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# **Iraq: Succession Politics**



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**An Intelligence Assessment**

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June 1982*

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# **Iraq: Succession Politics**





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## **An Intelligence Assessment**

*Information available as of 1 June 1982  
has been used in the preparation of this report.*

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This paper was prepared by  Office of  
Near East-South Asia Analysis. Comments and  
queries are welcome and may be addressed to the  
Chief, Persian Gulf Division, NESA, 

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This paper has been coordinated with the Directorate  
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**Iraq:  
Succession Politics**



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**Key Judgments**

President Saddam Husayn's decision to go to war with Iran has been a costly mistake. His battlefield strategy has placed Iraqi forces in a near untenable situation, and damage to Iraq's domestic and foreign policy objectives grows daily. Any rallying to the regime in the event of an Iranian invasion of Iraq, in our judgment, will be temporary.

The ultimate consequences of Iraq's failures in the war will be increased plotting against Saddam. The most serious threat—barring assassination—is likely to come from civilian and military leaders who have so far suppressed dissatisfaction with Saddam's policies. These leaders may attempt to replace Saddam if the Tikriti-led ruling hierarchy believes he has become a liability to its continued domination of Iraq. Saddam's command of the intelligence apparatus and extensive levers of repression—most run by trusted family or tribal members—as well as his record of striking first would seem to preclude drawn-out coup planning.

A successful coup would have to be executed swiftly by a small group of senior Ba'thists who would move on Saddam as soon as the decision to do so is made. We do not possess hard evidence of plotting and expect little warning given the secretive nature of the Iraqi system.

A takeover by the military acting alone appears unlikely. The officer corps will be preoccupied with long-term border tension or fighting with Iran. The Ba'th Party is entrenched at all levels in the Army and under Saddam has made considerable progress toward reducing the military's involvement in politics.

A popular uprising against the regime also appears unlikely unless the Army disintegrates in the face of an Iranian invasion. Khomeini's appeals to Iraq's majority Shia Muslim community to revolt have been largely ignored. Rebellious Kurds continue to be more of an irritant than a threat to government control.

The lack of an heir apparent to replace Saddam points to a period of collective rule dominated by key military and security figures from the current Tikriti ruling clique. Revolution Command Council (RCC) Vice Chairman Ibrahim and First Deputy Prime Minister Ramadan are strong candidates to succeed Saddam; ailing former President Bakr could be

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brought out of retirement to shore up support for a new regime. A collegial leadership probably would not make major foreign policy changes—it would continue to depend on the Gulf Arabs for financial support, trade heavily with the West for civilian and military goods, and rely on the USSR as a major source of arms.

Collegial rule will eventually break down as its leading figures, schooled in the politics of conspiracy and intrigue, seek preeminence. An unrestrained power struggle risks a return to a pattern of rule similar to the early 1970s when Ba'thist ideologues preoccupied with internal problems dominated Iraqi politics. The breakdown would affect Baghdad's foreign policy outlook, disrupting trends toward alignment with moderate Arabs and closer economic and political ties with the West.

Nonetheless, any Sunni government in Baghdad—collegial or dominated by a single figure—would have certain constant foreign policy goals, including competition for Arab leadership with Egypt and Syria; rivalry with Iran for domination of the Gulf; and an anti-Israeli outlook.



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**Iraq:  
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**Regime Vulnerabilities**

Two years ago Iraq had pretensions to succeed Egypt as an Arab leader, to shape the policy of the non-aligned movement for the next three years, and to use proceeds from expanding oil exports to achieve economic and political independence. Today, Iraq's human and material resources are being wasted in a war it cannot win, its Gulf ports are closed to trade, its domestic economic plans are being cut back, and its international prestige and military reputation are greatly diminished. [Redacted]

In January the regime curtailed its ambitious development program; only priority imports associated with the nonaligned summit meeting, military equipment, and food have been exempted. Consumers are being hurt by spending cutbacks. Imports for state-owned retail outlets, for example, have been suspended through June 1982. Despite more than \$20 billion in aid from the Gulf Arabs, new Iraqi austerity measures will be necessary and are likely to include more contract cancellations. Baghdad wants to limit depletion of its estimated \$26 billion in foreign exchange reserves so that it can finance postwar reconstruction. [Redacted]

