

New Insights

In-Depth Analysis of Middle Eastern Security Issues

Center for Defense and Security Policy Wilberforce University Summer 2006

Volume I, Issue I Summer 2006

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Founder's Remarks

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Wilberforce University is proud to announce the creation of New Insights. The journal was created to address the pressing need for informed debate on the main strategic events touching on U.S. and international security issues. Wilberforce University, named in honor of the 18th century British abolitionist and Member of Parliament, William Wilberforce, is an ideal home for this form of intellectual examination of the leading issues of our time. Wilberforce University, the first private historically black college in America, has a rich history of leadership in international affairs and global engagement. The first president of Malawi (Central Africa), H. Kamuzu Banda, was a graduate of Wilberforce. The University's current President, Floyd Flake, is a former member of the US House of Representatives and served on the important House Banking Committee.

In this capacity, he chaired and was a ranking member on the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the world's multilateral development banks like the Asian Development Bank, the African Development Bank, and the World Bank. This institution is no stranger to international engagement and foreign policy. Indeed, it is logical that we, Wilberforce University, would examine the most potent forces facing this nation and the world at this moment.

The Center for Defense and Security Policy offers this special supplement to the Wilberforce Quarterly and Disaster Preparedness journals in order to address the need for new fresh insights on the main strategic events touching on U.S. and international security issues. The journal's goal is to provide the best sourced information and analytical commentary on the conflict in Iraq, Iran's nuclear ambitions, and the war on terror. New Insights was founded by Anouar Boukhars, Director of Wilberforce Center for Defense and Security Policy, Marshall Mitchell, executive Vice President, and Reverend Dr. Floyd H. Flake, President of Wilberforce University and former member of Congress. The opinions expressed within are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of

Dr. Anouar Boukhars was also a logical choice to lead this effort. He brings to the University -and the issue at hand- depth, humanity, a global perspective and honesty. Along with Dr. Boukhars, we have invited participation of many of the world's leading thinkers, policymakers, journalists, and scholars. As a result, you will witness that the Center for Defense and Security Policy is representative of the excellence anticipated when the Center was imagined.

I am personally proud of this effort as it grew out of my vision to engage the world in an age when there are motivations and calls by many to withdraw into illusory national, ethnic, religious, cultural and ideological cloisters because of current turmoil around the world. Now more than ever, there is a need for serious, honest, thoughtful and robust engagement of the world, not retreat! Suo marte!

Editor's Welcome

By Anouar Boukhars



The Center for Defense and Security Policy offers this special supplement to the Wilberforce Quarterly and Disaster Preparedness journals in order to address the need for new fresh insights on the main strategic events touching on U.S. and international security issues. The journal's goal is to provide the best sourced information and analytical commentary on the conflict in Iraq, Iran's nuclear ambitions, and the war on terror.

New Insights is one of three journals that the Center for Defense and Security Policy (CDSP) produces. As an integral part of Wilberforce University, CDSP is dedicated to providing the best information and analysis on strategic issues for politicians, foreign affairs analysts and defense commentators. Through its various interrelated and mutually supporting activities, the Center strives to help improve wider public understanding of domestic and international security problems and influence the development of sounder public policy.

The Center's publications are timely. Its journals of Disaster Preparedness, New Insights and Wilberforce Quarterly are widely regarded as providing authoritative commentary and analysis on the main strategic events touching on national and global security. The Center's publications, conferences, seminars and workshops place it at the forefront of public policy development.

Motivations and Rationales of the Iraqi Insurgents

By Ahmed S. Hashim

Few observers of the post-Saddam Iraqi scene expected an insurgency to break out in Iraq after conventional combat operations were officially declared to be over. On the contrary, there was a deep-seated optimism among the architects of the conflict that the war would be over quickly and that Iraq would return to normality in fairly short order, the ensuing chaos and disorder notwithstanding. When the insurgency did break out in early May 2003 there was little concern on the part of the US senior officials, military officers and the CPA, which had been set up to run post-Saddam Iraq on a temporary basis.

In the early days the insurgents, often amateurish and clumsy, were described as former regime ‘dead-enders’ who would be soundly defeated. On 27 June 2003 Paul Wolfowitz, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and one of the key architects of the war, stated “The direction is pretty clear. It is toward a more secure Iraq.” [1] On the insurgents he added: “They lack the sympathy of the population, and they lack any serious external support. Basically, they are on their own.” [2] He made this statement in a month when the insurgency was beginning to take off, the first attack on the civilian aspect of the occupation occurred that month, as did the first attacks on and threats against Iraqis said to be collaborating with the occupation.

