

The Destruction of Iraq Goes On

by Ramtanu Maitra and Hussein Askary

March 17—Ten years after the invasion of Iraq, which took the lives of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, the destruction continues unabated, devastating one of the more advanced economies and societies in Southwest Asia. In addition, the war has ushered in an era of sectarian and ethnic civil wars, not only within Iraq, but throughout the region, thus fulfilling a British imperial plan long underway.

According to *The Lancet's* 2006 survey, 601,027 violent deaths out of 654,965 excess deaths related to the war (those above the normal expected rate) occurred between March 2003 and June 2006 alone. Later sectarian violence claimed the lives of tens of thousands. 4,480 U.S. soldiers were also reported killed in Iraq between 2003 and 2012. Other sources estimate that 150,000 Iraqi civilians were killed either by the allies or by acts of terrorism. The excess deaths were caused both by violent acts, and the degradation in health care and nutrition, as well as lack of infrastructure and other vital services due to the destruction wrought by the Anglo-American bombing campaigns and many years of brutal economic sanctions.

The infrastructure of the country has not been restored, by any means. In health care, for example, the country has lost more than half of its doctors, and tens of thousands of Iraqi patients are forced to seek health care outside the country, according to a recent “Costs of War” study at Brown University’s Watson Institute of International Studies.

The only thing which has been keeping the Iraqi government and chaotic political system together is the money earned from oil exports, the only real economic activity still taking place. Iraq’s oil production has increased from 2.7 to 3.4 million barrels per day, and is planned to reach 3.7 in 2013, with the help of international companies. Tragically, this is still below the 1979 level of 3.8 million.

Iraq’s infrastructure is almost completely dysfunctional. Although ten years have passed since the fall of Saddam Hussein’s regime, power supplies have not been restored, and most of the country relies on private diesel generators, one of the largest polluters in the

country. Agriculture is almost non-existent, and the water distribution, management, and sewage systems are damaged beyond repair and need to be rebuilt. In January and February of this year, large sections of the areas near the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, and the capital Baghdad, were flooded, due to unusually heavy rainfall. What used to be regarded a blessing for this dry country, has become a curse.

Almost all of the oil revenues are used to buy political loyalties and support for the government. Money is divided among the large ethnic and sectarian groups, to be passed on to their supporters. The population is being bribed with cash to keep them from protesting the corruption and lack of services and security. While there is very little investment in basic infrastructure, education, and health care, Iraq is turning into one of the largest markets for cheap consumer goods. The country’s immunity to major natural catastrophes and epidemics is being reduced to nothing.

Threatened by Break-Up

More horrifying than the physical destruction of Iraq, however, is the shattering of its social fabric, as a result of its being turned into a pawn of the long-term British geopolitical scheme to Balkanize the region.

Iraq is more divided today than at any other time in its modern history. The Kurds have their own semi-state in the north, with relative calm and a massive real estate bubble, but still plagued with electricity and water shortages. The Arabs in central and southern Iraq, mostly Shi’as, have established their regional structures and rule mainly through religious authority and tribal and primitive social codes.

The western provinces of Anbar, Salahuddin, and Mosul, are in a state of turmoil as they, dominated by the Sunni sect and infiltrated by Saudi-backed Salafi militants and extremists, do not approve of the policies of the Shi’a/Kurdish-dominated central government, and are threatening to split and establish their own autonomous region, or block all of the central government’s policies. They accuse the government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki of being an arm of the Islamic



Sectarian violence in an attack on the police headquarters in Kirkuk, Iraq, earlier this year: At least 16 people died. The British-engineered war destroyed a culturally advanced society, leaving Iraq with the prospect of endless sectarian warfare.



Republic of Iran. Iran has increased its political and economic influence in Iraq, but nowhere near to the extent claimed.

The chaos is increased by Shi'a militias, such as al-Mahdi Army of the Sadrist faction, who are also taking part in terrorism and "sectarian cleansing" against Sunnis, especially in such mixed cities as Baghdad and Basrah.

The power vacuum created after the elimination—ordered by Paul Bremer, the American Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority of Iraq after the March 2003 invasion—of modern state institutions, including the army and police, made it possible for all kinds of powers and terrorist groups to intervene into Iraq's affairs and dig themselves in as organic parts of society. Baghdad, which had been a melting pot of civilizations, religions, and cultures since its founding in 767 A.D., has been divided into Shi'a/Sunni sectors, with a small enclave for Christians. Tens of thousands of Iraqi Christians have fled the country or become internal refugees, since terrorist groups began targeting them.