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Iraq's dream of supplanting Egypt as Arab leader has been shattered. Iraq today is more supplicant than leader, and its dependence on moderate Arab neighbors, especially Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Jordan, for financial, logistic, and political support grows daily. The goal of independence from the USSR also is now more distant because Iraq must maintain deliveries of needed Soviet arms. Plans to hold the nonaligned summit meeting in Baghdad in September, kicking off Iraq's leadership of the movement for the next three years, are threatened. [Redacted]

Responsibility for this remarkable transformation clearly rests with President Saddam Husayn and his decision to invade Iran. It would be surprising if the Iraqi people or elements within the elite did not at some point turn him out of office. [Redacted]

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**Principal Threats**

The ultimate consequences of Saddam's failures will be serious attempts to oust him. We have scanty evidence of coup plotting and expect little warning given the secretive nature of the Iraqi system. [Redacted]

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Syria, Iraq's enemy on its western flank, has become a more dangerous adversary as the Damascus-Tehran alliance has strengthened. With quiet Soviet approval, Damascus has increased its arms aid to Iran. It has also closed its land border with Iraq and cut Iraq's oil pipeline across Syria to the Mediterranean, depriving Baghdad of about \$6 billion annually in oil revenues. The stated Iranian-Syrian goal is Saddam's overthrow. [Redacted]

Over the last several years we have received numerous reports of assassination attempts, [Redacted]

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[Redacted] Thousands of Iraqis have strong motivation for revenge because of Saddam's ruthless suppression of real or imagined enemies and his costly war. The Iraqi leader's frequent public appearances as well as his visits with troops at the front increase the risk of a successful attack despite the protection of formidable personal security forces. [Redacted]

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The domestic costs also are substantial. The government can no longer insulate the public from the economic consequences of the war. Reduction of oil revenues by more than two-thirds has slowed the steady growth in the standard of living that was an important factor in regime stability during the 1970s. Oil sales, which account for almost all export earnings, are projected between \$8.5 and 9 billion in 1982; the import bill for 1982 is estimated at \$21.5 billion. [Redacted]