Wolfowitz’s statement is clear evidence that US knowledge or understanding of the political and socio-economic situation on the ground in Iraq both before and in the aftermath of the collapse of the regime was almost non-existent. The Bush Administration’s characterization of the insurgents as regime dead-enders was simply not accurate. With respect to the question of who is involved in the insurgency, the answer is that the Sunni Arab community (with some significant Sunni Turkmen ‘input’) which makes up anywhere between eighteen and twenty percent of the total population and lives in the center of the country has provided the support base for the insurgency. This essay seeks to ask why they revolted and why they received support from a wide variety of Arabs and Muslims outside of Iraq. [3]

The Quest to Protect Identity

In 1921 the British institutionalized the ascendancy of the Sunni Arab minority over the new state of Iraq. In April 2003 the United States overthrew the Sunni Arab-dominated regime of Saddam Hussein and with that act it ended Sunni Arab ascendancy over the country. A total of 83 years separated these two seminal events in Iraqi political history. The past, present, and future of that country cannot be understood without reference to the key events that have occurred in between these two historical years.

This domination by a minority with a strong but narrowly circumscribed identity and ideology has meant that Iraq has suffered from serious legitimacy problems over the course of its political history from 1921 onwards when the state was formed. While the Sunni Arab community proved over the course of eighty-three years of rule that it was strong enough to maintain power, it never succeeded in establishing an ideological hegemony that was regarded as legitimate by the entire country. The end result has been the accumulation of deep-seated grievances and a quest for vengeance on the part of the ‘losers.’ This partly accounts for the utter lack of sympathy with which the Shi‘a and Kurds view the current plight of the once dominant Sunni community. This lack of sympathy or empathy translates into politics and policies that marginalize the Sunnis and drive them further into the arms of the insurgency perpetuating the kind of legitimacy deficit that Iraq exhibited under Sunni rule.

The political struggles until the downfall of Saddam, over ideological orientations and resources, were between and among the Sunni Arabs, the group at the center of power and that defined the state. These struggles were over minor ideological orientations and resources. Since his ouster in 2003, politics in Iraq is not only ideological and resource-driven but also identity-driven. The Sunni Arabs no longer define what Iraq is and that, coupled with what they perceive as their deliberate marginalization, has presented them with a deep identity crisis. It is true that people often fight fiercely to protect privileges and positions of dominance as much they fight to gain more of these resources. It is equally true that people also fight not only to maintain or advance things they value materially, but also for a set of *non-material* values that are subsumed under the rubric of identity.

In short, as Erik Ringmar points out in his study of Sweden's involvement in the disastrous Thirty Years War in the early seventeenth century, sometimes people fight not in order to maintain or restore their material benefits or what they believe they are entitled to. They also fight to defend or promote their sense of self or identity against dire threats, real or perceived. [4]

For the Sunni Arabs the downfall of the regime in April 2003 was not only or even primarily the collapse of power and privileges -- indeed, for many of them there were few, if any privileges and little power -- but of the entire nationalist edifice that has been in existence for over eight decades that had *identified* Iraq with them. This was a cataclysmic event. It constituted a *grievance*. For a while after the collapse of the Ba'athist regime the Sunni Arab community was not only in shock, but also in a state of confusion and aimlessness. Ultimately the shock and resultant anger, as well as Coalition policies that struck at the Sunni Arabs identity and self-worth, have contributed to the emergence and perpetuation of the insurgency. Identity crisis stems from a disruption of one's world and milieu and the quest to make sense of the changes by posing the interrelated questions of how you fit in that new world and whether and how you can remake your identity to fit the new circumstances. To repair this will take much more than simply providing the Sunnis with material resources and political power in accordance with their percentage of the population.

For them the Coalition invasion and occupation of the country that they had dominated and built in their own image for eighty three years constituted a massive blow. The Sunni community is questioning its future and role in the new Iraq. Some have voted with their feet and left the country *en masse*. Others are trying their hand at politics. Many more have chosen to fight. Indeed, many are not fighting to restore their privileges but to survive.

