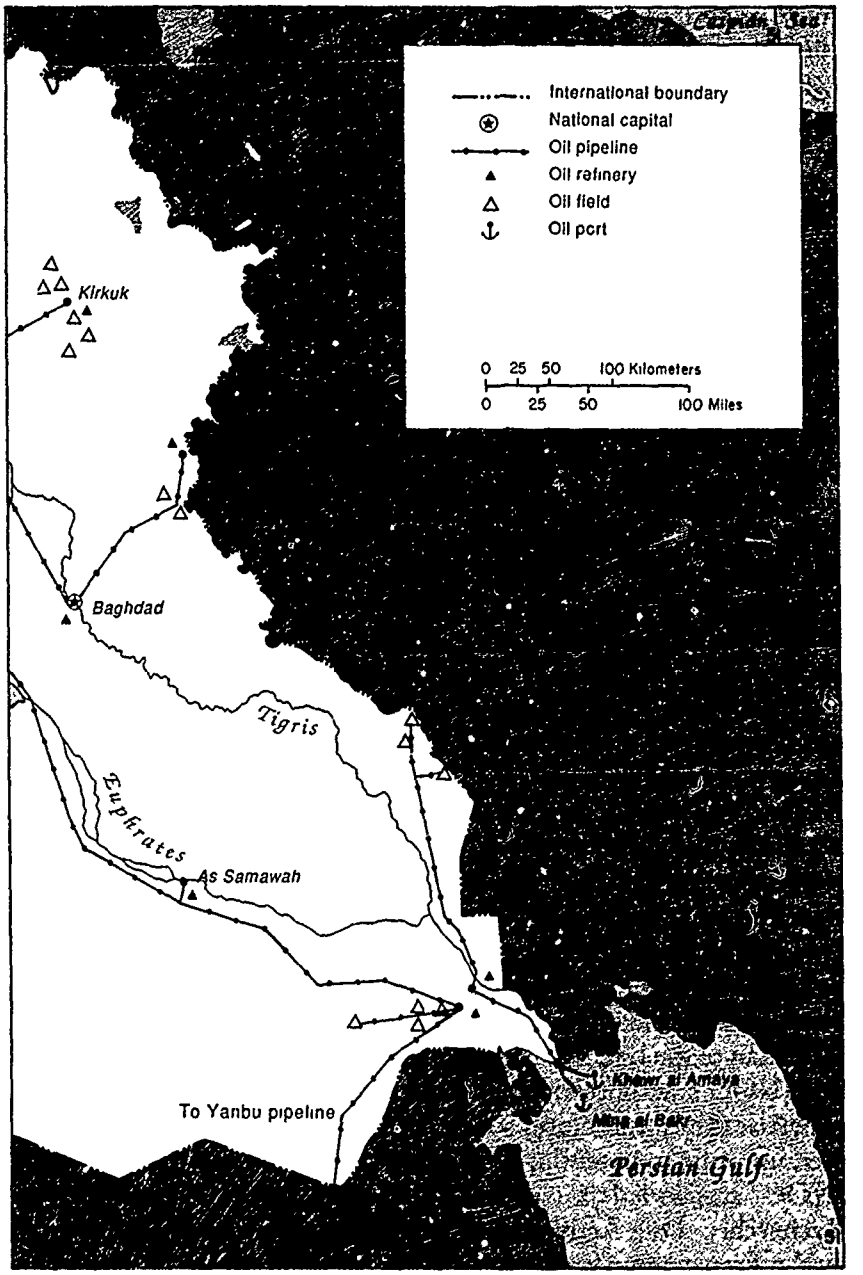


Figure 8. Petroleum Industry, 1988

taken over from IPC. INOC was eventually granted exclusive rights by law to develop Iraq's oil reserves; granting concessions to other oil companies was forbidden, although INOC could permit IPC



and other foreign companies to participate in the further development of existing concessions. Nevertheless, IPC continued to lift the bulk of Iraqi oil from the Kirkuk field that it had retained, and,

more important, to export and to market it. IPC therefore remained the arbiter of existing, if not potential, Iraqi oil production.

Iraq's disillusionment with newly formed OPEC began just after the enactment of Law 80. Iraq applied pressure on OPEC to adopt a unified negotiating stance vis-à-vis the oil companies. Instead, OPEC members negotiated separately. This allowed the oil companies to extract concessions that permitted them to switch production away from Iraq and therefore to pressure Iraq with the prospect of lower oil revenues. Iraq's relationship with IPC was further aggravated in 1966 when Syria raised transit fees on the pipeline that carried two-thirds of Iraqi oil to port and demanded retroactive payments from IPC. When IPC refused to pay, Syria closed the pipeline for several months, an action that cost the Iraqi government much revenue.

The eight-year shutdown of the Suez Canal that followed the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War increased the importance of Mediterranean oil producers because of their proximity to European markets. In 1970 Libya took advantage of this situation to win higher prices for its oil. Iraq, which was in the unusual position of exporting oil through both the Gulf and the Mediterranean, demanded that it be paid for its oil at the Libyan price. IPC countered that Iraqi oil, because of its higher sulfur content, was inferior to Libyan oil. Meanwhile, exports of Iraqi oil via the Mediterranean began to decline, which IPC attributed to falling tanker rates that made Gulf oil more competitive. Iraq, however, interpreted the declining exports as pressure from the oil companies. In general, Iraq believed that IPC was intentionally undercharging customers for oil it sold on behalf of Iraq and was cutting back Iraqi production to force Iraq to restore the nationalized concession areas. In response, Iraq attempted to make INOC a viable substitute for IPC. The INOC chairman of the board was given cabinet rank and greater authority, but INOC's activities were hampered by lack of experience and expertise. Iraq, therefore, sought assistance from countries considered immune to potential IPC sanctions and to retaliation. In 1967 INOC concluded a service agreement with Entreprise des Recherches et des Activités Pétrolières (ERAP)—a company owned by the French government—covering exploration and development of a large segment of southern Iraq, including offshore areas. Some foreign observers doubted that the terms of the arrangement were more favorable than IPC's terms, but more important from Iraq's point of view, the ERAP agreement left control in Iraqi hands. By 1976 ERAP started pumping the oil it had discovered, at which point INOC took over operation of the fields and began delivering the oil to ERAP.

In 1967 INOC tapped the Soviet Union for assistance in developing the North Rumaylah field. The Soviet Union provided more than US$500 million worth of tied aid for drilling rigs, pumps, pipelines, a deep-water port on the Persian Gulf, tankers, and a large contingent of technicians. In 1972, the North Rumaylah field started production and produced nearly 4 million tons of crude.

In the same period, Iraq obtained aid from French, Italian, Japanese, Indian, and Brazilian oil companies under service contracts modeled on the 1967 ERAP agreement. The service contracts, which Iraq did not regard as concessions, allowed the foreign oil companies to explore and to develop areas in exchange for bearing the full costs and the risks of development. If oil were discovered, the companies would turn their operations over to INOC, which would sell them the oil at a discounted rate.

Iraq's increasing ability to manage its petroleum resources finally induced IPC to negotiate. In 1972 IPC promised to increase its production in Iraq and to raise the price it paid for Iraqi oil to the Libyan level. In return, IPC sought compensation for its lost concession areas. Iraq rejected this offer and, on June 1, 1972, nationalized IPC's remaining holdings in Iraq, the original Kirkuk fields. A state-owned company, the Iraqi Company for Oil Operations (ICOO), was established to take over IPC facilities. BPC was allowed to continue its operations.

In February 1973, Iraq and IPC settled their claims and counterclaims. IPC acknowledged Iraq's right to nationalize and agreed to pay the equivalent of nearly US$350 million to Iraq as compensation for revenue lost to Iraq over the years when IPC was selling Iraqi oil. In return, the government agreed to provide to IPC, free of charge, 15 million tons of Kirkuk crude, valued at the time at over US$300 million, in final settlement of IPC claims. Some observers believed that IPC had received a liberal settlement.

The October 1973 Arab-Israeli War impelled the Iraqis to take complete control of their oil resources, and Iraq became one of the strongest proponents of an Arab oil boycott of Israel's supporters. Although Iraq was subsequently criticized by other Arab countries for not adhering to the agreed-upon production cutbacks, Iraq nationalized United States and Dutch interests in BPC. By 1975 all remaining foreign interests were nationalized. Fifty-three years after the humiliating San Remo agreement, Iraq had finally gained complete sovereignty over its most valuable natural resource.

Throughout the mid- to late-1970s, increases in the price of oil caused Iraqi oil revenues to skyrocket even as production fluctuated. Iraq funneled much of this revenue into expanding the oil industry infrastructure. Refinery capacity was doubled, and in 1977

a key pipeline was completed from the Kirkuk fields across Turkey to a Mediterranean terminal at Dortyol.

In 1976, the structure of the Iraqi oil industry was revamped. A new Ministry of Oil was established to direct planning and construction in the petroleum sector and to be responsible for oil refining, gas processing, and internal marketing of gas products through several subsidiary organizations. INOC would be responsible for the production, transport, and sale of crude oil and gas. Some of its operations were contracted out to foreign service companies. The State Organization for Northern Oil (SONO), subordinate to INOC, replaced ICOO as the operating company in the northern fields. In subsequent reorganizations, SONO was renamed the Northern Petroleum Organization (NPO), and a Central Petroleum Organization (CPO), as well as a Southern Petroleum Organization (SPO) were also established. The State Organization of Oil Projects (SOOP) took over responsibility for infrastructure from INOC, and the State Organization for Marketing Oil (SOMO) assumed responsibility for oil sales, leaving INOC free to oversee oil production.

Oil in the 1980s

In 1987 petroleum continued to dominate the Iraqi economy, accounting for more than one-third of nominal gross national product (GNP—see Glossary) and 99 percent of merchandise exports. Prior to the war, Iraq's oil production had reached 3.5 million bpd (barrels per day—see Glossary), and its exports had stood at 3.2 million bpd. In the opening weeks of the Iran-Iraq War, however, Iraq's two main offshore export terminals in the Persian Gulf, Mina al Bakr and Khawr al Amayah, were severely damaged by Iranian attacks, and in 1988 they remained closed. Oil exports were further restrained in April 1982, when Syria closed the pipeline running from Iraq to the Mediterranean. In response, Iraq launched a major effort to establish alternative channels for its oil exports. As an emergency measure, Iraq started to transport oil by tanker-truck caravans across Jordan and Turkey. In 1988 Iraq continued to export nearly 250,000 bpd by this method. In mid-1984, the expansion of the existing pipeline through Turkey was accomplished by looping the line and by adding pumping stations. The expansion raised the line's throughput capacity to about 1 million bpd. In November 1985, Iraq started work on an additional expansion of this outlet by building a parallel pipeline between Kirkuk and Dortyol that used the existing line's pumping stations. Work was completed in July 1987. The result was an increase in exports through Turkey of 500,000 bpd.

In September 1985, construction of a spur line from Az Zubayr in southern Iraq to Saudi Arabia was completed; the spur linked up with an existing pipeline running across Saudi Arabia to the Red Sea port of Yanbu. The spur line had a carrying capacity of 500,000 bpd. Phase two of this project was begun in late 1987 by a Japanese-South Korean-Italian-French consortium. Phase two was to be an independent pipeline, parallel to the existing pipeline, which would run 1,000 kilometers from Az Zubayr to Yanbu and its own loading terminal. The parallel pipeline was expected to add 1.15 million bpd to Iraq's export capacity when completed in late 1989. Iraq negotiated with the contractors to pay its bill entirely in oil at the rate of 110,000 bpd. According to Minister of Petroleum Isam Abd ar Rahim al Jalabi, Iraq negotiated special legal arrangements with Saudi Arabia guaranteeing Iraqi ownership of the pipeline. Iraq also considered construction of a 1-million bpd pipeline through Jordan to the Gulf of Aqaba, but in 1988 this project was shelved.

The expansion of export capacity induced Iraq to try to boost its oil production, which in 1987 averaged 2.8 million bpd of which 1.8 million bpd were exported. The remainder was retained for domestic use. In addition, Iraq continued to receive oil donations of between 200,000 and 300,000 bpd from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia pumped out of the Neutral Zone on the east end of Iraq's southern border with Saudi Arabia. By the end of 1989, Iraq's goal was to have the capacity to produce oil for export at the prewar level of 3.5 million bpd without having to depend on any exports by ship through the Persian Gulf; however, at a posted price of approximately US$18 per barrel, and with spot prices at less than US$13 per barrel, oil was worth less than half as much in 1988 as it was when the Iran-Iraq War started. Iraq's oil revenue in 1987 was estimated at US$11.3 billion, up about 60 percent from the 1986 level of US$6.8 billion (see table 6, Appendix).

The expanded export capacity theoretically gave Iraq greater leverage in negotiating an increase in its OPEC quota. For the first several years of the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq attempted to stay within its OPEC quota in order to bring OPEC pressure to bear on Iran to curtail its production. In early 1988, this issue was moot, however, because Iraq had announced in 1986 that it would not recognize its 1.54 million bpd quota and would produce whatever amount best served Iraqi national interests. In 1987, however, Iraqi oil minister Jalabi reasserted Iraq's willingness to hold its oil production to the 1.54 million bpd OPEC quota if Iran adhered to an identical quota level. This would represent a decrease of about 40 percent from the 2.61 million bpd that Iran was authorized by OPEC to produce.

When Jalabi was appointed Iraq's oil minister in March 1987, he instituted a new round of reorganizations in the petroleum sector. The Ministry of Oil assimilated INOC, thus consolidating management of Iraq's oil production and distribution. The NPO absorbed the CPO. This organization, along with SOOP, was to be granted corporate status in an effort to make it more efficient. Jalabi was also concerned about the proper handling of Iraq's large hydrocarbon reserves. Although estimates of Iraqi hydrocarbon reserves in the late 1980s varied considerably, by all accounts they were immense. In 1984, Iraq claimed proven reserves of 65 billion barrels plus 49 billion barrels of "semi-proven" reserves. In November 1987, Iraq's state-owned Oil Exploration Company calculated official reserves at 72 billion barrels, but the company's director, Hashim al Kharasan, stated that this figure would be revised upward to 100 billion barrels in the near future. In late 1987, oil minister Jalabi said that Iraqi reserves were "100 billion barrels definite, and 40 billion barrels probable," which would constitute 140 years of production at the 1987 rate. Western petroleum geologists, although somewhat more conservative in their estimates, generally concurred with Iraq's assessment; some said that Iraq had the greatest potential for new discoveries of all Middle Eastern Countries.

Besides petroleum, Iraq had estimated natural gas reserves of nearly 850 billion cubic meters, almost all of which was associated with oil. For this reason, most natural gas was flared off at oil wells. Of the estimated 7 million cubic meters of natural gas produced in 1987, an estimated 5 million cubic meters were flared. Iraq's Fifth Five-Year Plan of 1986–90 included projects to exploit this heretofore wasted asset.

The war did not impede Iraqi investment in the oil sector. On the contrary, it spurred rapid development. The government announced in 1987 that, during the previous 10 years, 67 oil-related infrastructure projects costing US$2.85 billion had been completed and that another 19 projects costing US$2.75 billion were under way. One Iraqi priority was to exploit natural gas reserves. Because natural gas is more difficult to process and to market than petroleum, the Ministry of Oil in late 1987 called for the substitution of natural gas for oil in domestic consumption, a move that could free more oil for export.

Therefore, it became a key goal to convey natural gas from oil fields to industrial areas, where the gas could then be used. In 1987 the Soviet Union's Tsevetmetpromexport (TSMPE) was constructing a main artery for such a system, the strategic trans-Iraq dry gas pipeline running northward from An Nasiriyah. In 1986 work

was started on liquefaction facilities and on a pipeline to transport 11.3 billion cubic meters per day of natural gas from Iraq's North Rumaylah oil field to Kuwait.

Another focus of Iraqi investment was the maintenance and augmentation of the oil industry's refining capacity. Before the war, Iraq had a refining capacity of 320,000 bpd, 140,000 barrels of which were produced by the southern refinery at Basra and 80,000 of which were produced by the Durah refinery, near Baghdad. In the opening days of the Iran-Iraq War, the Basra refinery was damaged severely, and as of early 1988 it remained closed. The Durah refinery, however, remained in operation, and new installations, including the 70,000 bpd Salah ad Din I refinery and the 150,000 bpd northern Baiji refinery, boosted Iraq's capacity past 400,000 bpd. About 300,000 bpd were consumed domestically, much of which was used to sustain the war effort.

A second thrust of Iraqi oil policy in the late 1980s was the development, with Soviet assistance, of a major new oil field. In September 1987, during the eighteenth session of the Iraqi-Soviet Joint Commission on Economic and Technical Cooperation, held in Baghdad, Iraq's SOOP signed an agreement with the Soviet Union's Techno-Export to develop the West Al Qurnah oilfield. This oilfield was regarded as one of Iraq's most promising, with an eventual potential yield of 600,000 bpd. Techno-Export planned to start by constructing the degassing, pumping, storage, and transportation facilities at West Al Qurnah's Mishrif reservoir, expected to produce 200,000 bpd.

Industrialization

The nonpetroleum industrial sector of the Iraqi economy grew tremendously after Iraq gained independence in 1932. Although growth in absolute terms was significant, high annual growth rates can also be attributed to the very low level from which industrialization started. Under Ottoman rule, manufacture consisted almost entirely of handicrafts and the products of artisan shops. The availability of electricity and lines of communication and transportation after World War I led to the establishment of the first large-scale industries, but industrial development remained slow in the first years after independence. The private sector, which controlled most of the nation's capital, hesitated to invest in manufacturing because the domestic market was small, disposable income was low, and infrastructure was primitive; moreover, investment in agricultural land yielded a higher rate of return than did investment in capital stock. World War II fueled demand for manufactured goods, and large public sector investments after 1951, made possible by the

jump in state oil revenues, stimulated industrial growth. Manufacturing output increased 10 percent annually in the 1950s.

Industrial development slowed after the overthrow of the monarchy during the 1958 revolution. The socialist rhetoric and the land reform measures frightened private investors, and capital began leaving the country. Although the regime led by Abd al Karim Qasim excepted industry from the nationalization imposed on the agricultural and the petroleum sectors, in July 1964 a new government decreed nationalization of the twenty-seven largest privately owned industrial firms. The government reorganized other large companies, put a low limit on individual shareholdings, allocated 25 percent of corporate profits to workers, and instituted worker participation in management. A series of decrees relegated the private sector to a minor role and provoked an exodus of managers and administrators, accompanied by capital flight. The government was incapable of filling the vacuum it had created, either in terms of money or of trained manpower, and industrial development slowed to about 6 percent per year in the 1960s.

After the 1968 Baath revolution, the government gave a higher priority to industrial development. By 1978 the government had revamped the public industrial sector by organizing ten semi-independent state organizations for major industry subsectors, such as spinning and weaving, chemicals, and engineering. Factory managers were given some autonomy, and an effort was made to hold them responsible for meeting goals. Despite Iraq's attempt to rationalize and reorganize the public sector, state organizations remained overstaffed because social legislation made it nearly impossible to lay off or to transfer workers and bureaucratization made the organizations top-heavy with unproductive management. The government acknowledged that unused capacity, overstocking of inventories, and lost production time, because of shortages or disruptions of supply, continued to plague the industrial sector.

The government attempted to strengthen public sector industry by pouring money into it. According to official figures, annual investment in the nonpetroleum industrial sector rose from ID39.5 million in 1968 to ID752.5 million in 1985. As a consequence, industrial output rose; the government put the total value of Iraq's industrial output in 1984 at almost ID2 billion, up from about ID300 million in 1968 and up more than 50 percent from the start of the Iran-Iraq War. The total value of industrial input in 1984 was ID981 million, so value added was in excess of 100 percent. Productivity relative to investment, however, remained low.

Because of revenues from oil exports, the government believed it could afford to pursue an ambitious and expensive policy of



Students learning foundry (tool and dye) skills at a technical instruction center
Courtesy United Nations

import substitution industrialization that would move the economy away from dependence on oil exports to obtain foreign exchange. In the early 1970s, Iraq made capital investments in large-scale industrial facilities such as steel plants. Many of the facilities were purchased from foreign contractors and builders on a turnkey basis. But Iraq neglected development of the next stage in the industrial process, the transformation of processed raw materials into intermediate products, such as construction girders, iron pipes, and steel parts. These bottlenecks in turn hampered the development of more sophisticated industries, such as machinery manufacture. Plant construction also outpaced infrastructure development. Many plants, for example, were inadequately linked by road or rail to outlets. Excess capacity remained a problem, as the large industrial plants continued to strain the economy's ability to absorb new goods. In an attempt to overcome these problems, Iraq imported the finished products and materials it required, defeating the purpose of its import substitution industrialization strategy and making the large extractive industries somewhat redundant. Imports of various basic commodities, such as plastics and chemicals, doubled and tripled in the 1970s. Most imports were consumed rather than used as intermediate components in industry; when imports were used as industrial inputs, value added tended to be low. Concurrently,

tariffs and other trade barriers erected to protect domestic infant industry from foreign competition impeded the importation of certain vital materials, particularly spare parts and machinery. The growth of small-scale industries in the private sector and the rise in the standard of living in general were inhibited by such restrictions. Subsidized by oil revenues, the industrialization strategy yielded growth, but only at great cost.

In the late 1980s, the cumulative fiscal effects of the war with Iran forced Iraq to reverse priorities and to focus on the export side of the trade equation. Although the government previously had attempted to diversify the economy in order to minimize dependence on natural resources, it was now forced to concentrate on generating export income from extractive industry, in which it had a comparative advantage, rather than on producing more sophisticated manufactured goods. At the same time, in conjunction with its gradual move toward privatization, the government ceded greater responsibility to the private sector for the manufacture of light consumer items as import substitutes. In 1983 legislation exempted the private sector from customs duties and from excise taxes on imported spare parts and on machinery needed to build factories. The private sector was also given tax exemptions for capital investment and for research and development spending. Finally, the replacement of sole proprietorships by joint stock companies was encouraged as a means of tapping more private investment. In a 1987 reorganization, the Ministry of Light Industries was renamed the Ministry of Industry, and the Ministry of Industry and Minerals was renamed the Ministry of Heavy Industry. New ministers were appointed and were charged with improving both the the quality and quantity of industrial output; large parts of the state bureaucracy that had controlled industry were abolished.

According to official Iraqi figures, the total industrial labor force in 1984 consisted of about 170,000 workers. State-operated factories employed slightly more than 80 percent of these workers, while 13 percent worked in the private sector. The remaining 7 percent worked in the mixed economy, which consisted of factories operated jointly by the state—which held a major share of the common stock—and the private sector. Men constituted 87 percent of the industrial work force. According to the Iraqi government, in 1984 there were 782 industrial establishments, ranging in size from small workshops employing 30 workers to large factories with more than 1,000 employees. Of these, 67 percent were privately owned. The private sector owned two-thirds of the factories, but employed only 13 percent of the industrial labor force. Privately owned

industrial establishments were, therefore, relatively numerous, but they were also relatively small and more capital-intensive. Only three privately owned factories employed more than 250 workers; the great majority employed fewer than 100 people each. Private-sector plant ownership tended to be dispersed throughout industry and was not concentrated in any special trade, with the exception of the production of metal items such as tools and utensils.

Although the private sector accounted for 40 percent of production in this area, the metal items sector itself constituted no more than a cottage industry. Figures published by the Iraqi Federation of Industries claimed that the private sector dominated the construction industry if measurement were based not on the number of employees or on the value of output, but on the amount of capital investment. In 1981, such private-sector capital investment in the construction industry was 57 percent of total investment. By this alternative measurement, private sector involvement in the textile and the food processing industries was above average. In contrast, about forty-six state-owned factories employed more than 1,000 workers apiece, and several industrial sectors, such as mining and steel production, were entirely state dominated.

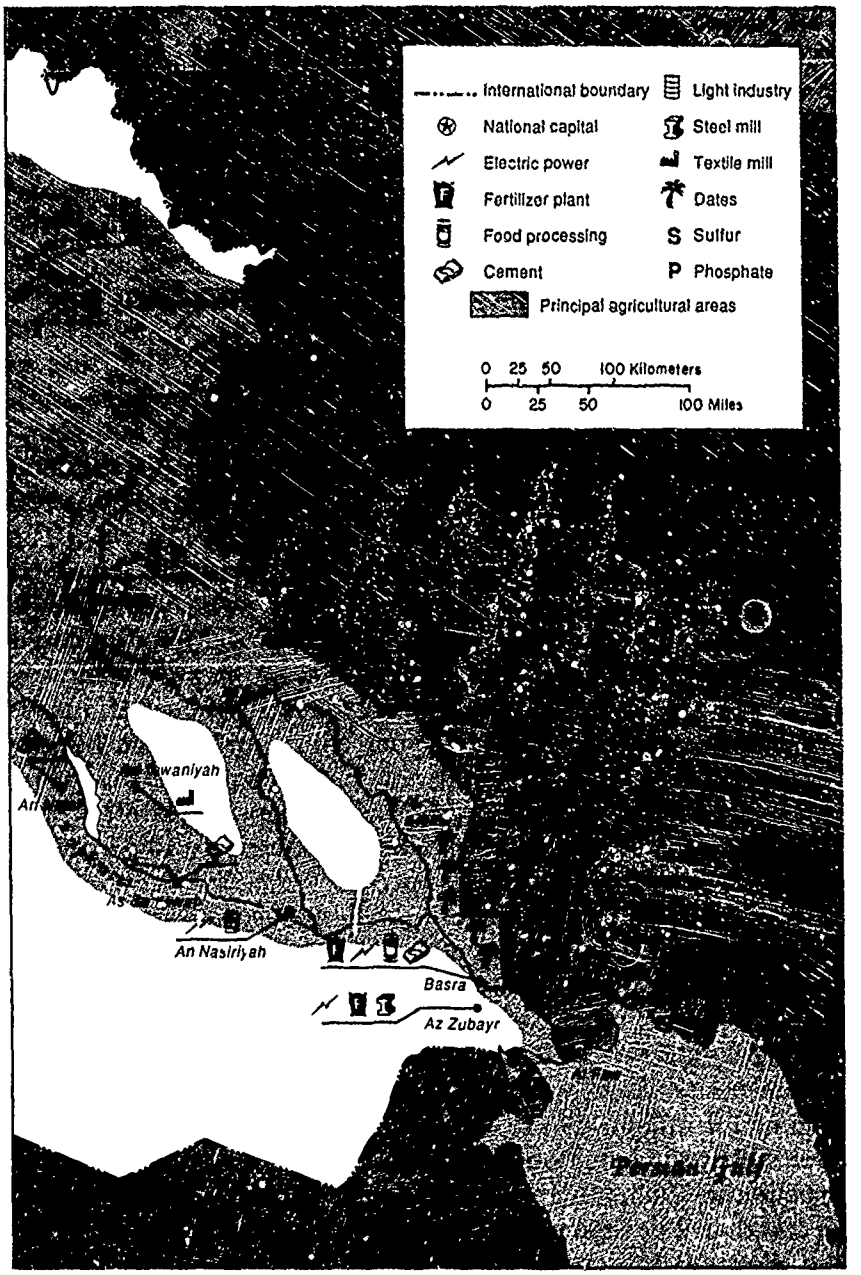
In 1984 Iraq's top industry, as measured by the number of employees, was the nonmetallic mineral industry, which employed 18 percent of industrial workers and accounted for 14 percent of the value of total industrial output. The nonmetallic mineral industry was based primarily on extracting and processing sulfur and phosphate rock, although manufacturing of construction materials, such as glass and brick, was also included in this category. Production of sulfur and of sulfuric acid was a priority because much of the output was exported; phosphates were likewise important because they were used in fertilizer production. Mining of sulfur began at Mishraq, near Mosul, in 1972; production capacity was 1.25 million tons per year by 1988. With the help of Japan, Iraq in the late 1980s was augmenting the Mishraq sulfur works with the intent of boosting sulfur exports 30 percent from their 1987 level of 500,000 tons per year and of increasing exports of sulfuric acid by 10,000 tons annually. Iraq was also attempting to increase the rate of sulfur recovery from oil from its 1987 level of 90 percent (see fig. 9).

Phosphate rock reserves were located mainly in the Akashat area northwest of Baghdad and were estimated in 1987 at 5.5 billion tons—enough to meet local needs for centuries. A fertilizer plant at Al Qaim, linked by rail to the Akashat mine, started production in 1984; it was soon converting 3.4 million tons of phosphate per year into fertilizer. As the Al Qaim operation came onstream,



Figure 9. Economic Activity, 1988

Iraq became self-sufficient in fertilizer, and three-quarters of the plant's output was exported. Iranian attacks on Iraqi fertilizer plants in the Basra area, however, cut Iraq's surplus. In 1986 Iraq obtained



a US$10 million loan from the Islamic Development Bank to import urea fertilizer, and in 1987 Iraq continued to import fertilizer as an emergency measure. Meanwhile, additional fertilizer plants were

under construction in 1987 at Shuwairah, near Mosul, and at Baiji. Their completion would bring to five the number of Iraqi fertilizer plants and would increase exports considerably.

Another important component of the mineral sector was cement production. Iraq's 1987 cement production capacity was 12 million tons, and the government planned a near doubling of production. Domestic consumption in 1986 was 7.5 million tons, and the surplus was exported, 1 million tons to Egypt alone.

In addition to the nonmetallic minerals industry, several other industries employed significant percentages of the work force. The chemical and petrochemical industry, concentrated at Khawr az Zubayr, was the second largest industrial employer, providing work for 17 percent of the industrial work force. Chemicals and petrochemicals accounted for a relatively high 30 percent of the total value of industrial output because of the high value of raw material inputs and the higher value added—more than 150 percent. The labor-intensive textile industry employed 15 percent of industrial workers but accounted for only 7 percent of the value of total industrial output. A major state-owned textile factory in Mosul produced calico from locally grown cotton. The foodstuffs processing and packaging industry, which employed 14 percent of the total industrial labor force, accounted for 20 percent of total output, but the value added was less than 50 percent. Light manufacturing industries based on natural resources, such as paper, cigarettes, and leather and shoe production, together accounted for 10 percent of the value of total industrial output.

By the mid-1980s, efforts to upgrade industrial capacity from the extracting and processing of natural resources to heavy industry, to the manufacturing of higher technology and to the production of consumer items were still not fully successful. An iron and steel works built in 1978 by the French company, Creusot-Loire, at Khawr az Zubayr, was expected to attain an annual production level of 1.2 million tons of smelted iron ore and 400,000 tons of steel. Other smelters, foundries, and form works were under construction in 1988. (In 1984 this sector of the economy accounted for less than 2 percent of total output.) Manufacture of machinery and transport equipment accounted for only 6 percent of output value, and value added was fairly low, suggesting that Iraq was assembling imported intermediate components to make finished products. A single factory established in the 1980s with Soviet assistance and located at Al Musayyib, produced tractors. In 1981, Iraq contracted with a company from the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germay) to develop the domestic capability to produce motor vehicles. Plans called for production of 120,000 passenger

cars and 25,000 trucks per year, but the project's US$5 billion cost led to indefinite delays.

By the late 1980s, Iraq had had some success in establishing light industries to produce items such as spark plugs, batteries, locks, and household appliances. The electronics industry, concentrated in Baghdad, had grown to account for about 6 percent of output with the help of Thompson-CSF (that is, Compagnie sans fil) of France and the Soviet Union. Other more advanced industries just starting to develop in Iraq in the late 1980s were pharmaceuticals and plastics.

Agriculture

Since the beginning of recorded time, agriculture has been the primary economic activity of the people of Iraq. In 1976, agriculture contributed about 8 percent of Iraq's total GDP, and it employed more than half the total labor force. In 1986, despite a ten-year Iraqi investment in agricultural development that totaled more than US$4 billion, the sector still accounted for only 7.5 percent of total GDP, a figure that was predicted to decline. In 1986 agriculture continued to employ a significant portion—about 30 percent—of Iraq's total labor force. Part of the reason the agricultural share of GDP remained small was that the sector was overwhelmed by expansion of the oil sector, which boosted total GDP.

Large year-to-year fluctuations in Iraqi harvests, caused by variability in the amount of rainfall, made estimates of average production problematic, but statistics indicated that the production levels for key grain crops remained approximately stable from the 1960s through the 1980s, with yield increasing while total cultivated area declined. Increasing Iraqi food imports were indicative of agricultural stagnation. In the late 1950s, Iraq was self-sufficient in agricultural production, but in the 1960s it imported about 15 percent of its food supplies, and by the 1970s it imported about 33 percent of its food. By the early 1980s, food imports accounted for about 15 percent of total imports, and in 1984, according to Iraqi statistics, food imports comprised about 22 percent of total imports. Many experts expressed the opinion that Iraq had the potential for substantial agricultural growth, but restrictions on water supplies, caused by Syrian and Turkish dam building on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, might limit this expansion.

Water Resources

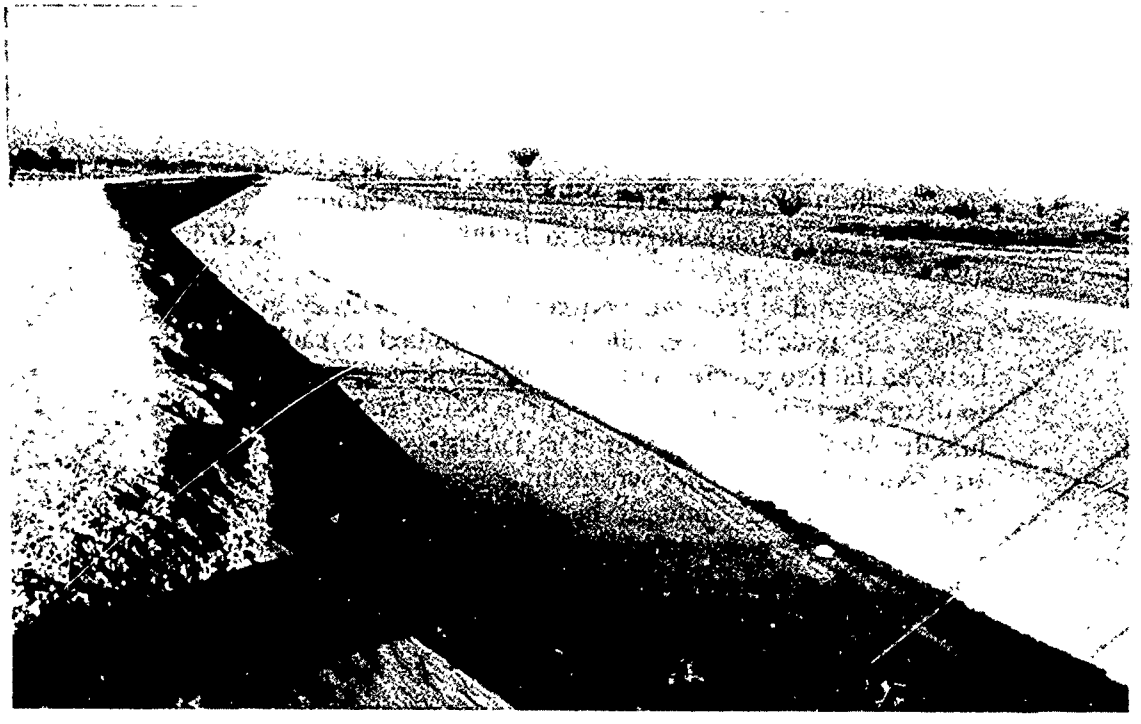
Iraq has more water than most Middle Eastern nations, which led to the establishment of one of the world's earliest and most advanced civilizations. Strong, centralized governments—a

phenomenon known as "hydraulic despotism"—emerged because of the need for organization and for technology in order to exploit the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Archaeologists believe that the high point in the development of the irrigation system occurred about 500 A.D., when a network of irrigation canals permitted widespread cultivation that made the river basin into a regional granary (see Ancient Mesopotamia, ch. 1). Having been poorly maintained, the irrigation and drainage canals had deteriorated badly by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the Mongols destroyed what remained of the system (see The Mongol Invasion, ch. 1).

About one-fifth of Iraq's territory consists of farmland. About half of this total cultivated area is in the northeastern plains and mountain valleys, where sufficient rain falls to sustain agriculture. The remainder of the cultivated land is in the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, which receive scant rainfall and rely instead on water from the rivers. Both rivers are fed by snowpack and rainfall in eastern Turkey and in northwest Iran. The rivers' discharge peaks in March and in May, too late for winter crops and too early for summer crops. The flow of the rivers varies considerably every year. Destructive flooding, particularly of the Tigris, is not uncommon, and some scholars have placed numerous great flood legends, including the biblical story of Noah and the ark, in this area. Conversely, years of low flow make irrigation and agriculture difficult.

Not until the twentieth century did Iraq make a concerted effort to restore its irrigation and drainage network and to control seasonal flooding. Various regimes constructed several large dams and river control projects, rehabilitated old canals, and built new irrigation systems. Barrages were constructed on both the Tigris and the Euphrates to channel water into natural depressions so that floods could be controlled. It was also hoped that the water could be used for irrigation after the rivers peaked in the spring, but the combination of high evaporation from the reservoirs and the absorption of salt residues in the depressions made some of the water too brackish for agricultural use. Some dams that created large reservoirs were built in the valleys of tributaries of the Tigris, a measure that diminished spring flooding and evened out the supply of water over the cropping season. When the Euphrates was flowing at an exceptionally low level in 1984, the government was able to release water stored in reservoirs to sustain farmers.

In 1988 barrages or dam reservoirs existed at Samarra, Dukan, Darband, and Khan on the Tigris and Habbaniyah on the Euphrates. Two new dams on the Tigris at Mosul and Al Hadithah, named respectively the Saddam and Al Qadisiyah, were on the



Irrigation canal south of Baghdad
Courtesy Ronald L. Kuipers

verge of completion in 1988. Furthermore, a Chinese-Brazilian joint venture was constructing a US$2 billion dam on the Great Zab River, a Tigris tributary in northeastern Iraq. Additional dams were planned for Badush and Fathah, both on the Tigris. In Hindiyah on the Euphrates and in Ash Shinafiyah on the Euphrates, Chinese contractors were building a series of barrages.

Geographic factors contributed to Iraq's water problems. Like all rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates carry large amounts of silt downstream. This silt is deposited in river channels, in canals, and on the flood plains. In Iraq, the soil has a high saline content. As the water table rises through flooding or through irrigation, salt rises into the topsoil, rendering agricultural land sterile. In addition, the alluvial silt is highly saline. Drainage thus becomes very important; however, Iraq's terrain is very flat. Baghdad, for example, although 550 kilometers from the Persian Gulf, is only 34 meters above sea level. This slight gradient makes the plains susceptible to flooding and, although it facilitates irrigation, it also hampers drainage. The flat terrain also provides relatively few sites for dams. Most important, Iraq lies downstream from both Syria and Turkey on the Euphrates River and downstream from Turkey on the Tigris River. In the early 1970s, both Syria and Turkey completed large dams on the Euphrates and filled vast reservoirs. Iraqi officials protested the sharp decrease in the river's

flow, claiming that irrigated areas along the Euphrates in Iraq dropped from 136,000 hectares to 10,000 hectares from 1974 to 1975.

Despite cordial relations between Iraq and Turkey in the late 1980s, the issue of water allocation continued to cause friction between the two governments. In 1986 Turkey completed tunnels to divert an estimated one-fifth of the water from the Euphrates into the Atatürk Dam reservoir. The Turkish government reassured Iraq that in the long run downstream flows would revert to normal. Iraqi protests were muted, because Iraq did not yet exploit Euphrates River water fully for irrigation, and the government did not wish to complicate its relationship with Turkey in the midst of the Iran-Iraq War.

Land Tenure and Agrarian Reform

Iraq's system of land tenure and inefficient government implementation of land reform contributed to the low productivity of farmers and the slow growth of the agricultural sector. Land rights had evolved over many centuries, incorporating laws of many cultures and countries. The Ottoman Land Code of 1858 attempted to impose order by establishing categories of land and by requiring surveys and the registration of land holdings. By World War I, only limited registration had been accomplished and land titles were insecure, particularly under the system of tribal tenure through which the state retained ownership of the land although tribes used it.