**Coup Peril**

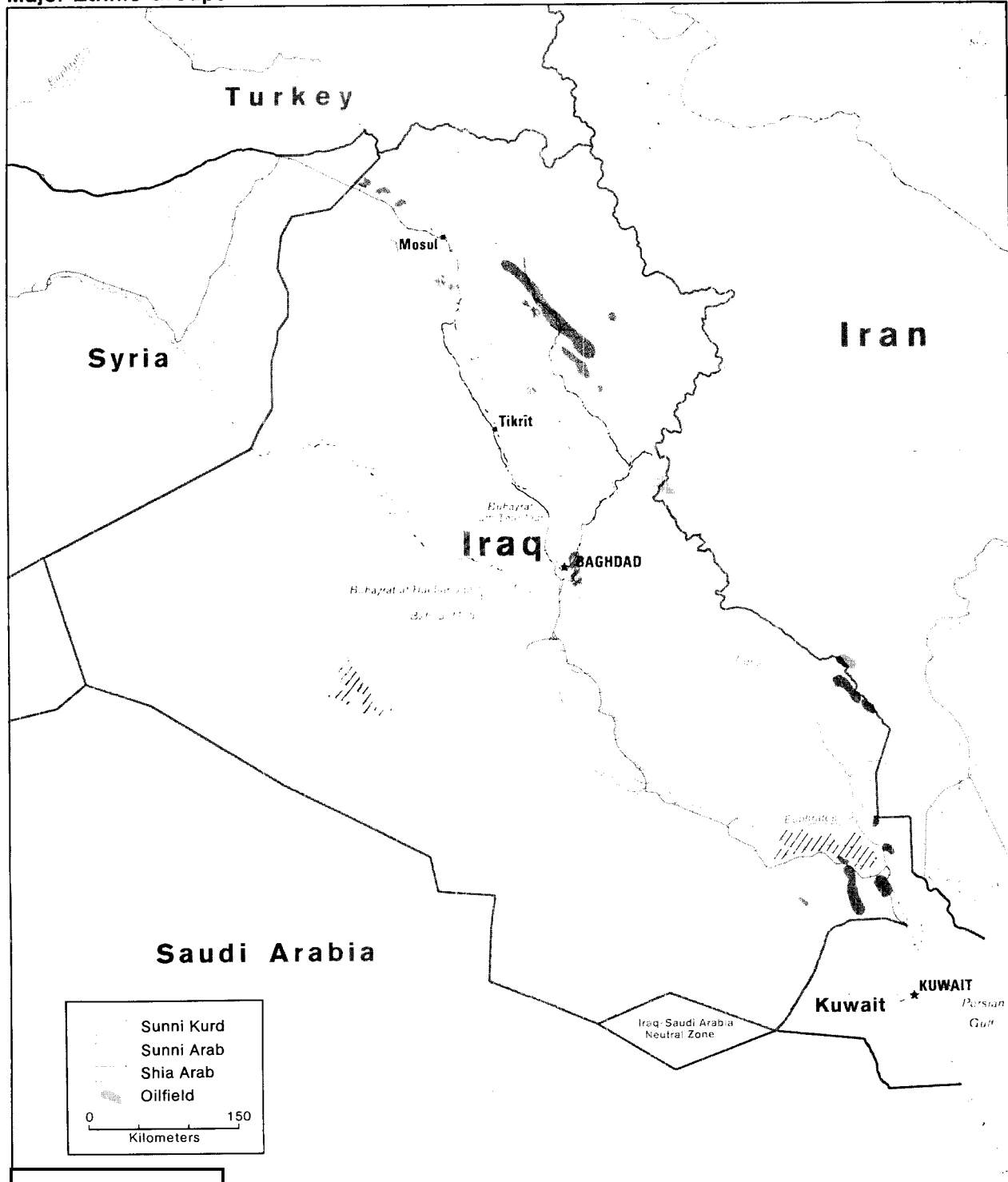
The most serious threat—barring assassination—is likely to come from key civilian and military leaders. Iraq's fading prospects in the war against Iran, coupled with suppressed grievances over Saddam's personality cult, his refusal to share power, and his

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Major Ethnic Groups



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deemphasis of the Ba'th Party, would be the principal stimuli for a palace coup. Potential opponents probably fear that continued public disgruntlement over having to bear the burdens of "Saddam's war" could grow and engulf the entire current leadership. [redacted]

"Saddam's war" is probably stirring additional military resentment of the Iraqi President's leadership. Political interference by Saddam and his cronies and the presence of political appointees masquerading as generals in key command positions have contributed to the Army's poor showing. [redacted]

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Saddam Husayn's political system is highly centralized, heavily repressive, and narrowly based on family and clan from a small geographic section of the country—the city of Tikrit in north-central Iraq. To oppose or even question the Iraqi leader, in public or private, can have dire consequences. Few challenges to Saddam's authority escape the notice of the security services. [redacted]

Military plotters could try to enlist the prestige of former President Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, once the leading figure of the Tikrit clan. Bakr, [redacted]

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[redacted] was pushed into retirement by Saddam in 1979. He is still a widely respected figure, however, because of his extensive military background and role in the revolution against the monarchy. Age and poor health probably rule out more than a symbolic role for Bakr. [redacted]

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- The unity of the Sunni Arab Tikriti clan, which dominates the government, has been disturbed by low-level feuding.
- Relations between Saddam and the Shammar tribe, an important Sunni Arab ally, have cooled because of the war.
- Saddam suffered an embarrassing loss of face last summer when he had to cancel the result of a local Ba'th Party election because his handpicked candidates were rejected.
- A small number of middle-level Ba'th Party and government officials who did not display enthusiastic support for the war were purged early this year.

A successful military takeover bid would face major obstacles:

- The officer corps is preoccupied with the war with Iran.
- Key military commands are in the hands of Saddam loyalists.
- The military is riddled with Saddam's spies, making it dangerous to even talk about the leadership.