Ba'ath Party Motivations

The U.S. characterization of the insurgency as 'regime dead-enders' led by the deposed Ba'ath Party and the senior leaders of the former regime reveals considerable ignorance about the nature of the party, its entrenchment in the society, and its ability to act effectively as a clandestine entity. Contrary to the belief that the deposed Ba'ath Party had faded away and played little or no role in the insurgency, there is compelling evidence that it did not fade away and that, indeed, its members did play significant political and operational roles. It also issued statements that outlined its operational goals -- regarding how to fight the occupiers -- and political goals for a 'liberated' Iraq. The fact is that this party functions well in clandestine mode because it has experienced working 'underground' when it was out of power and hunted by its enemies and had prepared for the possibility of overthrow once in power.

But the Ba'athists have also discovered that it is to their advantage to mobilize people on the basis of religious sentiment. Religious sentiment is a powerful tool for mobilizing people in favor of a cause. Moreover, the Ba'athists face a stark reality in Iraq: the rise of religious sentiment among the population and the increase in piety among ostensible Ba'ath Party members. They needed to join that bandwagon if they were to rouse the ire of the people against the foreign presence. Saddam's post-downfall statements were suffused with religious imagery. Of course, he had started down that path over a decade before, but he clearly realized that religion was a great motivational and recruitment tool in the fight against the coalition. Take the message he issued on the occasion of Ramadan on November 2003, almost a month before his capture:

O great people, God willing, O magnanimous mujahideen, lovers of martyrdom...O magnanimous men of our armed forces wherever you are hold on tightly to the weapons of the valiant resistance...May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you...Our martyrs are in paradise while the dead of the louts and our other enemies are in hell. Let us make this month of Ramadan the prelude to and foundation of victory as it was during the great (battle), which marked the era of the vanguards of Arabs and Muslims who were honored in you. [5]

With Saddam's incarceration, it is believed that Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri, who has recently been reported to have died or not, and was one of the former leader's closest comrades, continued to further promote the fusion of nationalist and religious themes as an element of the Ba'athist 'resistance' strategy. Izzat Ibrahim, a former vice-president and a member of the top decision-making body in the defunct regime, the Revolutionary Command Council, had always been one of the most religiously-oriented members of the government. He is on the run and plays, so it seems, a key role in the Ba'athist resistance to the foreign presence in Iraq. It has even been argued that he is the leader of this clandestine 'Iraqi national resistance.' Whatever the case maybe he does seem to rank high in the Ba'ath resistance and has been responsible for the myriad ideological statements issued by the party, particularly those couched in religious terms. [6]

Saddam Hussein's apprehension by the Coalition in mid-December 2003 and the former leader's less than dignified performance in those early days was a blow to the Ba'athist component of the insurgency (from which it was eventually to recover). Ba'athist insurgent leaders and spokesmen tried to downplay the impact of Saddam Hussein's capture by arguing that one should not focus solely or primarily on the role of the leader but on the motivations of the 'resistance' and on the cause they espouse. Nonetheless, even if they were not directly fighting for him or in order to restore him to power, it is clear that for many former regime elements he constituted a symbol of resistance to foreign occupation. The fact that he was running around free even if he was not in direct control of the insurgency was important. Not surprisingly, in January 2004 pro-Saddam insurgent leader 'Abu al-Mu'tasim,' who I think is a former army officer, declared candidly that the capture of former president Saddam Hussein hurt the insurgency:

There is no question that the capture of the leader President Saddam Husayn dealt a blow not only to the resistance fighters but to all the Arab nation's honorable sons. It is not a situation that we can easily bypass. President Saddam Husayn is the symbol and leader of the resistance. [7]

However, he expressed confidence in victory because justice and determination was on the side of the *muqawamah* (resistance). The 'resistance,' he continues:

represents the sons of Iraq and is an expression of their conscience...History, however, will record that it was the Ba'athists who started this resistance. It continued and escalated when elements of the Iraqi Army, the RG, Saddam's Fedayeen, Al Quds Army, and members of the security services joined its ranks...the resistance includes pan-Arabists, nationalists, and Islamists. It also includes Arab volunteers who are effectively participating in this heroic resistance that is led and administered by the Ba'ath party. [8]

The Ba'athist element of the insurgency has key strengths such as the fact that the Ba'ath continues to be deeply embedded in Sunni Arab society and that its conspiratorial mentality allows it to operate effectively in a clandestine manner.