An explosion of religious warfare followed a visit by

then-U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney to Saudi Arabia in November 2004, in which he discussed with King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz the allegedly growing danger posed by Shi'ite Iran and its allies, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the Bashar al-Assad government in Syria. This was later called the Shi'a Crescent. Saudi-backed, al-Qaeda-affiliated groups flooded Iraq to conduct a war of horror against the population, targeting both Shi'as and Sunnis who collaborated with the government or, ironically, with the U.S. occupation forces.

More than ever, Baghdad now faces a threat from the Saudi-funded, al-Qaeda-linked terrorists who are carving out an independent Sunni state in northern Iraq. This terrorist group goes by the name of al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), and it fought and killed many American soldiers until 2011, and particularly during the worst security years of 2007-08. These terrorists are still backed

by the Saudis today.

Meanwhile, the slavish academic-cum-intelligence officers of Britain's empire-servers are shouting from the rooftops that the Shi'a Prime Minister, al-Maliki, is becoming another Saddam Hussein, if not worse. These propagandists, working hand-in-glove with the "desert Islam" preachers of House of Saud and the Gulf sheikhdoms, say nary a word about the Saudi and Gulf funding of the Sunni terrorists who are trying to break up Iraq, using the methods of the British colonials in the Indian subcontinent in 1947.

Assembly-Line Production of Terrorists

The invasion of Iraq was the precursor for assembly-line production of hordes of terrorists, funded by the Gulf sheikhdoms promoting Salafism and Wahhabism. These terrorists have made Libya, parts of the Maghreb Arab countries, and Syria, killing fields on behalf of the regime-change doctrine of the Bush-Obama and Blair-Cameron administrations. In fact, these terrorists are the foot-soldiers whose "job" is to bring about the regime-change that London and Wash-

ington now seek, and Saudis and Gulfies demand, ostensibly to demarcate new geographical boundaries.

The Iraq invasion, and subsequent developments in the region, have made the politically sensitive Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey increasingly unstable. Kurds, who inhabit parts of adjoining areas of Syria, Iraq, Turkey, and Iran, have seized the opportunity to declare their intent to establish an independent state of Kurdistan. In parts of Syria, Iraq, and even Turkey, the Kurdish chauvinists now have a free hand; they are in military conflict with the rulers of at least three of those four countries.

The British Policy

One British academic who enunciates the larger geopolitical plan is Toby Dodge of Chatham House (the Royal Institute for International Affairs). According to [Dodge](#): “The size and capacity of the Iraqi armed forces, combined with the lack of democratic oversight to which they are subject, reflect their function as the tool of Nouri al-Maliki’s drive towards competitive authoritarianism. The Prime Minister, through the Office of the Commander in Chief, the proliferation of operations centres and his use of the Iraq Special Operations Forces, has the coercive capacity both to strike against his political opponents, as he did in December 2011 and 2012, and to demobilize popular protest movements, as he did in February 2011 and again in January 2013....”

The truth, however, lies somewhere else. Zayd Alisa of the Middle East Enterprise for Democracy Liberty and Counter Terrorism pointed out in a Feb. 24 [article](#) that, ever since the ouster of Saddam in 2003, the Saudi regime has adamantly refused to recognize the new democratic system in Iraq, and has been refused to have any diplomatic representation in Baghdad:

“It is doubtless that the U.S. final withdrawal from Iraq in December 2011, which coincided with the arrest warrant issued against Tariq al-Hashimi, Iraq’s Sunni Vice President, provided Saudi Arabia and Qatar with a golden opportunity to ramp up the message that Sunni discrimination would dramatically escalate. Despite the enormous geo-political concessions made by the Iraqi government on its stance towards Syria and Bahrain—before the Arab League summit held in Baghdad, in April 2012—to specifically appease the Saudi regime. [Saudi Arabia], nonetheless, decided to appoint its ambassador in Jordan as a non-resident ambassador to Iraq, reiterating the same old message that Iraq is far too insecure and unstable.