By the early 1930s, large landowners became more interested in secure titles because a period of agricultural expansion was under way. In the north, urban merchants were investing in land development, and in the south tribes were installing pumps and were otherwise improving land (see Rural Society, ch. 2). In response, the government promulgated a law in 1932 empowering it to settle title to land and to speed up the registration of titles. Under the law, a number of tribal leaders and village headmen were granted title to the land that had been worked by their communities. The effect, perhaps unintended, was to replace the semicommunal system with a system of ownership that increased the number of sharecroppers and tenants dramatically. A 1933 law provided that a sharecropper could not leave if he were indebted to the landowner. Because landowners were usually the sole source of credit and almost no sharecropper was free of debt, the law effectively bound many tenants to the land.

The land tenure system under the Ottomans, and as modified by subsequent Iraqi governments, provided little incentive to

improve productivity. Most farming was conducted by sharecroppers and tenants who received only a portion—often only a small proportion—of the crop. Any increase in production favored owners disproportionately, which served as a disincentive to farmers to produce at more than subsistence level. For their part, absentee owners preferred to spend their money in acquiring more land, rather than to invest in improving the land they had already accumulated.

On the eve of the 1958 revolution, more than two-thirds of Iraq's cultivated land was concentrated in 2 percent of the holdings, while at the other extreme, 86 percent of the holdings covered less than 10 percent of the cultivated land. The prerevolutionary government was aware of the inequalities in the countryside and of the poor condition of most tenant farmers, but landlords constituted a strong political force during the monarchical era, and they were able to frustrate remedial legislation.

Because the promise of land reform kindled part of the popular enthusiasm for the 1958 revolution and because the powerful landlords posed a potential threat to the new regime, agrarian reform was high on the agenda of the new government, which started the process of land reform within three months of taking power. The 1958 law, modeled after Egypt's law, limited the maximum amount of land an individual owner could retain to 1,000 dunums (100 hectares) of irrigated land or twice that amount of rain-fed land. Holdings above the maximum were expropriated by the government. Compensation was to be paid in state bonds, but in 1969 the government absolved itself of all responsibility to recompense owners. The law provided for the expropriation of 75 percent of all privately owned arable land.

The expropriated land, in parcels of between seven and fifteen hectares of irrigated land or double that amount of rain-fed land, was to be distributed to individuals. The recipient was to repay the government over a twenty-year period, and he was required to join a cooperative. The law also had temporary provisions maintaining the sharecropping system in the interim between expropriation and redistribution of the land. Landlords were required to continue the management of the land and to supply customary inputs to maintain production, but their share of the crop was reduced considerably. This provision grew in importance as land became expropriated much more rapidly than it was being distributed. By 1968, 10 years after agrarian reform was instituted, 1.7 million hectares had been expropriated, but fewer than 440,000 hectares of sequestered land had been distributed. A total of 645,000 hectares had been allocated to nearly 55,000 families, however,

because several hundred thousand hectares of government land were included in the distribution.

The situation in the countryside became chaotic because the government lacked the personnel, funds, and expertise to supply credit, seed, pumps, and marketing services—functions that had previously been performed by landlords. Landlords tended to cut their production, and even the best-intentioned landlords found it difficult to act as they had before the land reform because of hostility on all sides. Moreover, the farmers had little interest in cooperatives and joined them slowly and unwillingly. Rural-to-urban migration increased as agricultural production stagnated, and a prolonged drought coincided with these upheavals. Agricultural production fell steeply in the 1960s and never recovered fully.

In the 1970s, agrarian reform was carried further. Legislation in 1970 reduced the maximum size of holdings to between 10 and 150 hectares of irrigated land (depending on the type of land and crop) and to between 250 and 500 hectares of nonirrigated land. Holdings above the maximum were expropriated with compensation only for actual improvements such as buildings, pumps, and trees. The government also reserved the right of eminent domain in regard to lowering the holding ceiling and to dispossessing new or old landholders for a variety of reasons. In 1975 an additional reform law was enacted to break up the large estates of Kurdish tribal landowners. Additional expropriations such as these exacerbated the government's land management problems. Although Iraq claimed to have distributed nearly 2 million hectares by the late 1970s, independent observers regarded this figure as greatly exaggerated. The government continued to hold a large proportion of arable land, which, because it was not distributed, often lay fallow. Rural flight increased, and by the late 1970s, farm labor shortages had become so acute that Egyptian farmers were being invited into the country.

The original purpose of the land reform had been to break up the large estates and to establish many small owner-operated farms, but fragmentation of the farms made extensive mechanization and economies of scale difficult to achieve, despite the expansion of the cooperative system. Therefore, in the 1970s, the government turned to collectivization as a solution. By 1981 Iraq had established twenty-eight collective state farms that employed 1,346 people and cultivated about 180,000 hectares. In the 1980s, however, the government expressed disappointment at the slow pace of agricultural development, conceding that collectivized state farms were not profitable. In 1983 the government enacted a new law encouraging both local and foreign Arab companies or individuals to lease

larger plots of land from the government. By 1984, more than 1,000 leases had been granted. As a further incentive to productivity, the government instituted a profit-sharing plan at state collective farms. By 1987, the wheel appeared to have turned full circle when the government announced plans to reprivatize agriculture by leasing or selling state farms to the private sector.

Cropping and Livestock

Most farming in Iraq entails planting and harvesting a single crop per year. In the rain-fed areas the winter crop, primarily grain, is planted in the fall and harvested in the spring. In the irrigated areas of central and southern Iraq, summer crops predominate. A little multiple cropping, usually of vegetables, exists where irrigation water is available over more than a single season.

Even with some double or triple cropping, the intensity of cultivation is usually on the order of 50 percent because of the practice of leaving about half the arable land fallow each year. In the rain-fed region, land is left fallow so that it can accumulate moisture. The fertility of fallow land is also increased by plowing under weeds and other plant material that grow during the fallow period. On irrigated land, fallow periods also contribute some humus to the soil.

Grain, primarily wheat and barley, was Iraq's most important crop. Cereal production increased almost 80 percent between 1975 and 1985, notwithstanding wide variations in the harvest from year to year as the amount and the timing of rainfall strongly affected both the area planted and the harvest. Between 1980 and 1985, the area under wheat cultivation increased steadily for a cumulative growth of 30 percent, to about 1,566,500 hectares. In 1985, the most recent year for which statistics were available in 1988, Iraq harvested a bumper crop of 1.4 million tons of wheat. In 1984, a drought year, Iraq harvested less than half the planted area for a yield of between 250,000 and 471,000 tons, according to foreign and Iraqi sources respectively. The north and central rain-fed areas were the principal wheat producers (see table 7, Appendix).

Barley requires less water than wheat does, and it is more tolerant of salinity in the soil. For these reasons, Iraq started to substitute barley production for wheat production in the 1970s, particularly in southern regions troubled by soil salinity. Between 1980 and 1985, the total area under barley cultivation grew 44 percent, and by 1985 barley and wheat production were virtually equal in terms both of area cultivated and of total yield. Rice, grown in paddies, was Iraq's third most important crop as measured by cultivated area, which in 1985 amounted to 24,500 hectares. The area under cultivation, however, did not grow appreciably between

1980 and 1985; 1985 production totaled almost 150,000 tons. Iraq also produced maize, millet, and oil seeds in smaller quantities.

A number of other crops were grown, but acreage and production were limited. With the exception of tobacco, of which Iraq produced 17,000 tons on 16,500 hectares in 1985, cash crop production declined steeply in the 1980s. Probably because of domestic competition from synthetic imports and a declining export market, production of cotton was only 7,200 tons in 1985, compared with 26,000 tons in 1977. Production of sugar beets was halted completely in 1983, and sugarcane production declined by more than half between 1980 and 1985.

Iraq may have cut back on production of sugar beets and sugarcane because of an intention to produce sugar from dates. Dates, of which Iraq produces eight distinct varieties, have long been a staple of the local diet. The most abundant date groves were found along the Shatt al Arab. In the early 1960s, more than 30 million date palms existed. In the mid-1970s, the Iraqi government estimated that the number of date palms had declined to about 22 million, at which time production of dates amounted to 578,000 tons. The devastation of the Shatt al Arab area during the Iran-Iraq War hastened the destruction of date palm groves, and in 1985 the government estimated the number of date palms at fewer than 13 million. Date production in 1987 dropped to 220,000 tons. The government-managed Iraqi Date Administration, however, planned to increase production in an attempt to boost export revenue. In 1987 about 150,000 tons, or 68 percent of the harvest, was exported, primarily to Western Europe, Japan, India, and other Arab countries. The Iraqi Date Administration also devised plans to construct large facilities to extract sugar, alcohol, vinegar, and concentrated protein meal from dates. Iraq produced a variety of other fruits as well, including melons, grapes, apples, apricots, and citrus. Production of such fruits increased almost 30 percent between 1975 and 1985.

Vegetable production also increased, particularly near urban centers, where a comparatively sophisticated marketing system had been developed. Vegetable gardening usually employed relatively modern techniques, including the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Tomatoes were the most important crop, with production amounting to more than 600,000 tons in 1985. Other vegetables produced in significant quantity were beans, eggplant, okra, cucumbers, and onions. Overall vegetable production increased almost 90 percent between 1975 and 1985, even though the production of legumes dropped about 25 percent over the same period.



Date palms along the Tigris River near Baghdad
Courtesy Matson Collection

Crop production accounted for about two-thirds of value added in the agricultural sector in the late 1980s, and the raising of livestock contributed about one-third. In the past, a substantial part of the rural population had been nomadic, moving animals between seasonal grazing areas. Sheep and goats were the most important livestock, supplying meat, wool, milk, skins, and hair. A 1978 government survey, which represented the most recent official data available as of early 1988, estimated the sheep population at 9.7million and the goat population at 2.1 million. Sheep and goats were tended primarily by nomadic and seminomadic groups. The 1978 survey estimated the number of cattle at 1.7 million, the number of water buffalo at 170,000, the number of horses at 53,000, and the number of camels at 70,000.

In the 1970s, the government started to emphasize livestock and fish production, in an effort to add protein to the national diet. But 1985's red meat production (about 93,000 tons) and milk production (375,000 tons) were, respectively, about 24 and 23 percent less than the in 1975 totals, although other figures indicated that total livestock production remained stable between 1976 and 1985. In the mid-1980s, however, British, West German, and Hungarian companies were given contracts to establish poultry farms. At the same time, the government expanded aquaculture and deep-sea fishing. Total production of processed chicken and fish almost doubled, to about 20,000 tons apiece, from 1981 to 1985, while egg production increased substantially, to more than 1 billion per year. The government planned to construct a US$160 million deep-sea fishing facility in Basra and predicted that, within 10 years, freshwater fishing would supply up to 100,000 tons of fish. Iraq nevertheless continued to import substantial quantities of frozen poultry, meat, and fish to meet local needs for protein.

Transportation

Transportation was one of the Iraqi economy's most active sectors in the late 1980s; it was allocated a large share of the domestic development budget because it was important to the government for several reasons. Logistics became a crucial factor in Iraq's conduct of the Iran-Iraq War. The government also recognized that transportation bottlenecks limited industrial development more than any other factor. Finally, the government believed that an expanded transportation system played an important political role by promoting regional integration and by heightening the central government's presence in the more remote provinces. For these reasons, the government embarked on an ambitious plan to upgrade and to extend road, rail, air, and river transport simultaneously. Iraq's

main transportation axis ran roughly northwest to southeast from Mosul via Kirkuk to Baghdad, and then south to Basra and the Gulf. In the 1980s, efforts were underway to link Baghdad more closely with the Euphrates River basin to the west (see fig. 10).

Roads

The total length of Iraq's network of paved roads almost doubled between 1979 and 1985, to 22,397 kilometers, augmented by an additional 7,800 kilometers of unpaved secondary and feeder roads. In 1987 Iraq's major road project was a 1,000-kilometer-long segment of a six-lane international express highway that would eventually link the Persian Gulf states with the Mediterranean. In Iraq, the road would stretch from the Jordanian border through Ar Rutbah to Tulayah near An Najaf, then to the southern Iraqi town of Ash Shaykh ash Shuyukh, and finally to the Kuwaiti border at Safwan. Construction was under way in the late 1980s. Plans were also being made for another highway, which would link Baghdad with the Turkish border via Kirkuk and Mosul. There was progress as well on a program to build 10,000 kilometers of rural roads.

Railroads

Iraq possessed two separate railroads at independence, one standard gauge and one meter gauge. The standard gauge line ran north from Baghdad through Mosul to the Syrian border and to an eventual connection with the Turkish railroad system, and the meter gauge line ran south from Baghdad to Basra. Because the two systems were incompatible, until the 1960s cargo had to be transloaded at Baghdad to be transported between the two halves of the country. The Soviet Union helped extend the standard gauge system to Basra, and by 1977 fully 1,129 kilometers of Iraq's 1,539 kilometers of railroad were standard gauge. By 1985 the total length of railroad lines had been extended to 2,029 kilometers, of which 1,496 kilometers were standard gauge. In 1985 the railroads were being traveled by 440 standard-gauge locomotives that moved 1.25 billion tons of freight per kilometer. A 252-kilometer line linking Kirkuk and Al Hadithah was completed by contractors from the Republic of Korea (South Korea) in 1987 after five years of work. Built at a cost of US$855 million, the line was designed to carry more than 1 million passengers and more than 3 million tons of freight annually. The system included maintenance and control centers and more than thirty bridges crossing the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. By the end of the century, Iraq planned to triple the line's passenger capacity and to double its freight capacity.

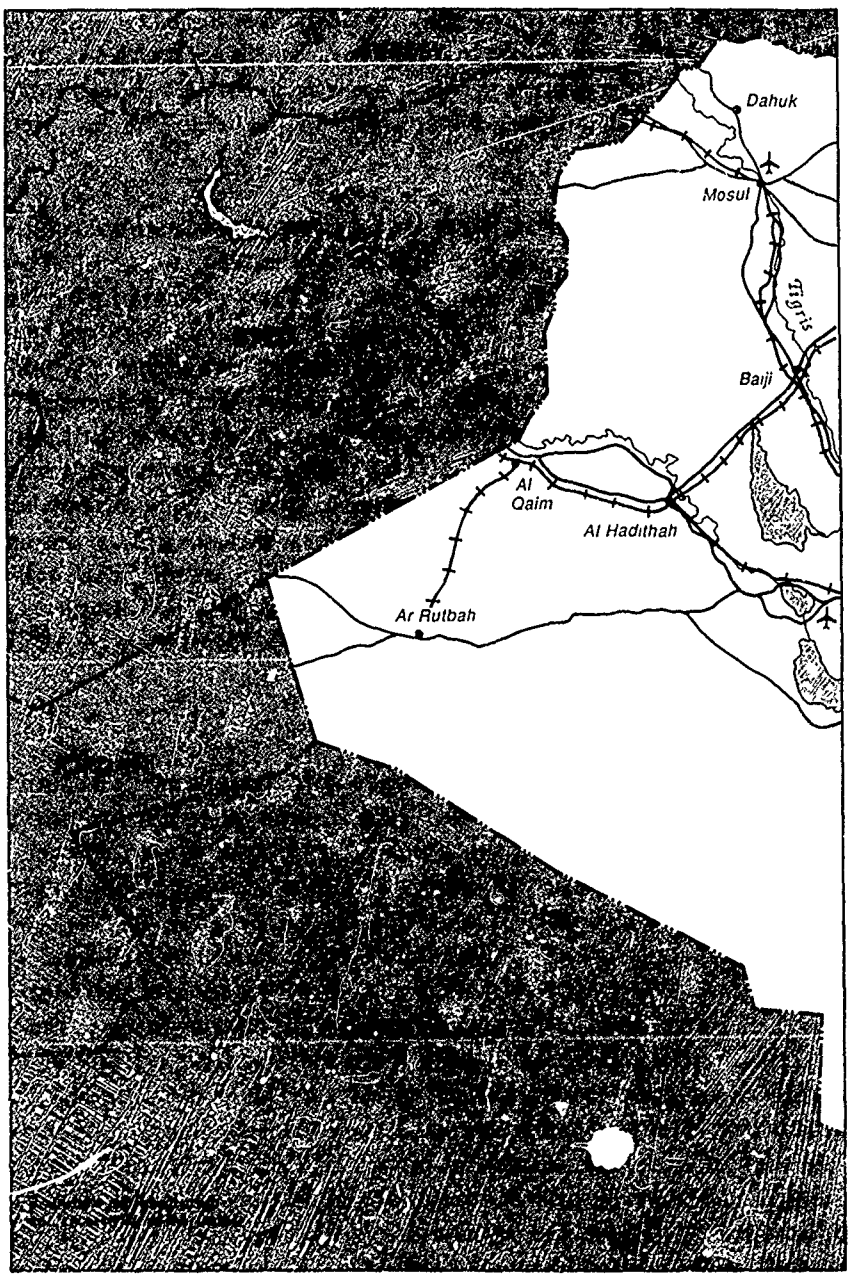
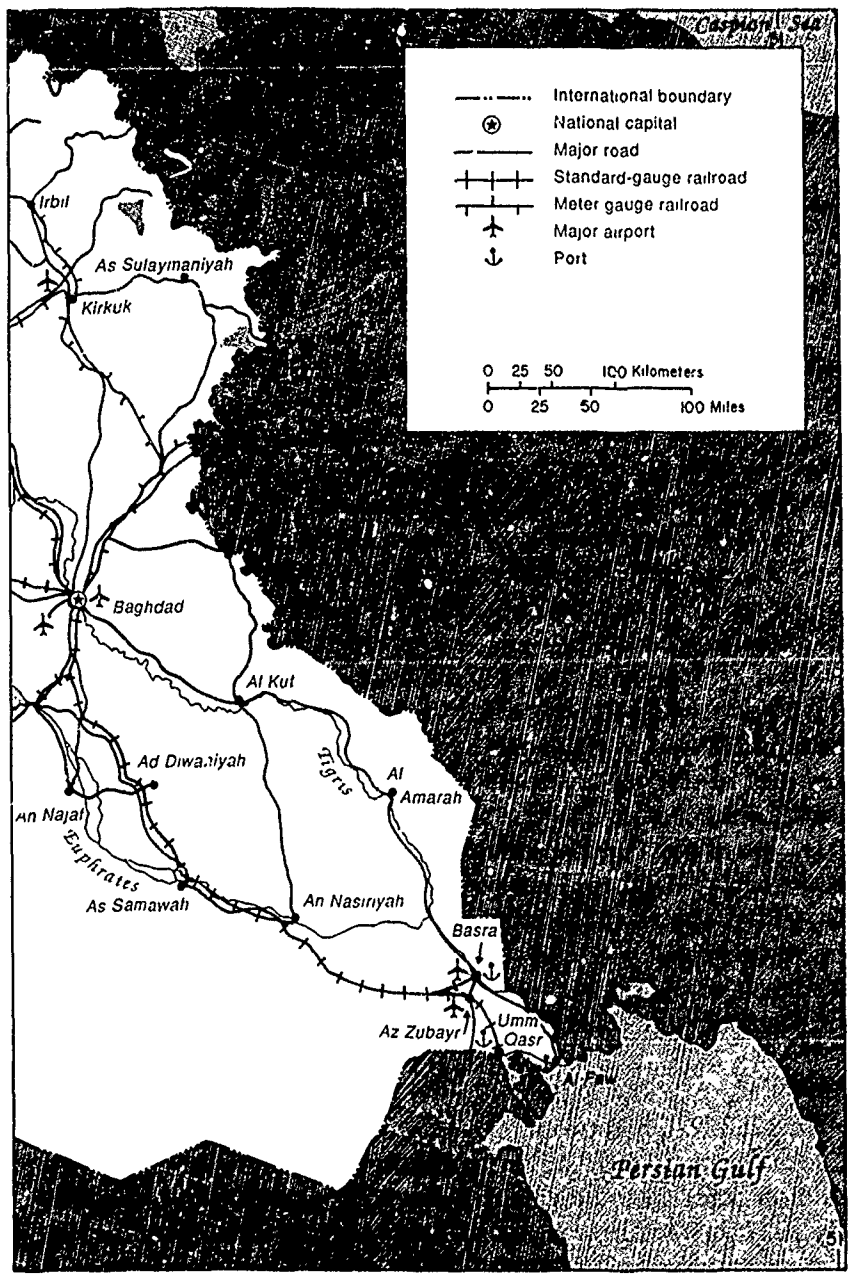


Figure 10. Transportation System, 1988

A 550-kilometer line, built by a Brazilian company and extending from Baghdad to Qusaybah on the Syrian border, was also opened in the same year. In 1987 Indian contractors were finishing work



on a line between Al Musayyib and Samarra. Iraqi plans also called for replacing the entire stretch of railroad between Mosul and Basra with modern, high-speed track, feeding all lines entering Baghdad

into a 112-kilometer loop around the city, and improving bridges, freight terminals, and passenger stations. In addition, Iraq has conducted intermittent negotiations over the years with Turkey, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia concerning the establishment of rail links to complete a continuous Europe-Persian Gulf railroad route.

Ports

At independence, Iraq had little port capacity, a fact that reflected the low level of foreign trade and the country's traditional overland orientation toward Syria and Turkey rather than toward the Gulf. Since then, the Gulf port of Basra has been expanded many times, and a newer port was built at Umm Qasr to relieve pressure on Basra. Oil terminals were located at Khawr al Amayah, and Mina al Bakr, Al Faw, and a port was built in tandem with an industrial center at Khawr az Zubayr. Because Iraq's access to the Gulf was an Iranian target in the Iran-Iraq War, port activities were curtailed severely in the 1980s. Before shipping can be resumed after the war, the Shatt al Arab will have to be cleared of explosives and wreckage, which will take years.

Despite long-standing government interest in developing the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers into major arteries for inland transport, little had been accomplished by the late 1980s, primarily because of the massive scale of such a project. Dredging and the establishment of navigation channels had been completed on several stretches of the Tigris south of Baghdad, and in 1987 a river freight route using barges was opened between Baghdad and Al Amarah. Iraq investigated the possibility of opening the entire Tigris River between Mosul and Baghdad, as well as the feasibility of opening a stretch of the Euphrates between Al Hadithah and Al Qurnah, but lack of funds precluded further action.

Airports

In 1988 Iraq had two international airports, one at Baghdad and one at Basra. In 1979 a French consortium was awarded a US$900 million contract to build a new international airport at Baghdad. By 1987 the facility was partially completed and in use. The Basra airport was also being upgraded with an extended 4,000-meter runway and other facilities at a cost in excess of US$400 million. A third international airport was planned for Mosul.

The State Enterprise for Iraqi Airways was the sole domestic airline in operation in 1988. The company was established in 1945 by Iraqi State Railways. In 1987, the airline's fleet included thirty-five Soviet-built Antonov and Ilyushin cargo planes and fourteen Boeing passenger jets, as well as smaller commuter aircraft and

VIP jets. The airline provided service throughout the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Europe, as well as to Brazil and to the Far East. In 1987 Saddam Husayn announced a decree to privatize Iraqi Airways. Two new ventures were to be established instead: the Iraqi Aviation Company to operate commercially as the national airline, and the National Company for Aviation Services to provide aircraft and airport services. Stock would be sold to the public, and the government would retain a minority share.

Telecommunications

In 1988 Iraq had a good telecommunications network of radio communication stations, radio relay links, and coaxial cables. Iraqi radio and television stations came under the government's Iraqi Broadcasting and Television Establishment, which was responsible to the Ministry of Culture and Information. The domestic service had one FM and nine AM stations with two program networks. The domestic service broadcast mainly in Arabic, but also in Kurdish, Turkoman, and Assyrian from Kirkuk. The short wave foreign service broadcast in Arabic, Azeri Turkish, English, French, German, Hebrew, Kurdish, Persian, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. Television stations were located in the major cities, and they carried two program networks. In 1988 Iraq had approximately 972,000 television sets; the system was connected to both the Atlantic Ocean and Indian Ocean systems of the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT) as well as to one Soviet Intersputnik satellite station. It also had coaxial cable and radio relays linking it to Jordan, Kuwait, Syria, and Turkey. Iraq had an estimated 632,000 telephones in 1988.

Electricity

Iraqi electric power consumption increased by a factor of fourteen in the twenty-year period between 1968 and 1988, and in the late 1980s it was expected to double every four to five years. Ongoing rural electrification contributed to increased demand; about 7,000 villages throughout the nation were provided electricity in the same twenty-year period. The destruction in 1980 of power-generating facilities near the Iran-Iraq border interrupted only temporarily the rapid growth in production and consumption. In 1981 the government awarded US$2 billion in contracts to foreign construction companies that were building hydroelectric and thermal generating plants as well as transmission facilities. By 1983 the production and consumption of electricity had recovered to the prewar levels of 15.6 billion kwh (kilowatt hours) and 11.7 billion kwh, respectively. As previously commissioned projects continued

to come onstream, Iraq's generating capacity was expected to exceed 6,000 megawatts by 1986. In December 1987, following the completion of power lines designed to carry 400 million kwh of power to Turkey, Iraq became the first country in the Middle East to export electric power. Iraq was expected to earn US$15 million annually from this arrangement. Long-range plans entailed exporting an additional 3 billion kwh to Turkey and eventually providing Kuwait with electricity.

Iraq's plans to develop a nuclear generating capacity were set back by Israel's June 1981 bombing of the Osiraq (Osiris-Iraq) reactor, then under construction (see The Search for Nuclear Technology, ch. 5). In 1988 French, Italian, and Soviet technicians were exploring the feasibility of rebuilding the reactor at a different site. Saudi Arabia had promised to provide financing, and Brazil and Portugal reportedly had agreed to supply uranium.

Foreign Trade

The pattern of Iraqi foreign trade in the 1980s was shaped primarily by the Iran-Iraq War, its resulting deficit and debt problems, and developments in the petroleum sector. Iranian attacks on petroleum industry infrastructure reduced oil exports sharply and Iraq incurred a trade deficit of more than US$10 billion in 1981. The pattern continued in 1982 as the value of Iraqi imports peaked at approximately US$23.5 billion, while exports reached a nadir of US$11.6 billion, leading to a record trade deficit. In 1983, however, imports were cut roughly by half. Figures for Iraq's imports and exports from 1984 onward vary widely and cannot be considered authoritative. Despite the partial recovery of Iraqi oil exports in 1986, exports were valued at only about US$7.5 billion because of the plunge in world oil prices (see Oil in the 1980s, this ch.). In 1987 imports were expected to rise to about US$10 billion. Export revenues were also expected to rise, as Iraq compensated for low oil prices with a higher volume of oil exports (see table 8, Appendix).

Iraq had counted heavily on solving its twin debt and deficit problems by reestablishing and eventually by augmenting its oil export capacity. But increases in volume were insufficient to offset lower prices, and because demand remained low, expanded oil exports served only to glut the market and further drive down the price of oil. The depressed price of oil and the low prices of other raw materials that Iraq exported, coupled with higher prices for the goods it imported, trapped the nation in the classic dilemma of declining terms of trade. Although Iraq was cutting the volume of its imports and was increasing the volume of its exports, the

relative values of imports and exports had shifted fundamentally. More than 95 percent of Iraq's exports were raw materials, primarily petroleum. Foodstuffs accounted for most additional exports. Conversely, nearly half of Iraq's imports were capital goods and consumer durables. According to Iraqi statistics, 34.4 percent of 1984 imports were capital goods, 30 percent were raw materials, 22.4 percent were foodstuffs, and 12.5 percent were consumer items.

Iraq's declining imports resulted not so much from belt-tightening or from import substitution, as from the increasing reluctance of trading partners to extend credit. Despite its socialist orientation, Iraq had long traded most heavily with Western Europe. Initially, Iraq's debt accumulation worked in its favor by creating a hostage effect. Western creditors, both governments and private companies, continued to supply Iraq in an effort to sustain the country until it could repay them. Additionally, the debt helped to secure outlets for Iraqi petroleum in a tight international market through barter agreements in which oil was exchanged for a reduction in debt. In 1987, however, as some West European companies prepared to cut their losses and to withdraw from the Iraqi market, and as others curtailed sales by limiting credits, other countries were poised to fill the vacuum by offering goods and services on concessional terms. Companies from Brazil, South Korea, India, Yugoslavia, and Turkey, backed by their governments' export credit guarantees, were winning an increasing share of the Iraqi market. In 1987 the Soviet Union and East European nations were also offering goods and services on highly concessional terms. Eventually, Iraq's exports might also be diverted from the West toward its new trading partners.

Iraq continued to seek Western imports when it could afford them. In 1987 Iraq was forced to ration imports for which payment was due in cash, although nonessential imports were purchased if the seller offered credit. Imports contributing to the war effort had top priority. Imports of spare parts and of management services for the maintenance of large industrial projects were also deemed vital, as Iraq sought to stave off the extremely high costs it would incur if facilities were shut down, mothballed, and then reopened in the future. Consumer goods were given lowest priority.

In 1985 Iraq purchased 14.4 percent of its total imports from Japan. Iraq bought an array of Japanese products, ranging from transport equipment, machinery, and electrical appliances to basic materials such as iron and steel, textiles, and rubber goods. In 1987, as Iraqi debt to Japan mounted to US$3 billion, the government of Japan curtailed the export insurance it had offered Japanese

companies doing business with Iraq; nevertheless, Japanese companies continued to trade with Iraq. Iraq bought 9.2 percent of its imports from West Germany. Neighboring Turkey provided the third largest source of Iraqi imports, accounting for 8.2 percent of the total. Italy and France each accounted for about 7.5 percent, followed by Brazil with 7 percent and Britain with 6.3 percent. Kuwait was Iraq's most important Arab trading partner, contributing 4.2 percent of Iraq's imports (see table 9, Appendix).

In 1985 Brazil was the main destination of Iraqi exports, accounting for 17.7 percent of the total. France was second with 13 percent, followed by Italy with 11 percent, Spain with 10.7 percent, Turkey and Yugoslavia with about 8 percent each, Japan with about 6 percent, and the United States with 4.7 percent.

In April 1987, the government attempted to streamline the trade bureaucracy by eliminating five state trading companies that dealt in various commodities. Although the state trading companies had been established in the 1970s to foster increased domestic production, they had evolved into importing organizations. In view of this orientation, their operations were incorporated into the Ministry of Trade. Three Ministry of Trade departments, which had administered trade with socialist, with African, and with Arab nations, were abolished. The responsibilities of these disbanded organizations were centralized in a new Ministry of Trade department named the General Establishment for Import and Export.

The Ministry of Trade implemented a national import policy by allocating portions of a total budget among imports according to priority. The import budget varied from year to year, depending on export earnings and on the amount in loans that had been secured from foreign creditors. The government's underlying intention was gradually to replace imported manufactured products with domestic manufactured products and then to increase export sales. In the mid-1980s, however, the government recognized that increased domestic production required the import of intermediate goods. In 1987 state companies were permitted for the first time to use private agents or middlemen to facilitate limited imports of necessary goods.

The private sector, which had long been accorded a quota of total imports, was also deregulated to a limited extent. In 1985 the quota was increased to 7.5 percent of total imports, and the government gave consideration to increasing that percentage further. All imports by the private sector had previously been subject to government licensing. In 1985, Law No. 60 for Major Development Projects exempted the private sector from the obligation to obtain licenses to import basic construction materials that would be used

in major development projects. In an attempt to increase remittances from Iraqis abroad, the government also gave special import licenses to nonresident Iraqis, if the value of the imports was invested in Iraq and was not transferred outside the country.

In 1987 the rules concerning private sector imports were liberalized further when private sector manufacturers were granted special licenses that permitted them to import raw materials, spare parts, packaging, machinery, and equipment necessary for plant modernization and for expansion. In some cases no ceiling was placed on such imports, while in other cases imports were limited to 50 percent of the value of the export earnings that the manufacturer generated. Such imports were not subject to quotas or to foreign exchange restrictions. Moreover, the government announced that it would make no inquiry into the companies' sources of financing. In a remarkably candid statement in a June 1987 speech, Saddam Husayn promised that citizens would not be asked where they had acquired their money, and he admitted that the private sector had not imported any goods because of its fear of prosecution by the security services for foreign exchange violations.

While the government permitted more imports by the private sector, it nevertheless continued to promote exports at the same time. Starting in 1969 it maintained an Export Subsidy Fund, which underwrote the cost of eligible nonpetroleum exports by up to 25 percent. The Export Subsidy Fund was financed with a tax of .5 percent levied on imports of capital goods and .75 percent levied on imports of consumer goods. Most imports were also charged both duty and a customs surcharge that varied from item to item. Export licenses were granted freely both to public and to private sector firms with only a few exceptions. The Board of Regulation of Trade had the authority to prohibit the export of any commodity when domestic supplies fell short of demand, and the control over export of certain items was reserved for the General Organization of Exports. The degree to which government economic policies would be liberalized in the late 1980s remained to be seen. The government had taken several steps in that direction but state controls continued to play a major role in the economy in 1988.

* * *

Both primary and secondary source information on the Iraqi economy tends to be scant and dated. The government of Iraq has regarded data on national economic performance as a state secret, particularly since the start of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980. The government does not publish a budget, although it releases

a yearbook, the *Annual Abstract of Statistics,* which contains some economic figures. The Iran-Iraq War has also diverted scholarly attention from economic issues. One exception is Phebe Marr's *The Modern History of Iraq,* which contains a chapter titled "Economic and Social Changes under the Revolutionary Regime." The most detailed and authoritative periodic reports on the Iraqi economy are produced by the Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates in their semiannual *Middle East Economic Outlook.* The Economist Intelligence Unit's *Country Report: Iraq,* a quarterly, contains much useful information and analysis. Another good source of up-to-date information is the *Middle East Economic Digest.* (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 4. Government and Politics



Bas relief of a warrior from Nimrud, ca. end of the eighth century B.C.

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM in 1988 was in what was officially characterized as a "transitional" phase. This description meant that the current method of rule by decree, which had been in effect since 1968, would continue until the goal of a socialist, democratic republic with Islam as the state religion was attained. The end of the transition period was to be marked by the formal enactment of a permanent constitution. The timing and the specific circumstances that would terminate the transitional stage had not been specified as of early 1988.

The country remained under the regime of the Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party, which had seized power through a coup d'état in July 1968. The legality of government institutions and actions was based on the Provisional Constitution of July 16, 1970, which embodied the basic principles of the Baath Party—Arab unity, freedom, and socialism. These principles were in turn rooted in the pan-Arab aspirations of the party, aspirations sanctified through identification with the historic right and destiny of all Arabs to unite under the single leadership of "the Arab Nation."

The most powerful decision-making body in Iraq, the ten-member Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which functioned as the top executive and legislative organ of the state, was for all practical purposes an arm of the Baath Party. All members of the RCC were also members of the party's Regional Command, or state apparatus. President Saddam Husayn was both the chairman of the RCC and the secretary general of the Baath's Regional Command. He was generally recognized as the most powerful political figure in the country.

From its earliest days, the Baath Party was beset by personality clashes and by factional infighting. These problems were a primary cause of the failure of the first Baath attempt to govern Iraq in 1963. After the Baath returned to power in 1968, intraparty fissures were generally held in check, albeit not eliminated, by President Ahmad Hasan al Bakr. When Saddam Husayn succeeded to the presidency in 1979, he also commanded the loyalty of the major elements of the Baath.

Saddam Husayn and other Baath leaders have always regarded the ability to balance endemic intraparty tensions—such as those between military and civilian elements and among personalities across boundaries of specialization—as the key to success in Baghdad. Above all, they perceived harmony in the military-civilian

coalition as pivotal. Although the Baath had begun recruiting within the Iraqi military as early as 1958, and within ten years military members constituted the backbone of the party's power, civilian Baath leaders maintained overall control of the party.

Iraqi politics under the Baath regime were generally geared toward mobilizing support for the regime. Loyal opposition had no place, and it was not recognized as legitimate. The party leaders believed competitive politics ill-suited to Iraq, at least during the indefinite transitional period. They condemned partisan political activity, which they insisted had had damaging consequences on national unity and integration. The Baath also invoked Iraq's unhappy legacy of ethnic and regional cleavages as justification for harsh curbs on political rights.

In 1988, twenty years after the Baath had come to power, it still was not possible to assess popular attitudes toward Saddam Husayn, toward the Baath Party, toward political institutions, or toward political issues because there had been insufficient field research in the country. Even though elections for a National Assembly had been held in 1980 and again in 1984, these had been carefully controlled by the government, and genuinely free elections had not been held for more than thirty years. Politicians or groups opposed to the principles of the 1968 Baath Revolution of July 17 to 30 were not permitted to operate openly. Those who aspired to be politically active had few choices: they could join the highly selective Baath Party, remain dormant, go underground or into exile, or join the Baath-sponsored Progressive National Front (PNF).

The PNF, which came into existence in 1974, was based on a national action charter that called for collaboration between the Baath and each of the other parties considered to be both progressive and nationalist. The PNF served as the only risk-free, non-Baath forum for political participation, although even this channel was denied to those whose loyalties to the regime were suspect. The Baath Party's objectives in establishing the front were to provide the semblance of broad popular support for the government as well as to provide the facade of alliance among the Baath and other parties. The Baath, however, held a dominant position within the front and therefore assumed sole responsibility for carrying out the decisions of the front's executive commission, which was composed of the Baath's most important members and sympathizers.

In early 1988, the war with Iran continued to preoccupy Saddam Husayn and his associates. Approximately 75,000 Iraqis had been killed in the war, and about 250,000 had been wounded; more than 50,000 Iraqis were being held as prisoners of war in Iran. Property damage was estimated in the tens of billions of dollars;

destruction was especially severe in the southern part of the country (see Introduction).

Constitutional Framework

The Provisional Constitution of July 16, 1970, upon which Iraq's governmental system was based in 1988, proclaims Iraq to be "a sovereign people's democratic republic" dedicated to the ultimate realization of a single Arab state and to the establishment of a socialist system. Islam is declared to be the state religion, but freedom of religion and of religious practices is guaranteed. Iraq is said to be formed of two principal nationalities, Arab and Kurd. A March 1974 amendment to the Constitution provides for autonomy for the Kurds in the region where they constitute a majority of the population. In this Autonomous Region (see Glossary) both Arabic and Kurdish are designated as official languages for administrative and educational purposes. The Constitution also prescribes, however, that the "national rights" of the Kurds as well as the "legitimate rights" of all minorities are to be exercised only within the framework of Iraqi unity, and the document stipulates that no part of Iraq can be relinquished.

The Constitution sets forth two basic aims, the establishment of a socialist system based on "scientific and revolutionary principles," and pan-Arab economic unity. The state is given an active role in "planning, directing, and guiding" the economy. National resources and the principal means of production are defined as "the property of the people" to be exploited by the state "directly in accordance with the requirements of the general planning of the national economy." The Constitution describes public properties and the properties of the public sector as inviolable.

The Constitution classifies the ownership of property as "a social function that shall be exercised within the limits of society's aims and the state's programs in accordance with the provisions of the law"; nevertheless, the Constitution also guarantees private ownership and individual economic freedom "within the limits of the law, provided that individual ownership will not contradict or be detrimental to general economic planning." The Constitution stipulates that private property may not be expropriated except for the public interest and then only with just compensation. The size of private agricultural land holdings is to be defined by law, and the excess is to be regarded as the property of the people. The Constitution also bars foreign ownership of real estate, although individuals may be granted a legal exemption from this prohibition.