Nationalism, Honor, Revenge and Pride

Four key values – nationalism, honor, revenge and pride -- dictate that one must fight occupation. In other words, resisting the occupation simply because it is an occupation is a major motivating factor. One of the towering figures of modern political philosophy, Sir Isaiah Berlin, and on whom I was weaned in Britain in the 1980s (the other was Karl Popper) once wrote that “nationalism is an inflamed condition of national consciousness which can be, and has on occasion been, tolerant and peaceful. *It usually seems to be caused by wounds, some form of collective humiliation.*” [9] While I was in Iraq I came across Iraqis who would espouse a vague kind of nationalism as they expressed their distaste for the foreign presence in the country.

Others who were more articulate or better educated articulated their distaste from within a framework of a more coherent nationalist ideology. Both in my mind, however, fell within the rubric of Berlin's notion of an ‘inflamed condition’ that was caused by wounds. This was noticed by many other observers. CBS news correspondent, David Hawkins, interviewed Iraqi insurgents. Hawkins posed the following question: “Why do you fight? Why do you attack American soldiers?” One of them responded: “This is occupation, so we fight against the occupation.” [10] Another insurgent from the Dulaim tribe was an educated man who told a French journalist: “Upon the fall of Baghdad, I assumed my responsibilities as a Muslim and an Iraqi citizen. What human being can stand to watch his country, his house destroyed by people who respect nothing? These people have no motivation except material interests. The members of the former Governing Council arrived on American tanks, violating holy places, injuring people's honor and dignity, leaving many dead.” [11]

Anthony Shadid details the spirit of revenge that has animated Iraqis to fight in the insurgency. He cites the example of Saadi Muhammad Abu Shaiba, who returned to fight and die in Fallujah in mid-December 2004 in order to avenge the death of his thirteen-year old son at the hands of US forces. [12] An Arab journalist, Zeki Chehab, political editor with the Al-Hayat-LBC television station, met with insurgents in the Ramadi area who defined themselves in nationalist terms. He quotes one: “We do not want to see our country occupied by forces clearly pursuing their own interests, rather than being poised to return Iraq to the Iraqis.” [13] In Mosul and Fallujah he met with insurgents who were more Islamist in their orientation. He mentioned reports of representatives of Iraqi insurgents meeting in Amman, the Jordanian capital, with representatives of the Palestinian group Hamas in order to learn from its experiences against the Israelis.

Iraqis are infuriated by American behavior and tactics of shooting first and asking questions later or ransacking homes as they search for former regime figures and insurgents. [14] A resident of the wealthy Mansur district told a British reporter after an US raid in the area that he was not a supporter of the former regime, adding: “But I cannot accept the way Americans treat us. When I see things like this I can understand why people want to drive them out of our country. If this happens more and more then I will also join this resistance.” [15]

The U.S. loss of Iraqi support reached its zenith in the spring of 2004. [16] An Iraqi, on the outrage and humiliation he felt, told a reporter that he had been ready to explode for months: “But in the last two weeks, these feelings have blown up inside me. The Americans are attacking Shiite and Sunni at the same time. They have crossed a line. I had to get a gun.” One poor Iraqi, a laborer in his thirties named Abdul Razak al-Muaimi: “I train my son to kill Americans. That is one reason I am grateful to Saddam. All Iraqis know how to use a weapon. [US soldiers] searched my house. They kicked my Koran.

They speak to me so poorly in front of my children. It’s not that I encourage my son to hate Americans. It’s not that I make him want to join the resistance. Americans do that for me.” [17]

An Italian journalist had an encounter with Sunni insurgents in Mosul who proceeded to explain to her why they were fighting:

We are the fighters for the freedom of Iraq, we are the sons of Mosul, we are the mujahidin who will halt the US crusaders. We will win because the people of Iraq are with us, because Allah is

with us, and because the Americans are gutless dogs...The Americans are rich, but how many soldiers, how many more vehicles can they afford to lose? They are talking about withdrawal. And do you know why? Because we can place in their path all the bombs that we want to, and we can kill them all any time we want to. They will flee like yellow-bellied dogs, or else we will kill them one by one. [18]

The insurgents that the Italian journalists talked with in Mosul were not the elite of the former Ba‘th party but country people from the region around the city. They had taken up arms against the American presence and the favoritism shown to the Kurds.