“But, even more disparaging, was the Saudis’ and

Qataris’ decision to restrict their representation to low-level delegations. And as part of Saudi and Qatari relentless efforts to ratchet up sectarian tensions in Iraq, the Qatari Prime Minister, Hamad Bin Jassima, not only asserted that Qatar’s low-level participation was aimed at highlighting Qatar’s fierce objection to the marginalization of Sunnis in Iraq, but to add insult to injury the Qatari PM and afterwards the Saudi Foreign Minister, Saud al-Faisal, offered al-Hashimi a formal red-carpet reception in Doha and Riyadh, even while al-Hashimi—found guilty and handed down a death sentence—was facing terrorism allegations.

“Both Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been working tirelessly to break up the Shia-Kurdish strategic alliance in Iraq, replacing it by a Turkish strategic alliance with the Kurdish Region (KR), headed by Massoud Barzani, which has, unquestionably, not only dramatically bolstered the position of the KR in its tense confrontation with the CG [central government] over land and oil, but also ramped up the ethnic tension.”

Saudi and Libyan Terrorists

Back in 2008, Gordon [Lubold](#) of the *Christian Science Monitor* pointed to an analysis published at West Point, which showed that most of the terrorists operating in Iraq come from Saudi Arabia and Libya, while others are from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia.

“The analysis suggests that the bulk of foreign fighters originate from countries with whom the United States is allied—Saudi Arabia, for one—and also offers clues as to how American officials can stem the flow of these terrorists. The report, which is based on data compiled by al-Qaeda and captured by coalition forces last fall, shows that the most violent acts in Iraq are typically carried out by foreign fighters. Their goals sometimes align with the group al-Qaeda in Iraq, which, estimates suggest, has between 5,000 and 8,000 people associated with it. The foreign fighters, however, represent just a small fraction of that group.”

What also follows from Zayd Alisa’s analysis is that, while Baghdad was threatened by the Sunni areas before, it had never faced threats from the Iraqi Kurds in isolation. However, because of the funding of Sunni terrorists by Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and latent support from London, Washington, and Paris, the Kurds have increasingly made common cause with their Sunni neighbors. Following years of poor relations between Erbil (the capital of the Iraqi province of Kurdistan) and Baghdad because of disputes over oil and gas policy,

budgetary allocations, disputed territories (including Kirkuk), and an overall disenchantment within Erbil toward the al-Maliki government, the relationship between the two capitals has, by the start of 2013, become appalling.

Following a military stand-off in the disputed territories at the end of 2012, the scene is set in 2013 for the Kurds to move ahead with securing their autonomy by strengthening their relationship with their northern neighbor, Turkey, and the Arab Gulf states, and by exporting oil and gas directly to Turkey. This could lead to increased military confrontation with Maliki in such volatile flashpoints as Kirkuk, Diyala, and Ninevah. This is a confrontation that the Kurds, with at least tacit Sunni support, may feel capable of winning. The Kurdistan War of 2013 may not be unlikely, looking at the current pieces on the chessboard.¹

An [article](#) by Murad Batal al-Shishani, published by the Jamestown Foundation, a right-wing think tank based in Washington, D.C., indicated the modus ope-

randi of these Saudi/Qatar-funded terrorists whom the Obama Administration knows too well:

“Gunmen from the al-Qaeda-affiliated Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) took hostages in a Syriac Catholic church in central Baghdad on October 31. About 52 people were killed and 67 injured after Iraqi security forces stormed the church. The ISI claimed responsibility for the hostage-taking and also threatened to attack the Coptic Church in Egypt if it did not release two Coptic women the group claimed were being held and tortured in a Christian monastery after allegedly converting to Islam.

“In an Arabic-language discussion on a Tehran television station, leading Sadrist Abd al-Hadi al-Muhammawi and representatives from Iraq’s State of Law Coalition and the Fadhilah Islamic Party insisted the attack bore all the hallmarks of al-Qaeda and declined repeated invitations from the program’s presenter to implicate the United States in the attack. There were, however, suggestions that the assailants may have been supported by a country that shared their takfiri, Salafist and Wahhabi ideologies, a veiled reference to Saudi Arabia.”

This is religious war, British Empire-style: a war without end—until the Empire itself is destroyed.

1. Gareth Stansfield, Senior Associate Fellow and Director of Middle East Studies, “A Year of Endemic Instability in Iraq,” *RUSI Analysis*, Jan. 3, 2013.

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