Articles 19 through 36 of the Constitution spell out fundamental rights and duties in detail. The right to fair trial through due

process, the inviolability of person and of residence, the privacy of correspondence, and the freedom to travel are guaranteed to all citizens. The Constitution also assures citizens of their right to religious freedom; to the freedom of speech, of publication, and of assembly; and to the freedom to form political parties, trade unions, and professional societies. The Constitution directs the state to eliminate illiteracy and to ensure the right of citizens to free education from elementary school through the university level. According to Article 28, the aims of education include instilling opposition to "the doctrines of capitalism, exploitation, reaction, Zionism, and colonialism" in order to ensure the achievement of the Baathist goals of Arab unity, freedom, and socialism. The Constitution also requires the state to provide every citizen with employment and with free medical care.

The Constitution defines the powers and the functions of the different government institutions. These include the RCC, the National Assembly, the presidency, the Council of Ministers, or cabinet, and the judiciary (see fig. 11). According to Article 37, the RCC "is the supreme body in the State." Article 43 assigns to the RCC, by a vote of two-thirds of its members, authority to promulgate laws and regulations, to deal with national security, to declare war and conclude peace, and to approve the government's budget. Article 38 stipulates that all newly elected members of the RCC must be members of the Baath Party Regional Command. The Constitution also provides for an appointed Council of Ministers that has responsibility for carrying out the executive decisions of the RCC.

The chief executive of the RCC is the president, who serves as the commander in chief of the armed forces and as the head of both the government and the state. The powers of the president, according to the Constitution, include appointing, promoting, and dismissing personnel of the judiciary, civil service, and military. The president also has responsibility for preparing and approving the budget. The first president, Ahmad Hasan al Bakr, was in office from 1968 to 1979, when he resigned and was succeeded by Saddam Husayn.

Articles 47 through 56 of the Constitution provide for an elected National Assembly, but its powers are to be defined by the RCC. Elections for the Assembly took place for the first time in June 1980. Subsequent National assembly elections were held in October 1984.

The Constitution can be amended only by a two-thirds majority vote of the RCC. Although the 1970 Constitution is officially designated as provisional, it is to remain in force until a permanent constitution is promulgated.

Government

The Constitution provides for a governmental system that, in appearance, is divided into three mutually checking branches, the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. In practice, neither the legislature nor the judiciary has been independent of the executive.

The Revolutionary Command Council

In 1988 the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) continued to be the top decision-making body of the state. The RCC was first formed in July 1968, and since then it has exercised both executive and legislative powers. The chairman of the RCC is the president of the republic. The number of RCC members has varied over time; in 1988 there were ten members.

According to the Constitution, the RCC is the supreme organ of the state, charged with the mission of carrying out the popular will by removing from power the reactionary, the dictatorial, and the corrupt elements of society and by returning power to the people. The RCC elects its chairman, who serves concurrently as president of the republic, by a two-thirds majority vote. In case of the chairman's official absence or incapacitation, his constitutional powers are to be exercised by the vice-chairman, who also is elected by the RCC from among its members. Thus the vice-chairman (in 1988 Izzat Ibrahim, who had served since 1979) is first in line of succession.

The members of the RCC, including both the chairman and the vice-chairman, are answerable only to the RCC itself, which may dismiss any of its members by a two-thirds majority vote and may also charge and send to trial for wrongdoing any member of the council, any deputy to the president, or any cabinet minister. Since 1977 the Baath Party has regarded all members of the Baath Party Regional Command as members of the RCC. The interlocking leadership structure of the RCC and the Regional Command has served to emphasize the party's dominance in governmental affairs.

The RCC's constitutional powers are wide ranging. It may perform legislative functions, both in collaboration with, and independently of, the National Assembly; approve government recommendations concerning national defense and internal security; declare war, order general mobilization, conclude peace, and ratify treaties and international agreements; approve the state's general budget; lay down the rules for impeachment of its members and set up the special court to try those impeached; authorize the chairman or the vice-chairman to exercise some of the council's powers except for legislative ones; and provide the internal regulations and

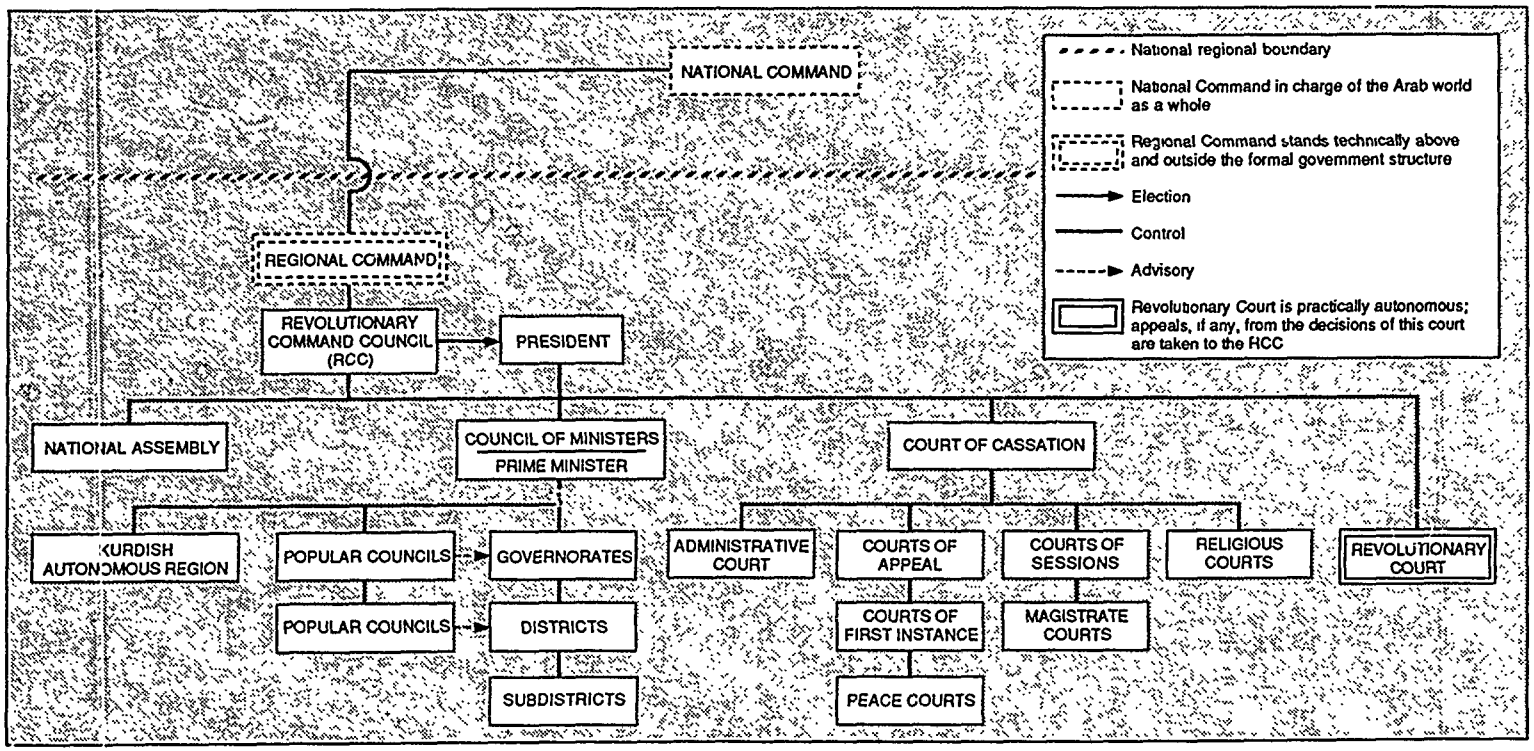


Figure 11. Government Organization, 1988

working procedures of the council. The chairman is specifically empowered to preside over the council's closed sessions, to sign all laws and decrees issued by the council, and to supervise the work of cabinet ministers and the operation of the institutions of the state.

The National Assembly

Although the 1970 Constitution provides for a parliament called the National Assembly, this body was not instituted until 1980. The RCC first circulated a draft law creating the assembly in December 1979; after some changes this was promulgated as law the following March. According to the law, the National Assembly consists of 250 members elected by secret ballot every four years. All Iraqi citizens over eighteen are eligible to vote for assembly candidates. The country is divided into 250 electoral districts, each with an approximate population of 250,000. One representative is elected to the assembly from each of these constituencies. The National Assembly law also stipulates, however, that there is to be a single electoral list. Furthermore, the qualifications of all candidates for the assembly must be reviewed and be approved by a government-appointed election commission. In practice, these provisions have enabled the Baath Party to control the National Assembly.

To qualify as a candidate for National Assembly elections, individuals need to meet certain conditions. For example, prospective candidates must be at least twenty-five years of age, must be Iraqi by birth, must not be married to foreigners, and must have Iraqi fathers. Having a non-Iraqi mother is grounds for disqualification except in those cases where the mother is of Arab origins and from another Arab country. In addition, persons who were subject to property expropriation under the land reform or nationalization laws are not eligible candidates. Furthermore, all aspiring candidates are required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the election commission that they believe in the principles of the 1968 Baath Revolution, that is, in the Baath Party's objectives.

The first parliamentary elections since Iraq became a republic in 1958 were held in June 1980, and the First National Assembly convened at the end of that month. Baath Party candidates won 75 percent, or 187, of the 250 seats. The remaining 25 percent were won by parties allied with the Baath and by independent parties. Elections for the Second National Assembly were held in October 1984. Approximately 7,171,000 votes were cast in that election, and the Baath won 73 percent (183) of the seats. Thirty-three women were elected to the assembly. Saadun Hammadi was elected chairman of the assembly, and two years later he was made a member of the RCC.

Since 1980 the National Assembly generally has held two sessions per year in accordance with Article 48 of the Constitution. The first session is held in April and May, and the second session in November and December. During the few weeks each year that the National Assembly is in session, it carries out its legislative duties in tandem with the RCC. The assembly's primary function is to ratify or reject draft legislation proposed by the RCC. In addition, it has limited authority to enact laws proposed by a minimum of one-fourth of its membership, to ratify the government's budget and international treaties, and to debate domestic and international policy. It also has authority to supervise state agencies and to question cabinet ministers. Although the assembly has served as a forum for limited public discussion of issues, its actual powers were restricted and ultimate decision-making authority pertaining to legislation continued to reside with the RCC in 1988.

The President and the Council of Ministers

The president is the chief executive authority of the country. He may exercise authority directly or through the Council of Ministers, the cabinet. He must be a native-born Iraqi. The Constitution does not stipulate the president's term of office, nor does it provide for his successor. President Bakr served for eleven years before retiring for health reasons in 1979. He was succeeded by Saddam Husayn, the former vice-chairman of the RCC, who continued to hold the office of president in early 1988.

The position of vice-chairman, rather than the office of vice-president, appeared to be the second most powerful political one. The vice-presidency appeared to be a largely ceremonial post, and the vice-president seemed to be appointed or dismissed solely at the discretion of the president. In 1988 the vice-president was Taha Muhy ad Din Maruf, who was first appointed by Bakr in 1974, and was subsequently kept in office by Saddam Husayn. The vice-chairman of the RCC, who would presumably succeed Saddam Husayn, was Izzat Ibrahim.

The Council of Ministers is the presidential executive arm. Presidential policies are discussed and translated into specific programs through the council. The council's activities are closely monitored by the diwan, or secretariat of the presidency. The head of the diwan is a cabinet-rank official, and his assistants and support staff are special appointees. The members of the diwan are not subject to the regulations of the Public Service Council, the body which supervises all civil service matters.

Cabinet sessions are convened and presided over by the president. Some senior members of the RCC are represented on the



President Saddam Husayn
Courtesy Embassy of Iraq, Washington

cabinet. By convention, about one-third of the cabinet positions may be reserved for members of the Baath Party. In early 1988, the cabinet consisted of forty-one members including president Saddam Husayn and vice-president Maruf. Ministerial portfolios included those for agriculture and agrarian reform, communications, culture and arts, defense, education, finance, foreign affairs, health, higher education and scientific research, industry and minerals, information, interior, irrigation, justice, labor and social affairs, oil, planning, public works and housing, religious trusts, trade, and transport. Additionally, there were seven ministers of state and seven presidential advisers with ministerial status. Of the cabinet members, the president and the minister of defense, the minister of foreign affairs, the minister of interior, and the minister of trade were also members of the powerful RCC.

The Judiciary

Although the Constitution guarantees an independent judiciary, it contains no provisions for the organization of courts. Consequently, the legal system has been formed on the basis of laws promulgated by the RCC. In early 1988 the judicial system consisted of courts that had jurisdiction over civil, criminal, administrative, religious and other matters. The courts were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice, and all judges were appointed by the president. The secular courts continued to function partly on the basis of the French model, first introduced prior to 1918 when Iraq was under Ottoman rule and subsequently modified, and partly on Islamic law. The three dominant schools of Islamic jurisprudence were the Hanafi among the Sunni Arabs, the Shafii among the Sunni Kurds (see Glossary), and the Jafari among Shia Arabs. The Christian and Jewish minorities had their own religious courts for the adjudication of personal status issues, such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance.

For judicial administration, the country was divided into five appellate districts centered, respectively, in Baghdad, Basra, Al Hillah (Babylon), Kirkuk, and Mosul. Major civil and commercial cases were referred to the courts of first instance, which were of two kinds: 18 courts of first instance with unlimited powers, and 150 courts of first instance with limited powers. The former were established in the capitals of the eighteen governorates (provinces); the latter, all of which were single-judge courts, were located in the district and subdistrict centers, and in the governorate capitals (see fig. 1). Six peace courts, two in Baghdad and one in each of the other four judicial district centers, handled minor litigation.

Decisions of these courts could be appealed to the relevant district court of appeals.

Wherever there were civil courts, criminal cases were judged by magistrates. Six sessions courts reviewed cases appealed from the lower magistrates' courts. The personal status of both Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims and disputes arising from administration of waqfs (religious trusts or endowments) were decided in sharia (Islamic law) courts. Sharia courts were located wherever there were civil courts. In some places sharia courts consisted of specially appointed qadis (religious judges), and in other places of civil court judges. Christians, Jews, and other religious minorities had their own separate communal councils to administer personal status laws.

Civil litigation against government bodies and the "socialist sector" and between government organizations were brought before the Administrative Court, set up under a law promulgated in November 1977. Jurisdictional conflicts between this court and other courts were adjudicated by the Court of Cassation, which on appeal could also review decisions of the Administrative Court. Offenses against the internal or external security of the state—whether economic, financial, or political offenses—were tried before the Revolutionary Court. Unlike the other courts described above, the Revolutionary Court was not under the jurisdiction of the appellate court system. In addition, the RCC periodically established special security courts, under the jurisdiction of the secret security police, to handle cases of espionage, of treason, and of "antistate" activities. The proceedings of the Revolutionary Court and of the special security courts, in contrast to the practice of all other courts, were generally closed (see Criminal Justice System, ch. 5).

The court of last resort for all except security cases was the Court of Cassation. It consisted of a president; vice-presidents; no fewer than fifteen permanent members; and a number of deputized judges, reporting judges, and religious judges. It was divided into general, civil, criminal, administrative affairs, and personal status benches. In addition to its appellate function, the Court of Cassation assumed original jurisdiction over crimes committed by high government officials, including judges. The Court of Cassation also adjudicated jurisdictional conflicts between lower courts.

Local Government

In 1988 there were eighteen governorates (*alwiya,* sing., *liwa*), each administered by a governor appointed by the president. Each governorate was divided into districts (*aqdhiya,* sing., *qadha*) headed by district officers (*qaimaqamun;* sing., *qaimaqam*); each district was divided into subdistricts (*nawahy;* sing., *nahiyah*) under the

responsibility of subdistrict officers (*mudara;* sing., *mudir*). Mayors headed cities and towns. Municipalities were divided into several categories depending upon the size of local revenues. Baghdad, the national capital, had special administrative status. The mayor of Baghdad and the mayors of other cities were presidential appointees.

In 1971 President Bakr promulgated the National Action Charter, a broad statement of Baath Party political, economic, social, and foreign policy objectives. This document called for the formation of popular councils in all administrative subdivisions. These councils were to be given the right to supervise, to inspect, and to criticize the work of the government. The first councils were appointed in 1973 in accordance with a law promulgated by the RCC. As late as 1988, however, there was insufficient empirical research available to determine whether the popular councils were autonomous forums for the channeling of grievances or were merely Baath Party-dominated institutions used to encourage active popular support of, and involvement in, government-initiated activities.

Kurdish Autonomy

Three governorates in the north—Dahuk, Irbil, and As Sulaymaniyah—constitute Iraqi Kurdistan, a region that historically has had a majority population of Kurds. Ever since Iraq became independent in 1932, the Kurds have demanded some form of self-rule in the Kurdish areas. There were clashes between Kurdish antigovernment guerrillas and army units throughout most of the 1960s. When the Baath Party came to power in July 1968, the principal Kurdish leaders distrusted its intentions and soon launched a major revolt (see The Emergence of Saddam Husayn, 1968–79, ch. 1). In March 1970, the government and the Kurds reached an agreement, to be implemented within four years, for the creation of an Autonomous Region consisting of the three Kurdish governorates and other adjacent districts that have been determined by census to have a Kurdish majority. Although the RCC issued decrees in 1974 and in 1975 that provided for the administration of the Autonomous Region, these were not acceptable to all Kurdish leaders and a major war ensued. The Kurds were eventually crushed, but guerrilla activities continued in parts of Kurdistan. In early 1988, antigovernment Kurds controlled several hundred square kilometers of Irbil and As Sulaymaniyah governorates adjacent to the Iranian frontier.

In early 1988, the Autonomous Region was governed according to the stipulations of the 1970 Autonomy Agreement. It had a twelve-member Executive Council that wielded both legislative and executive powers and a Legislative Assembly that advised the

council. The chairman of the Executive Council was appointed by President Saddam Husayn and held cabinet rank; the other members of the council were chosen from among the deputies to the popularly elected Legislative Assembly.

The Legislative Assembly consisted of fifty members elected for three-year terms from among candidates approved by the central government. The Legislative Assembly chose its own officers, including its cabinet-rank chairman, a deputy chairman, and a secretary. It had authority to ratify laws proposed by the Executive Council and limited powers to enact legislation relating to the development of "culture and nationalist customs of the Kurds" as well as other matters of strictly local scope. The Legislative Assembly could question the members of the Executive Council concerning the latter's administrative, economic, educational, social, and other varied responsibilities; it could also withhold a vote of confidence from one or more of the Executive Council members. Both the assembly and the council were located in the city of Irbil, the administrative center of Irbil Governorate. Officials of these two bodies were either Kurds or "persons well-versed in the Kurdish language," and Kurdish was used for all official communications at the local level. The first Legislative Assembly elections were held in September 1980, and the second elections took place in August 1986.

Despite the Autonomous Region's governmental institutions, genuine self-rule did not exist in Kurdistan in 1988. The central government in Baghdad continued to exercise tight control by reserving to itself the power to make all decisions in matters pertaining to justice, to police, to internal security, and the administration of the frontier areas. The Baath Party, through the minister of state for regional autonomy and other ministerial representatives operating in the region, continued to supervise activities of all governing bodies in the region. The minister of justice and a special oversight body set up by the Court of Cassation reviewed all local enactments and administrative decisions, and they countermanded any local decrees that were deemed contrary to the "constitution, laws, or regulations" of the central government. The central government's superior authority has been most dramatically evident in the frontier areas, where government security units have forcibly evacuated Kurdish villagers to distant lowlands (see The Kurds, ch. 2).

Politics

The Baath Party

In early 1988, the Baath Party continued to stress parallelism

focused on "regional" (*qutri*) and "national" (*qawmi*) goals, following the Baath doctrine that the territorially and politically divided Arab countries were merely "regions" of a collective entity called "The Arab Nation." Hence the Baath movement in one country was considered merely an aspect of, or a phase leading to, "a unified democratic socialist Arab nation." That nation, when it materialized, would be under a single, unified Arab national leadership. Theoretically, therefore, success or failure at the regional level would have a corresponding effect on the movement toward that Arab nation. Moreover, the critical test of legitimacy for any Baath regime would necessarily be whether or not the regime's policies and actions were compatible with the basic aims of the revolution—aims epitomized in the principles of "unity, freedom, and socialism."

The Baath Party in Iraq, like its counterparts in other Arab regions (states), derived from the official founding congress in Damascus in 1947. This conclave of pan-Arab intellectuals was inspired by the ideas of two Syrians, Michel Aflaq and Salah ad Din al Bitar, who are generally regarded as the fathers of the Baath movement. Several Iraqis, including Abd ar Rahman ad Damin and Abd al Khaliq al Khudayri, attended this congress and became members of the party. Upon their return to Baghdad, they formed the Iraqi branch of the Baath. Damin became the first secretary general of the Iraqi Baath.

From its early years, the Iraqi Baath recruited converts from a small number of college and high school students, intellectuals, and professionals—virtually all of whom were urban Sunni Arabs. A number of Baath high school members entered the Military College, where they influenced several classmates to join the party. Important military officers who became Baath members in the early 1950s included Ahmad Hasan al Bakr, Salih Mahdi Ammash, and Abd Allah Sultan, all of whom figured prominently in Iraqi political affairs in later years.

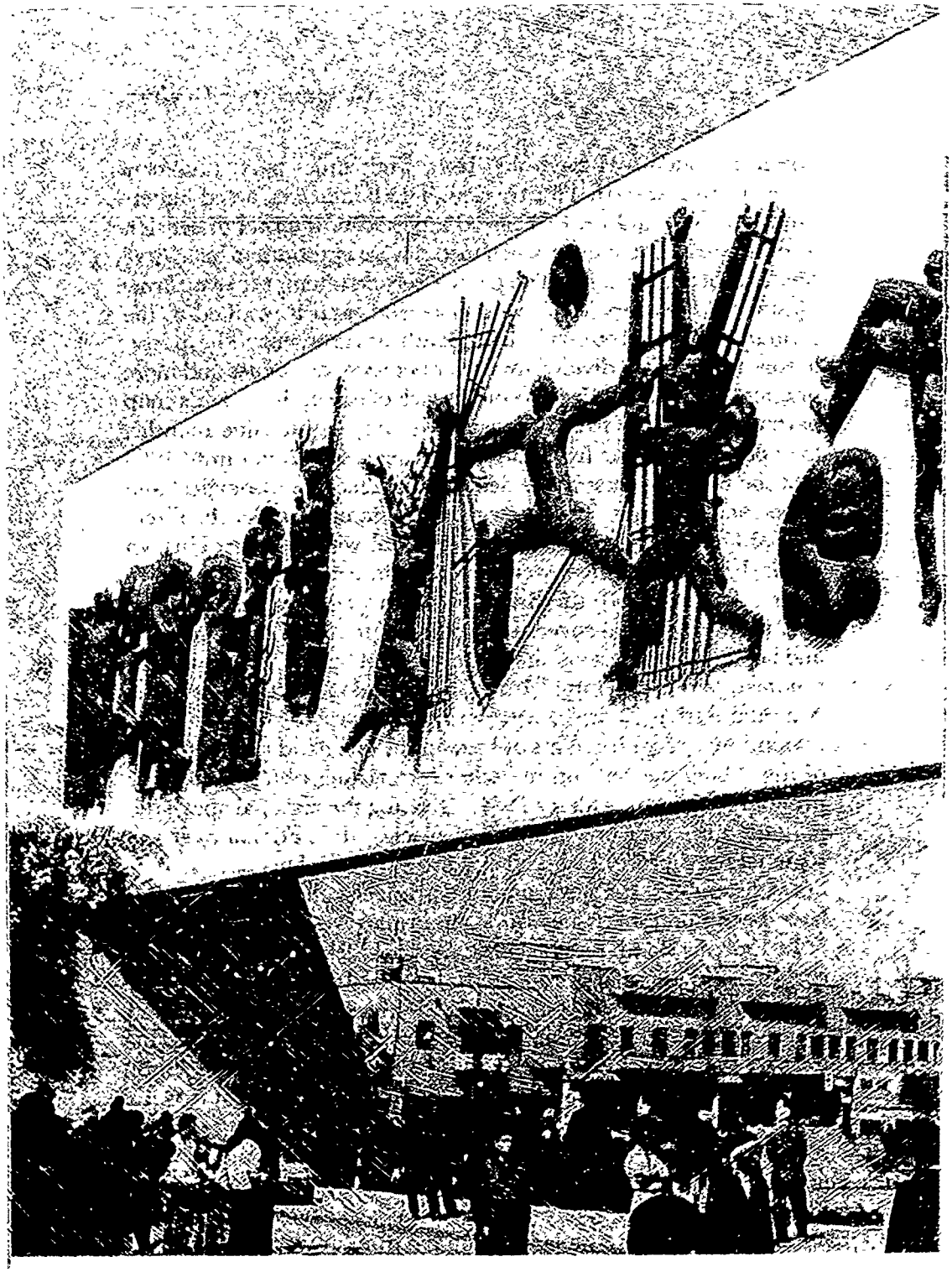
During the 1950s, the Baath was a clandestine party, and its members were subject to arrest if their identities were discovered. The Baath Party joined with other opposition parties to form the underground United National Front and participated in the activities that led to the 1958 revolution. The Baathists hoped that the new, republican government would favor pan-Arab causes, especially a union with Egypt, but instead the regime was dominated by non-Baathist military officers who did not support Arab unity or other Baath principles. Some younger members of the party, including Saddam Husayn, became convinced that Iraqi leader Abd al Karim Qasim had to be removed, and they plotted his assassination. The October 1959 attempt on Qasim's life, however, was

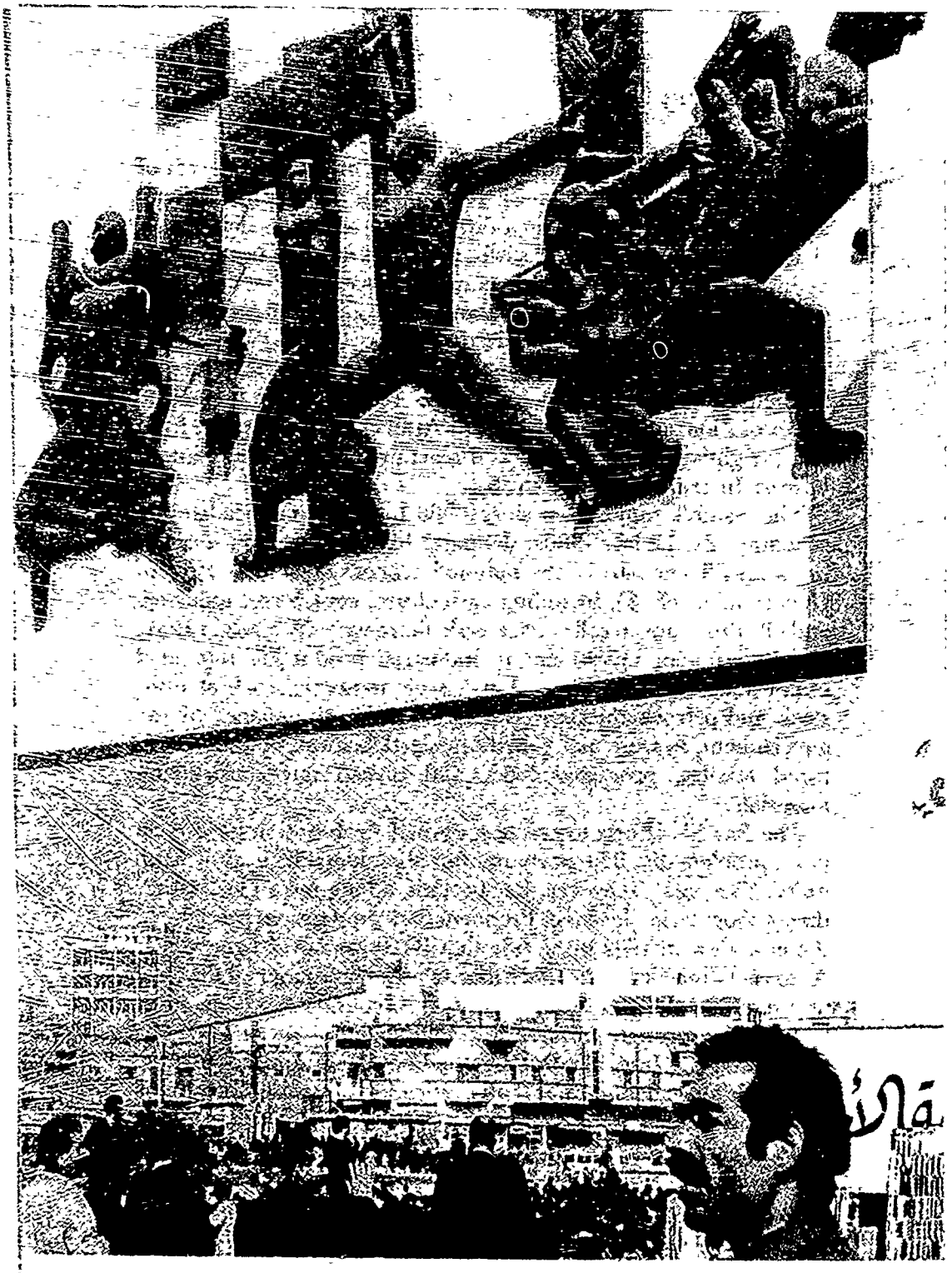
bungled; Saddam Husayn fled Iraq, while other party members were arrested and tried for treason. The Baath was forced underground again, and it experienced a period of internal dissension as members debated over which tactics were appropriate to achieve their political objectives. The party's second attempt to overthrow Qasim, in February 1963, was successful, and it resulted in the formation of the country's first Baath government. The party, however, was more divided than ever between ideologues and more pragmatic members. Because of this lack of unity, the Baath's coup partners were able to outmaneuver it and, within nine months, to expel all Baathists from the government. It was not until 1965 that the Baath overcame the debilitating effects of ideological and of personal rivalries. The party then reorganized under the direction of General Bakr as secretary general with Saddam Husayn as his deputy. Both men were determined to return the Baath to power. In July 1968, the Baath finally staged a successful coup.

After the Baath takeover, Bakr became president of the regime, and he initiated programs aimed at the establishment of a "socialist, unionist, and democratic" Iraq. This was done, according to the National Action Charter, with scrupulous care for balancing the revolutionary requirements of Iraq on the one hand and the needs of the "Arab nation" on the other. According to a Baath Party pronouncement in January 1974, "Putting the regional above the national may lead to statism, and placing the national over the regional may lead to rash and childish action." This protestation notwithstanding, the government's primary concerns since 1968 have been domestic issues rather than pan-Arab ones.

In 1968 the Baath regime confronted a wide range of problems, such as ethnic and sectarian tensions, the stagnant condition of agriculture, commerce, and industry, the inefficiency and the corruption of government, and the lack of political consensus among the three main sociopolitical groups—the Shia Arabs, the Sunni Arabs, and the Kurds. The difficulties of consensus building were compounded by the pervasive apathy and mistrust at the grassroots levels of all sects, by the shortage of qualified party cadres to serve as the standard-bearers of the Baath regime, and by the Kurdish armed insurgency. Rivalry with Syria and with Egypt for influence within the Arab world and the frontier dispute with Iran also complicated the regime's efforts to build the nation.

Since 1968 the Baath has attempted to create a strong and unified Iraq, through formal government channels and through political campaigns designed to eradicate what it called "harmful prerevolutionary values and practices," such as exploitation, social inequities, sectarian loyalties, apathy, and lack of civil spirit. Official





Tahrir Square, Baghdad, showing the Monument of Liberty
Courtesy United Nations

statements called for abandonment of traditional ways in favor of a new life-style fashioned on the principles of patriotism, national loyalty, collectivism, participation, selflessness, love of labor, and civic responsibility. These "socialist principles and practices" would be instilled by the party's own example, through the state educational system, and through youth and other popular organizations. The Baath particularly emphasized "military training" for youth; such training was considered essential for creating "new men in the new society" and for defending the republic from the hostile forces of Zionism, imperialism, anti-Arab chauvinism (e.g., from Iran), rightists, opportunists, and reactionaries (see Paramilitary Forces; Internal Security, ch. 5).

The Baath's major goal since 1968 has been to socialize the economy. By the late 1980s, the party had succeeded in socializing a significant part of the national economy (see The Role of Government, ch. 3), including agriculture, commerce, industry, and oil. Programs to collectivize agriculture were reversed in 1981, but government investment in industrial production remained important in the late 1980s. Large-scale industries such as iron, steel, and petrochemicals were fully owned and managed by the government, as were many medium-sized factories that manufactured textiles, processed food, and turned out construction materials.

The Baath's efforts to create a unified Arab nation have been more problematic. The party has not abandoned its goal of Arab unity. This goal, however, has become a long-term ideal rather than a short-term objective. President Saddam Husayn proclaimed the new view in 1982 by stating that Baathists now "believe that Arab unity must not take place through the elimination of the local and national characteristics of any Arab country. . . . but must be achieved through common fraternal opinion." In practice this meant that the Iraqi Baath Party had accepted unity of purpose among Arab leaders, rather than unification of Arab countries, as more important for the present.

As of early 1988, the Baath Party claimed about 10 percent of the population, a total of 1.5 million supporters and sympathizers; of this total, full party members, or cadres, were estimated at only 30,000, or 0.2 percent. The cadres were the nucleus of party organization, and they functioned as leaders, motivators, teachers, administrators, and watchdogs. Generally, party recruitment procedures emphasized selectivity rather than quantity, and those who desired to join the party had to pass successfully through several apprentice-like stages before being accepted into full membership. The Baath's elitist approach derived from the principle that the

party's effectiveness could only be measured by its demonstrable ability to mobilize and to lead the people, and not by "size, number, or form." Participation in the party was virtually a requisite for social mobility.

The basic organizational unit of the Baath was the party cell or circle (*halaqah*). Composed of between three and seven members, cells functioned at the neighborhood or the village level, where members met to discuss and to carry out party directives. A minimum of two and a maximum of seven cells formed a party division (*firqah*). Divisions operated in urban quarters, larger villages, offices, factories, schools, and other organizations. Division units were spread throughout the bureaucracy and the military, where they functioned as the ears and eyes of the party. Two to five divisions formed a section (*shabah*). A section operated at the level of a large city quarter, a town, or a rural district. Above the section was the branch (*fira*), which was composed of at least two sections and which operated at the provincial level. There were twenty-one Baath Party branches in Iraq, one in each of the eighteen provinces and three in Baghdad. The union of all the branches formed the party' . congress, which elected the Regional Command.

The Regional Command was both the core of party leadership and the top decision-making body. It had nine members, who were elected for five-year terms at regional congresses of the party. Its secretary general (also called the regional secretary) was the party's leader, and its deputy secretary general was second in rank and power within the party hierarchy. The members of the command theoretically were responsible to the Regional Congress that, as a rule, was to convene annually to debate and to approve the party's policies and programs; actually, the members were chosen by Saddam Husayn and other senior party leaders to be "elected" by the Regional Congress, a formality seen as essential to the legitimation of party leadership.

Above the Regional Command was the National Command of the Baath Party, the highest policy-making and coordinating council for the Baath movement throughout the Arab world. The National Command consisted of representatives from all regional commands and was responsible to the National Congress, which convened periodically. It was vested with broad powers to guide, to coordinate, and to supervise the general direction of the movement, especially with respect to relationships among the regional Baath parties and with the outside world. These powers were to be exercised through a national secretariat that would direct policy-formulating bureaus.

In reality, the National Command did not oversee the Baath movement as a whole in 1988 because there continued to be no

single command. In 1966 a major schism within the Baath movement had resulted in the creation of two rival National Commands, one based in Damascus and the other in Baghdad. Both commands claim to be the legitimate authority for the Baath, but since 1966 they have been mutually antagonistic. Michel Aflaq, one of the original cofounders of the Baath Party, was the secretary general of the Baghdad-based National Command, and Saddam Husayn was the vice-chairman. In practice, the Syrian Regional Command, under Hafiz al Assad, controlled the Damascus-based National Command of the Baath Party, while the Iraqi Regional Command controlled the Baghdad-based National Command.

Theoretically, the Iraqi Regional Command made decisions about Baath Party policy based on consensus. In practice, all decisions were made by the party's secretary general, Saddam Husayn, who since 1979 had also been chairman of the RCC and president of the republic. He worked closely with a small group of supporters, especially members of the Talfah family from the town of Tikrit (see The Emergence of Saddam Husayn, 1968–79, ch. 1); he also dealt ruthlessly with suspected opposition to his rule from within the party. In 1979 several high-ranking Baathists were tried and were executed for allegedly planning a coup; other prominent party members were forcibly retired in 1982. Saddam Husayn's detractors accused him of monopolizing power and of promoting a cult of personality.

The Politics of Alliance: The Progressive National Front

In 1988 Iraq was no nearer to the goal of democracy than it had been when the Baath came to power in 1968. The establishment of "popular democracy" as a national objective remained essentially unfulfilled. Political activities were restricted to those defined by the Baath regime. The party, however, recognized that not all citizens would become party members, and it sought to provide a controlled forum for non-Baathist political participation. It created the Progressive National Front (PNF) in 1974 to ally the Baath with other political parties that were considered to be progressive. As a basis for this cooperation President Bakr had proclaimed the National Action Charter in 1971. In presenting the charter for public discussion, the Baath had invited "all national and progressive forces and elements" to work for the objective of a "democratic, revolutionary, and unitary" Iraq by participating in the "broadest coalition among all the national, patriotic, and progressive forces."

The Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) was one of the important political groups that the Baathists wanted involved in the PNF. Discussions between the Baath and the ICP took place periodically

over three years before the latter was induced to join the NF in 1974. For Baath leaders, the PNF was a means of containing potential opposition to their policies on the part of the ICP. Although the ICP was too small to pose a serious armed challenge to the Baath, it was regarded as a major ideological rival. The ICP's roots were as deep as those of the Baath, because the former party had been formed by Iraqi Marxists in the 1930s. Like the Baath, the ICP was an elitist party that advocated socialist programs to benefit the masses and that appealed primarily to intellectuals. Despite these similarities, there had been a long history of antagonism between the two parties. Baathists tended to suspect the communists of ultimate loyalty to a foreign power, the Soviet Union, rather than to the Arab nation, even though the Baathists themselves regarded the Soviet Union as a friendly and progressive state after 1968.

In return for participation in the PNF, the ICP was permitted to nominate its own members for some minor cabinet posts and to carry on political and propaganda activities openly. The ICP had to agree, however, not to recruit among the armed forces and to accept Baath domination of the RCC. The ICP also recognized the Baath Party's "privileged" or leading role in the PNF: of the sixteen-member High Council that was formed to direct the PNF, eight positions were reserved for the Baath, five for other progressive parties, and only three for the communists. The ICP also agreed not to undertake any activities that would contravene the letter or spirit of the National Action Charter.

The ICP may have hoped that the PNF would gradually evolve into a genuine power-sharing arrangement. If so, these expectations were not realized. The Baath members of the High Council dominated the PNF, while the party retained a firm grip over government decision making. By 1975, friction had developed between the ICP and the Baath. During the next two years, at least twenty individual ICP members were arrested, tried, and sentenced to prison for allegedly attempting to organize communist cells within the army in contravention of the specific ban on such activities. The April 1978 Marxist coup d'état in Afghanistan seemed to serve as a catalyst for a wholesale assault on the ICP. Convicted communists were retried, and twenty-one of them were executed; there were virulent attacks on the ICP in the Baathist press; and scores of party members and sympathizers were arrested. The ICP complained, to no apparent avail, that communists were being purged from government jobs, arrested, and tortured in prisons. By April 1979, those principal ICP leaders who had not been arrested had either fled the country or had gone underground. In 1980 the ICP formally withdrew from the PNF and announced the formation

of a new political front to oppose the Baath government. Since then, however, ICP activities against the Baathists have been largely limited to a propaganda campaign.