Religion as a motivator

Traditionally, the Sunni clergy has not been as politically active as their Shi‘a counterparts in mobilizing the populace against perceived injustices or inequities. This has begun to change both in Iraq and in the rest of the Arab world. In Iraq we have witnessed a rising tide of political activism among the mainstream clerical establishment and the emergence of younger politically active clergymen (*imams*) with clear-cut Salafist tendencies – that is, those who seek a purist interpretation and application of Islam. In Iraq the process of re-Islamization started in the 1990s. Both mainstream and extremist Sunni Islamist tendencies have emerged in the country. The reasons why will require detailed sociological analyses in the coming months.

With the downfall of Saddam many Sunni Muslims began to express their religious freedom more openly. [19] Young Islamist men ‘came out of the closet’ so to speak. Abu Mojahed – mid-thirties, a laborer and adherent of Salafi Islam who was jailed four times under Saddam’s regime -- would gather like-minded friends for secret Salafi classes and discussions. He did not fight for the regime when the U.S. invaded, stayed home; but did not welcome the Americans either: “I didn’t fight. I stayed at home. If you fight for Saddam and he wins, you are not winning. If America wins, you are not winning. They freed us from evil but they brought more evil to the country.” [20]

Ultimately, clerics in the mosques instructed him and his friends to take up arms. Why does he fight? “We fight the Americans because they are nonbelievers and they are coming to fight Islam, calling us terrorists.” [21] Abu Mojahed continues to say that they fight for the following:

We fight for our land, against those who are fighting Islam, for our country and for our women. Our goal is to fight whoever fights us and not just the Americans. And we want this country to be ruled by the Tawhid and Sunna. If that doesn’t happen, that means all of us die because we fight until the last breath. [22]

Once harassed and often arrested by Saddam’s security forces, the Islamists of Mosul made serious inroads into the political and social life of the city right under the noses of the Americans; and the attitudes of their preachers towards the occupation are not favorable. One imam, Sheikh Ibrahim al-Nama’a, who had a considerable following, began with preaching a very political sermon against the occupation from the earliest days:

In invading a Muslim territory, the objective of the infidels has always been to destroy the cultural values of Islam. With them they bring nationalism, democracy, liberalism, communism, Christianity...Today the Iraqis suffer. Now Iraq is occupied precisely because it has forgotten the divine teachings and has not followed the principles of Islam. We have been delivered of the injustices of one man (i.e. Saddam), but this does not mean we must accept the American-British domination... [23]

Arab nationalists, disgruntled Muslims and foreign fighters and Sunni extremists have played a role in the insurgency since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They chose to use suicide bombs and the massive car bombs that devastated several targets in Baghdad and elsewhere, causing a great many deaths. Yet the influx of foreign terrorists and religious extremists is not massive one. More important than their relatively small numbers is that they constitute a force multiplier and are willing to engage in operations that most Iraqi insurgents would prefer to stay away from such as extremely bloody suicide attacks.

The question of foreign insurgents in Iraq presents a particularly thorny one. Complex layers beneath an apparently simple surface make it difficult to discern fact from fiction. The Bush administration has maintained that ‘regime dead-enders’ and foreign infiltrators are behind the attacks, but hard empirical evidence – often from the US military – indicates that the foreign element is minuscule. In 2004 evidence showed that of 8,000 suspected insurgents detained in Iraq, only 127 held foreign passports, which supports this latter claim. In Fallujah US officers concluded that the overwhelming majority of the fighters who battled the Marines and the US Army in April and November 2004 were Iraqis. By blaming foreigners, the Bush administration and the CPA hoped to quash the notion that there was an insurgency by a segment of the population and in order to frame the conflict as part of the wider war on terror. Even after the horrific acts of foreign fighters continued to be in the limelight they still constituted a minority of the insurgency. In March 2005 Major General Martin Dempsey said the idea that foreign fighters were flooding Iraq was ‘a misconception.’ [24] A simple head-count does not tell the whole story. The insurgency's foreign element has had a greater impact than mere numbers would lead us to believe.

Uncertainty regarding the level or depth of al-Qaeda presence in Iraq remains due to a lack of non-politicized intelligence on its activities in that country. Osama bin Laden and his subordinates did not think much of Saddam Hussein and his regime, with evidence showing that the feelings were mutual. In the early days of the war, when there was an influx of foreign volunteers into Iraq, Hussein apparently warned the Ba'ath party against close links with outsiders, especially religious extremists. A senior Islamist operative (now deceased) allegedly authored a text entitled "The Future of Iraq and the Peninsula After Baghdad's Fall: The Religious, Military, Political and Economic Future." The work argues that the fall of the Ba'athist regime was "better for the Islamists than the victory of the Iraqi Ba'athists, because the collapse of Arab Ba'athism means the collapse of the atheist, pan-Arab slogans that swept the Muslim nation...the demise of the Ba'ath government in Iraq heralds the hoisting of the Islamic banner over the debris." Such fighters were attracted to Iraq following the war precisely in order to fight the U.S. presence in that country for the sake of Islam.

Among the foreign fighters who has had the greatest impact and caused the greatest amount of devastation in Iraq, nobody can top the Jordanian Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, known to Coalition forces as AMZ. The mysterious Zarqawi emerged as a leader and tough guy in jail in Jordan in the 1990s according to several accounts. He grew up in Zarqa, a crime-ridden industrial city northeast of Amman, and which is home to many Islamists. His real name is Ahmed Fadil al-Khalayleh. He made his way into Iraq during the course of the war and attached himself to Ansar al-Islam. [25] Osama Bin Laden praised Zarqawi's operations and recognized Zarqawi as the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq in December 2004 when he said: "We are pleased with their daring operations against the Americans and Allawi's renegade government...We, in the Al-Qaida Organization, warmly welcome their union with us. This is a great step toward rendering successful the efforts of the mujahidin to establish the state of right and annihilate the state of injustice." [26] Many of the foreign Arab fighters in Fallujah were volunteers in Zarqawi's group. Each of the squads or cells would have an "emir," or commander, usually an Iraqi who often would have had military training in the former Iraqi army.

The collapse of Iraqi border controls facilitated the entry of un-sponsored insurgents into Iraq, while Iraqi middlemen or facilitators provided logistical support (i.e. food, directions, and weapons and ammunition) once these individuals had gained entry into the country. Un-sponsored foreign infiltrators are then "passed on" to Sunni imams who became their mentors. Many of these foreign infiltrators entered Iraq before the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. While poorly trained and ill-equipped, a substantial number of them fought doggedly and to the death in some of the battles between Iraqi irregular forces and the coalition advancing from the south. After the end of Operation Iraqi Freedom, some returned home, while others remained and fought in the insurgency. Many of these gravitated towards the more disciplined jihadist insurgents.

Foreign insurgents who come in as part of a "package" sent into Iraq by non-state actors are a more formidable force than un-sponsored foreign infiltrators. There is growing evidence that Iraq has begun to attract foreign Islamists and anti-American groups such as al-Qaeda and the Tawhid organization of the elusive and enigmatic Jordanian-Palestinian terrorist, Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, for whom Iraq was a new and easily accessible battlefield.

The media, namely T.V. and the clerics, played an important role in persuading many Arab volunteers to go to Iraq. For example, one volunteer, Walid Muhammad Hadi al-Masmudi, from Tunisia who was captured in Iraq in January and was interrogated admitted readily that the media and the exhortations of clerics constituted the primary influence on his decision to go to Iraq and fight in the jihad:

We also watched (Muslim) clerics on television and on Al-Jazirah declaring jihad in Iraq...there was a statement, fatwa, by a list of 40 scholars from the Arab and Islamic world on Al-Jazirah... They used to show events in Abu Ghurayb, the oppression, abuse of women, and fornication, so I acted in the heat of the moment and decided...to seek martyrdom in Iraq. [27]

Recruits for the holy war come from a wide variety of countries, including several in Western Europe where there is a large population of young and disgruntled Muslim men of fighting age. While the vast majority are immigrants of Middle Eastern descent (mainly North African), there are some white European converts among them. Dutch intelligence argues that recruitment into the jihadist network is an individual development rather than a group development process. The recruiters spend a great deal of effort and time on subverting and seducing each individual:

Recruiters are purposefully searching for potential recruits. Their approaching of these people – in some cases even during detention (i.e. in prisons) – marks the beginning of a process in which the recruiters gradually drive the potential recruits apart from their family and friends in order to be able to control and manipulate them and, to begin with, indoctrinate them with the radical Islamic range of ideas. Recruitment is a gradual process which requires tact and discretion from the recruiter. The process is not completed before a recruit actively devotes himself to the violent jihad, either by means of support activities or by taking part in the fight. [28]