The various Kurdish political parties were the other main focus of Baath attention for PNF membership. Three seats on the PNF were reserved for the Kurds, and initially the Baath intended that these be filled by nominees from the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), the oldest and largest Kurdish party. By the time the PNF was established in 1974, however, the KDP was already involved in hostilities against the government. The KDP, which originally had been formed in 1946 in Iran where Mullah Mustafa Barzani and other party cofounders had fled following the collapse of a 1945 revolt, was suspicious of the Baath's ultimate intentions with respect to self-rule for the Kurdish region. Even though Barzani himself had negotiated the March 1970 Autonomy Agreement with Saddam Husayn, he rejected Baghdad's March 1974 terms for implementing autonomy. Subsequently, full-scale warfare erupted between central government forces and KDP-organized fighters, the latter receiving military supplies covertly from Iran and from the United States. The Kurdish rebellion collapsed in March 1975, after Iran reached a rapprochement with the Baath regime and withdrew all support from the Kurds. The KDP leaders and several thousand fighters sought and obtained refuge in Iran. Barzani eventually resettled in the United States, where he died in 1979. Following Barzani's death, his son Masud became leader of the KDP; from his base in Iran he directed a campaign of guerrilla activities against Iraqi civilian and military personnel in the Kurdish region. After Iraq became involved in war with Iran, Masud Barzani generally cooperated with the Iranians in military offensives in Iraqi Kurdistan (see Internal Developments and Security, ch. 5).

Barzani's decision to fight Baghdad was not supported by all Kurdish leaders, and it led to a split within the KDP. Some of these Kurds, including Barzani's eldest son, Ubaydallah, believed that the Autonomy Agreement did provide a framework for achieving practical results, and he preferred to cooperate with the Baath. Other leaders were disturbed by Barzani's acceptance of aid from Iran, Israel, and the United States, and they refused to be associated with this policy. Consequently, during 1974, rival KDP factions, and even new parties such as the Kurdish Revolutionary Party and the Kurdish Progressive Group, emerged. Although none of these parties seemed to have as extensive a base of popular support as did the KDP, their participation in the PNF permitted the Baath to claim that its policies in the Autonomous Region had the backing of progressive Kurdish forces.

The unanticipated and swift termination of KDP-central government hostilities in March 1975 resulted in more factional splits from the party. One breakaway group, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) under the leadership of Jalal Talabani, was committed to continuing the armed struggle for Kurdish autonomy. Until 1985, however, most of the PUK's skirmishes were with fellow Kurdish fighters of the KDP, and Talabani himself held intermittent negotiations with Baathist representatives about joining the PNF. Other KDP splinter groups agreed to cooperate with the central government. In order to accommodate them, and in recognition of the fact that no single political party represented the Kurds, two additional seats, bringing the total to eighteen, were created in the PNF. Thus, the number of Kurdish representatives increased from three to five. The composition of the PNF changed again in 1980, following the withdrawal of the three ICP members; the number of Kurds remained constant.

In 1975 the Baath invited two independent progressive groups to nominate one representative each for the unreserved seats on the PNF. These seats went to the leaders of the Independent Democrats and the Progressive Nationalists. Neither of these groups was a formally organized political party, but rather each was an informal association of non-Baathist politicians who had been active before 1968. These groups had demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Baath Party that their members had renounced the former "reactionary" ideas of the various prerevolutionary parties to which they had belonged.

In 1988 the Baath Party continued to hold the position that the PNF was indispensable as long as the Arab revolutionary movement faced dangers in Iraq and in other parts of the Arab homeland. The Baath insisted that its policy of combining its "leading role" within the front and a cooperative relationship based on "mutual respect and confidence" among itself and the front's members was correct and that, in fact, this was a major accomplishment of its rule. Nevertheless, the PNF was not an independent political institution. Although it served as a forum in which policy could be discussed, the Baath actually controlled the PNF by monopolizing executive positions, by holding half of the total seats, and by requiring that all PNF decisions must be by unanimous vote.

Political Opposition

Although the Baath in 1988 permitted the existence of several non-Baathist political parties, it did not tolerate political opposition to its policies. An effective security police apparatus had forced underground those groups opposed to the Baath (see Internal

Security, ch. 5). Other opposition groups operated in exile in Europe, Iran, and Syria. These included the ICP, the KDP, the PUK, a Baath splinter that supported the Damascus-based National Command, and several Islamic parties. Although various opposition parties periodically succeeded in carrying out acts of violence against regime targets, especially in Kurdistan, for the most part their activities within Iraq did not seriously challenge the Baath regime.

The opposition to the Baath historically has been fragmented, and efforts to form alliances—such as the ICP's November 1980 initiative to create a Democratic and Patriotic Front of Kurdish and Arab secular parties—foundered over ideological divisions. Personality clashes and feuds also prevented the various Kurdish and Arab secular parties from cooperating. In addition, many of the opposition parties seemed to have a weak internal base of popular support because of the prevailing perception that they had collaborated with enemies of Iraq at a time when the country was engaged in war with Iran.

The religious opposition to the Baath was primarily concentrated among the devout Shia population. The most important opposition party was Ad Dawah al Islamiyah (the Islamic Call), popularly known as Ad Dawah, which originally had been established by Shia clergy in the early 1960s. After the Baath came to power in 1968, Ad Dawah opposed the regime's secular policies, and consequently many prominent clergy associated with the party, as well as some who had no connections to Ad Dawah, were persecuted. In 1979, apparently to contain any radicalization of the Iraqi Shia clergy like that which had occurred in Iran, the regime arrested and subsequently executed Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Baqir as Sadr, the country's most respected Shia leader. Sadr's precise relationship to Ad Dawah was not established, but his death precipitated widespread, violent demonstrations and acts of sabotage. Ad Dawah was banned in 1980, and membership in the organization was made a capital offense. After the war with Iran had begun, Ad Dawah and other Shia political groups reorganized in exile in Europe and in Iran.

In late 1982, the Iranian authorities encouraged the Iraqi Shia parties to unite under one umbrella group known as the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI). Headquartered in Tehran, SAIRI was under the chairmanship of Muhammad Baqir al Hakim, a prominent clergyman whose father had been the leading ayatollah of Iraq in the 1960s. SAIRI's aim was to promote the cause of Islamic revolution in Iraq by overthrowing the Baathist regime. To further that objective, in 1983 SAIRI

established a government-in-exile. SAIRI's activities brought harsh reprisals against members of the extended Hakim family still living in Iraq but were generally ineffective in undermining the political controls of the Baath. Another opposition element included in SAIRI was the Organization of Islamic Action, headed by Iraqi-born Muhammad Taqi al Mudarrissi.

Mass Media

In early 1988, all radio and television broadcasting in Iraq was controlled by the government. Radio Iraq had both domestic and foreign services. The domestic service broadcast in Arabic, Kurdish, Syriac, and Turkoman; the foreign service, in English, French, German, Russian, Swahili, Turkish, and Urdu. Two radio stations based in Baghdad broadcast all day, and they could be picked up by the overwhelming majority of the estimated 2.5 million radio receivers in the country. There were also separate radio stations with programs in Kurdish and Persian.

Baghdad Television was the main government television station. It broadcast over two channels throughout the day. Government-owned commercial television stations also broadcast from Basra, Kirkuk, Mosul, and nineteen other locations for an average of six hours a day. A Kurdish-language television station aired programs for eight hours each day. There were an estimated 750,000 privately owned television sets in the country in 1986, the latest year for which such statistics were available.

In 1988 there were six national daily newspapers, all of which were published in Baghdad. One of these papers, the *Baghdad Observer,* was published in English; it had an estimated circulation of 220,000. Another daily, *Al Iraq,* with a circulation of abat 30,000, was published in Kurdish. The largest of the four Arabic-language dailies was *Al Jumhuriya,* which had a circulation of approximately 220,000. *Ath Thawra,* with a circulation of about 22,000, was the official organ of the Baath Party. There were also seven weekly papers, all published in Baghdad. The government's Iraqi News Agency (INA) distributed news to the foreign press based in, or passing through, Iraq.

Although Article 26 of the Provisional Constitution guarantees freedom of opinion and publication "within the limits of the law," newspapers, books, and other publications were subject to censorship. The Ministry of Guidance monitored published material to ensure that all writing was "in line with the nationalist and progressive line of the revolution." The Ministry of Culture and Information's National House for Publishing and Distributing

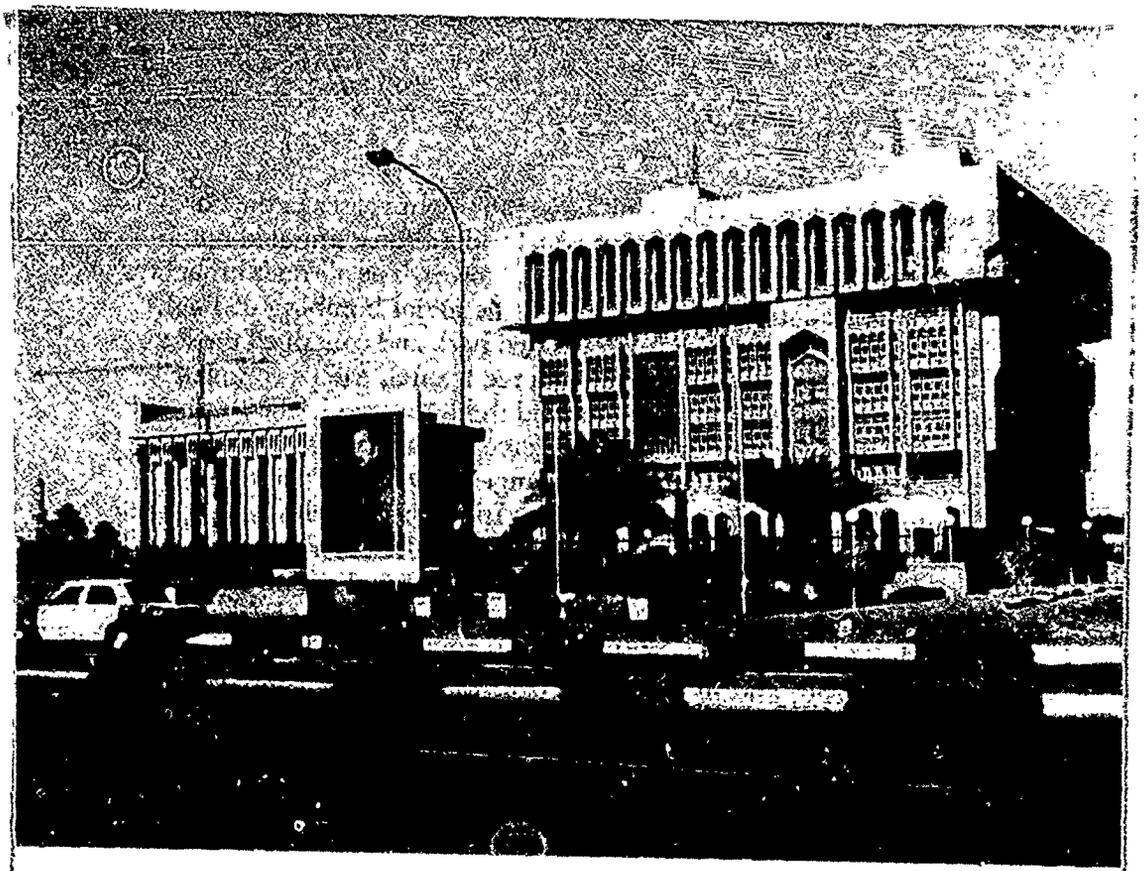
Advertising had the sole authority to import and to distribute all foreign newspapers, magazines, and periodicals.

Foreign Policy

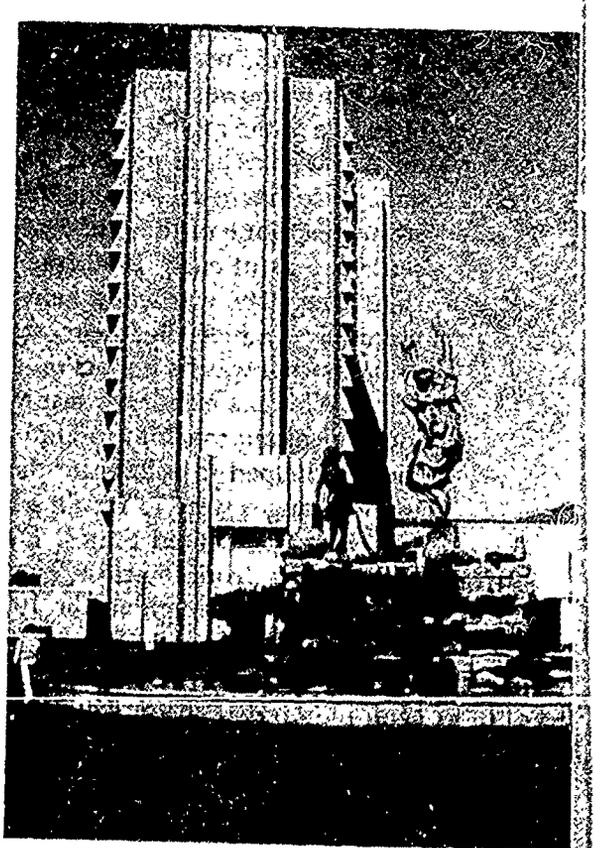
Iraq's relations with other countries and with international organizations are supervised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1988 the minister of foreign affairs was Tariq Aziz, who had served in that post since 1983. Aziz was a member of the RCC and an influential leader of the Baath Party. Before becoming minister of foreign affairs, he had been director of the party's foreign affairs bureau. Aziz, Saddam Husayn, and the other members of the RCC formulated foreign policy, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs bureaucracy implemented RCC directives. The Baath maintained control over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and over all Iraqi diplomatic missions outside the country through its party cells that operated throughout the ministry and in all embassies abroad.

In 1988 Iraq's main foreign policy issue was the war with Iran. This war had begun in September 1980, when Saddam Husayn sent Iraqi forces across the Shatt al Arab into southwestern Iran (see Iran-Iraq Conflict, ch. 1). Although the reasons for Saddam Husayn's decision to invade Iran were complicated, the leaders of the Baath Party had long resented Iranian hegemony in the Persian Gulf region and had especially resented the perceived Iranian interference in Iraq's internal affairs both before and after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. They may have thought that the revolutionary turmoil in Tehran would enable Iraq to achieve a quick victory. Their objectives were to halt any potential foreign assistance to the Shias and to the Kurdish opponents of the regime and to end Iranian domination of the area. The Baathists believed a weakened Iran would be incapable of posing a security threat and could not undermine Iraq's efforts to exercise the regional influence that had been blocked by non-Arab Iran since the mid-1960s. Although the Iraqis failed to obtain the expected easy victory, the war initially went well for them. By early 1982, however, the Iraqi occupation forces were on the defensive and were being forced to retreat from some of their forward lines. In June 1982, Saddam Husayn ordered most of the Iraqi units to withdraw from Iranian territory; after that time, the Baathist government tried to obtain a cease-fire based on a return of all armed personnel to the international borders that prevailed as of September 21, 1979.

Iran did not accept Iraq's offer to negotiate an end to the war. Similarly, it rejected a July 1982 United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire. Subsequently, Iranian forces invaded Iraq by crossing the Shatt al Arab



Khalafa Street, Baghdad
Courtesy Ronald L. Kuipers



Rashid Hotel, Baghdad
Courtesy Ronald L. Kuipers

in the south and by capturing some mountain passes in the north. To discourage Iran's offensive, the Iraqi air force initiated bombing raids over several Iranian cities and towns. The air raids brought Iranian retaliation, which included the aerial bombing of Baghdad. Although Iraq eventually pushed back and contained the Iranian advances, it was not able to force Iranian troops completely out of Iraqi territory. The perceived threat to Iraq in the summer of 1982 thus was serious enough to force Saddam Husayn to request the Non-Aligned Movement to change the venue of its scheduled September meeting from Baghdad to India; nevertheless, since the fall of 1982, the ground conflict had generally been a stalemated war of attrition—although Iran made small but demoralizing territorial advances as a result of its massive offensives in the reed marshes north of Basra in 1984 and in 1985, in Al Faw Peninsula in early 1986, and in the outskirts of Basra during January and February 1987. In addition, as of early 1988 the government had lost control of several mountainous districts in Kurdistan where, since 1983, dissident Kurds have cooperated militarily with Iran.

Saddam Husayn's government has maintained consistently since the summer of 1982 that Iraq wants a negotiated end to the war based upon the status quo ante. Iran's stated conditions for ceasing hostilities, namely the removal of Saddam Husayn and the Baath from power, however, have been unacceptable. The main objective of the regime became the extrication of the country from the war with as little additional damage as possible. To further this goal, Iraq has used various diplomatic, economic, and military strategies; none of these had been successful in bringing about a cease-fire as of early 1988 (see Introduction).

Although the war was a heavy burden on Iraq politically, economically, and socially, the most profound consequence of the war's prolongation was its impact on the patterns of Iraq's foreign relations. Whereas trends toward a moderation of the Baath Party's ideological approach to foreign affairs were evident before 1980, the war helped to accelerate these trends. Two of the most dramatic changes were in Iraq's relationships with the Soviet Union and with the United States. During the course of the war Iraq moved away from the close friendship with the Soviet Union that had persisted throughout the 1970s, and it initiated a rapprochement with the United States. Iraq also sought to ally itself with Kuwait and with Saudi Arabia, two neighboring countries with which there had been considerable friction during much of the 1970s. The alignment with these countries was accompanied by a more moderate Iraqi approach to other Arab countries, such as Egypt and Jordan, which previously Iraq had perceived as hostile.

The Soviet Union

When the Baath Party came to power in 1968, relations between Iraq and the West were strained. The Baathists believed that most Western countries, and particularly the United States, opposed the goal of Arab unity. The Baathists viewed the 1948 partition of Palestine and the creation of Israel as evidence of an imperialist plot to keep the Arabs divided. Refusal to recognize Israel and support for the reestablishment of Palestine consequently became central tenets of Baath ideology. The party based Iraq's relations with other countries on those countries' attitudes toward the Palestinian issue. The Soviet Union, which had supported the Arabs during the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War and again during the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War, was regarded as having an acceptable position on the Palestine issue. Thus, the Baath cultivated relations with Moscow to counter the perceived hostility of the United States.

In 1972 the Baathist regime signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union. Article 1 stated that the treaty's objective was to develop broad cooperation between Iraq and the Soviet Union in economic, trade, scientific, technical, and other fields on the basis of "respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in one another's internal affairs." Under the treaty, Iraq obtained extensive technical assistance and military equipment from the Soviet Union.

Despite the importance that both the Bakr and the Saddam Husayn governments attached to the relationship with the Soviet Union, they were reluctant to have Iraq become too closely entangled with the Soviet Union or with its sphere of influence. Ideologically, the Baath Party espoused nonalignment vis-à-vis the superpower rivalry, and the party perceived Iraq as being part of the Non-Aligned Movement. Indeed, as early as 1974, the more pragmatic elements in the party advocated broadening relations with the West to counterbalance those with the East and to ensure that Iraq maintained a genuine nonaligned status. The dramatic increase in oil revenues following the December 1973 quadrupling of prices by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) provided the government with the financial resources to expand economic relations with numerous private and public enterprises in Western Europe, Japan, and the United States. Iraq also was able to diversify its source of weapons by purchasing arms from France.

The major impetus for Iraq's retreat from its close relationship with the Soviet Union was not economic, despite Iraq's increasing commercial ties with the West, but political. Iraqis were shocked

by the December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and Saddam Husayn's government took a lead among the Arab states in condemning the invasion. Additional strain was placed on Iraqi-Soviet relations in the fall of 1980, when the Soviet Union cut off arms shipments to Iraq (and to Iran) as part of its efforts to induce a cease-fire. This action angered Saddam Husayn and his colleagues, because Iraq had already paid more than US$1 billion dollars for the interdicted weapons. Although Moscow resumed arms supplies to Iraq in the summer of 1982, following the Iranian advance into Iraqi territory, Iraqi leaders remained bitter over the initial halt.

Despite Iraq's apparent ambivalence about its relationship with the Soviet Union, in early 1988 relations remained correct. The Soviets were still the main source of weapons for the Iraqi military, a fact that restrained public criticism. Nevertheless, the Saddam Husayn government generally suspected that the Soviet Union was more interested in gaining influence in Iran than in preserving its friendship with Iraq. Consequently, Iraqi leaders were skeptical of Soviet declarations that Moscow was trying to persuade Iran to agree to a cease-fire. They expressed disappointment in late 1987 that the Soviet Union had not exerted sufficient pressure upon Iran to force it to cooperate with the UN Security Council cease-fire resolution of July 1987.

The West

Iraq's disappointment in its relations with the Soviet Union gradually led to a tilt toward the West. This process began as early as 1974 when prominent Baathists such as Bakr, Saddam Husayn, and Aziz expressed the need for a more pragmatic, less ideological approach to relations with "the Western capitalist world." For example, the government stated in January 1974 that the West was not composed "totally of enemies and imperialists," that some countries were relatively moderate, and that there were contradictions among the principal Western nations. These views became the basis on which the regime established generally cordial relations with Britain, Italy, France, the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), and Japan.

Iraq's closest ties were with France, which came to rank second to the Soviet Union as a source of foreign weapons. Iraq imported billions of dollars worth of French capital and consumer goods during the 1970s and signed several agreements with French companies for technical assistance on development projects. A major project was the Osiraq (Osiris-Iraq) nuclear reactor, which French engineers were helping to construct at Tuwaitha near Baghdad

before it was bombed by Israel in June 1981. Because Iraq was a signatory to the nuclear weapons Nonproliferation Treaty and had previously agreed to permit on-site inspections of its nuclear energy facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency and because France expected to reap considerable economic benefits from Iraqi goodwill, France agreed to assist in the reconstruction of the nuclear power station; however, as of early 1988 no major reconstruction work had been undertaken.

Economic links with France became especially important after the war with Iran had begun. Arms purchases from France, for example, continued in the 1980 to 1982 period when the Soviet Union was withholding weapons supplies. France also provided Iraq generous credits, estimated at US$7 billion, during 1980 to 1983 when oil revenues were severely reduced on account of the war-related decline in exports. To demonstrate its support further, in 1983 France provided Iraq with advanced weapons, including Exocet missiles and Super Etendard jets, which Iraq subsequently used for attacks on Iranian oil loading facilities and on tankers carrying Iranian oil.

Iraq's ties with the United States developed more slowly, primarily because the Baathists were antagonistic to the close United States-Israeli relationship. Relations had been severed following the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War, before the Baath came to power, but after 1968 the government became interested in acquiring American technology for its development programs. State organizations were therefore permitted to negotiate economic contracts, primarily with private American firms. In discussing the United States during the 1970s, the government emphasized, however, that its ties were economic, not political, and that these economic relations involving the United States were with "companies," not between the two countries.

Even though Iraqi interest in American technical expertise was strong, prior to 1980 the government did not seem to be seriously interested in reestablishing diplomatic relations with the United States. The Baath Party viewed the efforts by the United States to achieve "step-by-step" interim agreements between Israel and the Arab countries and the diplomatic process that led to the Camp David Accords as calculated attempts to perpetuate Arab disunity. Consequently, Iraq took a leading role in organizing Arab opposition to the diplomatic initiatives of the United States. After Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, Iraq succeeded in getting members of the League of Arab States (Arab League) to vote unanimously for Egypt's expulsion from the organization.

Concern about the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan prompted Iraq to reexamine seriously the nature of its relationship with the United States. This process led to a gradual warming of relations between the two countries. In 1981 Iraq and the United States engaged in low-level, official talks on matters of mutual interest such as trade and regional security. The following year the United States extended credits to Iraq for the purchase of American agricultural commodities, the first time this had been done since 1967. More significant, in 1983 the Baathist government hosted a United States special Middle East envoy, the highest-ranking American official to visit Baghdad in more than sixteen years. In 1984, when the United States inaugurated "Operation Staunch" to halt shipment of arms to Iran by third countries, no similar embargo was attempted against Iraq because Saddam Husayn's government had expressed its desire to negotiate an end to the war. All of these initiatives prepared the ground for Iraq and the United States to reestablish diplomatic relations in November 1984.

In early 1988, Iraq's relations with the United States were generally cordial. The relationship had been strained at the end of 1986 when it was revealed that the United States had secretly sold arms to Iran during 1985 and 1986, and a crisis occurred in May 1987 when an Iraqi pilot bombed an American naval ship in the Persian Gulf, a ship he mistakenly thought to be involved in Iran-related commerce. Nevertheless, the two countries had weathered these problems by mid-1987. Although lingering suspicions about the United States remained, Iraq welcomed greater, even if indirect, American diplomatic and military pressure in trying to end the war with Iran. For the most part, the government of Saddam Husayn believed the United States supported its position that the war was being prolonged only because of Iranian intransigence.

The Persian Gulf Countries

Iraq's closest relations in 1988 were with the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, especially Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. This was a reversal of the pattern of relations that had persisted in the 1970s. The original Baathist view of the Arabian Peninsula shaykhdoms was that they were regimes that had been set up by the imperialist powers to serve their own interests. This attitude was reinforced in the period between 1968 and 1971, when Britain was preparing the countries of Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for complete independence. Iraq wished to have an influence on the governments that would come to power, and it provided clandestine assistance to various groups opposed to the

pro-British rulers. Iraqi support of dissident movements was particularly evident in Oman, where an organized guerrilla force was fighting the government from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s.

The Baathist perception of Iran's role in the Persian Gulf was an important factor in Iraqi views of the Arabian Peninsula states. In 1969 Iran, which was then providing aid to dissident Iraqi Kurds, unilaterally abrogated a 1937 treaty that had established the Shatt al Arab boundary along the low water on the Iranian shore; in 1971 Iran forcibly occupied three small islands in the lower gulf near the approaches to the Strait of Hormuz; and by 1972 Iran was again giving assistance to antigovernment Kurds. As Iraq became increasingly concerned about Iranian policies, it tried to enlist the cooperation of the Arab monarchies in an effort to keep the Persian Gulf independent of Iranian influence. Iraq believed it was possible to collaborate with the Arab kings and shaykhs because the latter had proven their Arab nationalism by participating in the 1973 oil boycott against the Western countries supporting Israel. Despite Iraq's new friendliness, the rulers in countries like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia did not easily forget their suspicions of Iraqi radicalism. Nevertheless, political discussions were initiated, and progress was made toward resolving disputes over borders, over oil pricing policy, and over support for subversion.

By the time the Islamic Revolution occurred in Iran in 1979, Iraq had succeeded in establishing generally correct relations with the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. The war with Iran served as a catalyst to develop these relations even further. Although the Gulf states proclaimed their neutrality in the war, in practice they gave Iraq crucial financial support. The unexpected prolongation of the war and the closing of Iraqi ports early in the war had produced a severe economic crunch by the beginning of 1981. In response, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE all provided loans to help replace revenues that Iraq had lost because of the decline of its oil exports. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were particularly generous, providing an estimated US$50 billion in interest-free loans up through 1987. In addition, a major portion of Iraq's nonmilitary imports were shipped to Kuwaiti harbors, then transported overland to Iraq. Saudi Arabia also agreed to provide to Iraqi contract customers part of its own oil from the Neutral Zone, jurisdiction over which it shared with Iraq; it was understood that Iraq would repay this oil "loan" after the war had ended.

Iraq and Other Arab Countries

The war with Iran changed the Baathist perception of what constituted the principal threat to Arab unity. Prior to 1980, the Baath

leaders had identified Zionism as the main danger to Arab nationalism. After the war had begun, Iranian nationalism was perceived as the primary force threatening the Arabs. Under the pressures of war, Iraq became reconciled with Egypt and moderated its once-uncompromising stance on Israel. This reconciliation was ironic, because Iraq had taken the lead in 1978 and in 1979 in ostracizing Egypt for recognizing Israel and for signing a separate peace treaty with the latter state. The war with Iran helped to transform Egypt from an excoriated traitor into a much-appreciated ally. Factories in Egypt produced munitions and spare parts for the Iraqi army, and Egyptian workers filled some of the labor shortages created by the mobilization of so many Iraqi men. As early as 1984, Iraq publicly called for Egypt's readmission into pan-Arab councils, and in 1987 Iraq was one of the countries leading the effort to have Egypt readmitted to the Arab League.

The Baath also abandoned its former hostility to countries such as Jordan, Morocco, and the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen). On a smaller scale than Egypt, Jordan provided Iraq with tanks and with laborers, and it served as a transshipment point for goods intended for Iraq.

The most ideologically significant consequence of the war was the evolution of Baathist views on the issue of Palestine. Prior to 1980, Iraq had opposed any negotiations that might lead to the creation of a Palestinian state on the Israeli-occupied West Bank and in the Gaza Strip on the ground that these territories constituted only part of historic Palestine. Accordingly, Iraq supported the most extreme Palestinian guerrilla groups, the so-called "rejectionist" factions, and was hostile toward the mainstream Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Thus, Iraq provided financial and military aid to such forces as George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Palestine Liberation Front, and the Arab Liberation Front. The latter group had actually been founded by the Baath in 1969. In addition, Iraq was widely believed to have links to various Palestinian terrorist groups such as the "Special Operations Branch" of the PFLP, Black June, the Arab Organization of the 15th May, and the Abu Nidal Organization.

Beginning in 1980, Iraq gradually retreated from its long-held position that there could never be any recognition of Israel. In 1983 Baath leaders accepted the de facto partition of pre-1948 Palestine by stating publicly that there could be negotiations with Israel for a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli dispute. Consequently, Iraq cut its ties to the extremist Palestinian factions, including that of Abu Nidal, who was expelled from the country in November; he subsequently established new headquarters in Syria. Iraq shifted

its support to the mainstream Palestinian groups that advocated negotiations for a Palestinian state. Yasir Arafat's Al Fatah organization was permitted to reopen an office in Baghdad. Arafat, whose proposed assassination for alleged treason against the Palestinians had been clandestinely supported by Iraq in the late 1970s, was even invited to visit the country. This shift represented a fundamental revolution in the thinking of the Iraqi Baath. In effect, by 1986 the Baath Party was saying that the Palestinians had to determine for themselves the nature of their relationship with Israel.

Iraq's most bitter foreign relationship was with the rival Baath government in Syria. Although there were periods of amity between the two governments—such as the one immediately after the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the one in October 1978, when Iraq and Syria both opposed Egypt's plans for a separate peace with Israel—the governments generally were hostile to one another. Relations began to deteriorate once again at the end of 1980 following the outbreak of the war with Iran. Syria criticized Iraq for diverting Arab attention from the real enemy (Israel) and for attacking a regime (Iran) supportive of the Arab cause. Relations worsened throughout 1981 as each country accused the other of assisting antiregime political groups. In April 1982, Syria closed its borders with Iraq and cut off the flow of Iraqi oil through the pipeline that traversed Syrian territory to ports on the Mediterranean Sea. The cessation of Iraqi oil exports via this pipeline was a severe economic blow; Iraq interpreted the move as a confirmation of Syria's de facto alliance with Iran in the war.

The hostility between Iraq and Syria has been a source of concern to the other Arab states. King Hussein of Jordan, in particular, tried to reconcile the Iraqi and Syrian leaders. Although his efforts to mediate a meeting between Saddam Husayn and Syrian president Hafiz al Assad were finally realized in early 1987, these private discussions did not lead to substantive progress in resolving the issues that divided the two countries. Intense diplomatic efforts by Jordan and by Saudi Arabia also resulted in the attendance of both presidents, Husayn and Assad, at the Arab League summit in Amman in November 1987. The Iraqis were irritated, however, that Syria used its influence to prevent the conference from adopting sanctions against Iran. The animosities that have divided the rival Iraqi and Syrian factions of the Baath appeared to be as firmly rooted as ever in early 1988.

Relations with Other Countries

In 1988 Iraq maintained cordial relations with Turkey, its non-Arab neighbor to the north. Turkey served as an important

transshipment point for both Iraqi oil exports and its commodity imports. A pipeline transported oil from the northern oil fields of Iraq through Turkey to the Mediterranean Sea. Trucks carrying a variety of European manufactured goods used Turkish highways to bring imports into Iraq. There was also trade between Turkey and Iraq, the former selling Iraq small arms, produce, and textiles. In addition, Iraq and Turkey have cooperated in suppressing Kurdish guerrilla activities in their common border area.

Outside the Middle East, Iraq maintained correct relations with other countries. Iraq identified itself as part of the Non-Aligned Movement of primarily African and Asian nations, actively participated in its deliberations during the late 1970s, and successfully lobbied to have Baghdad chosen as the site for its September 1982 conference. Although significant resources were expended to prepare facilities for the conference, and Saddam Husayn would have emerged from the meeting as a recognized leader of the Nonaligned Movement, genuine fears of an Iranian bombing of the capital during the summer of 1982 forced the government reluctantly to request that the venue of the conference be transferred to New Delhi. Since that time, preoccupation with the war against Iran, which also is a member of the Nonaligned Movement, has tended to restrict the scope of Iraqi participation in that organization.

Participation in International Organizations

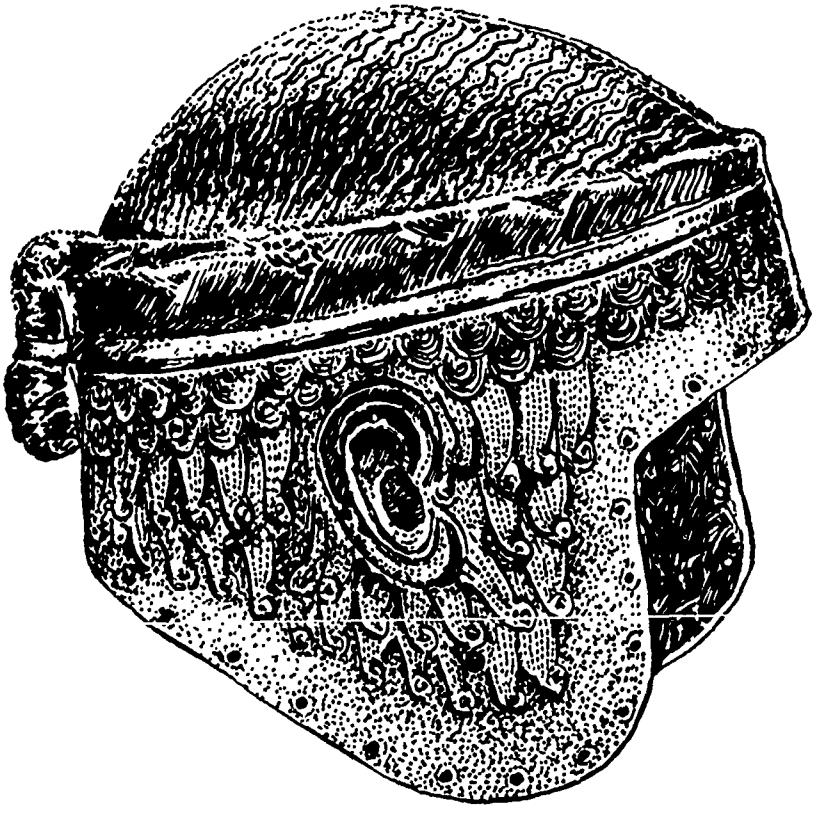
Iraq is a member of the UN and of its affiliated agencies. It also is a member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF—see Glossary), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The Iraqi Red Crescent is affiliated with the International Committee of the Red Cross. Iraq is one of the founding members of OPEC. Iraq also belongs to several pan-Arab organizations including the Arab League and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries.

* * *

A good overview of Iraqi politics from the overthrow of the monarchy in 1958 until the mid-1980s is Phebe Marr's *The Modern History of Iraq.* An excellent source for details about Iraqi politics during the first ten years of Baath Party rule is Majid Khadduri's *Socialist Iraq.* The social origins of the Baath leaders are exhaustively examined in Hanna Batatu's *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq.* An analysis of the early years of Saddam Husayn's presidency is Christine Moss Helms's study *Iraq, Eastern Flank of the Arab World.* Tim Niblock edited a collection of

essays on the state of politics at the beginning of the 1980s called *Iraq: The Contemporary State.* For background on the war with Iran see Jasim Abdulghani, *Iraq and Iran: The Years of Crisis.* (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography).

Chapter 5. National Security



The golden helmet of Maskalam-dug, king of Ur, ca. 2450 B.C.

SOCIAL UPHEAVALS HAVE PLAYED a major role in Iraq's perception of its national security. Internal political instability, coupled with recurrent revolts by the Kurdish minority, mobilized the energies of successive regimes to crush opposition forces and to restore order. During the mid- and late 1970s, however, the Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party leaders succeeded in establishing a revolutionary government, which temporarily subdued the Kurdish revolt in northern Iraq and, using repressive measures, consolidated its power.

The higher prices of petroleum following the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and the Arab oil embargo, resulted in an accumulation of wealth that enabled Iraq to expand its armed forces in an attempt to match, in strength as well as in strategic importance, the capacity of its neighbor, Iran. Having signed a border treaty with Tehran in 1975, Baghdad assumed that its search for military parity would not result in conflict, in particular because the two states enjoyed economic prosperity; however, regional events, ranging from the Soviet Union's expulsion from Egypt in 1972 to Egypt's eventual expulsion from the League of Arab States (Arab League) in 1979, following the signing of the separate Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty, strengthened Baghdad's resolve to make a bid for regional leadership. Armed with modern weapons and with sophisticated equipment from the Soviet Union and France, Iraq gained a sense of invincibility and, when the opportunity arose, implemented its resolve. Threatened by the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and by its potential influence on Iraq's majority Shia (see Glossary) population, Iraq attacked Iran on September 22, 1980.

For most of the 1980s, Iraq has been preoccupied with that war. In contrast to the first forty years of Iraqi independence, when the military participated in several coups, the Iraqi armed forces demonstrated growing professionalism in the 1980s by limiting their direct role in the country's political life. The armed forces' loyalty has also been assured by the Baath Party, however, which—after conducting purges against the military during the 1970s—continued to maintain a close eye on every aspect of military life and national security in the late 1980s.

National Security Concerns

Like most developing states, but perhaps to a greater extent because of internal schisms, Iraq was plagued with insecurity and

with political instability after independence in 1932. When Britain and France redrew boundaries throughout the Middle East following the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, the region that eventually became Iraq (under the Sykes-Picot Agreement) included a wide variety of ethnic and religious groups with little sense of national unity (see World War I and the British Mandate, ch. 1). The absence of nation-building elements encouraged various sectors of Iraqi society to oppose the establishment of central authority, often for personal and ideological reasons. Consequently, clandestine activities against the state's budding political and military institutions threatened Iraq's political leaders. Insecurity arising from domestic opposition to the state was compounded by Iraq's long-standing isolation from neighboring countries because of ideological rivalries, ethnic and religious differences, and competition for influence in the Persian Gulf. The Iraqi political agenda was further burdened in the late 1970s by the newly inherited Arab leadership role that came with Egypt's isolation in the wake of the Camp David Accords and the ensuing separate Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty.

The Baath Party that ruled Iraq in early 1988 came to power in July 1968 determined to restore order to a country where political turmoil was the norm (see The Emergence of Saddam Husayn, 1968-79, ch. 1). Despite several coup attempts during the intervening twenty years, notably in 1970 and in 1973, the Baath successfully ended the political turbulence of the 1950s and the 1960s. Yet, this level of stability was achieved only through harsh methods imposed by an increasingly disciplined, if intolerant, party. Anti-state conspirators, including fellow Baathists, were rushed into exile, were kept under house arrest, or were executed. Actual or alleged coup attempts were forcefully put down and were followed by systematic purges of the bureaucracy and the armed forces; moreover, the party's vigilance on internal security was supported by a thorough indoctrination program to gain and to maintain formerly uncertain loyalties, both within the armed forces and in the civilian population.

Baathist success in maintaining internal security resulted partly from its 1975 limited victory against the Kurds (see People, ch. 2; Internal Security, this ch.). The Iraqi-Iranian border agreement of March 1975, subsequently formalized in the Baghdad Treaty in June 1975, resolved a number of disputes between the two states. Its provisions ended Iranian support for Iraqi Kurds, whose struggles for autonomy had troubled Iraqi governments since 1932. Bolstered by this limited success, Baghdad adopted a variety of measures in the succeeding decade in order to emerge from its

political isolation and assert its strategic value. The 1970s closed under a cloud of insecurity, however, as the Baathists took stock of the revolutionary Islamic regime in Tehran. Threatened by Ayatollah Sayyid Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini's repeated calls to Iraqi Shias to follow in the Iranian people's footsteps by overthrowing usurpers of power, the Baathist leadership embarked on an adventurous war. Seven years later, Baghdad was nowhere near its objective, and it was struggling to avoid a military defeat. Nevertheless, the Baath Party continued to maintain its influence in Iraq throughout the early and mid-1980s. For the most part, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) and its chairman, President Saddam Husayn (also seen as Hussein), maintained their political positions through repressive means and by what was justified as a defensive Iraqi war against a perceived threat. Foreign observers believed that the government remained vulnerable to challenges to its authority because of the lack of any legitimate means of political dissent and because of the reverberations of a war of attrition with mounting casualties.

Iraq had enjoyed a relatively favorable national security situation in the late 1970s, but practically all its perceived politico-military gains were lost after it attacked Iran in 1980, and in 1988 Iraq faced serious economic and military difficulties.

The Regular Armed Forces

Size, Equipment, and Organization

During the late 1970s and the mid-1980s, the Iraqi armed forces underwent many changes in size, structure, arms supplies, hierarchy, deployment, and political character. Headquartered in Baghdad, the army—of an estimated 1.7 million or more Iraqis, including reserves (actual numbers not available) and paramilitary—in 1987 had seven corps, five armored divisions (each with one armored brigade and one mechanized brigade), and three mechanized divisions (each with one armored brigade and two or more mechanized brigades). An expanded Presidential Guard Force was composed of three armored brigades, one infantry brigade, and one commando brigade. There were also thirty infantry divisions, composed of the People's Army (Al Jaysh ash Shaabi—also cited as the Popular Army or People's Militia) brigades and the reserve brigades, as well as six Special Forces brigades.

This growth in the manpower and equipment inventories of the Iraqi armed forces was facilitated by Iraq's capacity to pay for a large standing army and was occasioned by Iraq's need to fight a war with Iran, a determined and much larger neighbor. Whereas

in 1978 active-duty military personnel numbered fewer than 200,000, and the military was equipped with some of the most sophisticated weaponry of the Soviet military arsenal, by 1987 the quality of offensive weapons had improved dramatically, and the number of men under arms had increased almost fourfold (see table 10, Appendix).

Army equipment inventories increased significantly during the mid-1980s. Whereas in 1977 the army possessed approximately 2,400 tanks, including several hundred T-62 models, in 1987 the International Institute for Strategic Studies estimated that Iraq deployed about 4,500 tanks, including advanced versions of the T-72. Other army equipment included about 4,000 armored vehicles, more than 3,000 towed and self-propelled artillery pieces, a number of FROG-7 and Scud-B surface-to-surface missiles with a range of up to 300 kilometers, and an array of approximately 4,000 (some self-propelled) antiaircraft guns. The vast majority of the army's equipment inventory was of Soviet manufacture, although French and Brazilian equipment in particular continued to be acquired in Iraq's ongoing attempt to diversify its sources of armaments (see table 11, Appendix). This mammoth arsenal gave Iraq a clear-cut advantage over Iran in 1987. Iraq had an advantage of more than four to one in tanks (4,500 to 1,000); four to one in armored vehicles (4,000 to 1,000); and two to one in artillery and antiaircraft pieces (7,330 to 3,000). Despite this quantitative and qualitative superiority, the Iraqi army by the end of 1987 had not risked its strength in a final and decisive battle to win the war.

Headquartered in Basra, the 5,000-man navy was the smallest branch of the armed forces in early 1988, and, in contrast to the Iranian navy, had played virtually no role in the war. Iraq's second naval facility at Umm Qasr took on added importance after 1980, in particular because the Shatt al Arab waterway, which leads into Basra, was the scene of extensive fighting. It was at Umm Qasr that most of the Iraqi navy's active vessels were based in early 1988. Between 1977 and 1987, Iraq purchased from the Soviet Union eight fast-attack OSA-class patrol boats—each equipped with Styx surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs). In late 1986, Iraq obtained from Italy four Lupo class frigates, and six Wadi Assad class corvettes equipped with Otomat-2 SSMs. Although the four frigates and the six corvettes was held in Italy under an embargo imposed by the Italian government, these purchases signaled Iraq's intention to upgrade its naval power. Observers speculated that the end of the war with Iran could be followed by a rapid expansion of the Iraqi navy, which could exercise its influence in northern Persian Gulf waters (see table 12, Appendix).

In 1987 the Iraqi air force consisted of 40,000 men, of whom about 10,000 were attached to its subordinate Air Defense Command. The air force was headquartered in Baghdad, and major bases were located at Basra, H-3 (site of a pump station on the oil pipeline in western Iraq), Kirkuk, Mosul, Rashid, and Ash Shuaybah. Iraq's more than 500 combat aircraft were formed into two bomber squadrons, eleven fighter-ground attack squadrons, five interceptor squadrons, and one counterinsurgency squadron of 10 to 30 aircraft each. Support aircraft included two transport squadrons. As many as ten helicopter squadrons were also operational, although these formed the Army Air Corps. The Air Defense Command piloted the MiG-25, MiG-21, and various Mirage interceptors and manned Iraq's considerable inventory of surface-to-air missiles (SAMs).

The equipment of the air force and the army's air corps, like that of the other services, was primarily of Soviet manufacture. After 1980, however, in an effort to diversify its sources of advanced armaments, Iraq turned to France for Mirage fighters and for attack helicopters. Between 1982 and 1987, Iraq received or ordered a variety of equipment from France, including more than 100 Mirage F-1s, about 100 Gazelle, Super-Frelon, and Alouette helicopters, and a variety of air-to-surface and air-to-air missiles, including Exocets. Other attack helicopters purchased included the Soviet Hind equipped with AT-2 Swatter, and BO-105s equipped with AS-11 antitank guided weapons. In addition, Iraq bought seventy F-7 (Chinese version of the MiG-21) fighters, assembled in Egypt. Thus Iraq's overall airpower was considerable (see table 13, Appendix).

Although Iraq expanded its arms inventory, its war efforts may have been hindered by poor military judgment and by lack of resolve. Saddam Husayn was the country's head of state and premier as well as the chairman of both the RCC and the Baath Party; moreover, in 1984 he assumed the rank of field marshal and appointed himself commander in chief of the Iraqi armed forces. Iraqi propaganda statements claimed that Saddam Husayn had "developed new military ideas and theories of global importance," but few Western military analysts gave credence to such claims. Since 1980 General Adnan Khairallah, who served as both deputy commander in chief of the armed forces and minister of defense, was the highest officer in the military chain of command. In 1987 he also assumed the position of deputy prime minister. His multiple roles reflected the predominance of the army in the organizational structure of the armed forces. Sattar Ahmad Jassin was appointed secretary general of defense and adjutant of the armed forces in 1985. General Abd al Jabar Shanshal assumed the position

of chief of the armed forces general staff in 1984. Frequent changes at the general staff level indicated to foreign observers that Iraq's military failures were primarily the result of poor leadership and an overly rigid command structure. Defective leadership was evident in the lack of clear orders and in the poor responses by the army in the occupation of Susangerd. In October 1980, armored units twice advanced and withdrew from the city, and later in the same operation, the army abandoned strategic positions near Dezful. Rigid control of junior officers and of noncommissioned officers (NCOs) frustrated their initiative and may have been the reason for the high casualty figures in the infantry, where initiative and spontaneity in decision making can be of paramount importance. The command structure reportedly was even more inflexible and slow in the People's Army detachments, where political commanders routinely made military decisions.

Manpower and Training

Historically, under Turkish rule, Iraqi conscripts were often transported to distant locations within the vast Ottoman Empire, and they were not allowed to return home for many years. During the early years of independence, conditions of service were nearly as onerous: pay was irregular, troops were misused, and retention beyond the compulsory period remained a common practice. Throughout modern history, the majority of conscripts have fulfilled much of their service obligation in the rugged mountains of northern Iraq, where conditions were Spartan at best and were often very dangerous. Although conditions improved markedly during the 1970s, and conscription was no longer as widely resented as it had been for more than a century, there were still draft dodgers, and they were routinely court-martialed and executed in public.

In the past, deferments and exemptions from conscription were usually granted generously. Until 1958 exemptions could be bought. In 1988 deferments were still available to full-time students, to hardship cases, and to those with brothers serving in the military. The increase in manpower needs created by the rapid growth of the army after 1973 and the war with Iran after 1980 resulted in a tightening of previously liberal exemption policies, however. In 1987 observers estimated that a total of 3 million Iraqi males, aged eighteen to forty-five, were fit for military service. An additional 2 million Iraqi females in the same age group were potentially available for military service.

Males were liable to conscription until the age of forty-five. In 1980 the two-year compulsory period of service was extended without specific time limitations, to support the war effort; many

trained technicians started serving as long as five years. A man could also volunteer—for a two-year term that could be extended by periods of two years—as an alternative to conscription or for additional service at any time between ages eighteen and forty-three. After two years of compulsory active service, both conscripts and volunteers were obliged to spend eighteen years in a reserve unit. These reserve units received intensive training during the mid-1980s because many reservists were called up to fill manpower shortages caused by the Iran-Iraq War and to relieve temporarily those on active duty.

Although women were not conscripted, under a law passed in 1977 they could be commissioned as officers if they held a health-related university degree, and they could be appointed as warrant officers or NCOs in army medical institutes if they were qualified nurses. The vast majority of women in the armed forces held administrative or medical-related positions, but an increasing number of women performed in combat functions after 1981. Women were serving in combat roles both in the air force and in the Air Defense Command in 1987. This integration of women into the military reflected the shortage of trained males.

Most army officers came from the Military College in Baghdad, which was founded in 1924. Candidates for the college were physically qualified, secondary-school graduates of Iraqi nationality, who had demonstrated political loyalty. Cadets were divided into two groups, combatant (combat arms) and administrative (technology and administration). They studied common subjects during the first two years, and they specialized according to their group designation in the final year. On graduation cadets received commissions as second lieutenants in the regular army. Some were granted higher ranks because of voluntary service on the war front.

Another source of army officers was the Reserve College founded in 1952. This school enrolled two classes annually, one for those who held professional degrees, such as medicine and pharmacy, and one for secondary-school graduates. During the 1970s, approximately 2,000 reserve officers were graduated each year; those with professional degrees were commissioned as second lieutenants, and those without a college education were appointed as warrant officers. The army also maintained a system of service schools for training in combat arms as well as in technical and administrative services. Most of those schools, located in or near Baghdad, have conducted additional courses for both officers and NCOs since 1980. Since 1928 the army has also maintained a two-year staff college to train selected officers in all services for command and staff positions.

In mid-1977 the navy opened its own officer training academy. This comparatively new institution was called the Arabian Gulf Academy for Naval Studies. Since 1933 the air force has maintained its own college as a source of officer personnel. In 1971 the college was moved from Rashid Airbase (southeast of Baghdad) to Tikrit. It offered administrative and flight training courses as well as training for technical specialists. (Iraqi officers and pilots received training in several foreign countries as well in the 1970s; pilots were trained in India and in France, and especially in the Soviet Union.)

The highest level of military training in Iraq was a one-year course conducted at Al Bakr University for Higher Military Studies (also called the War College) in Baghdad, founded in 1977. At the War College, high-ranking officers studied modern theories and methods of warfare in preparation for assuming top command and staff positions in the armed forces. Little was known about the content of Iraq's military training, although political and ideological indoctrination appeared to accompany military training at all levels. In any case, the seven years of combat in the Iran-Iraq War could only have enhanced technical skills; many of these officers presumably applied their theoretical training in conducting the war. By Western accounts, however, the battlefield performance of military leaders did not reflect sophisticated grasp of strategy and tactics (see The Iran-Iraq War, this ch.).

Conditions of Service and Morale

Conditions of service in the Iraqi army historically have been poor. In addition to receiving low and irregular pay, during much of the country's modern history Iraqi soldiers were involved in a costly and unpopular war with Kurdish rebels. Having to fight the Kurds caused morale problems and desertions, particularly among the army's Kurdish recruits, and on at least two occasions between 1975 and 1979 the government offered amnesties to all soldiers and security personnel who had deserted during Kurdish conflicts. Between 1975 and 1980, Baghdad made some progress in solving long-standing morale problems and in improving conditions of service. The 1975 victory against the Kurds and increased oil income contributed to these improvements. A reversal recurred in 1981, however, when many of the Iraqi military failed to cope with combat stress, and thousands experienced psychological problems because of their war experiences. The surrender rate was also high, as prisoner-of-war statistics indicated, and that further demoralized loyal troops.

In 1975 Baghdad adopted a comprehensive Military Service and Pension Law that established pay scales, allowances, benefits, and retirement pay designed to attract officers and enlisted men from the civilian sector. A second lieutenant was authorized ID65 (ID or Iraqi dinar—for value of dinar, see Glossary) a month as base pay, with an increase of ID20 for each higher rank. Moreover, an adjustable cost-of-living allowance was established, as was a family allowance amounting to a 5 percent increase in salary for each dependent. Service allowances were also granted to those with special skills or duties. Retirement pay was commensurate with rank and with civilian retirement benefits, and indemnities were established for the families of soldiers disabled or killed in action.

After the military defeats of 1982, the entire chain of command suffered low morale. On several occasions, signs of mutiny in opposition to the war emerged. According to unverified Iraqi dissident reports, the number of deserters reached 100,000, and in central and in southern Iraq, they formed armed groups that were opposed to the regime. Many soldiers refused to fight in Kurdistan, and many more joined the armed Kurdish resistance movement.

Military Justice System

Both political offenders and ordinary criminal offenders in the armed forces were tried in the military courts, but Iraq's military courts had no jurisdiction over civilians accused of security-related crimes. Such cases were reviewed by revolutionary courts. Military tribunals were held in camera and were often summary in nature. Although little information was available in early 1988, observers believed that the system of military justice differed little from the system in operation at the time of the 1968 Baath Revolution. At that time a permanent military court of at least five members was usually established at each division headquarters and wherever large concentrations of nondivision troops were stationed. In addition, emergency military courts could be set up in combat areas to expedite the trial of offenders there. Such courts usually consisted of three members, a president with the rank of lieutenant colonel and two members with the rank of major or above.

The highest court was the Military Court of Cassation, which sat in Baghdad. It was appointed by the minister of defense and was composed of a president with the rank of brigadier general or above and two members with the rank of colonel or above. Appeals from the sentences of lower military courts were heard in the Military Court of Cassation; it also conducted trials of the first instance of senior officers.

A number of changes were introduced into the Penal Code of the Popular Army since 1980. Law No. 32 of 1982, for example, made several offenses by service personnel punishable by death. In its 1985 report, Amnesty International noted that RCC Resolution No. 1370 reaffirmed the death penalty for various offenses. These included fleeing or defaulting from military service, conspiring against the state, espionage, and joining the Ad Dawah al Islamiyah (the Islamic Call), commonly referred to as Ad Dawah.

Uniforms and Rank Insignia

In the late 1980s, Iraqi uniforms consisted of service and field attire for both summer and winter and a dress uniform and mess jacket for officers. The winter service dress uniform, of olive drab wool, consisted of a single-breasted coat having patch pockets with flaps, a khaki shirt and tie, and trousers that were usually cuffless. The summer uniform was similar but was made of light tan material. The winter field uniform consisted of an olive drab shirt, wool trousers, and a waist-length jacket. The summer field uniform was identical in style but was made of lighter material. Both field uniforms included a web belt, a beret or helmet, and high-top shoes.

Commissioned officers' rank insignia were identical for the army and for the air force except that shoulder boards were olive drab for the army and were blue for the air force. Naval officer rank insignia consisted of gold stripes worn on the lower sleeve. Army and air force enlisted personnel wore stripes on the sleeve to designate rank, while the top noncommissioned officer rank, sergeant major and chief master sergeant, respectively, consisted of a gold bar on top of the shoulders (see fig. 12 and fig. 13).

Paramilitary Forces

In 1987 the People's Army (Al Jaysh ash Shaabi—also cited as the Popular Army or People's Militia), standing at an estimated 650,000, approached the regular armed forces' manpower strength. Officially, it was the Iraqi Baath Party Militia and included a special youth section. Formed in 1970, the People's Army grew rapidly, and by 1977 it was estimated to have 50,000 active members. Subsequently, a phenomenal growth, giving the militia extensive internal security functions, occurred. Whereas its original purpose was to give the Baath Party an active role in every town and village, the People's Army in 1981 began its most ambitious task to date, the support of the regular armed forces.

The official functions of the People's Army were to act as back-up to the regular armed forces in times of war and to safeguard revolutionary achievements, to promote mass consciousness, to

consolidate national unity, and to bolster the relationship between the people and the army in times of peace. The People's Army dispatched units to Iraqi Kurdistan before 1980 and to Lebanon to fight with Palestinian guerrillas during the 1975–76 Civil War. Foreign observers concluded, however, that the primary function of the People's Army was political in nature; first, to enlist popular support for the Baath Party, and second, to act as a counterweight against any coup attempts by the regular armed forces.

Beginning in 1974, Taha Yasin Ramadan, a close associate of President Saddam Husayn, commanded the People's Army, which was responsible for internal security. The command of such a large military establishment gave Ramadan so much power, however, that some foreign observers speculated that the primary function of his second in command was to keep him from using the People's Army as a personal power base.

People's Army members were recruited from among both women and men (who had completed their regular army service) eighteen years of age and older. It was unclear whether or not Baath Party membership was a prerequisite—especially after 1981, when the numerical strength of the People's Army ballooned—but, clearly, party indoctrination was at least as important as military training. Members usually underwent a two-month annual training period, and they were paid from party funds. Although the extent of their training was unknown in early 1988, all recruits were instructed in the use of a rifle. Graduates were responsible for guarding government buildings and installations, and they were concentrated around sensitive centers in major towns. Militia members possessed some sophisticated arms, and it was possible hat disgruntled officers contemplating a challenge to Saddam Husayn could rally the support of a force of such militiamen.

Futuwah (Youth Vanguard) was a paramilitary organization for secondary-school students founded by the Baath Party in 1975. Boys and girls between the ages of fourteen and eighteen could join Futuwah and receive training in light arms, in the use of grenades, and in civil defense work. By early 1988, several thousand Iraqi youth had volunteered for Futuwah training, and they had been organized into youth platoons. Unverified reports claimed that some People's Army units and Futuwah units were dispatched to the war front for short periods of time in 1983 and 1985. Visitors to Baghdad in the 1980s, however, reported that most civil defense activities in the capital were performed by young People's Army members.

IRAQI RANK	MULAZIM	MULAZIM AWWAL	NAQIB	RAID	MUQADDAM	AQID	AMID	LIWA	FARIQ	FARIQ AWWAL	MUSHIR
ARMY											
U S RANK TITLES	2D LIEUTENANT	1ST LIEUTENANT	CAPTAIN	MAJOR	LIEUTENANT COLONEL	COLONEL	BRIGADIER GENERAL	MAJOR GENERAL	LIEUTENANT GENERAL	GENERAL	GENERAL OF THE ARMY
IRAQI RANK	MULAZIM	MULAZIM AWWAL	NAQIB	RAID	MUQADDAM	AQID	AMID	LIWA	FARIQ	FARIQ AWWAL	MUSHIR
AIR FORCE											
U S RANK TITLES	2D LIEUTENANT	1ST LIEUTENANT	CAPTAIN	MAJOR	LIEUTENANT COLONEL	COLONEL	BRIGADIER GENERAL	MAJOR GENERAL	LIEUTENANT GENERAL	GENERAL	GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE
IRAQI RANK	MULAZIM	MULAZIM AWWAL	NAQIB	RAID	MUQADDAM	AQID	AMID	LIWA	FARIQ	FARIQ AWWAL	MUSHIR
NAVY											
U S RANK TITLES	ENSIGN	LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE	LIEUTENANT	LIEUTENANT COMMANDER	COMMANDER	CAPTAIN	COMMODORE ADMIRAL	REAR ADMIRAL	VICE ADMIRAL	ADMIRAL	FLEET ADMIRAL

Figure 12. Officer Ranks and Insignia, 1987

IRAQI RANK	JUNDI	JUNDI AWWAL	NAIB ARIF	ARIF	RAIS URAFA	NAIB DABIT
ARMY	NO INSIGNIA					
U S RANK TITLES	BASIC PRIVATE	PRIVATE/PRIVATE 1ST CLASS	CORPORAL	SERGEANT	STAFF SERGEANT/ SERGEANT 1ST CLASS	SERGEANT MAJOR
IRAQI RANK	JUNDI	JUNDI AWWAL	NAIB ARIF	ARIF	RAIS URAFA	NAIB DABIT
AIR FORCE	NO INSIGNIA					
U.S RANK TITLES	AIRMAN BASIC	AIRMAN/AIRMAN 1ST CLASS	SERGEANT	STAFF SERGEANT	TECHNICAL SERGEANT/ MASTER SERGEANT	CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT
IRAQI RANK	JUNDI	JUNDI AWWAL	NAIB ARIF	ARIF	RAIS URAFA	NAIB DABIT
NAVY	NO INSIGNIA	INSIGNIA NOT KNOWN	INSIGNIA NOT KNOWN	INSIGNIA NOT KNOWN	INSIGNIA NOT KNOWN	INSIGNIA NOT KNOWN
U S RANK TITLES	SEAMAN RECRUIT	SEAMAN APPRENTICE/SEAMAN	PETTY OFFICER 3D CLASS	PETTY OFFICER 2D CLASS	PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS/ CHIEF PETTY OFFICER	MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER

Figure 13. Enlisted Ranks and Insignia, 1987

Foreign Military Ties

Military Ties Prior to the Iran-Iraq War

Iraq's armed forces were heavily dependent on foreign military assistance after the fall of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I. In 1921 British Mandate authorities undertook the training of Iraqi soldiers who had served under the Ottomans. The British reorganized the former Ottoman units into a force designed to uphold internal law and order and to serve British interests by putting down frequent tribal revolts. Until 1958 British officers guided the development of the armed forces, and British influence was reflected in the organization, training, and equipment of the Iraqi military. Senior Iraqi officers regularly were sent to Britain or to India to receive advanced training. Iraq's generally Western-oriented military posture throughout this period culminated in the 1955 Baghdad Pact.

The revolution of July 14, 1958, and the coming to power of Abd al Karim Qasim completely altered Iraq's military orientation. Disagreement with the British (and with the Western world's) stance vis-à-vis Israel and growing pan-Arab sentiment led Qasim to abrogate the Baghdad Pact and to turn to the Soviet Union for arms. Since 1959 the Soviet Union has been Iraq's chief arms supplier and its most essential foreign military tie. In April 1972, the two states signed a fifteen-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in which Iraq and the Soviet Union agreed to "continue to develop cooperation in the strengthening of the defense capabilities of each."

By no means, however, was Iraq a "satellite" of the Soviet Union. Baghdad consistently insisted on its independence in policy making, and on a number of key issues, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, Syria's role in Lebanon, and the Nonaligned Movement, the two states held opposing views. Furthermore, Iraq's Baathist ideology remained fundamentally antithetical to communism. As a further sign of its staunch independence, Iraq insisted on its freedom to purchase weapons from Western sources, and in 1980 it demonstrated its intention to diversify its source of armaments. Although France and Britain both had sold some arms to Iraq during the 1966 to 1968 regime of Abd ar Rahman Arif, between 1974 and 1980 Iraq increased its purchases from France by acquiring helicopters, antitank missiles, and high performance Mirage jet fighters.

Despite these expressions of Iraqi independence, both mutual interests and practical necessity dictated the Iraqi air forces's reliance

on Soviet support. Total Soviet military aid to Iraq between 1958 and 1974 was estimated at the equivalent of US$1.6 billion; in 1975 alone such Soviet aid was estimated at US$1 billion. Soviet deliveries of military hardware of increasingly higher quality between 1976 and 1980 were estimated at US$5 billion. In 1977, for example, Iraq ordered the Ilyushin Il-76 long-range jet transport, the first such Soviet aircraft provided to a foreign state. Until 1980 nearly 1,200 Soviet and East European advisers, as well as 150 Cuban advisers, were in Iraq. Iraqi military personnel were also trained in the use of SAMs, and observers estimated that between 1958 and 1980, nearly 5,000 Iraqis received military training in the Soviet Union.

Although receiving arms and training from foreign sources itself, Iraq provided some military aid to irregular units engaged in pro-Iraqi "national liberation movements" in the Middle East and in Africa prior to 1980. Most of this aid was in monetary grants and in armaments, which amounted to more than US$600 million annually. Pro-Iraqi Palestinian groups, such as the Arab Liberation Front, received the bulk of the aid, but several African organizations, including the Eritrean Liberation Front, also received some. Volunteer Iraqi soldiers fought on the side of Palestinian guerrillas in Lebanon on at least two occasions, in 1976 against Syrian troops and in March 1978 against Israeli troops.

The Iran-Iraq War and the Quest for New Sources of Arms

As a result of the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq was obliged to extend its search for arms in 1981. By the time the war entered its eighth year in September 1987, Iraq had become the world's biggest single arms market. In addition to its purchases from the Soviet Union and France, Iraq sought to buy armaments from China, the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), Italy, Brazil, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Egypt, among others. The United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency estimated in 1987 that Iraq had imported about US$24 billion worth of military equipment during the period from 1981 to 1985.

Arms from the Soviet Union

From 1972 to 1979, the percentage of Iraq's military equipment supplied by the Soviet Union declined from 95 to 63 percent. Even so, in 1987 the Soviet Union, having provided more than US$8 billion worth of weapons since 1980, was Iraq's most important arms supplier. In its 1987 annual study, *Soviet Military Power,* the United States Department of Defense stated that, while maintaining official neutrality in the Iran-Iraq War, the Soviet Union had

provided extensive military assistance to Iraq and, at the same time, continued its efforts to gain leverage on Iran. In early 1987, Moscow delivered a squadron of twenty-four MiG-29 Fulcrums to Baghdad. Considered the most advanced fighter in the Soviet arsenal, the MiG-29 previously had been provided only to Syria and India. The decision to export the MiG-29 to Iraq also assured Iraq a more advantageous payment schedule than any offered by the West and it reflected Soviet support for one of its traditional allies in the Middle East. Caught in a financial crisis, Baghdad welcomed the low-interest loans Moscow extended for this equipment.

Although the Soviets might not receive payments for several years, the sale of military hardware remained a critical source of revenue for them, and they have tried to retain Iraq as a customer. In May 1987, for example, the Soviets provided Iraq with better financial terms in a successful effort to prevent Iraq from buying sixty French Mirage 2000 fighters for an estimated US$3 billion. An additional US$3 billion in sales of helicopters and radar equipment may also have been denied to the French, although it was not possible to determine whether the Soviets agreed to fulfill both requirements. In early 1988, Iraq owed the Soviet Union between US$8 billion and US$10 billion in military debts alone.

Arms from France

France became a major military supplier to Iraq after 1975 as the two countries improved their political relations. In order to obtain petroleum imports from the Middle East and strengthen its traditional ties with Arab and Muslim countries, France wanted a politico-military bridge between Paris and Baghdad.

Between 1977 and 1987, France contracted to sell a total of 133 Mirage F-1 fighters to Iraq. The first transfer occurred in 1978, when France supplied eighteen Mirage F-1 interceptors and thirty helicopters, and even agreed to an Iraqi share in the production of the Mirage 2000 in a US$2 billion arms deal. In 1983 another twenty-nine Mirage F-1s were exported to Baghdad. And in an unprecedented move, France "loaned" Iraq five Super-Etendard attack aircraft, equipped with Exocet AM39 air-to-surface missiles, from its own naval inventory. The Super-Etendards were used extensively in the 1984 tanker war before being replaced by several F-1s. The final batch of twenty-nine F-1s was ordered in September 1985 at a cost of more than US$500 million, a part of which was paid in crude oil.

In 1987 the Paris-based *Le Monde* estimated that, between 1981 and 1985, the value of French arms transfers to Iraq was US$5.1 billion, which represented 40 percent of total French arms exports.

France, however, was forced to reschedule payment on most of its loans to Iraq because of Iraq's hard-pressed wartime economy and did so willingly because of its longer range strategic interests. French president François Mitterand was quoted as saying that French assistance was really aimed at keeping Iraq from losing the war. Iraqi debts to France were estimated at US$3 billion in 1987.

French military sales to Iraq were important for at least two reasons. First, they represented high-performance items. Iraq received attack helicopters, missiles, military vehicles, and artillery pieces from France. Iraq also bought more than 400 Exocet AM39 air-to-surface missiles and at least 200 AS30 laser-guided missiles between 1983 and 1986. Second, unlike most other suppliers, France adopted an independent and unambiguous arms sales policy toward Iraq. France did not tie French arms commitments to Baghdad's politico-military actions, and it openly traded with Iraq even when Iranian-inspired terrorists took French hostages in Lebanon. In late 1987, however, the French softened their Persian Gulf policy, and they consummated a deal with Tehran involving the exchange of hostages for detained diplomatic personnel. It was impossible in early 1988 to determine whether France would curtail its arms exports to Iraq in conjunction with this agreement.

The Search for Nuclear Technology

On June 7, 1981, Israeli air force planes flew over Jordanian, Saudi, and Iraqi airspace to attack and destroy an Iraqi nuclear facility near Baghdad. In a statement issued after the raid, the Israeli government stated that it had discovered from "sources of unquestioned reliability" that Iraq was producing nuclear bombs at the Osiraq (acronym for Osiris-Iraq) plant, and, for this reason, Israel had initiated a preemptive strike. Baghdad, however, reiterated a previous statement that the French atomic reactor was designed for research and for the eventual production of electricity.

The attack raised a number of questions of interpretation regarding international legal concepts. Those who approved of the raid argued that the Israelis had engaged in an act of legitimate self-defense justifiable under international law and under Article 51 of the charter of the United Nations (UN). Critics contended that the Israeli claims about Iraq's future capabilities were hasty and ill-considered and asserted that the idea of anticipatory self-defense was rejected by the community of states. In the midst of this controversy, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) came under fire from individuals and from governments who complained that the Vienna-based UN agency had failed to alert the world to developments at Osiraq. IAEA officials denied these charges and

reaffirmed their position on the Iraqi reactor, that is, that no weapons had been manufactured at Osiraq and that Iraqi officials had regularly cooperated with agency inspectors. They also pointed out that Iraq was a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (informally called the Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT) and that Baghdad had complied with all IAEA guidelines. The Israeli nuclear facility at Dimona, it was pointed out, was not under IAEA safeguards, because Israel had not signed the NPT and had refused to open its facilities to UN inspections.

After the raid, Baghdad announced that it planned to rebuild the destroyed facility. Although France agreed in principle to provide technical assistance, no definitive timetable had been announced as of early 1988.

The Iran-Iraq War

Of the many conflicts in progress around the world in early 1988, the Iran-Iraq War was by far the bloodiest and the costliest. The Iran-Iraq War was multifaceted and included religious schisms, border disputes, and political differences. Conflicts contributing to the outbreak of hostilities ranged from centuries-old Sunni-versus-Shia (for Sunni—see Glossary) and Arab-versus-Persian religious and ethnic disputes to a personal animosity between Saddam Husayn and Ayatollah Khomeini. Above all, Iraq launched the war in an effort to consolidate its rising power in the Arab world and to replace Iran as the dominant Persian Gulf state. Phebe Marr, a noted analyst of Iraqi affairs, stated that "the war was more immediately the result of poor political judgement and miscalculation on the part of Saddam Hussein," and "the decision to invade, taken at a moment of Iranian weakness, was Saddam's" (see The Iran-Iraq Conflict, ch. 1).

Iraq and Iran had engaged in border clashes for many years and had revived the dormant Shatt al Arab waterway dispute in 1979. Iraq claimed the 200-kilometer channel up to the Iranian shore as its territory, while Iran insisted that the thalweg—a line running down the middle of the waterway—negotiated last in 1975, was the official border. The Iraqis, especially the Baath leadership, regarded the 1975 treaty as merely a truce, not a definitive settlement.

The Iraqis also perceived revolutionary Iran's Islamic agenda as threatening to their pan-Arabism. Khomeini, bitter over his expulsion from Iraq in 1977 after fifteen years in An Najaf, vowed to avenge Shia victims of Baathist repression. Baghdad became more confident, however, as it watched the once invincible Imperial Iranian Army disintegrate, as most of its highest ranking officers

were executed. In Khuzestan (Arabistan to the Iraqis), Iraqi intelligence officers incited riots over labor disputes, and in the Kurdish region, a new rebellion caused the Khomeini government severe troubles.

As the Baathists planned their military campaign, they had every reason to be confident. Not only did the Iranians lack cohesive leadership, but the Iranian armed forces, according to Iraqi intelligence estimates, also lacked spare parts for their American-made equipment. Baghdad, on the other hand, possessed fully equipped and trained forces. Morale was running high. Against Iran's armed forces, including the Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guard) troops, led by religious mullahs with little or no military experience, the Iraqis could muster twelve complete mechanized divisions, equipped with the latest Soviet matériel. In addition, the area across the Shatt al Arab posed no major obstacles, particularly for an army equipped with Soviet river-crossing equipment. Iraqi commanders correctly assumed that crossing sites on the Khardeh and Karun rivers were lightly defended against their mechanized armor divisions; moreover, Iraqi intelligence sources reported that Iranian forces in Khuzestan, which had formerly included two divisions distributed among Ahvaz, Dezful, and Abadan, now consisted of only a number of ill-equipped battalion-sized formations. Tehran was further disadvantaged because the area was controlled by the Regional 1st Corps headquartered at Bakhtaran (formerly Kermanshah), whereas operational control was directed from the capital. In the year following the shah's overthrow, only a handful of company-sized tank units had been operative, and the rest of the armored equipment had been poorly maintained.

For Iraqi planners, the only uncertainty was the fighting ability of the Iranian air force, equipped with some of the most sophisticated American-made aircraft. Despite the execution of key air force commanders and pilots, the Iranian air force had displayed its might during local riots and demonstrations. The air force was also active in the wake of the failed United States attempt to rescue American hostages in April 1980. This show of force had impressed Iraqi decision makers to such an extent that they decided to launch a massive preemptive air strike on Iranian air bases in an effort similar to the one that Israel employed during the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

Iraqi Offensives, 1980–82

On September 22, 1980, formations of Iraqi MiG-23s and MiG-21s attacked Iran's air bases at Mehrabad and Doshen-Tappen (both near Tehran), as well as Tabriz, Bakhtaran,

Ahvaz, Dezful, Urmia (sometimes cited as Urumiyeh), Hamadan, Sanandaj, and Abadan. Iranian defenses were caught by surprise, but the Iraqi raids failed because Iranian jets were protected in specially strengthened hangars and because bombs designed to destroy runways did not totally incapacitate Iran's very large airfields. Within hours, Iranian F-4 Phantoms took off from the same bases, successfully attacked strategically important targets close to major Iraqi cities, and returned home with very few losses.

Concurrently with its air attack, Iraq ordered six of its divisions across the border into Iran, where they drove as far as eight kilometers inland and occupied 1,000 square kilometers of Iranian territory. As a diversionary move, a mechanized division overwhelmed the border garrison at Qasr-e Shirin, while five armored and mechanized divisions invaded Khuzestan on two axes, one crossing over the Shatt al Arab near Basra, which led to the siege and eventual occupation of Khorramshahr, and the second heading for Susangerd, which had Ahvaz, the major military base in Khuzestan, as its objective. In addition, Dehloran and several other towns were targeted and were rapidly occupied to prevent reinforcement from Bakhtaran and from Tehran. By mid-October, a full division advanced through Khuzestan headed for Khorramshahr and Abadan and the strategic oil fields nearby (see fig. 14).

Iraq's blitz-like assaults against scattered and demoralized Iranian forces led many observers to think that Baghdad would win the war within a matter of weeks. Indeed, Iraqi troops did capture the Shatt al Arab and did seize a forty-eight-kilometer-wide strip of Iranian territory. But Tehran rejected a settlement offer and held the line against the militarily superior Iraqi force. It refused to accept defeat, and slowly began a series of counteroffensives in January 1981. Iran stopped Iraqi forces on the Karun River and, with limited military stocks, unveiled its "human wave" assaults, which used thousands of Basij (Popular Mobilization Army or People's Army) volunteers. The recapture of Abadan, Iran's first major victory, came in September 1981.

Iraqi Retreats, 1982–84

In March 1982, Tehran launched its Operation Undeniable Victory, which marked a major turning point, as Iran penetrated Iraq's "impenetrable" lines, split Iraq's forces, and forced the Iraqis to retreat. In late June 1982, Baghdad stated its willingness to negotiate a settlement of the war and to withdraw its forces from Iran. Iran refused, and in July 1982 Iran launched Operation Ramadan on Iraqi territory, near Basra. Tehran used Pasdaran forces and Basij volunteers in one of the biggest land battles since 1945. Ranging

in age from only nine to more than fifty, these eager but relatively untrained soldiers swept over minefields and fortifications to clear safe paths for the tanks. In doing so, the Iranians sustained an immense number of casualties, but they enabled Iran to recover some territory before the Iraqis could repulse the bulk of the invading forces.

By the end of 1982, Iraq had been resupplied with new Soviet matériel, and the ground war entered a new phase. Iraq used newly acquired T-55 tanks and T-62 tanks, BM-21 Stalin Organ rocket launchers, and Mi-24 helicopter gunships to prepare a Soviet-type three-line defense, replete with obstacles, minefields, and fortified positions. The Combat Engineer Corps proved efficient in constructing bridges across water obstacles, in laying minefields, and in preparing new defense lines and fortifications.

In 1983 Iran launched three major, but unsuccessful, human-wave offensives, with huge losses, along the frontier. On February 6, Tehran, using 200,000 "last reserve" Pasdaran troops, attacked along a 40-kilometer stretch near Al Amarah, about 200 kilometers southeast of Baghdad. Backed by air, armor, and artillery support, Iran's six-division thrust was strong enough to break through. In response, Baghdad used massive air attacks, with more than 200 sorties, many flown by attack helicopters. More than 6,000 Iranians were killed that day, while achieving only minute gains. In April 1983, the Mandali-Baghdad north-central sector witnessed fierce fighting, as repeated Iranian attacks were stopped by Iraqi mechanized and infantry divisions. Casualties were very high, and by the end of 1983, an estimated 120,000 Iranians and 60,000 Iraqis had been killed. Despite these losses, in 1983 Iran held a distinct advantage in the attempt to wage and eventually to win the war of attrition.

The War of Attrition, 1984–87

Most foreign military analysts feel that neither Iraq nor Iran has used its modern equipment efficiently. Frequently, sophisticated matériel had been left unused, when a massive modern assault could have won the battle for either side. Tanks and armored vehicles were dug in and used as artillery pieces, instead of being maneuvered to lead or to support an assault. William O. Staudenmaeir, a seasoned military analyst, reported that "the land-computing sights on the Iraqi tanks [were] seldom used. This lower[ed] the accuracy of the T-62 tanks to World War II standards." In addition, both sides frequently abandoned heavy equipment in the battle zone because they lacked the skilled technical personnel needed to carry out minor repairs.