The Dutch conclude that this is a time-consuming process but the result is usually dedicated and committed individuals who then are allowed to proceed to “paramilitary training.” Many Muslims in Europe are drawn into the jihadist network because they are outraged by Western policies in the Middle East and the Islamic world and by the perceived humiliation and poor treatment meted out to them in their adopted countries. As the report by the Dutch intelligence service concludes: “The group of young people who feel treated disrespectfully is a major potential target for radicalisation (sic) and possibly recruitment processes.” [29]

Once in Iraq, ‘sponsored’ jihadists needed to create a logistical infrastructure, as infiltrating heavy weapons and explosives across the borders of Iraq's neighbors is difficult. For this they needed the help of Iraqis. Mutual suspicion between Sunni Islamists and former regime loyalists, secular-minded nationalists, and tribal elements actively opposing the Coalition does not mean that the latter groups are averse to providing logistical support for the former. Attempts by foreign jihadist organizations to operate in Iraq depend on the resources, protection and concealment provided to their fighters by Iraqis. Unable to enter into Iraq with the resources they need or blend in with the local population, these foreign elements would be lost without support from within Iraq.

The importance of the foreign jihadists who adhere to a strict interpretation of Sunni Islam lies in three distinct areas. Firstly, these foreign jihadists have coupled with local Iraqi Salafists – who emerged into the open following the downfall of the Saddam regime – to successfully introduce a cohesive and extreme ideology to the public. Many of these groups, like the Mujahideen al-Salafiyah in Balad, have even reached out to members of the former *Fida'iyin* Saddam as long as the latter drop their allegiance to Saddam.

Secondly, they have increased the prospects for communal violence by waging a campaign of deliberate and focused attacks against leaders of other Muslim communities, promoters of 'moral laxity,' and non-Muslims. In the fall of 2003, Islamists were particularly active in Mosul, where they attacked a nunnery, killed a well-known writer, bombed a popular cinema, and torched four liquor stores.

Thirdly, they have been responsible for the suicide bombing campaigns in Iraq between early fall 2003 and summer 2005. August 2003 saw three massive car bombings. Some of the most devastating suicide attacks came in mid-November 2003 against Italians in Nasiriyah and in mid-January 2004 outside a Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) compound in Baghdad. In March 2004, the Shi'a religious celebration of Ashura witnessed multiple suicide bombings which killed hundreds.

Professor Ahmed S. Hashim is a leading authority on Middle Eastern, Central and South Asian security issues. A member of the United States Naval War College's strategic research department, Hashim recently returned from field research in Iraq. The views expressed here are those of the author and not of any institution or organization with which he is affiliated.

Notes

1. Thomas Ricks, 'Experts Question Depth of Victory,' Washington Post, 27 June 2003, p.20.
2. Ibid.
3. This essay is derived from my forthcoming (December 2005) book, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, London: Hurst and Company, 2005 and Cornell University Press, 2005.
4. See Erik Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action: A Cultural Explanation of the Swedish Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
5. Message of Saddam on the occasion of Ramadan, 16 November 2003, <<http://comitesirak.free.fr/freng/saddam15.htm>>.
6. For more details see 'Statement from the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party,' 7 February 2005, (<<http://comitesirak.free.fr/baath/baath-050207-en.htm>>).
7. Albasrah.net, 21 January 2004; also in the Palestinian online weekly Al-Dar, 23 January 2004 (FBIS-GMP20040123000183, <<https://portal.rccb.osis.gov>>).
8. Ibid.
9. Isaiah Berlin, 'The Bent Twig: A Note on Nationalism,' *Foreign Affairs*, 1, (1972), p.17.
10. David Hawkins, 'Iraqi Fighters; Yankees Go Home,' CBSNEWS.com, July 21, 2003 (accessed online).

11. Jean-Claude Renet, 'The Iraqi Resistance,' Paris Oumma.com, 18 January 2005 (originally in French in FBIS, 18 January, 2005, <https://imos.rccb.osis.gov>)
12. Anthony Shadid, 'Father Seeks Vindication But Finds Death in Fallujah,' Washington Post, 15 February 2005, p.1.
13. Zaki Chehab, 'Inside the resistance,' Guardian, 13 October 2003.
14. For more on the U.S. operational methods and their impact on the Iraqis see Chapter 5.
15. Mike Donkin, 'US tactics fuel Iraqi anger,'"BBC News, 28 July 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3102823.stm>.
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