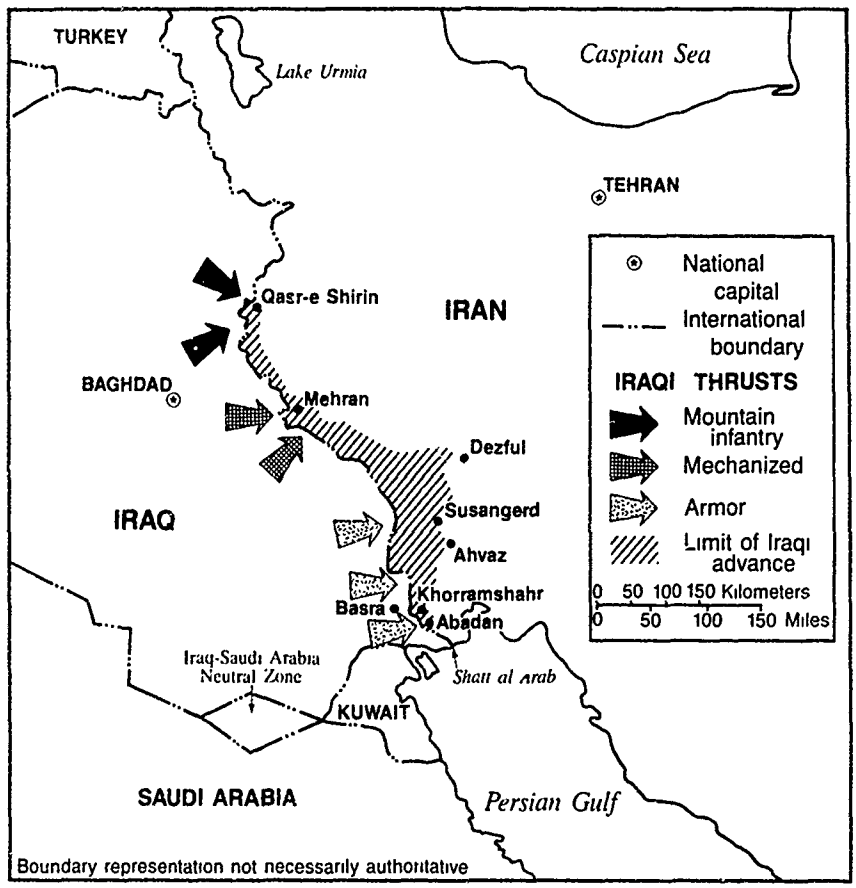


Figure 14. Initial Iraqi Attack on Iran, 1980

Analysts also assert that the two states' armies have shown little coordination and that some units in the field have been left to fight largely on their own. In this protracted war of attrition, soldiers and officers alike have failed to display initiative or professional expertise in combat. Difficult decisions, which should have had immediate attention, were referred by section commanders to the capitals for action. Except for the predictable bursts on important anniversaries, by the mid-1980s the war was stalemated.

In early 1984, Iran had begun Operation Dawn V, which was meant to split the Iraqi 3rd Army Corps and 4th Army Corps near Basra. In early 1984, an estimated 500,000 Pasdaran and Basij forces, using shallow boats or on foot, moved to within a few kilometers of the strategic Basra-Baghdad waterway. Between February 29 and March 1, in one of the largest battles of the war, the

two armies clashed and inflicted more than 25,000 fatalities on each other. Without armored and air support of their own, the Iranians faced Iraqi tanks, mortars, and helicopter gunships. Within a few weeks, Tehran opened another front in the shallow lakes of the Hawizah Marshes, just east of Al Qurnah, in Iraq, near the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Iraqi forces, using Soviet- and French-made helicopter gunships, inflicted heavy casualties on the five Iranian brigades (15,000 men) in this Battle of Majnun.

Lacking the equipment to open secure passages through Iraqi minefields, and having too few tanks, the Iranian command again resorted to the human-wave tactic. In March 1984, an East European journalist claimed that he "saw tens of thousands of children, roped together in groups of about twenty to prevent the faint-hearted from deserting, make such an attack." The Iranians made little, if any, progress despite these sacrifices. Perhaps as a result of this performance, Tehran, for the first time, used a regular army unit, the 92nd Armored Division, at the Battle of the Marshes a few weeks later.

Within a four-week period between February and March 1984, the Iraqis reportedly killed 40,000 Iranians and lost 9,000 of their own men, but even this was deemed an unacceptable ratio, and in February the Iraqi command ordered the use of chemical weapons. Despite repeated Iraqi denials, between May 1981 and March 1984, Iran charged Iraq with forty uses of chemical weapons. The year 1984 closed with part of the Majnun Islands and a few pockets of Iraqi territory in Iranian hands. Casualties notwithstanding, Tehran had maintained its military posture, while Baghdad was reevaluating its overall strategy.

The major development in 1985 was the increased targeting of population centers and industrial facilities by both combatants. In May Iraq began aircraft attacks, long-range artillery attacks, and surface-to-surface missile attacks on Tehran and on other major Iranian cities. Between August and November, Iraq raided Khark Island forty-four times in a futile attempt to destroy its installations. Iran responded with its own air raids and missile attacks on Baghdad and other Iraqi towns. In addition, Tehran systematized its periodic stop-and-search operations, which were conducted to verify the cargo contents of ships in the Persian Gulf and to seize war matériel destined for Iraq.

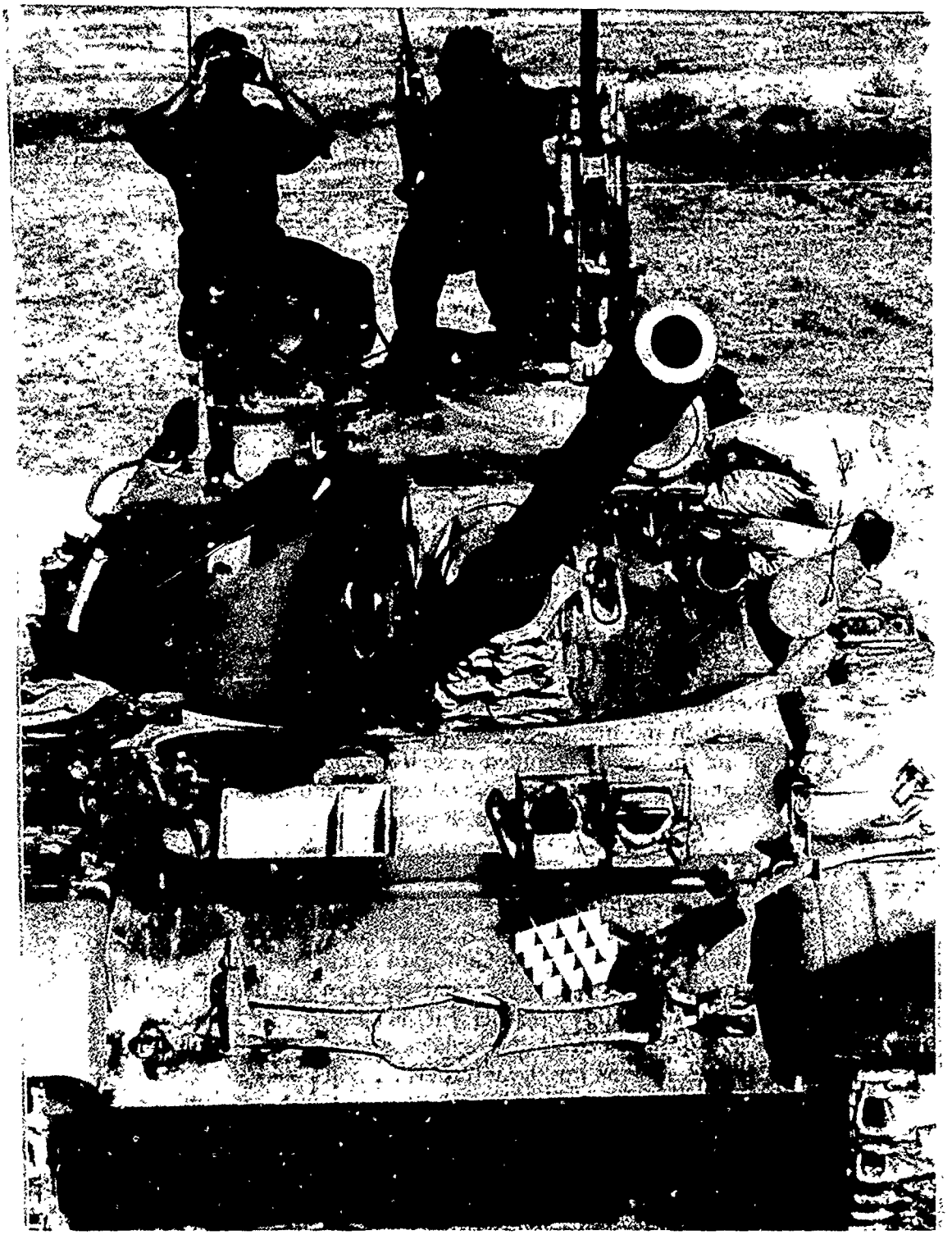
The only major ground offensive, involving an estimated 60,000 Iranian troops, occurred in March 1985 near Basra; once again, the assault proved inconclusive except for heavy casualties. In 1986, however, Iraq suffered a major loss in the southern region. On February 9, Iran launched a successful surprise amphibious assault

across the Shatt al Arab and captured the abandoned Iraqi oil port of Al Faw. The occupation of Al Faw, a logistical feat, involved 30,000 regular Iranian soldiers who rapidly entrenched themselves. Saddam Husayn vowed to climinate the bridgehead "at all costs," and in April 1988 the Iraqis succeeded in regaining the Al Faw Peninsula.

Late in March 1986, the UN secretary general, Javier Pérez de Cuellar, formally accused Iraq of using chemical weapons against Iran. Citing the report of four chemical warfare experts whom the UN had sent to Iran in February and March 1986, the secretary general called on Baghdad to end its violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol on the use of chemical weapons. The UN report concluded that Iraqi forces had used chemical warfare against Iranian forces; the weapons used included both mustard gas and nerve gas. The report further stated that the use of chemical weapons appeared to be more extensive in 1981 than in 1984. Iraq attempted to deny using chemicals, but the evidence, in the form of many badly burned casualties flown to European hospitals for treatment, was overwhelming. According to a British representative at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva in July 1986, Iraqi chemical warfare was responsible for about 10,000 casualties. In March 1988, Iraq was again charged with a major use of chemical warfare while retaking Halabjah, a Kurdish town in northeastern Iraq, near the Iranian border.

Unable in 1986, however, to dislodge the Iranians from Al Faw, the Iraqis went on the offensive; they captured the city of Mehran in May, only to lose it in July 1986. The rest of 1986 witnessed small hit-and-run attacks by both sides, while the Iranians massed almost 500,000 troops for another promised "final offensive," which did not occur. But the Iraqis, perhaps for the first time since the outbreak of hostilities, began a concerted air-strike campaign in July. Heavy attacks on Khark Island forced Iran to rely on makeshift installations farther south in the Gulf at Sirri Island and Larak Island. Thereupon, Iraqi jets, refueling in midair or using a Saudi military base, hit Sirri and Larak. The two belligerents also attacked 111 neutral ships in the Gulf in 1986.

Meanwhile, to help defend itself, Iraq had built impressive fortifications along the 1,200-kilometer war front. Iraq devoted particular attention to the southern city of Basra, where concrete-roofed bunkers, tank- and artillery-firing positions, minefields, and stretches of barbed wire, all shielded by an artificially flooded lake 30 kilometers long and 1,800 meters wide, were constructed. Most visitors to the area acknowledged Iraq's effective use of combat engineering to erect these barriers.



Iraqi tank outside Khorramshahr, Iran, October 1980
Courtesy Photri/Lehtikuva

On December 24, 1986, Iran began another assault on the Basra region. This annual "final offensive" resulted in more than 40,000 dead by mid-January 1987. Although the Iranian push came close to breaking Iraq's last line of defense east of Basra, Tehran was unable to score the decisive breakthrough required to win outright victory, or even to secure relative gains over Iraq.

The Tanker War, 1984–87

Naval operations came to a halt, presumably because Iraq and Iran had lost many of their ships, by early 1981; the lull in the fighting lasted for two years. In March 1984, Iraq initiated sustained naval operations in its self-declared 1,126-kilometer maritime exclusion zone, extending from the mouth of the Shatt al Arab to Iran's port of Bushehr. In 1981 Baghdad had attacked Iranian ports and oil complexes as well as neutral tankers and ships sailing to and from Iran; in 1984 Iraq expanded the so-called tanker war by using French Super-Etendard combat aircraft armed with Exocet missiles. Neutral merchant ships became favorite targets, and the long-range Super-Etendards flew sorties farther south. Seventy-one merchant ships were attacked in 1984 alone, compared with forty-eight in the first three years of the war. Iraq's motives in increasing the tempo included a desire to break the stalemate, presumably by cutting off Iran's oil exports and by thus forcing Tehran to the negotiating table. Repeated Iraqi efforts failed to put Iran's main oil exporting terminal at Khark Island out of commission, however. Iran retaliated by attacking first a Kuwaiti oil tanker near Bahrain on May 13 and then a Saudi tanker in Saudi waters five days later, making it clear that if Iraq continued to interfere with Iran's shipping, no Gulf state would be safe.

These sustained attacks cut Iranian oil exports in half, reduced shipping in the Gulf by 25 percent, led Lloyd's of London to increase its insurance rates on tankers, and slowed Gulf oil supplies to the rest of the world; moreover, the Saudi decision in 1984 to shoot down an Iranian Phantom jet intruding over Saudi territorial waters played an important role in ending both belligerents' attempts to internationalize the tanker war. Iraq and Iran accepted a 1984 UN-sponsored moratorium on the shelling of civilian targets, and Tehran later proposed an extension of the moratorium to include Gulf shipping, a proposal the Iraqis rejected unless it were to include their own Gulf ports.

Iraq began ignoring the moratorium soon after it went into effect and stepped up its air raids on tankers serving Iran and Iranian oil-exporting facilities in 1986 and 1987, attacking even vessels that belonged to the conservative Arab states of the Persian Gulf. Iran

responded by escalating its attacks on shipping serving Arab ports in the Gulf. As Kuwaiti vessels made up a large portion of the targets in these retaliatory raids, the Kuwaiti government sought protection from the international community in the fall of 1986. The Soviet Union responded first, agreeing to charter several Soviet tankers to Kuwait in early 1987. Washington, which had been approached first by Kuwait and which had postponed its decision, eventually followed Moscow's lead. United States involvement was sealed by the May 17, 1987, Iraqi missile attack on the USS *Stark,* in which thirty-seven crew members were killed. Baghdad apologized and claimed that the attack was a mistake. Ironically, Washington used the *Stark* incident to blame Iran for escalating the war and sent its own ships to the Gulf to escort eleven Kuwaiti tankers that were "reflagged" with the American flag and had American crews. Iran refrained from attacking the United States naval force directly, but it used various forms of harassment, including mines, hit-and-run attacks by small patrol boats, and periodic stop-and-search operations. On several occasions, Tehran fired its Chinese-made Silkworm missiles on Kuwait from Al Faw Peninsula. When Iranian forces hit the reflagged tanker *Sea Isle City* in October 1987, Washington retaliated by destroying an oil platform in the Rostam field and by using the United States Navy's Sea, Air, and Land (SEAL) commandos to blow up a second one nearby.

Within a few weeks of the *Stark* incident, Iraq resumed its raids on tankers but moved its attacks farther south, near the Strait of Hormuz. Washington played a central role in framing UN Security Council Resolution 598 on the Gulf war, passed unanimously on July 20; Western attempts to isolate Iran were frustrated, however, when Tehran rejected the resolution because it did not meet its requirement that Iraq should be punished for initiating the conflict.

In early 1988, the Gulf was a crowded theater of operations. At least ten Western navies and eight regional navies were patrolling the area, the site of weekly incidents in which merchant vessels were crippled. The Arab Ship Repair Yard in Bahrain and its counterpart in Dubayy, United Arab Emirates (UAE), were unable to keep up with the repairs needed by the ships damaged in these attacks.

Armed Forces and Society

Status in National Life

In modern Iraq, the armed forces have intervened in the political life of the state. Military interventions were concentrated in two periods, the first from 1936 to 1941, when there were seven

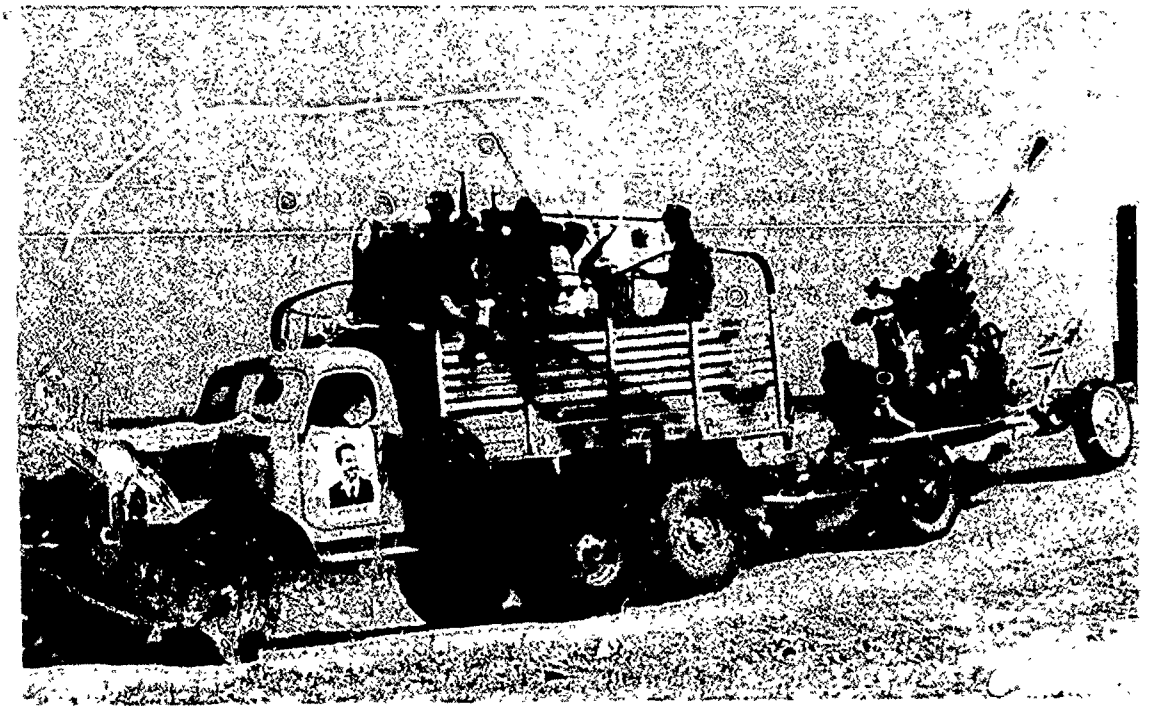
coups d'état, and the second between 1958 and 1968, when there were five military seizures of power. Because Iraq had a highly developed military institution and chronically weak civilian regimes, the armed forces felt that they alone were capable of providing strong and stable governments; however, personal and ideological factionalization within the armed forces fostered heightened instability and a cycle of coups that culminated in the Baathist takeover on July 17, 1968.

As the leadership in the previous military regime became increasingly fragmented and weak, and as resistance movements grew, Baathist officers, intending to end the cycle of military intervention in the government, carried out a coup. Baath Party officials believed the Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and various Kurdish movements were using the military as a vehicle to promote their own interests. Consequently, the Baath decided to weaken the military's political power gradually and to turn the army into a loyal and strong defensive force. Accordingly, they steadily reduced military participation in the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC); whereas the five-member 1968 RCC was composed exclusively of military men, only three of the RCC's twenty-two members in 1978 were active-duty officers.

To transform the military into an ideological army (Al Jaysh al Aqidi), the Baath undertook purges of the armed forces and granted military posts to civilians. They also tried to "purify" the armed forces by providing propaganda pamphlets and indoctrination lectures.

To institutionalize its control of the army, the Baath Party adopted an eclectic strategy. First, it restricted admission to military colleges and institutions to members of the Baath Party. Those accepted could expect generous financial rewards if they remained loyal, but, if they did not, they could expect the death penalty. Second, discrimination, in recruitment and in promotion, on religious and nationality grounds was intensified. At one point in 1979, all senior posts were restricted to officers related to Saddam Husayn or to other individuals from Tikrit.

The Ideological Army advocated national socialism, and the Baath Party used the army to fulfill Baath objectives. By 1980 the Ideological Army was an organized, modern force capable of rapid movement and had been strengthened by an overwhelming feeling of historical responsibility. The officers were firmly convinced that theirs was an elite role, that of the leading patriotic force in Iraqi society, and they, too, were inspired to carry out the national "historical mission." In short, the Baathization of the armed forces, based on an indoctrination in national socialism, in reliance on force,



Iraqi units at Khorramshahr, Iran, October 1980
Courtesy Photri/Lehtikuva

and in a vision of this historical mission, completed the emergence of the new army as a national force.

During the 1970s, military officers unsuccessfully attempted to overthrow the Baathist regime, however, on at least two occasions. In January 1970, an attempted coup led by two retired officers, Major General Abd al Ghani ar Rawi and Colonel Salih Mahdi as Samarrai, was discovered and thwarted as the conspirators entered the Republican Palace. In June 1973, a plot by Nazim Kazzar, a Shia and the director of internal security, to assassinate President Ahmad Hasan al Bakr and Saddam Husayn was foiled. Kazzar, who resented both Sunni and Tikriti domination of the Baath Party, had taken a prominent part in organizing the massacre of communists in the anarchy that followed the military's seizure of power in February 1963. He had acquired a reputation as a torturer, and the old palace that he had taken over as headquarters was known as "Qasr an Nihayah," the "Palace of the End." Few who entered ever came out, nor did their bodies receive public burial. When his coup plans failed, Kazzar fled toward the Iranian border. Before being apprehended, he killed the minister of defense, Hammad Shihab, who happened to be in the area inspecting border posts. Shortly afterward he was executed. Both coup attempts were followed by summary trials, executions, and purges of the armed forces.

Although rumors about foiled coup attempts have circulated periodically, the most serious attempt to assassinate Saddam Husayn reportedly occurred in 1982, after both a military defeat on the battlefield and an erosion in the economy. On July 11, 1982, the presidential party was traveling through the mixed Shia-Sunni village of Ad Dujayl, about sixty kilometers northeast of Baghdad, when it was surrounded by Shia villagers and held for several hours before it was rescued by the army. Subsequent reports revealed that a number of Saddam's bodyguards and of the villagers were killed. As punishment, the Baath government deported the villagers to Iran and razed their houses.

The Sociology of the Military

The armed forces in 1988 conceivably could have been expected to reflect the varied ethnic, religious, and class components of Iraqi society, because universal male conscription has been compulsory since 1934. To a certain extent the enlisted men did reflect society, especially after seven years of war. Indeed, for the purpose of unifying the diverse minority groups in this extremely heterogeneous country, the armed forces was one of the most important institutions in Iraq. For political reasons, this unification was never fully accomplished, however. Selective recruitment policies for the Military College, for example, were instituted by the British in the 1920s to favor the Sunni Arab community, and this bias was perpetuated by the Sunni political and military elite, which has also tended to dominate the Baath Party. The Shia majority was represented in the officer corps, but in a proportion far below that of their numerical presence in society.

The majority of the officers were of lower middle class urban background; they were the sons of minor government officials and small traders, for whom a career in the military promised considerable social advancement. Family ties to officers also played an important role in the recruitment of new personnel, and in the mid-1980s, Iraq's top military commanders were from the small town of Tikrit on the Euphrates River in the heart of Iraq's Sunni Arab community.

The Defense Burden

Military expenditures before 1980 fluctuated between 15 and 21 percent of the gross national product (GNP—see Glossary). In 1975, for example, Iraq allocated to its defense budget an estimated US$3 billion, representing 17.4 percent of GNP, whereas in 1979, military expenditures were estimated at US$6.4 billion, or 14.9 percent of GNP. After 1980, however, defense expenditures skyrocketed,

exceeding 50 percent of GNP by 1982. The 1986 military budget was estimated at US$11.58 billion.

The war's staggering financial and economic costs have proved to be more severe than anticipated, and, because of them, most large-scale infrastructure development projects have been halted. In 1980 Iraqi revenues from oil exports amounted to US$20 billion, which, when added to Iraq's estimated US$35 billion in foreign exchange reserves, permitted the country to sustain rapid increases in military expenditures. By 1984, however, oil revenues were so low that Iraq sought loans from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and from its foreign creditors. In 1986 annual oil revenues were estimated at US$5 to US$8 billion, whereas the war cost between US$600 million and US$1 billion per month. Military and financial experts estimated that by the end of 1987, Iraq had exhausted its US$35 billion reserves, and had incurred an additional US$40 to US$85 billion debt. Most of the money (US$30 to US$60 billion) came from GCC members, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which, some experts believed, may not demand repayment. The Baathist regime adopted a strategy of "guns and butter," trying to absorb the economic shock of the war without imposing undue hardships on the population. Through a subsidy program, the government continued to provide ample food and basic necessities to the population. The policy succeeded, but it also mortgaged the state's future. In early 1988, as the war dragged on and as military expenditures rose, it was difficult to ascertain whether this strategy could be sustained (see Introduction).

The Impact of Casualties on the Armed Forces

Casualty figures in the Iran-Iraq War could not be estimated accurately because neither belligerent permitted independent observers to assist in verifying records, and both belligerents rarely allowed foreign observers to visit combat areas. At the end of 1986, the most frequently cited estimate of casualties since September 1980 was about 1 million—350,000 dead and 650,000 wounded. According to this estimate, 250,000 Iranians and 100,000 Iraqis had been killed, while 500,000 Iranians and 150,000 Iraqis had been wounded. These estimates were probably conservative. Another reliable source claimed that the combined death toll was between 600,000 and 800,000. In 1987, the Iraqi minister of defense reported that as many as 1 million Iranians had been killed and almost 3 million had been wounded, but this was impossible to verify. During large offensives, reports indicated that casualty

figures ranged between 10,000 and 40,000, primarily because of Iran's "human wave" tactics. The impact of this loss of life on both societies was immense as was that of the high number of prisoners of war (POWs). The Geneva-based International Committee of the Red Cross estimated the number of POWs at nearly 50,000 Iraqis and 10,000 Iranians in early 1988.

For Iraq, the most damaging social repercussion in 1988 was the knowledge that the toll in casualties would continue to increase. Drafting young men, and at times women, from school and from work became unpopular, and the loss of young life weakened the regime. This human drain also created shortages in the labor force. These shortages forced an integration of women into the work force, a move that further disrupted Iraq's traditional social environment.

The war also forced cutbacks in Iraq's economic development, and it wiped out the relative prosperity of the late 1970s. Individuals were pressured to donate savings and gold holdings to the war effort. Experts believed in 1988 that these hardships, endured from 1980 onward, would gradually erode what social cohesion and progress had been achieved over the previous decade, should the war continue for a few more years.

Opposition to the war continued to grow. There were sporadic attempts on the lives of military officers, and especially on the lives of Saddam Husayn's relatives. As funerals in every neighborhood reminded the masses of the realities they faced, Iraqi morale continued to diminish.

Treatment of Veterans and Widows

The regime, at least initially, provided substantial sums of money to the families of war "heroes." Parents received, as a lump payment, enough for a car, a piece of land, and a new house. In addition, a victim's brother was assigned a monthly pension of ID500—which was equivalent in purchasing power to somewhat less than the same amount in US dollars in 1987—and his sister, in keeping with "Iraqi tradition," received a pension of half that amount. A widow and surviving children also received monthly pensions, in addition to a guarantee of free university education for the children.

The government reduced its benefits packages in 1985, especially after revenues declined. Survivors of a soldier killed in battle continued to receive the equivalent of US$10,000, and veterans received monthly pensions equivalent to US$500, but women whose husbands and sons were away fighting found it increasingly difficult to make ends meet.



Iraqi soldiers at Qasr-e Shirin, Iran, June 1981
Courtesy Photri/Lehtikuva

Internal Security

Internal Developments and Security

In maintaining internal security, the Baath regime focused on three main sources of opposition—the Kurds, living primarily near the borders of Iran and Turkey, the ICP and its splinter factions, and Shia revival movements not in sympathy with Baath socialism. In dealing with these groups, the government tended either to provide them with benefits so as to coopt them into the regime, or to take repressive measures against them.

The Kurdish Problem

The Kurdish minority offered the most persistent and militarily effective security threat of Iraq's modern history (see People, ch. 2). Although the Kurds had traditionally opposed any central governments in both Iran and Iraq, most Kurdish leaders initially saw the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran as a possible vehicle for promoting Kurdish aspirations toward self-government. The Iranian government's antiminority attitude, however, along with Iraq's attempts to support the Iranian Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), dashed all hopes for a unified Kurdish independent state. The Iraqi and Iranian regimes each chose to support a Kurdish faction opposing the other's government, and this intervention divided the Kurds

along "national" lines. As a result, during the 1980s Kurds in Iraq tended to hope for an Iranian victory in the Iran-Iraq War, while a number of Kurds in Iran thought that an Iraqi victory would best promote their own aspirations. Because most Kurds were Sunni Muslims, however, their enthusiasm for a Shia government in either country was somewhat limited.

Following the outbreak of hostilities and the ensuing stalemate in the Iran-Iraq War, Kurdish opponents of the Iraqi regime revived their armed struggle against Baghdad. In response to deportations, executions, and other atrocities allegedly perpetrated by the Baath, the Kurds seemed in the 1980s to have renewed their political consciousness, albeit in a very limited way. Differences between the brothers Masud and Idris Barzani, who led the KDP, and Jalal Talabani, leader of the Iraqi-supported Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), as well as the Kurdish leadership's periodic shifts into progovernment and antigovernment alliances, benefited Baghdad, which could manipulate opposing factions. What the Iraqi government could not afford, however, was to risk the opening of a second hostile front in Kurdistan as long as it was bogged down in its war with Iran. Throughout the 1980s, therefore, Baghdad tolerated the growing strength of the Kurdish resistance, which, despite shortcomings in its leadership, continued its long struggle for independence.

The Iraqi Communists and Baathist Iraq

The Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) has seen its fortunes rise and fall repeatedly since its founding by Yusuf Salman Yusuf (known as Comrade Fahd, or the Leopard) in 1934. During the next fifty years, the party's fortunes fluctuated with the successes of particular regimes in Baghdad. Although the ICP was legalized in 1937, and again in 1973, the Baath Party regularly suppressed it after 1963 and outlawed it altogether in 1985 (see Political Opposition, ch. 4).

In general, Iraqis rejected communism as contrary to both Islam and Arab nationalism. Yet, the clandestine ICP survived under the repressive policies of the monarchy, which had determined that because of its widespread appeal, the dissemination of communist theory among the armed forces or the police could be punished with death or with penal servitude for life. This persecution under the Hashimite monarchy raised communists to a status near that of martyrs in the eyes of the antimonarchical postrevolutionary leaders plotting the 1958 uprising. Ironically, the ICP was able to use the army to promote its goals and to organize opposition to the monarchy. In August 1949, for example, one of the army units

returning from Palestine smuggled in a stencil printing machine for the ICP.

Between 1958 and 1963, the ICP became closely aligned with the Qasim regime, which used the communist militia organization to suppress its traditional opponents brutally (see Republican Iraq, ch. 1). By 1963 Qasim's former allies, except the ICP, had all deserted him. When he was overthrown in February 1963, the new Baathist leaders carried out a massive purge in which thousands of communists were executed for supporting the hated Qasim. Survivors fled to the relatively isolated mountainous regions of Kurdistan. This first Baathist rise to power was short-lived, however, and under Abd as Salam Arif (1963–66) and his brother, Abd ar Rahman Arif (1966–68), both ICP and Baath cadre members were suppressed, largely because of their close connections with the Communist Party of Egypt and, in turn, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Although the Baath hierarchy had earlier perceived the ICP as a Soviet arm ready to interfere in internal affairs, after the successful 1968 coup d'état, Baath leaders joined ICP officials in calling for a reconciliation of their decade-long rivalry.

This reconciliation was short-lived, however, and in May 1978 Baghdad announced the execution of twenty-one ICP members, allegedly for organizing party cells within the armed forces. Foreign observers contended that the executions, which took place long after the alleged crimes were committed, were calculated to show that the Baath would not tolerate communist penetration of the armed forces with the ultimate aim of seizing control, probably with Soviet assistance. Attempts to organize new communist cells within the armed forces were crushed, as the government argued that according to the 1973 agreement creating the Progressive National Front (PNF), only the Baath Party could organize political activities within the military (see The Politics of Alliance: The Progressive National Front, ch. 4). Unverified reports suggested that several hundred members of the armed forces were questioned at that time concerning their possible complicity in what was described as a plot to replace Baath leaders with military officers more sympathetic to the Soviet Union.

Despite several decades of arrests, imprisonments, repression, assassinations, and exile, in the late 1980s the ICP remained a credible force and a constant threat to the Baath leadership. After the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980, the ICP came to depend heavily on outside support for its survival. Syria, for example, provided material support to the ICP's struggle against the Saddam Husayn regime, and the Syrian Communist Party cooperated with the ICP in strongly condemning the war with Iran.

In addition to relying more heavily on outside financial and moral support, the ICP initiated significant structural and ideological changes in the 1980s. Four Arab leaders (two Shias, two Sunnis) were dropped from the Politburo, and four Central Committee members were reportedly expelled from the party in 1984. Although the reasons for these changes were not clear, observers speculated at the time that party boss Aziz Muhammad and his Kurdish compatriots had gained control of the ICP and that Kurdish interests therefore outweighed national interests. Muhammad's tenacity in supporting the armed struggle of Iraqi Kurds and in totally opposing the Iran-Iraq War helped to bring about a split in the ICP leadership. His keynote address to the 1985 Fourth Party Congress analyzed in detail the course of the Iran-Iraq War; he assigned partial responsibility for the war to Iran, but he blamed the Baath government in Baghdad for prolonging the conflict. In September 1986, the ICP declared the communists' fight against the Baath regime to be inextricably linked to the achievement of peace between Iraq and Iran. A 1986 joint statement of the Tudeh (the Tudeh Party being the leading Marxist party of Iran) and the ICP called for an end to the war and for establishment of "a just democratic peace with no annexations whatsoever, on the basis of respect for the two countries' state borders at the start of the war, each people's national sovereignty over its territory, and endorsing each people's right to determine the sociopolitical system they desire."

Reliable data on ICP membership were unavailable in early 1988. One 1984 estimate was 2,000 members, but other foreign sources indicated a considerably larger ICP membership. Because it was a clandestine party fighting for the overthrow of the Baathist regime, the ICP's true membership strength may never be known, especially because it directed its organizational efforts through the Kurdish Democratic National Front (DNF). The ICP headquarters was partially destroyed in May 1984 following limited Turkish incursions to help Iraq protect its oil pipeline to and through Turkey and was apparently relocated in territories controlled by the DNF in 1988. Ideologically split and physically mauled, the ICP may have lost much of its strength, and it had no influence in the People's Army, which remained in the hands of the Baath Party.

Impact of the Iranian Revolution on Iraqi Shias

In 1964 Ayatollah Khomeini was expelled from Iran to Turkey, and he was then granted asylum by Iraq (see The Iran-Iraq Conflict, ch. 1). His theological erudition and idealism earned him a significant following in An Najaf, where ulama (religious leaders) and students from throughout the Shia world formed an important

circle of learned men. The Baath socialist regime, however, with its secular, anticlerical stance, was never comfortable with Shia religious leaders and their followers.

Relations between the Iraqi regime and the Shia clerics deteriorated during the Imam Husayn celebrations in February 1977, when police interference in religious processions resulted in massive antigovernment demonstrations in An Najaf and in Karbala. Several thousand participants were arrested, and eight Shia dignitaries, including five members of the clergy, were sentenced to death and were executed. In 1978, in an effort to quell the Shia unrest and to satisfy the shah's request, Baghdad expelled Ayatollah Khomeini, who sought refuge in France.

In another attempt to minimize Shia dissent, the Iraqi government had deported to Iran 60,000 Shias of Iranian origin in 1974. In the months following the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, the Iraqi government deported nearly 35,000 more ethnic Iranians.

Deportations, the suppression of the Shia ulama, and the death under suspicious circumstances of Shia leader Imam Musa as Sadr all contributed to the deterioration of relations between Baathist Iraq and Islamic Iran. The ranking Shia religious leader, Sayyid Abu al Qasim al Khoi, refrained from either sanctioning or opposing the Baath government, but the government feared Sadr because of his leadership qualities and because of his close association with Khomeini.

Beginning in 1980, Iran actively promoted its own revolutionary vision for Iraq. All anti-Iraqi Islamic organizations, including Ad Dawah al Islamiyah, commonly called Ad Dawah (see Political Opposition, ch. 4) and the Organization of Islamic Action were based in Tehran, where they came under the political, religious, and financial influence of the ruling clergy. To control rivalry and infighting among the different groups, Iran helped to set up the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI) on November 17, 1982. It was headed by Iraqi cleric Hujjat al Islam Muhammad Baqir al Hakim. Establishing SAIRI was viewed as a step toward unifying the political and military work of all groups and as an attempt to unite them under a single command directly supervised by their Iranian counterparts. In return, SAIRI acknowledged the leadership of Khomeini as the supreme commander of the Islamic nation. Nevertheless, the majority of Iraqi Shias resisted Tehran's control and remained loyal to Iraq.

Internal Security in the 1980s

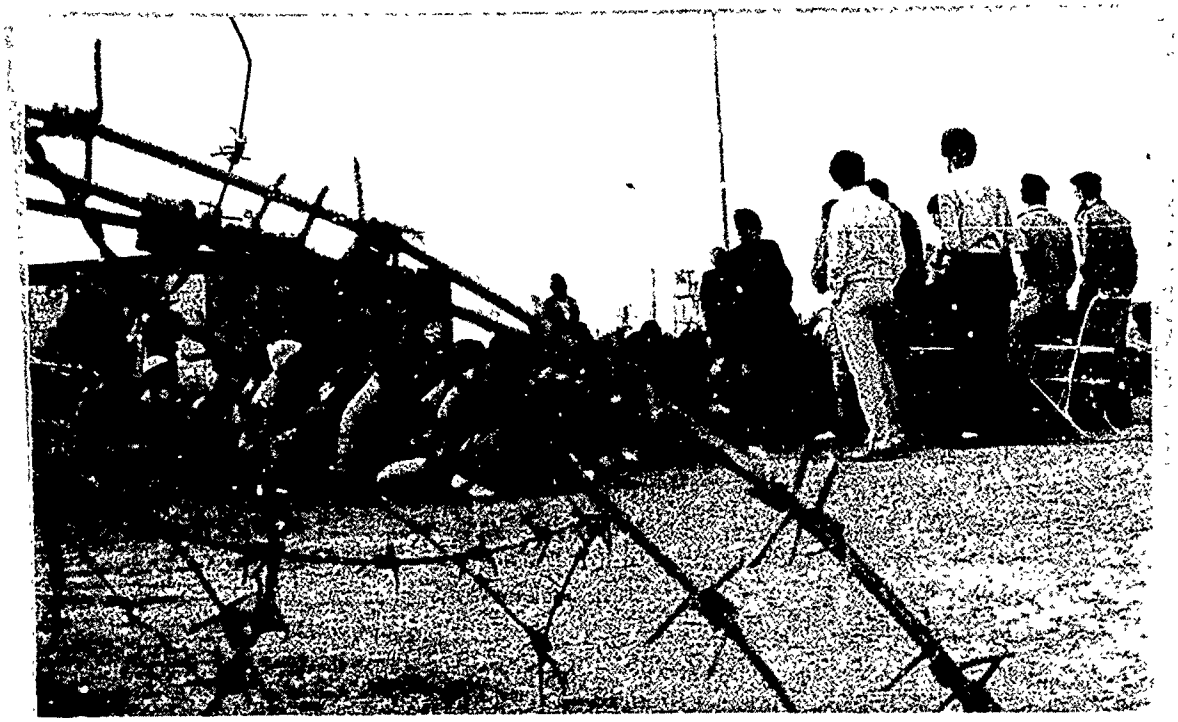
In addition to the regular armed forces, Iraq's state security system consisted of at least six organizations charged with a wide

variety of security functions. Little was publicly known about these paramilitary and police organizations, but their importance was undisputed. In addition to the People's Army, discussed above, internal security organizations consisted of the Security Troops (or Presidential Guard), the Border Guard, the Frontier Force, the regular civil police, and the Mukhabarat (or Department of General Intelligence).

The Security Troops formed an elite group of 4,800 whose primary task was to protect the Baath leadership in Iraq. Their ranks were filled with the most loyal troops serving in the Iraqi armed forces, whose dedication to Baathism and to Saddam Husayn personally had been tested on numerous occasions. These troops faced considerable danger because the frequent assassination attempts on the president and on his close associates usually meant loss of life among bodyguards. Survivors were generously rewarded, however.

The Frontier Guard and the Mobile Force accounted for an estimated 50,000 additional men within the security system. Unlike the People's Army, these forces consisted of full-time, professional men-at-arms. Frontier Guard personnel were stationed principally in northern Iraq along the borders with Iran, Turkey, and Syria to guard against smuggling and infiltrations. Before 1974 the Frontier Guard was under the control of local Kurds, but, after the defeat of the Kurdish revolt in 1975, it was administered by the central government. The Mobile Force was a strike force used to support the regular police in the event of major internal disorders. It was armed with infantry weapons, with artillery, and with armored vehicles, and it contained commando units trained to deal with guerrilla activities.

The regular civil police handled state security in addition to their routine duties of fighting crime, controlling traffic, and the like. After 1982, many of these routine functions were taken over by People's Army "volunteers" to free more able-bodied men for duty on the war front. The regular police were under the Ministry of Interior, and they were commanded by the director of police in Baghdad. There were thought to be several specialized components of the police, including forces assigned exclusively to traffic, to narcotics investigation, and to railroad security. The police operated at least two schools: the Police College for those with secondary degrees and the Police Preparatory School for those without secondary education. Police officers held military ranks identical to those of the regular armed forces, and many were called to serve in the war with Iran.



Iranian soldiers in a prisoner of war camp at Ar Ramadi, Iraq
Courtesy International Committee of the Red Cross
Photo by J.J. Kurz

The Department of General Intelligence was the most notorious and possibly the most important arm of the state security system. It was created in 1973 after the failed coup attempt by Director of Internal Security Nazim Kazzar. In 1982 the Department of General Intelligence underwent a personnel shake-up. At that time, it was headed by Saadun Shakir, who was an RCC member and, like Saddam Husayn, a Tikriti, and who was assisted by Saddam Husayn's younger half-brother, Barazan Husayn. Foreign observers believed that the president was dissatisfied because the agency had not anticipated the assassination attempt at Ad Dujayl. It was also believed that several separate intelligence networks were incorporated within the department, and that Iraqi intelligence agents operated both at home and abroad in their mission to seek out and eliminate opponents of the Baghdad regime.

Incidence of Crime

The Baathist regime introduced a variety of laws, of which the most important was a 1969 penal code that expanded the definition of crime to include acts detrimental to the political, the economic, and the social goals of the state. Baathist hegemony in the political sphere, for example, was enforced by a law making it a crime to insult the state or its leaders publicly. Economic goals were

also enforced by several laws—a 1970 trade regulation, for example, made both the selling of goods at prices other than those fixed by the state and the production of inferior products felonies. The government's free education program was enforced by a law making it a crime to refuse to participate.

The more traditionally defined kinds of crime, including theft, forgery, bribery, the misappropriation of public funds, and murder, followed the pattern of most developing states. No adequate statistical data for Iraq were available in 1987, however. Amnesty International reported in 1986 that degrading treatment of prisoners, arbitrary arrests, and denial of fair public trials were common. In 1985 and in 1986, several high-ranking officials, including the mayor of Baghdad, were tried for corruption, were found guilty, and were executed. Presumably, the purpose of these sentences was to make it clear that criminals would be punished, regardless of their status.

Criminal Justice System

The regular criminal justice system consisted of courts of first instance (including magistrate courts), courts of sessions, and the Court of Cassation. Major crimes against state security were tried in the revolutionary courts, which operated separately from the regular judicial system. In general this court system followed the French pattern as first introduced during the rule of the Ottoman Turks, although the system had undergone several modifications during the twentieth century. Juries were not used anywhere in the Iraqi criminal court system.

Most petty crimes, or contraventions, which carried penalties of imprisonment from one day to three months or of fines up to ID30, were tried in local magistrate courts. These third-class courts, which were found in all local municipalities, were presided over by municipal council members or by other local administrative officials. First- and second-class criminal matters, which corresponded to felonies and to misdemeanors, respectively, were tried within appropriate penal courts attached to civil courts of first instance, located in provincial capitals and in district and subdistrict centers. Misdemeanors were punishable by three months' to five years' imprisonment; felonies by five years' to life imprisonment or by the death penalty. One judge conducted the trials for criminal matters at each of these courts of original jurisdiction.

In 1986 the six courts of session continued to hold jurisdiction in the most serious criminal matters, and they acted as courts of appeal in relation to lower penal or magistrate courts. Four of these

courts were identical to the civil courts of appeal; two were presided over by local judges from the courts of first instance. Three judges heard cases tried in the courts of session.

The Court of Cassation was the state's highest court for criminal matters. At least three judges were required to be present in its deliberations, and in cases punishable by death, five judges were required. The Court of Cassation also served as the highest court of appeals, and it confirmed, reduced, remitted, or suspended sentences from lower courts. It assumed original jurisdiction over crimes committed by judges or by high-ranking government officials.

The revolutionary courts, composed of three judges, sat permanently in Baghdad to try crimes against the security of the state; these crimes were defined to include espionage, treason, smuggling, and trade in narcotics. Sessions were held in camera, and the right of defense reportedly was severely restricted. It was also believed that regular judicial procedures did not apply in these special courts, summary proceedings being common.

On several occasions during the 1970s—after the attempted coups of 1970 and of 1973, after the 1977 riots in An Najaf and in Karbala, and after the 1979 conspiracy against the regime—the RCC decreed the establishment of special temporary tribunals to try large numbers of security offenders en masse. Each of these trials was presided over by three or four high government officials who, not being bound by ordinary provisions of criminal law, rendered swift and harsh sentences. In 1970 fifty-two of an estimated ninety accused persons were convicted, and thirty-seven of these were executed during three days of proceedings. It was believed that about thirty-five had been sentenced to death and about twenty had been acquitted, during two days of trials in 1973. In a one-day trial in 1977, eight were sentenced to death, and fifteen were sentenced to life imprisonment; eighty-seven persons were believed to have been acquitted. Thirty-eight Iraqis were executed between May 24 and May 27, 1978. The majority of them were members of the armed forces, guilty of political activity inside the military. An additional twenty-one leading members of the party, including ministers, trade union leaders, and members of the RCC, were tried in camera and executed in 1979. In general, those sentenced to death were executed, either by hanging or by firing squad, immediately after the trials.

Administered by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the penal system was dominated by the central prison at Abu Ghurayb near Baghdad, which housed several thousand prisoners, and by three smaller branch prisons located in the governorates of Al

Basrah, Babylon, and Nineveh. Additional detention centers were located throughout the country. In early 1988, it was impossible to determine the full number of imprisonments in Iraq.

Internal security was a matter of ongoing concern for Iraq in the late 1980s. The end of the war with Iran would presumably bring opportunities for liberalizing the security restrictions imposed by the Baathist regime.

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English-language literature on the subject of Iraqi national security was scarce in 1988, largely because of the government's almost obsessive secrecy with respect to security affairs and because of the Iran-Iraq War. Frederick W. Axelgard's *Iraq in Transition: A Political, Economic, and Strategic Perspective* was the most comprehensive and up-to-date study of the subject in 1988. Majid Khadduri's *Socialist Iraq,* dealing with military and security affairs in the larger context of post-1968 political developments, continued to be indispensable. Mohammad A. Tarbush's *The Role of the Military in Politics: A Case Study of Iraq to 1941,* and Hanna Batatu's *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq,* provided invaluable background information. The rapid growth, in both manpower and equipment, of Iraq's armed forces was best documented in the annual *The Military Balance,* published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. Accounts by Efraim Karsh in *The Iran-Iraq War,* and a series of articles by Anthony H. Cordesman, thoroughly discussed the Iran-Iraq War. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Appendix

Table

1 Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors
2 Population Distribution by Governorate, 1987
3 Area and Population Density, 1987
4 Teachers, Students, and Schools, School Years 1976-77 to 1985-86, Selected Years
5 Medical Personnel and Facilities, 1985
6 Crude Oil Production and Oil Revenues, 1982-87
7 Production and Area of Major Crops, 1981-85, Selected Years
8 Principal Exports and Imports, 1984
9 Direction of Trade, 1985 and 1986
10 Armed Forces Manpower, 1977-87
11 Major Army Equipment, 1987
12 Major Navy Equipment, 1987
13 Major Air Force Equipment, 1987

Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m²)	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
	1.1	short tons
	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius (Centigrade)	9 divide by 5 and add 32	degrees Fahrenheit

Table 2. Population Distribution by Governorate, 1987
(in thousands)

Administrative Division	Female	Male	Urban	Rural	Total
Governorate					
Al Anbar	390	428	538	280	818
Al Basrah	438	434	782	90	872
Al Muthanna	160	153	163	150	313
Al Qadisiyah	280	281	321	240	561
An Najaf	362	361	568	155	723
At Tamim	255	338	473	120	593
Babylon	557	552	669	440	1,109
Baghdad	1,390	1,955	3,600	245	3,845
Dhi Qar	445	473	468	450	918
Diyala	445	455	465	435	900
Karbala	229	227	341	115	456
Maysan	244	256	275	225	500
Nineveh	745	762	982	525	1,507 [1]
Salah ad Din	350	374	400	324	724
Wasit	225	235	260	200	460
Autonomous Region [2]					
As Sulaymaniyah	433	510	543	400	943
Dahuk	125	168	160	133	293
Irbil	340	403	475	268	743
TOTAL	7,913 [1]	8,365 [1]	11,483	4,795	16,278 [1]

[1] From October 17, 1987, census; remaining figures are estimates.
[2] See Glossary.

Source: Based on information from Joint Publications Research Service, *Daily Report: Near East and South Asia,* October 20, 1987, 22, and October 21, 1987, 25.

Table 3. Area and Population Density, 1987

Administrative Division	Land Area (in square kilometers)[1]	Population (in thousands)	Density (persons per square kilometer)
Governorate			
Al Anbar	137,723	818	5.9
Al Basrah	19,070	872	45.7
Al Muthanna	51,029	313	6.1
Al Qadisiyah	8,507	561	65.9
An Najaf	27,844	723	26.0
At Tamim	10,391	593	57.1
Babylon	5,258	1,109 [2]	210.9
Baghdad	5,159	3,845 [2]	745.3
Dhi Qar	13,626	918	67.4
Diyala	19,292	900	46.7
Karbala	5,034	456	90.6
Maysan	14,103	500	35.5
Nineveh	37,698	1,507 [2]	40.0
Salah ad Din	29,004	724	25.0
Wasit	17,308	460	26.6
Autonomous Region [3]			
As Sulaymaniyah	15,756	943	59.9
Dahuk	6,120	293	47 9
Irbil	14,471	743	51.3
TOTAL	437,393	16,278 [2]	37.2

[1] From *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1985.*
[2] From October 17, 1987, census; remaining figures are estimates.
[3] See Glossary.

Source: Based on information from Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1985,* Baghdad, n.d., 10, and Joint Publications Research Service, *Daily Report: Near East and South Asia,* October 20, 1987, 22 and October 21, 1987, 25.

Table 4. Teachers, Students, and Schools, School Years 1976–77 to 1985–86, Selected Years

Level	Number of Teachers	Number of Students		Total Students	Number of Schools
		Female	*Male*		
Kindergarten					
1976–77	2,291	24,223	27,617	51,840	276
1979–80	3,079	33,156	47,262	80,418	358
1982–83	4,175	38,137	41,319	79,456	507
1985–86	4,657	38,604	42,827	81,431	584
Primary					
1976–77	70,799	687,220	1,259,962	1,947,182	8,156
1979–80	92,644	1,174,866	1,434,067	2,608,933	11,316
1982–83	107,364	1,214,410	1,400,517	2,614,927	10,223
1985–86	118,492	1,258,434	1,554,082	2,812,516	8,127
Secondary					
1976–77	19,471	164,442	387,600	552,042	1,319
1979–80	28,002	271,112	626,588	897,700	1,774
1982–83	32,556	334,897	636,930	971,827	1,977
1985–86	35,051	371,214	660,346	1,031,560	2,238
Vocational [1]					
1976–77	1,906	n.a.	n.a.	28,365	82
1979–80	3,928	n.a	n.a.	4,026	126
1982–83	4,733	n.a.	n.a.	61,383	157
1985–86	6,405	31,252	88,838	120,090	237
Teacher Training Schools [2]					
1977–78	666	12,685	4,652	17,337	32
1982–83	1,022	15,936	10,255	26,191	36
1985–86	209	3,355	2,928	6,283	7
Teacher Training Institutes [3]					
1977–78	241	3,233	3,019	6,252	13
1982–83	219	3,286	3,197	6,483	7
1985–86	1,202	16,820	11,083	27,903	37
University, College, or Technical Institutes [4]					
1976–77	4,008	24,584	56,914	81,498	9
1979–80	5,680	9,298	21,884	31,182	9
1982–83	6,674	10,536	23,626	34,162	9
1985–86	7,616	17,015	36,022	53,037	9

n a —not available.

[1] Includes commercial, technical, and agricultural schools

[2] A three-year course for those who had completed intermediate studies.

[3] A two-year course for secondary school graduates

[4] Includes Iraqi, other Arab, and foreign faculty and students at University of Baghdad, University of Basra, Foundation of Technical Institutes, University of Mosul, University of Al Mustansiriyah, University of Salah ad Din, University of Technology, and the religious colleges affiliated with the University of Baghdad and the University of Al Mustansiriyah

Source: Based on information from Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1985,* Baghdad, n d., 203–33

Table 5. Medical Personnel and Facilities, 1985

Administrative Division	Estimated Population (in thousands) [1]	Hospitals	Hospital Beds	Doctors	Paramedics
Governorate					
Al Anbar	818	11	825	206	523
Al Basrah	872	14	2,212	399	1,562
Al Muthanna	313	5	499	499	307
Al Qadisiyah	561	11	749	163	435
An Najaf	723	8	1,355	207	581
At Tamim	593	8	869	146	488
Babylon	1,109 [2]	7	859	203	623
Baghdad	3,845 [2]	41	10,006	2,145	4,535
Dhi Qar	918	15	1,102	160	600
Diyala	900	10	836	148	454
Karbala	456	4	488	118	287
Maysan	500	10	956	126	546
Nineveh	1,507 [2]	21	2,223	498	1,011
Salah ad Din	724	6	775	125	403
Wasit	460	10	590	137	506
Autonomous Region [3]					
As Sulaymaniyah	943	11	1,187	124	630
Dahuk	293	7	490	124	344
Irbil	743	17	1,684	196	848
TOTAL	16,278	216	27,705	5,724	4,683

[1] For 1987
[2] From October 17, 1987, census.
[3] See Glossary.

Source. Based on information from Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1985,* Baghdad, n.d., 192-96; and Joint Publications Research Service, *Daily Report Near East and South Asia,* October 20, 1987, 22 and October 21, 1987, 25.

Table 6. Crude Oil Production and Oil Revenues, 1982-87

	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Production (in thousands of barrels per day)	972	922	1,203	1,437	1,746	2,076
Revenue (in millions of United States dollars)	$10,250*	$9,650*	$10,000*	$11,900*	$6,813*	$11,300*

*Estimated

Source: Based on information from Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, *Economic and Energy Indicators,* June 3, 1988, 9, and *The Middle East and North Africa, 1989,* London: Europa, 1988, 475.

Table 7. Production and Area of Major Crops, Selected Years, 1981–85

	Production (in thousands of tons)			Cultivated Area (in thousands of hectares)		
Crop	*1981*	*1983*	*1985*	*1981*	*1983*	*1985*
Wheat	902	841	1,406	484.7	512.6	626.6
Barley	925	835	1,331	419.5	556.6	579.5
Rice	162	111	149	22.9	22.7	24.5
Cotton	13	12	7	4.5	5.5	4.3
Tobacco	12	14	17	4.8	5.8	6.6
Tomatoes	425	439	612	16.4	14.9	19.1
Eggplant	83	112	232	3.0	3.8	5.6
Watermelon	491	583	757	17.1	18.8	21.9

Source: Based on information from Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1985,* Baghdad, n d., 59–64.

Table 8. Principal Exports and Imports, 1984

Exports (in millions of Iraqi dinars*)		Imports (in millions of Iraqi dinars*)	
Oil, gas and related products	7,028	Machinery, including aircraft	65,067
Foodstuffs	681	Manufactured goods	48,786
Raw materials (including fertilizers, cement)	287	Foodstuffs	43,828
Manufactured goods	241	Chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and explosives	17,225
		Heating, medical equipment, furniture, and clothes	10,285
Other items	36	Other items	10,653
TOTAL	8,273		195,844

*For value of the Iraqi dinar—see Glossary

Source. Based on information from Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Organization, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1985,* Baghdad, n.d., 164.

Table 9. Direction of Trade, 1985-86
(in percentages)

Country	1985	1986
Exports		
Brazil	17.7	n.a.
Britain	n.a.	1 2
France	13.0	7.0
Italy	11.0	8 1
Japan	6.0	10.5
Spain	10.7	n.a.
Turkey	8.1	8.1
United States	4.7	5.8
West Germany	n.a.	10.5
Yugoslavia	8.0	8.1
Imports		
Brazil	7.0	n.a.
Britain	6.3	8.0
France	7.5	6 8
Italy	7.6	8 0
Japan	14.4	14.8
Kuwait	4.2	n.a.
Turkey	8.2	9.0
United States	n.a.	5.7
West Germany	9.2	8.0
Yugoslavia	n.a.	4.5

n.a — not available.

Source: Based on information from the International Monetary Fund, *Direction of Trade Statistics,* cited in the Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Report Iraq,* No 1, 1987, 2 and No 1, 1988, 2.

Table 10. Armed Forces Manpower, Selected Years, 1977-87

	1977	1979	1981	1983	1985	1987
Armed Forces						
Army	160,000	190,000	210,000 [1]	475,000 [1]	475,000 [1]	475,000
Navy	3,000	4,000	4,250 [1]	4,250 [1]	5,000 [1]	5,000 [1]
Air Force	15,000	18,000	28,000 [1]	28,000 [1]	30,000 [1]	30,000
Air Defense	10,000	10,000	10,000 [1]	10,000 [1]	10,000 [1]	10,000
TOTAL	188,000	222,000	252,250 [1]	517,250 [1, 2]	520,000 [1]	520,000
Reserves	250,000	250,000	250,000	75,000	75,000	480,000
Paramilitary						
People's Army	50,000	75,000	250,000 [3]	250,000	450,000	650,000
Security Forces	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800
Frontier Guard	—	—	—	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

n.a.—not available.
[1] Losses make estimates tentative
[2] In addition, 10,000 armed forces personnel from Egypt, Jordan, and Sudan served in Iraq.
[3] 75,000 of these mobilized.

*Table 11. Major Army Equipment, 1987**

TYPE	DESIGNATION	INVENTORY
Armored fighting vehicles		
Heavy and medium tanks	T-54, T-55, T-62, T-72	2,790
	T-59, T-69 II	1,500
	Chieftain Mark 3/5, M-60, M-47	150
	M-77	60
Light tanks	PT-76	100
TOTAL		4,600
Armored vehicles		
Mechanized infantry combat vehicles	BMP	1,000
Reconnaissance vehicles	BRDM-2, FUG-70, ERC-90, MOWAG Roland, EE-9 Cascavel, EE-3 Jararaca	
Armored personnel carriers	BTR-50, BTR-60, BTR-152, OT-62, OT-64, VC-TH (with HOT antitank guided weapons), M-113A1, Panhard M-3, EE-11 Urutu	
TOTAL		4,000
Artillery guns	122mm: D-74; 130mm: M-46, Type 59-1; 155mm: GCT self-propelled.	5
Guns/howitzers	152mm: M-1937;	
	155mm: G-5,	40
	GHN-45	40
Howitzers	105mm: M-56 pack;	
	122mm: D-30 towed, M-1938, M-1974 (2S1);	
	152mm: M-1943, M-1973 (2S3) self-propelled;	
	155mm: M-114/M-109 self-propelled	
TOTAL		3,000
Multiple rocket launchers	Includes 122mm: BM-21	n.a.
	127mm: ASTROS II	60
	132mm: BM-13, BM-16	n.a.
TOTAL		200
Surface-to-surface missiles	FROG-7	30
	Scud-B	20
TOTAL		50
Mortars	81mm; 120mm; 160mm	n.a.

Table 11.—Continued.

TYPE	DESIGNATION	INVENTORY
Antitank weapons		
Recoilless rifles	73mm: SPG-9	
	82mm: B-10	
	107mm	n.a.
Guns	85mm; 100mm towed; 105mm:	
	JPz	100
	SK-105 self-propelled	n.a.
Antitank guided weapons	AT-3 Sagger (including	
	BRDM-2)	n.a
	AT-4 Spigot (reported), SS-11,	
	Milan, HOT	n.a.
Army Air Corps,		
armed helicopters		
Attack helicopters	Mil Mi24 Hind, with AT-2	
	Swatter	40
	SA-342 Gazelle (some with	
	HOT)	50
	SA-321 Super Frelon (some with	
	Exocet AM-38 ASM)	10
	SA-316B Alouette III, with	
	AS-12 ASM	30
	BO-105, with AS-11 antitank	
	guided weapons	56
	Hughes-530F	26
	Hughes-500D	30
	Hughes-300C	30
TOTAL		272
Transport helicopters		
Heavy	Mi-6 Hook	10
Medium	Mi-8	100
Light	Mi-4	20
	SA-330 Puma	10
TOTAL		140
Air defense weapons		
Guns	23mm: ZSU-23-4 self-propelled;	
	37mm: M-1939 and twin;	
	57mm: includes ZSU-57-2	
	self-propelled;	
	85mm; 100mm; 130mm	
TOTAL		4,000
Surface-to-air missiles	SA-2	120
	SA-3, SA-6, SA-7, SA-9	150
	Roland	60
TOTAL		300

n.a —not available.
*Equipment estimates are tentative because of wartime losses.

Source: Based on information from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1987-1988.* London, 1987, 100.

Table 12. Major Navy Equipment, 1987

Type and Description	Inventory
Frigates	5
4 Lupo class with 8 Otomat-2 SSM, 1 X 8 Albatros/Aspide SAM, 1 helicopter (held in Italy)	
1 Yug (training vessel)	
Corvettes	6
Assad class, all with 1 X 4 Albatros/Aspide SAMs:	
2 with 2 Otomat-2 SSMs, 1 helicopter;	
4 with 6 Otomat-2 SSMs;	
completed (all 6 held in Italy)	
Fast-attack craft (missiles) OSA class, each with 4 Styx SSMs (6 of model II, 2 of model I)	8
Fast-attack craft (torpedoes)	4
P-6 (may not be operable)	
Large patrol craft: SO-1	3
Coastal patrol craft: Zhuk (under 100 tons)	5
Minesweepers	8
2 Soviet T-43 (ocean);	
3 Yevgenya (ocean); and	
3 Nestin (inshore/river)	
Amphibious	6
3 Polnocny (LSM [1])	
3 modern cargo (LST [2])	
Support ships	5
1 Stromboli class	
2 Poluchat torpedo support;	
1 Agnadeen tanker; and 1 Transport	

[1] Landing ship, medium.
[2] Landing ship tank.

Source: Based on information from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1987-1988,* London, 1987, 100.

Table 13. Major Air Force Equipment, 1987

TYPE	DESIGNATION	INVENTORY
Bombers	Tu-16	8
	Tu-22	7
Fighters	MiG-29	28
	MiG-23BM	40
	Mirage F-1C	40
	Mirage F-1EQ5 (Exocet-equipped)	20
	Mirage F-1EQ-200	23
	F-7 (Chinese version of MiG-21 assembled in Egypt)	70
	Su-7; Su-20 (Su-25 reported)	n.a.
Interceptors	MiG-25	25
	MiG-21	200
	MiG-19	40
	Mirage F-1EQ	30
Reconnaissance	MiG-25	5
Transport aircraft	An-2 Colt	10
	An-12 Cub	10
	An-24 Coke (retiring)	6
	An-26 Curl	2
	Il-76 Candid	19
	Il-14 Crate	19
	DH Heron	1
Trainers	MiG-15, MiG-21, MiG-23U, Su-7U	n.a.
	Mirage F-1BQ	16
	L-29 Delfin	50
	L-39 Albatros	40
	PC-7 Turbo Trainer	50
	EMB-312 Tucano	21
Air-to-air missiles	R-530	n.a.
	R-550 Magic	n.a.
	AA-2, AA-6, AA-7, AA-8	n.a.
Air-to-surface missiles	AS-30 Laser	200
	Armat	n.a.
	Exocet AM-39	542
	AS-4 Kitchen	n.a.
	AS-5 Kelt	n.a.

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1987-1988,* London: 1987, 100-1; *The Military Balance, 1986-1987,* London: 1986, 98; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *World Armaments and Disarmament, SIPRI Yearbook 1987.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, 250-53.

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Glossary

Autonomous Region—Governorates of As Sulaymaniyah, Dahuk, and Irbil, the Kurdish majority area. In this region—popularly known as Kurdistan—Kurdish has status of official language, and residents enjoy limited autonomy from central government.

atabeg—Turkish word that during the period of the Ottoman Empire meant governor of a province.

barrels per day—Production of crude oil and petroleum products is frequently measured in barrels per day, often abbreviated bpd or bd. A barrel is a volume measure of forty-two United States gallons. Conversion of barrels to metric tons depends on the density of a specific product. About 7.3 barrels of average crude oil, or about 7 barrels of heavy crude oil, weigh 1 metric ton. Light products, such as gasoline and kerosene, average close to eight barrels per metric ton.

currency—*See* dinar.

dinar (ID)—Currency unit consisting of 1,000 fils or 20 dirhams. When officially introduced at the end of the British mandate (1932), the dinar was equal to, and was linked to, the British pound sterling, which at that time was equal to US$4.86. Iraqi dinar (ID) equaled US$4.86 between 1932 and 1949 and after devaluation in 1949, equaled US$2.80 between 1949 and 1971. Iraq officially uncoupled the dinar from the pound sterling as a gesture of independence in 1959, but the dinar remained at parity with the pound until the British unit of currency was again devalued in 1967. One Iraqi dinar remained equal to US$2.80 until December 1971, when major realignments of world currencies began. Upon the devaluation of the United States dollar in 1973, the Iraqi dinar appreciated to US$3.39. It remained at this level until the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980. In 1982 Iraq devalued the dinar by 5 percent, to a value equal to US$3.22, and sustained this official exchange rate without additional devaluation despite mounting debt. In early 1988, the official dinar-dollar exchange rate was still ID1 to US$3.22; however, with estimates of the nation's inflation rate ranging from 25 percent to 50 percent per year in 1985 and 1986, the dinar's real transaction value, or black market exchange rate, was far lower—only about half the 1986 official rate.

Free Officers—Term applied retroactively to the group of young military officers that planned and carried out the July 14 Revolution in 1958.

GDP (gross domestic product)—A value measure of the flow of domestic goods and services produced by an economy over a period of time, such as a year. Only output values of goods for final consumption and for intermediate production are assumed to be included in final prices. GDP is sometimes aggregated and shown at market prices, meaning that indirect taxes and subsidies are included; when these have been eliminated, the result is GDP at factor cost. The word gross indicates that deductions for depreciation of physical assets have not been made.

GNP (gross national product)—GDP (*q.v.*) plus the net income or loss stemming from transactions with foreign countries. GNP is the broadest measurement of the output of goods and services by an economy. It can be calculated at market prices, which include indirect taxes and subsidies. Because indirect taxes and subsidies are only transfer payments, GNP is often calculated at factor cost, removing indirect taxes and subsidies.

hadith—Tradition based on the precedent of Muhammad's nondivinely revealed words that serves as one of the sources of Islamic law (sharia).

hijra—Literally to migrate, to sever relations, to leave one's tribe. Throughout the Muslim world hijra refers to the migration of Muhammad and his followers to Medina. In this sense the word has come into European languages as hegira, and it is usually, and somewhat misleadingly, translated as flight.

ID—Iraqi dinar. *See* dinar.

Imam—A word used in several senses. In general use and in lower case, it means the leader of congregational prayers; as such it implies no ordination or special spiritual powers beyond sufficient education to carry out this function. It is also used figuratively by many Sunni (*q.v.*) Muslims to mean the leader of the Islamic community. Among Shias (*q.v.*) the word takes on many complex meanings; in general, it indicates that particular descendant of the House of Ali ibn Abu Talib, who is believed to have been God's designated repository of the spiritual authority inherent in that line. The identity of this individual and the means of ascertaining his identity have been major issues causing divisions among Shias.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)—Established along with the World Bank in 1945, the IMF is a specialized agency affiliated with the United Nations and is responsible for stabilizing international exchange rates and payments. The main business of the IMF is the provision of loans to its members (including industrialized and developing countries) when they experience

balance of payments difficulties. These loans frequently carry conditions that require substantial internal economic adjustments by the recipients, most of which are developing countries.

Levant—Historically, the countries along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

shaykh—Leader or chief. Word of Arabic origin used to mean either a political leader or a learned religious leader. Also used as an honorific.

Shia, from Shiat Ali, the Party of Ali—A member of the smaller of the two great divisions of Islam. The Shias supported the claims of Ali and his line to presumptive right to the caliphate and to leadership of the Muslim community, and on this issue they divided from the Sunni (*q.v.*) in the great schism within Islam Later schisms have produced further divisions among the Shias over the identity and the number of Imams (*q.v.*). Shias revere Twelve Imams, the last of whom is believed to be in hiding.

Shiite—*See* Shia.

Sunni (from *sunna,* orthodox)—A member of the larger of the two great divisions of Islam. The Sunnis supported the traditional method of election to the caliphate, and they accepted the Umayyad line that began with caliph Muawiyah in 661. On this issue they divided from the Shias (*q.v.*) in the great schism within Islam.

Index

Abadan, 52, 137, 233, 234
Abbasid Dynasty, xxiii, 20, 21, 92, 99-100
Abbasid Empire, 4, 25-26, 99-100
Abbasids, 3, 20-21, 23
Abd al Abbas, 20
Abd al Hamid (sultan), 29
Abd al Ilah, 45-49
Abd Allah, 18
Abraham (prophet), 9
Abu Bakr, 15, 17, 89
Abu Ghurayb, 255
Abu Musa, 60
Abu Muslim, 20
Abu Nidal, 208
Abu Nidal Organization, 208
Abu Said (Bahadur the Brave), 25
Abu Timman, 44
Achaemenids, 12, 13
Adams, Robert McCormick, 76
Ad Dawah al Islamiyah (the Islamic Call), xxvi, 64-65, 198, 224, 251
Ad Dujayl, 244, 253
Administrative Court, 185
Adrah 18
Afghanistan, 31
Aflaq, Michel, 53, 188, 194
Agade, 9
agrarian reform (*see also* land reform; rural society), 103-5, 157-59
Agricultural and Industrial Bank, 131
Agricultural Bank, 131, 132
Agricultural Census (1971), 104
agriculture (*see also* agrarian reform; collectives; cooperatives; irrigation; land reform; migration; water control), xv-xvi, 76, 78, 153; expansion of, 156; grain crops of, 159-60; production in, 153, 156-60; rain-fed and irrigation crops, 159
Ahali government, 44
Ahvaz, 233, 234
aircraft, combat and support, xviii, 219
aircraft, commercial, 166-67
Air Defense Command, 219, 221
air force, xviii, 219, 233-34, 235
air force training college, 222
airports, xvii, 166-67
Aisha, 17
Akashat, 149
Akhbari school, 95
Akkad, 9
Akkadians, xxiii, 9
Akshak, 9
Al Ahd (the Covenant), 31
Al Amarah, 26, 74, 101, 166
Al Anbar, 116
Al Bakr University for Higher Military Studies, 222
Al Basrah, 20, 26, 98-99, 255-56
Alexander, 3
Alexander the Great, 12, 13, 14
Al Fatah, 209
Al Faw Peninsula, xxv, xxix, 202, 241
Al Faw terminal and port, xvi, 31, 136, 163, 238
Algeria as mediator, 70
Algiers Agreement (1975), xxiv, xxviii, 5, 61, 70, 84
Al Habbaniyah, 39
Al Hadithah, 136, 154, 163, 166
Al Hillah, 34
Al Hirah, 16
Ali ibn Muhammad, 23
Ali (imam), 94
Al Jamiya al Wataniya al Islamiya (The Muslim National League), 34
Al Jazirah, 71
Al Kifl, 74
Al Kufah, 18, 19, 20, 116
Al Kut, 31, 34
alluvial plain region, 74
Al Mamun (caliph), 21, 92
Al Mansur, 21
Al Musayyib, 152, 165
Al Muthanna Governorate, 80, 98
Al Qadisiyah, 16, 86, 96, 98, 116
Al Qadisiyah Dam, 154
Al Qaim, 149
Al Qurnah, 74, 75, 166, 237
Amin, 21
Amman, 63, 209
Ammash, Salih Mahdi, 188
Amnesty International, 224, 254
Amorites, 10
Amu Darya, 16

Anatolia, 26
Anayzah, 33
Anayzah tribal confederation, 26
Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, 133
Anglo-Iraqi Treaty (1922), 36-37, 38, 39
Anglo-Iraqi Treaty (1930), 39, 42-43, 46
Anglo-Persian Oil Company (*see also* Anglo-Iranian Oil Company; British Petroleum; Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC)), 133, 134-35
Anglo-Turco-Iraqi treaty (1926), 38-39
An (god), 7
An Najaf, 19, 25, 31, 33, 34, 36, 63, 64, 69, 94, 163, 232, 250, 251, 255
An Nasiriyah, 31, 144
An Nur, 107
antiaircraft guns, 218
appliance industry, 153
Aqaba, 63
Arab civilization, 79
Arabia, 15
Arabian Gulf Academy for Naval Studies, 222
Arabian Peninsula, 26, 87, 206-7
Arabic language (*see also* classical Arabic; Iraqi Arabic; Modern Standard Arabic), xiv, 16, 81-82, 177
Arab-Israeli wars: 1948 war, 47-48, 136; June 1967 War, 57-58, 140, 203, 205; October 1973 War, 141, 203
Arab League (League of Arab States), 46, 52, 60, 205, 208, 209, 210, 215
Arab Legion, 46
Arab Liberation Front, 208, 229
"Arab Nation, The," 188
Arab Organization of the 15th May, 208
Arab Revolt (1916), 32
Arab Revolutionary Movement, 57
Arabs, 14, 15, 50-52, 81
Arab Ship Repair Yard, 241
Arafat, Yasir, 209
Aramaeans, 14
Aramaic language, 13, 86
arid regions, 77
Arif, Abd ar Rahman, 54, 56-57, 228, 249
Arif, Abd as Salaam, 49, 50, 53-55, 56, 249
armed forces, 215, 217-27
Armenian language, xiv
Armenians, xiv, 81, 86
armored vehicles, 218
arms, xviii; artillery pieces as, 218; production of, xxviii-xxix; purchases of, 203-4, 205, 229-30
army (*see also* Ideological Army (Al Jaysh al Aqidi)), xviii, 36, 52, 217; Iraqi Communist Party activity in, 248-49; morale problems of, 222-23; reserves of, 217
Ar Ramadi, 74
Ar Rutbah, 78, 95, 163
Arsacids, 14
Ash Shabana tribe, 102
Ash Shaykh ash Shuyukh, 163
Ash Shinafiyah, 155
Ash Shuaybah, 219
Ashur, 11
Ashurbanipal (king), 11
Ashurnasirpal, 11
Askari, Jafar al, 32, 37, 44
Assad, Hafiz al, 63, 194, 209
As Samawah, 74
As Samitah, 60
As Sulaymaniyah, xxiv, 77, 83, 106, 118
As Sulaymaniyah Governorate, xiv, 186
Assyria, 3, 10, 12
Assyrian Rebellion (1918), 41
Assyrians, xiv, xxiii, 11, 12, 33, 40, 41, 81, 86
atabegs, 24, 25
Atatürk, 38
Atatürk Dam reservoir, 156
Autonomous Region, xvii, 177, 186-87
Autonomy Agreement (1970), 186-87, 196
auto parts industry, 153
Axis countries, 45, 46
Azarbaijan, 25, 83
Aziz, Tariq, 64, 200, 204
Az Zubayr, 143

Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection) Party (*see also* National Command: Baath Party; pan-Arab concepts; Regional Command: Baath Party; Revolutionary Command Council (RCC)), 5, 50, 51, 53-54, 57, 61, 64, 87, 104-5, 110; altered perceptions of, 207-9; control of army by, 242-43; creation of, 188; economic focus of, 192; first government of (1963), 189; focus on domestic issues by, 189, 192; link to Revolutionary Command Council of, 179; militia of (People's Army), xxv,

59, 224–25; opposition to, 96–97, 176, 195–96, 197–99; organization and function of, 192–94; principles and pan-Arab goals of, xvii, xxiii, 175–76, 186, 187–88, 192, 215, 228; relations with Iraqi Communist Party, 194–96, 248–49; role in foreign policy of, 200; supervision of Autonomous Region by, 187, 196
Baath Revolution. *See* coups d'état
Baban Dynasty, 26
Babylon, xxiii, 3, 10–14, 256
Babylon Governorate, 80, 104
Badush, 155
Baghdad, xvi, xvii, xxiii, xxvi, 3, 4, 16, 19, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 34, 39, 44, 48, 49, 54, 74, 75, 79, 94, 95, 105–9, 117, 118, 145, 149, 163, 164, 165, 166, 194, 209, 210, 219, 221, 222; administrative status of, 186; bombing of, 202
Baghdad Governorate, 80, 98–99, 117
Baghdad Pact (1955), 49, 228
Baghdad Television, 199
Baghdad Treaty, 216
Bahadur the Brave, 25
Bahrain, 206, 241
Bahr al Milh (Sea of Salt), 74
Baiji refinery and fertilizer plant, xvi, 145, 152
Bakhtaran, 233, 234
Bakr, Ahmad Hasan al, xxiv, 53, 58–59, 64, 175, 178, 182, 186, 188–89, 194, 204, 243
Baku, 133
Balkh, 24
Bani Isad tribe, 102
Bani Lam tribal confederation, 26
Baniyas, 136
banking industry, 55, 131–32
Baqir as Sadr, Ayatollah Muhammad, 64–65, 198
Baqubah, xxvii, 76
barley, 159
barrages, 74, 75, 154–55
barter agreements, 126, 169
Barzani, Idris, 61, 62, 248
Barzani, Masud, 62, 84, 196, 248
Barzani, Mustafa (mullah), 52, 56, 60–62, 84, 196
Barzani, Ubaydallah, 196
Basij volunteers (Iranian), 234–36
Basra, xvi, xvii, xxvii, xxix, 16, 17, 25, 27, 29, 31, 39, 40, 45, 69, 75, 79–80, 95, 99, 105–6, 117, 118, 150, 162, 163, 165, 218, 219, 234, 237, 238; Iranian offensives near, 202; oil industry in, 136; as port, 166
Basrah Petroleum Company (BPC), 136, 141
Batatu, Hanna, 35
Battle of Buwayb, 16
Battle of Majnun, 237
Battle of the Chains, 15
Battle of the Marshes, 237
Bazargan, Mehdi, 64
Bazzaz, Abd ar Rahman, 55, 56
Beirut, 29
Bitar, Salah ad Din al, 53, 188
Black June, 208
Board of Regulation of Trade, 171
Bokhara, 24
border agreement: with Iran (1975), 61; with Saudi Arabia (1975), 71
border disputes (*see also* Shatt al Arab; thalweg), 40, 70
Border Guard, 252
border with Kuwait, 70
Bosporus, 24
Brazil, xvi, 170
brick industry, 149
brigades, xviii, 217
Britain: control of industry by, 38; Iraq as mandate of, xxiii, 5, 32–35, 130–31, 134, 228; Iraqi relations with, 204; occupation of Iraq by, 31–34, 45–46; oil company ownership by, 133; relationship with Assyrians, 41; role in Iraq in Second World War, 46; role in Iraq of, 5, 31–32; role in Palestine revolt, 45; sale of arms from, 228; trade with Iraq of, xvi, 170
British Oil Development Company (BODC) (*see also* Mosul Petroleum Company (MPC)), 135–36
British Petroleum, 133
Bubiyan, 60
Buhayrat al Habbaniyah (lake), 74
Buhayrat ath Tharthar (lake), 74
Buwayhids, 23
Byzantine Empire, 15, 16

cabinet. *See* Council of Ministers
Cairo Conference (1921), 35, 36
Camp David Accords (1978), xxiv, 63, 205, 216

capital flight, 146
Caspian Sea, 23, 133
cement industry, 55, 152
Central Bank of Iraq, 131
Central Petroleum Organization (CPO), 42, 144
CFP. *See* Compagnie Française des Pétroles-Total
Chaldeans, xxiii, 11
Chaldean (Uniate) church, 86
chemical industry, 152
chemical warfare, xxvi, 237, 238
China, 24
Chinggis (Genghis) Khan, 24–25
Christian Crusaders, 24
Christians, xiv, 15, 41, 86, 87; court system of, 184
cigarette industry, 152
classical Arabic, 81
Clayton, Gilbert, 39
climate, 77–78
Code of Hammurabi, xxiii, 10
collectives, xxv, 158–59
communism, 50, 51, 52
Conference on Disarmament (1986), 238
Compagnie Française des Pétroles-Total, 126, 134, 135
conscription/conscripts, xviii, 220–21, 244
Constituent Assembly (1924), 37
constitution (*see also* Provisional Constitution), 51; new, xxvi, xxx
construction companies, foreign, 167, 168
construction industry, xv, 55
Cooperative Bank, 131
cooperatives, agricultural, 104, 157–58
corvettes, xviii, 218
cotton, 160
Council of Ministers, 178, 182, 184
coups d'état: in 1936, 44, 49; in 1941, 5, 45–46, 47, 48, 49; in 1958, 3, 5, 49, 109, 137, 146, 228; 1959 attempt, 51, 188–89; 1963 (February, November), 52–53, 54, 189, 243; 1965 attempt, 55; in 1968, 57, 146, 175, 189; 1970 attempt, 243, 255; 1973 attempt, 59, 216, 255; 1982 attempt, 244
Court of Cassation, xvii, 185, 187, 254, 255
court system (*see also* Administrative Court; Court of Cassation; military courts; religious court system; Revolutionary Court), 184–85, 254–55; appellate districts of, 184
Cox, Percy, 32, 33, 35, 37
CPO. *See* Central Petroleum Organization (CPO)
credit. *See* debt, external
Crete, 46
Creusot-Loire, 152
Ctesiphon, 16
cuneiform, xxiii, 6–7
currency (*see also* Iraqi dinar), xv, 130–31
current account, 123
Cyrus, 3, 12
Cyrus the Great, xxiii, 12

Dahuk, xxiv, 41, 69, 83, 106
Dahuk Governorate, xiv, 186
Damascus, 11, 19, 20, 32, 194
dam construction, 153–55
Damin, Abd ar Rahman ad, 188
Darband, 154
Darius, 3
Darius the Great, 12
date industry, 160
Daud, Ibrahim ad, 27, 57
Daylam, 23
debt, external, xxviii, 126, 169, 230
debt, military, 230
Decree Number 652, 128
Dehloran, 234
Democratic National Front (DNF), Kurdish, 250
Department of General Intelligence. *See* Mukhabarat
desert conditions, 78
desert zone, 71
Dezful, 220, 233, 234
Dhi Qar Governorate, 98
diseases, xiv, 117–18
divisions, xviii, 217
divorce, 113
Diyala, 75
Diyala Governorate, 76, 98
Diyala River, 77
Dobbs, Henry, 37
Dortyol terminal, xvi, 126, 142
Doshen-Tappen, 233
drainage, 155
drought, 83
Dubayy, 241
due process of law, 177–78
Dukan, 154
Dulles, Allen, 52
Durah refinery, 145

duststorms, 78
Dutch Shell Group, 134

economic agreement with Soviet Union (1959), 51
economic assistance from Persian Gulf states, 207
economic development: industrial, 124-25; transportation, 162-67
economic planning, 55, 127
economic policy: under Baath regime, xxv-xxvi, 123-24, 127-30
education facilities (*see also* school system), xiv, 109, 114, 116, 254
Egypt, xxiv, 9, 18, 21, 46, 57, 63, 215; Iraqi relations with, xxviii, 202; military aid from, 208
Egyptians in Iraq, 105
Elamites, 10
elections: 1922, 37; 1980, 1984, 176, 181
Electoral Law (1922), 37
electric power, 167-68
electrification, rural, 167
electronics industry, 153
Elf Aquitaine, 126
Entreprise des Recherches et des Activités Pétrolières (ERAP), 140
Eridu, 3, 7, 9
Eritrean Liberation Front, 229
Ethiopia, 9
ethnic minorities (*see also* Kurds), 82-86; tension, 189
Euphrates delta, 15
Euphrates (Furat) River, xiv, 3, 6, 10, 16, 17, 21, 27, 30, 31, 35, 40, 71, 74, 75, 101, 118, 153, 155-56, 166
Euphrates River valley, 34, 154, 163
Europe, 10
Europe-Persian Gulf railroad route, 166
export, xvi, 142, 143, 148, 149-50; of agricultural products, 160, 169; of electric power, 168; promotion of and licensing for, 171
Export Subsidy Fund, 171
expropriation of land, 157-58

Faili Kurds, 83
Faisal (as prince), 32, 35
Faisal I (as king), xxiii, xxviii, 35-37, 39, 41, 42
Faisal II (king), 3, 45, 49
family law. *See* Law of Personal Status (1959, 1963)
family structure, 110-14
Fathah, 155
Fatima, 17, 89
fertilizer industry, 149-52
First Baghdad International Exhibition for Military Production, xxix
fiscal policy, 148
fishing industry, 162
Five-Year Plan: First (1965-70), 55; Fourth (1981-85), 127; Fifth (1986-90), 127, 144
flood control, 3, 6, 75, 77, 154
floods, 6, 14, 27, 71, 74, 75, 154, 155
flour mills, 55
food processing and packaging industry, xv, 152
foreign policy, 49, 52, 200-209
foreign relations. *See* specific countries by name
foreign trade, 131, 166
Foundation of Technical Institutes, 116
France, 133-34, 136, 140, 152; Iraqi relations with, xviii, xxiv, 204-5; sale of aircraft, armaments and weapons from, xxviii, 203, 205, 219, 228, 230-31; trade with Iraq of, 170
Free Officers' Movement, 45, 50, 51, 53, 109
frigates, xviii, 218
Frontier Guard, xviii, 252
Futuwah, xviii

Gailani, Abd ar Rahman al, 37
GDP. *See* gross domestic product (GDP)
General Establishment for Import and Export. *See* Ministry of Trade
General Federation of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce and Industry, 130
General Organization of Exports, 171
Geneva Protocol (1925), 238
geographic zones, 71
geography, xiii-xiv, 71-75
Germany, 31; under Nazis, 45, 46
Germany, Federal Republic, 152-53; Iraqi relations with, 204; trade with Iraq of, xvi, 170
Ghazali, Abu Hamid al, 24
Ghazi (king), xxviii, 42-45
Gilgamesh, 7
glass industry, 149

government administration: decentralized nature of, 3-4; effect of rural-to-urban migration on, 4-5; local, 185-86
government role, 102-3; in economic planning, 127; in medical services and health care, 117
governorate administration, xvii, 185-87
Greater and Lesser Tunbs, 60
The Great Iraqi Revolution (Ath Thawra al Iraqiyya Kubra): 1920, 35
Great Zab River, 75, 155
Greek period, 14
gross domestic product (GDP), xv, 124, 125, 153
gross national product (GNP), 142
guerrillas: Kurdish, 52, 77, 84-85, 196, 196, 210, 215; Palestinian, 225, 229
Gulbenkian, Caloust, 133-35
Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), 245
Gulf of Aqaba, 143
Guti, 9

Habash, George, 208
Habbaniyah, 154
hadith, 87
Haifa, 48, 136
Hakim family, 199
Hakim, Muhammad Baqir al, 198, 251
Hakkari Mountains, 33
Halabjah, 60, 238
Hamadan, 2345
Hammadi, Saadun, 181
Hammurabi (king), 3, 10
Hanafi school of jurisprudence, 91, 184
Hanbali school, 91
Hanging Gardens of Babylon, xxiii, 11
Haras al Istiqlal (The Guardians of Independence), 34
Harun ar Rashid, 21, 92
Hasan, 18
Hashim, 20
Hashimi, Yasin al, 44
Hashimite (or Hashemite) monarchy, xxiii, 5, 49
Hawizah Marshes, 237
Hawr al Hammar, 74
health care, xiv, 117-18
helicopters, 228
Hellenization, 14
Herkki tribe, 83
highland region, northeast, 71, 73
Hijaz, 17
hijra (hegira), 87
Hindiyah Barrage, 74, 155
Hindiyah Channel, 74
Hit, 71
Hittites, 10
housing projects. *See* An Nur; Madinat ath Thawra: Saddam City
Hulagu Khan, 25
Husayn, Barazan, 253
Husayn ibn Ali, 32
Husayn (imam), 19, 94
Hussein (king of Jordan), xxviii, 49, 63, 209
"hydraulic despotism," 154

Ibn Yusuf ath Thaqafi al Aajjay, 20
Ibrahim, Izzat, xvii, 179, 182
ICOO. *See* Iraqi Company for Oil Operations (ICOO)
Ideological Army (Al Jaysh al Aqidi), 242-43
imam, 88
Imamate, 91-92, 94
imports, xvi, 147-48, 151, 168; of agricultural products, 162; of capital goods and durables, 169; with concessions, 169; of food, 153, 169; licenses for, 171
import substitution policy, 147-48, 170
independence (1932), 3, 40, 79, 216
Independent Democrats: Kurdish, 197
India, 10, 34
Indus River, 13
Industrial Bank, 151, 132
industrial development, 145-53
inflation, xxix, 48, 125
infrastructure development, 147, 162-67, 245
INOC. *See* Iraq National Oil Company (INOC)
insurance industry, 55
internal security, 247-56
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), 205, 231-32
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), xxvii, 210, 246
International Labour Organisation (ILO), 210
International Monetary Fund (IMF), 210
International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT), 167
Intersputnik satellite station, 167

investment, 144; in agriculture, 125; by Government, 145-46; in industry, 124-25, 145; by private sector, 149
IPC. *See* Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC)
Iran, 10, 25, 31, 33, 40, 44, 46, 52, 59-60, 64, 75, 83, 94, 133, 137; aid to Kurdish Democratic party by, 196, 247-48; border treaty (Baghdad Treaty) with (1975), 215, 216; border with Iraq, 70; early rulers of Iraq, 12-14; hegemony in Persian Gulf of, xv, 200, invasion by Iraqi troops: 1980, xv, 5-6, 200, 215; Iraq border with, 4; Iraqi perception of, 207; Islamic Revolution in, 62; military assistance from, 61; oil exploration with Iraq, 56
Iranian forces, 99
Iranians, 13-16
Iran-Iraq War (*see also* tanker war), xvi, xxiii, xxv, xxvi-xxvii, xxviii, 65, 69-70, 232-40; casualties' impact on armed forces, 245-46; cease-fire of, xxviii; cost for Iraq of, 123-24, 244-45; effect of, xxix-xxx, 127-30, 148, 160, 176-77, 207-8; effect on foreign relations of, 202; effect on foreign trade of, 168; as foreign policy issue, 202, 200; importance of transportation for, 162; Iraq military in, 217-20; Kurdish sympathy with Iran in, 248; naval operations in, 240
Iraq Currency Board, 130-31
Iraqi Arabic, 81
Iraqi Arab Socialist Union, 54
Iraqi Aviation Company, 130
Iraqi Broadcasting and Television Establishment, 167
Iraqi Communist Party (ICP), xvii, 47, 51, 53, 61, 83, 194-96, 198, 247, 248-50
Iraqi Company for Oil Operations (ICOO), 141, 142
Iraqi dinar, 130-31
Iraqi Federation of Industries, 149
Iraqi Red Crescent, 210
Iraqi-Soviet Joint Commission on Economic and Technical Cooperation, 145
Iraqi State Railways, 166
Iraq Levies, 41
Iraq Life Insurance Company, 132
Iraq National Oil Company (INOC), 50, 57, 137-42, 144
Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) (*see also* Iraq National Oil Company (INOC)), 38, 50, 56-57, 135-42
Iraq Reinsurance Company, 132
Irbil, xxiv, 77, 83, 85, 106, 116, 118
Irbil Governorate, xiv, 186-87
iron and steel industry, 152
irrigation systems, xxiii, 3, 75, 77, 154
Islam (*see also* Shia Islam; Sunni Islam), xiv, xxiii, 15, 16, 19-20, 23, 81, 86; as state religion, 177; tenets of, 86-90
Islamic Call. *See* Ad Dawah al Islamiyah (the Islamic Call)
Islamic Development Bank, 151
Islamic jurisprudence, 184
Islamic Republic of Iran, 64
Islamic Revolution (1979), 62, 63, 64, 206, 207, 215, 247, 251
Ismailis, 95
Ismail Shah, 26
Israel: aid to Kurdish Democratic Party by, 196; attitude of Baath Party toward, 203; Baath Party relations with, 208-9; destruction of nuclear facility by, 231; military aid from, 61; state of, 69
Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, 215, 216
Istanbul, 29
Italy, 134; Iraqi relations with, 204; trade with Iraq of, xvi, 170

Jacobite (Syrian Orthodox) church, 86
Jafari school of jurisprudence, 184
Jalabi, Isam Abd ar Rahim al, 143-44
Jalayirids, 25
Jamil al Midfai, 32
Jamiyat an Nahda al Islamiya (League of the Islamic Awakening), 33-34
Japan: economic assistance by, 149; Iraqi relations with, 204; trade with Iraq by, xvi, 169-70
Jasim, Latif Nayyif, 64
Jassin, Sattar Ahmad, 219
Jerusalem, 11
jet fighters, 228
Jews, xiv, 12, 48, 86, 87; court system of, 184; emigration of, 108
Joint Presidency Council, 54
joint stock companies, 148
Jordan, xviii, 18, 49, 57, 63, 71, 142, 143, 163; Iraqi relations with, xxviii, 202
Jubur, 32
Judah, 11

judicial system (*see also* court system; military courts), xvii, 184-85, 254
Jumailah tribe, 54, 55
June 1967 War. *See* Arab-Israeli wars

Kaaba, 87
Karbala, 19, 20, 25, 31, 32, 34, 36, 64, 69, 94, 251, 255
Karun River, 75, 233, 234
Kassites, 10
Kazzar, Nazim, 59, 243, 253
KDP. *See* Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP)
Khabur River, 74, 75
Khairallah, Adnan, 219
Khan, 154
Khanaqin, xvi, 83
Kharajites, 18
Kharasan, Hashim al, 144
Khardeh River, 233
Khark Island, 237, 238
Khawr al Amayah, xxix
Khawr al Amayah terminal, xvi, 142, 166
Khawr az Zubayr, xvi, 152, 163
Khoi, Sayyid Abu al Qasim al, 251
Khomeini, Ayatollah Sayyid Ruhollah Musavi, xxiv, 63, 64, 217, 232, 233, 250-51
Khorasan, 20, 21, 23-24
Khorramshahr, 95, 234
Khudari, Abd al Khaliq al, 188
Khuzestan, 52, 61, 233, 234
Khwarizm shahs, 24
Kinik group, 23
kinship groups, 110-12
Kirkuk, 51, 53, 61, 71, 73, 83, 84, 106, 118, 142, 163, 219; oil industry in, 133, 134, 136-37, 142
Kirmanji (Karamanji) language, 84
Kish, 9
Konya, 31
Korea, Republic of, 163
Kufah, 16
Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), 60-62, 83, 84, 196, 198, 247; split in, 196-97
Kurdish Progressive Group, 196
Kurdish resistance, xxx, 5, 41, 62, 247-48
Kurdish Revolutionary Party, 196
Kurdistan, xvii, 26, 27, 33, 61, 77, 186-87, 196, 198, 202, 223, 225, 248, 249
Kurds, xiv, xxiv, 5, 26, 37-39, 40, 41, 45, 50, 51-52, 54, 61, 73, 81, 189; Autonomous Region for, 177, 186, 196; concentration in Iraq of, 82-83; culture of, 84; guerrilla activity of, 52, 77, 84-85, 106, 196, 210, 215; language of, xiv, 56, 84, 177; military cooperation with Iran of, 202, 207; political parties of, 196-97; rebellion of, 56, 186, 196, 216, 222-23, 233; tribal affiliation of, 83
Kut Barrage, 75
Kuwait, xxv, 40, 52, 60, 143, 145, 163, 241, 245; border with Iraq, 70; economic assistance of, 207; Iraqi relations with, 202, 206-7; trade with Iraq by, 170

labor force: agriculture, xv, 153, 158; industrial, xv, 148-49, 152
labor law, 128
Lagash, 9
land ownership (*see also* expropriation of land), 177
land reform, xxiv, 4, 27, 29, 42, 46, 50, 104
land reform law (*see also* Lazmah land reform (1932)), 42, 46, 156, 157
land tenure system, 156-57
languages, 84, 177; Arabic, xiv, 16, 81-82, 177; Aramaic, 13, 86; Armenian, xiv; Kurdish, xiv, 56, 84, 177; Persian, xiv, 16; Turkic, xiv, 69; Turkish, 30, 85
Larak Island, 238
Larsa, 9
Law Number 80 (*see also* oil industry), 137, 140
Law Number 60 for Major Development Projects, 170-71
Law of Personal Status (1959, 1963), 111-12, 113-14
Lazmah land reform (1932), 42, 46, 156
League of Nations, 5, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41
League of Nations Covenant, 32
leather industry, 152
Lebanon, 46, 48, 63, 136, 225, 228, 229
legal system, 184
Levant, 46
Libya, 140
licensing for foreign trade, 170-71
Little Zab River, 75
livestock, 162

local government. *See* governorate administration
Long-Berenger Agreement (1919), 38

machinery industry, 152
Madain, 16
Madan (Marsh Arabs), 27, 76-77
Madinat ath Thawra, 107
Mahmud II, 27
Malek Shah, 24
Maliki school, 91
Mamluks, 23, 27
manufacturing, xv
Marduk (god), 13
Marr, Phebe, 57, 232
marriage, 112, 113
Mar Shamun, 41
Maruf, Taha Muhy ad Din, xvii, 182, 184
Mashhad, 92, 94
Maude, Stanley, 31-32
Mecca, 15, 19, 26, 32, 35, 87
Medes, 11
medical facilities, xiv-xv, 117
Medina (*see also* Yathrib), 17, 35, 87
Mediterranean Sea, xvi, 10, 11, 136, 140, 142, 163
Mehrabad, 233
Mehran, 238
Merv, 20, 21, 24, 92
Mesopotamia, xxiii, 3, 6-7, 9-15, 65, 133-34
Midhat Pasha, 27, 29
migration, xxx, 4, 6, 83, 98-99, 104; to cities, 105-8, 158
Milhat ath Tharthar, 77
military assistance, 61, 228-30
military budget, xviii, 244-45
Military College, 188, 219, 244
Military Court of Cassation, 223
military courts, 223
military equipment (*see also* arms), xviii, 203, 218
military intervention, 241-42
Military Service and Pension Law, 223
Mina al Bakr terminal, xvi, xxix, 142, 166
mineral industry, nonmetallic, xv, 149-52
Ministry of Culture and Information, 167, 199-200
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 200
Ministry of Guidance, 199
Ministry of Health, 117
Ministry of Heavy Industry, 148
Ministry of Industry, 148
Ministry of Justice, xvii, 184
Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, 255
Ministry of Oil, 142, 144
Ministry of Planning, 104
Ministry of Trade, 170
Mirza Muhammad Riza, 34
Mishraq, 149
missiles, 218, 219, 228
Mitterand, François, 231
Mobile Force, 252
Modern Standard Arabic, 81
monetary policy, 131
Mongol invasion, 24-25, 27, 79, 154
Mongols, xxiii
Morocco, 21
Mortgage Bank, 131
Mosul, 24, 30, 31, 34, 40, 41, 51, 53, 71, 73, 85, 95, 106, 118, 149, 152, 154, 163, 165, 166, 219; oil industry in, 133, 136
Mosul Petroleum Company (MPC), 136
Mosul Province, 37-39
motor vehicle industry, 152-53
Muawiyah, 17, 18, 19, 89
Mubarak, Husni, xxviii
Mudarrissi, Muhammad Taqi al, 199
Muhammad, Aziz, 250
Muhammad (prophet), xxiii, 15, 16, 17, 18, 32, 35, 86, 87-91
Muharram, 94
Mukhabarat, xviii, 252, 253
Muntafiq tribal confederation, 26
Murad IV, 26
Mustafa Kamal. *See* Atatürk
Mutasim (caliph), 23

Naft-e Shah, 56
Naft Khaneh, 56
Najd, 26
Nasser, Gamal Abdul, 40, 49, 53, 54-55, 58
National Action Charter, 186, 189, 194, 195
National Assembly, xvii, 176, 178; organization and function of, 181
National Bank of Iraq (*see also* Central Bank of Iraq), 131
National Command: Baath Party, 193-94
National Company for Aviation Services, 130

National Council of Revolutionary Command (NCRC), 53, 54
National Defense Council, 56
National Guard, 54
nationalism, 5, 29, 33-36, 39, 42-47, 51, 52, 96; of Kurds, 83
nationalization, 55, 57, 131, 141, 146
National Life Insurance Company, 132
natural gas, xv; use, liquefaction and pipeline for, 144-45
navy, xviii, 218
Nayif, Abd ar Razzaq an, 55, 57
NCRC. *See* National Council of Revolutionary Command (NCRC)
Near East Development Corporation, 134
Nebuchadnezzar (king), 11
Nestorian church, 86
Neutral Zone (Iraq-Saudi Arabia), xiv, 71, 143, 207
New Delhi, 210
newspapers, 199
Neyshabur, 24
Nineveh, 11, 69, 256
Nineveh Governorate, 104
Nizam al Mulk, 24
Non-Aligned Movement, 202, 203, 210, 228
Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), 205
Northern Petroleum Organization (NPO), 142, 144
North Rumaylah field, 137, 141, 145
NPO. *See* Northern Petroleum Organization (NPO)

officer corps, 109
Oghuz Turks, 23
oil companies, foreign, 140-41
Oil Exploration Company, 144
oil industry (*see also* natural gas), xv, xxix, 4, 38, 48, 50, 56, 133; drilling rights of, 71; effect of Iran-Iraq War on, 168; exports of, 142-43, 168; fields, 73, 137, 141, 145; hydrocarbon reserves of, 144; investment in, 144, 145; refining sector of, 145; revenues of, 109, 123-25, 127, 137, 141-43, 146, 148, 203, 245; service agreements with oil companies, 140-41; terminals in Iraq for, 142; transportation for, 142
oil pipelines. *See* pipelines, oil
Oman, 62, 206-7
OPEC. *See* Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)
Operation Dawn V, 236
Operation Ramadan, 234
Operation Undeniable Victory, 234
opposition groups, 188
opposition (to Baath) organizations, 197-99
Organic Law, 37
Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, 210
Organization of Islamic Action, 199, 251
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), 137-43, 203, 210
Osiraq nuclear reactor, 168, 204-5, 231
Ottoman Decentralization Party, 29
Ottoman Empire, 4, 29-31, 38, 45, 70, 79, 87, 98, 133, 135, 216, 220, 228
Ottoman Land Code (1858), 156
Ottoman Turks, xxiii, 3, 25-26, 27
Oxus River, 16, 23

Pachachi, Hamdi al, 46
Palestine, 11, 32, 136; partition of (1947), 47
Palestine Liberation Front, 208
Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), xxviii, 208
Palestine revolt (1936-39), 45
pan-Arab concepts, 44, 54, 58, 175, 228, 232; of economic unity, 177; "The Arab Nation," 188, 189, 192
paper industry, 152
paramilitary forces (*see also* Futuwah (Youth Vanguard)); People's Army, xviii, 217, 224-25
Paris Peace Conference (1919), 32
Parthians (or Arsacids), 14
Pasdaran (Iranian Revolutionary Guard), 233, 234-36
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), 62, 83, 84, 197, 198, 248
patrol boats, 218
penal code (1969), 253
Penal Code of the Popular Army, 224
People's Army (Al Jaysh ash Shaabi) (*see also* Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection Party)), xviii, xxv, xxvii, 217, 224, 250, 252
People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, 60, 62-63
People's Militia. *See* People's Army

People's Resistance Force, 50, 51
Pérez de Cuellar, Javier, xxvii, 238
Permanent Bureau of the Arab Jurists' Federation, xxvi
Persia. *See* Iran
Persian Empire, 12-13
Persian Gulf, xvi, xxviii, 10, 13, 27, 56, 61, 74, 135, 136, 140, 141, 155, 163, 200, 216, 237, 238
Persian language, xiv, 16
Pesh Merga, 60, 61
petrochemical industry, 152
petroleum sector. *See* oil industry
Petroline, xvi
Phoenicia, 11, 14
phosphate rock industry, 149
physicians, 117
pipelines, gas, 144
pipelines, oil, xvvi, xxix, 48, 56-57, 135, 136, 140, 142-43, 209, 210
plague, 27
police, xviii, 252
Police College, 252
Police Preparatory School, 252
Popular Army. *See* People's Army
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), 208; Special Operations Branch, 208
Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf, 60
population, xiv, 78-80; growth in cities of, 105-9; redistribution of, 97-99
ports, xvi, 166
Portsmouth Treaty (1948), 47
presidency, 178
Presidential Guard Force, xviii, 217, 252
price controls, xxix, 254
prisoners of war, 246
private sector: imports of, 170; industries of, 145-46, 148-49
privatization, xxv, xxx, 42, 129-30, 148; of agriculture, 159; of airline, 167
Progressive National Front (PNF) (*see also* Baath (Arab Socialist Resurrection Party)), xvii, 176, 194-97, 249; High Council of, 195
Progressive Nationalists: Kurdish, 197
protection, 148
Provisional Constitution (1970), xvii, xxiv, 58, 59, 175, 181, 199; principles expressed in, 177-78
public health system, 117-18
Public Service Council, 182
PUK. *See* Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)
purges, 58, 216, 242, 249

Qabus (sultan), 62
Qasim, Abd al Karim, 49, 50-53, 103, 188-89, 228
Qasim government, 107, 146, 249
Qasr-e Shirin, 65, 234
Qatar, xxv, 206, 207
Qom, 92, 94
Quraysh tribe, 15
Qusaybah, 164

radio: broadcasting, 199; transmission, 167
Radio Iraq, 199
Rafidayn Bank, 131-32
railroads, xvi, 163-66
rainfall, 77-78, 153, 154
Ramadan, 88, 94
Ramadan, Taha Yasin, 225
Ras al Khaymah, 60
Rashid, 219
Rashid Airbase, 222
Rashid Ali, 5, 45-46, 47, 48
Rawanduz, 61
Rawi, Abd al Ghani ar, 243
Razzaq, Arif Abd ar, 55
RCC. *See* Revolutionary Command Council (RCC)
Real Estate Bank, 131, 132
reconstruction, xxix
Red Line Agreement, 135
Red Sea, 143
refineries, 145
refugees, 61
Regional Command: Baath Party, xvii, 97, 193
Regional Congress, 193
religion, xiv, 7
religious court system, 184-85
Reserve College, 221
reserve units, military, 221
reservoirs, 154
Resolution 598, UN Security Council, xxvii
Resolution 1646, of the RCC, 130
revenues: from export of electric power, 168; from oil export, 48, 50, 109, 123-25, 127, 137, 141-43, 146, 148, 168-69, 203, 245

Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), xvii, xxiii-xxiv, xxvi, 58, 59, 60, 96-97, 128-30; link to National Assembly of, 182; organization and function of, 175, 178, 179, 181; repression by, 217; Resolution 1646, 130; Resolution 1370, 224; role in foreign policy of, 200
Revolutionary Court, 185
revolutionary courts, 223, 254, 255
Revolution of July 14 (1958), 49, 50, 51, 56, 75
Reza (Imam), 92
rice, 101, 159-60
Rikabi, Fuad, 51, 53
roads, xvi, 163
Romans, 14
rural society (*see also* agrarian reform; tribal society; villages), xxiv, 98, 99
Rustam, 15, 16

Saadi, Ali Salih as, 53-54
Saadun, Abd al Muhsin as, 37, 39
Saadun family, 26
Sadat, Anwar, 63
Saddam City, 107
Saddam Dam, 154
Saddam Husayn, xxiv-xxv, 51, 61, 65, 87, 96, 178, 184, 192, 204, 210, 232, 238, 243; administration of, 167, 171, 175, 182, 200, 202; assassination attempt on, 244; consolidation of power by, xxvi, 62-63; economic reform of, 127-29; emergence of, 5, 58-59, 188-89; as leader of Baath Party, xvii, 105, 175-76, 194, 209, 217; role in government and party of, 219
Saddam Hussein, *See* Saddam Husayn
Sadr, Musa as (imam), 251
Safavid Empire, 25-26
Safavids, 26
Safwan, 163
Said, Nuri as, 32, 39-40, 44-49, 52
SAIRI. *See* Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI)
Salah ad Din I refinery, 145
Samanids, 21
Samarkand, 24, 25
Samarra, 71, 154, 165
Samarrai, Salih Mahdi as, 243
Sanandaj, 234
San Remo Conference (1920), 32, 38, 133-34, 136, 141
Sardis, 12
Sargon I (king), 9
Sassanid Empire, 15, 16, 86
Sassanids, 14, 15
Saudi Arabia, xvi, xxiv, xxv, xxix, 40, 46, 60, 62, 71, 143, 245; economic assistance from, 207; Iraqi relations with, 202, 206-7
schools, theological, 90-91, 92, 95
school system, 114, 116
Sea Isle City, 241
secret societies, 33-34
sectarian tension, 189
Security Forces, xviii
Security Troops, 252
Seleucia, 14
Selim the Grim, 26
Seljuks, 23-24
Semitic languages, 81
Sennacherib (king), 11
Septimius Severus, 14
services, xv
settlements, 75-77
Shafii school of jurisprudence, 184
Shah Abbas, 26
shah of Iran, xxiv, xxv, 52, 56, 59-61, 63, 84
Shakir, Saadun, 253
Shammar, 32
Shammar tribal confederation, 26
Shanshal, Abd al Jabar, 219-20
sharia courts, 185
Sharjah, 60
Shatt al Arab, xxiv, xxvii-xxviii, 31, 44, 52, 56, 60, 61, 63, 70, 75, 106, 160, 166, 200, 207, 218, 232, 233, 234, 238
Shatt al Gharraf, 75
Shatt al Hillah, 74
shaykhs, 4, 5, 26-27, 36, 39, 42, 45, 50, 94, 100-101
Shia Arabs, xiv, 189
Shia clergy, 198
Shia Islam, xxiv, 20, 23, 25, 26, 63, 81, 91-95
Shia revival movements, 247
Shias, xiv, xxx, 18, 19, 23, 30, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 45, 50, 63-64, 90, 95-97, 107
Shiat Ali, 3, 89-90
Shihab, Hammad, 58, 243
Shirazi (imam), 34
Shishakli, Adib, 48-49
shoe manufacturing industry, 152

Shuwairah, 152
Sidqi, Bakr, 42, 44-45
Siffin, Plain of, 17
Simel (Sumayyil), 42
Sinai Peninsula, 49
Sinjar, 83
Sinjar Mountains, 85
Sirri Island, 236
Slaibi, Said, 54
social structure (*see also* tribal society), 49-50, 52-53, 109-10; in urban centers, 108
social welfare, 118, 127
SOMO. *See* State Organization for Marketing Oil (SOMO)
SONO. *See* State Organization for Northern Oil (SONO)
SOOP. *See* State Organization of Oil Projects (SOOP)
Sorchi tribe, 83
Southern Petroleum Organization (SPO), 142
South Yemen. *See* People's Democratic Republic of Yemen
Soviet Union, 126-27, 215; assistance with railroad construction by, 163; economic cooperation with Iraq of, 145; gas pipeline construction by, 144; Iraqi relations with, xvii-xviii, 202, 203-4; military aid from, 229; oil development assistance by, 141; relations with Iraq of, xxiv, 51; role in Iran-Iraq War, 241; sale of arms and aircraft by, 204, 219, 228-29; treaty with, 61
Spain, xvi, 21, 170
SPO. *See* Southern Petroleum Organization (SPO)
Standard Oil of New Jersey, 135
State Enterprise for Iraqi Airlines, 130, 166
state farms. *See* collectives
State Organization for Marketing Oil (SOMO), 142
State Organization for Northern Oil (SONO), 142
State Organization of Oil Projects (SOOP), 142, 144, 145
state-owned enterprises. 127-30, 137, 141, 144, 146, 148, 152, 192
state religion, 86
state security organizations, xviii
Staudenmaeir, William O., 235
steel industry, 55
Strait of Hormuz, 207, 241
Sublime Porte, 30
Suez Canal, 29, 140
Suffarids, 21
sugar industry, 160
Sulayman, Hikmat, 41, 44
Suleyman II, 27
Suleyman the Magnificent, 26
sulfuric acid industry, 149
sulfur industry, 149
Sultan, Abd Allah, 188
Sumer, 3, 6-7, 9, 10
Sumerians, xxiii, 6-7, 9
sunna, 87
Sunni Arabs, xiv, 81, 189
Sunni Islam, xxiv, 20-21, 23, 26, 81, 87, 232
Sunnis, xiv, xxx, 19-20, 23, 24, 30, 34, 35, 36, 39, 44, 50, 58, 63, 85-86, 90-91, 95-97; as ruling class, 95-96
Sunni-Shia relations, 17, 26, 40, 95-97
Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), 198-99, 251
Susa, 12
Susangerd, 234
Suwaidi, Tawfiq, 47
Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916), 38, 216
Syria, xvi, xviii, 11, 20, 30, 32, 35, 40, 46, 48, 54, 56-57, 63, 71, 74, 83, 136, 140, 142, 153, 155, 163, 228; military aid from, 61; rival Baath government in, xxv, 209
Syrian Catholic church, 86
Syrian Desert, 71

Tabriz, 25, 233
Tahirids, 21
Talabani, Jalal, 62, 84, 197, 248
Talfah, Adnan Khayr Allah, xxvi, 59
Talfah, Khayr Allah, 59
Talfah family, 194
Talib, Ali ibn Abu, 3, 17-20, 89-90
Talib, Naji, 56-57
Tamerlane (Timur the Lame), 25
tanker war, 240-41
tanks, 218
tanneries, 55
TAPU land law (1858), 27, 30
tariffs, 148
technical assistance, 203
technocrats, xxiv
Techno-Export (Soviet Union), 145

Tehran, 56, 234, 251
telecommunications system, 167
telephones, 167
television: broadcasting, 199; transmission, 167
temperatures, 78
Temujin, 24
textile industry, xv, 152
thalweg, 60, 61, 70, 232
Thompson-CSF, 153
Tiglath-Pileser III (king), 11
Tigris (Dijlis) River, xiv, 3, 6, 10, 11, 14, 21, 26, 27, 30, 35, 71, 74, 75, 101, 118, 135, 153, 155, 166
Tigris-Euphrates confluence, xxiii, 74, 75, 237
Tigris-Euphrates river valley, 14
Tigris Valley, 11, 154
Tikrit, xxiv, 58, 59, 116, 194, 222, 244
Tikritis, 58, 59
tobacco industry, 55, 160
topography, xiv
Townshend, Charles, 31
trade barriers, 148
trade deficit, 168
trade policy, 170
trade unions, 50, 51, 128
trading companies, 170
Trajan, 14
Transjordan, 32, 45, 46
Transoxiana, 23
transportation, 162-67
transport equipment industry, 152
Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Soviet Union (1972), 203, 228
Treaty of Mohammara (1922), 70
Treaty of Sèvres (1920), 37-38
treaty setting Kuwait-Iraq border (1913), 70
treaty with Iran (1937), 70
tribal affiliation, 83
tribal revolts, 42
tribal society (*see also* shaykhs), 99-103
Tripoli, 48, 136
Tsevetmetpromexport (TSMPE), 144
Tudeh Party, 250
Tughril, 24
Tughril Beg, 23
Tulayah, 163
Tunisia, 21
Turkestan, 14, 24
Turkey, 4, 30, 31, 33, 38, 41, 44, 71, 74, 83, 126, 142, 153, 155-56, 163, 168; relations with, 209-10; trade with Iraq of, xvi, 170
Turkic language, xiv
Turkish language, 30
Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC) (*see also* Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC)), 38, 133-35
Turkomans, xiv, 51, 69, 81, 85-86
Turks, 23, 35
Tuwaitha, 204
Twelver or Ithna-Ashari sect, 95
Twentieth Brigade, 54

Ubayd Allah, 19
Umar (caliph), 16, 17, 18, 86, 89
Umar Khayyam, 24
Umayyad Dynasty, 19, 40, 90, 92
Umayyads, 20, 21
Umm Qasr, xvi, xxviii, 60, 166, 218
Unified Political Command, 54
uniforms and insignia, 224
United Arab Emirates (UAE), xxv, 60, 206, 207, 241
United Arab Republic (UAR), 54
United National Front, 188
United Nations (UN), xxvii, 46, 210; partition of Palestine by, 47; report on chemical weapon use, 238
United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 104
United Nations (UN) Security Council: cease-fire resolution for Iran-Iraq War, 200, 204; Resolution 598, xxvii
United States: aid to Kurdish Democratic Party by, 196; Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 229; Central Intelligence Agency, 52; Department of Defense, 229; Department of State, xxviii; Iraqi relations with, xviii, 202, 205-6; military assistance from, 61; Navy SEAL commandos, 241; ownership in TPC of, 134; role in Iran-Iraq War, 241; trade with Iraq of, 170
University of Al Mustansiriyah, 116
University of Baghdad, 116
University of Basra, 116
University of Mosul, 116
University of Salah ad Din, 116
University of Technology, 116
university system, 116
upland regions, 71
Ur, 3, 9-10

urban growth, 105-9
urbanization, 98
urban society, xxiv, 98
Urmia, 33, 234
Uruk, 7, 9
USS *Stark*, xxviii, 241
Usuli school, 95
Uthman (caliph), 17, 18, 89-90
Uzaym, 75

vegetable production, 160
veterans, 246
villages, 102-3
volunteer military service, 221

wadis, 71, 74
Walid, Khalid ibn al, 15
Warbah, 60
war casualties, 245-46
War College. *See* Al Bakr University for Higher Military Studies
water control (*see also* barrages; dam construction; floods; irrigation), distribution system for, 101; diversion by other countries, 155-56
water resources, 153-56
water supply, 153
Wathbah uprising (1948), 47, 49
West Al Qurnah oil field, 145
Western influence, 97
wheat, 159
widows, 246
Wilson, Arnold Talbot, 32, 33, 34
winds, 78
women, xxx, 113; in armed forces, 220, 221
World Health Organization (WHO), 210

Yahya, Tahir, 57
Yanbu, xvi, xxix, 143
Yathrib (Medina), 87
Yazid I, 19
Yazidis, xiv, 85
Yemen, 14, 46
Young Arab Society, 29
Young Turks, 29, 30-31
Young Turks' Revolution of 1908, 29
Yugoslavia, 170
Yusuf, Yusuf Salman, 248

Zagros Mountains, 78, 83
Zakhu, 41, 60
Zangid Dynasty, 24
Zanj, 23
Zaydis, 95
Zibari tribe, 83
ziggurats, 7
Ziyad ibn Abihi, 20

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