We know little of political attitudes within the military and can expect little or no warning of a coup attempt. Such an attempt, if it occurs, would most likely come from an as yet unknown group of middle-level officers. [redacted]

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Prospects are slim for a coup in which the Ba'th Party plays no role. The party organization is too widespread to be ignored, and the military probably would have to make an accommodation with civilian leaders to run the country. [redacted]

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The military has reason to hate Saddam. He is a civilian who owes his position to the Ba'th Party and the security apparatus. Since 1968 Saddam has worked hard to establish a tradition of civilian leadership in a state where military coups have been commonplace. He has used forced retirements, frequent transfers, and politically directed promotions to place loyalists in key commands and to deny individual officers the opportunity to build personal followings. Generous salaries and benefits as well as high levels of defense spending have probably helped buy only shallow loyalty from the armed forces. [redacted]

**Popular Uprising Unlikely**

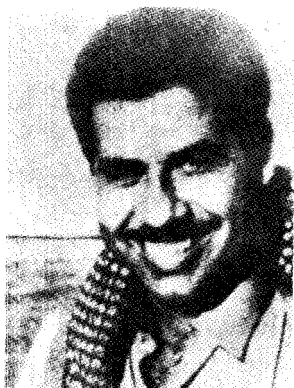
Popular revolt against Saddam seems the least likely near-term cause of a change of government. Saddam has made effective use of a carrot-and-stick policy to buy off and intimidate potential opposition. Draconian police powers have been used to cow opponents. The regime has used its oil revenues to create jobs,

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*Can Saddam Survive?**Baghdad Observer* ©*Saddam Husayn in 1964*

□ *Saddam's leadership style reflects lessons learned during his formative years: be ruthless and preemptive; get "them" before they get you; trust few people—family, tribesmen, and Tikritis, in that order, plus a few selected, but expendable, outsiders. These traits were reinforced in 1979 when Saddam discovered opposition to his elevation to the presidency among handpicked proteges on the Revolutionary Command Council. He ordered the immediate execution of the plotters and personally presided over his inauguration.*

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*Iraq's poor showing in "Saddam's war" has caused speculation about the Iraqi leader's staying power. Other Arab rulers—Assad of Syria, Hussein of Jordan, Nasser of Egypt—have clung to power despite military failures and serious domestic challenges. Saddam's strengths could allow him to do the same.*

*His radical rhetoric has not always been matched with radical deeds. He has learned to be flexible, abandoning beliefs and positions when they get in the way of larger interests. Ba'th ideology, for example, has been modified or shelved to advance economic development schemes and Saddam's Arab leadership goals.*

*Saddam's talent for survival has helped him climb to a position of authority and remain there for 14 years in a country notorious for its conspiratorial politics and violent change. His whole political experience has been grounded in secrecy and intrigue. As a young man in the 1950s and 1960s, Saddam lived a furtive life as a member of the underground interrupted by periods of imprisonment and exile. He was involved in the 1959 plot to assassinate Prime Minister Qasim that has become part of Ba'thist folklore. The attempt failed, but a wounded Saddam made good his escape and established his reputation by swimming the Tigris River to freedom.*

*Under pressure to end the war with Iran and stop the erosion of his position, Saddam probably will blame others for Iraq's shortcomings. He is undoubtedly aware of reports of unhappiness with his leadership and at some point will display his characteristic ruthlessness with a preemptive purge of potential rivals and an even greater display of clannishness in choosing key aides. The outcome of a power struggle in an environment as violent and secretive as Iraq is hazardous to predict, but Saddam's years of experience at the top give him advantages over other contenders.*

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subsidize prices, and improve education, housing, medical care, and transportation. Saddam undoubtedly is aware that his regime cannot afford a loss of public faith in its ability to continue improving living standards. A severe decline seems unlikely, but the regime may have difficulty insulating the public from the effects of economic austerity measures. [redacted]

Although the government's preoccupation with the war has given Iraqi opposition forces greater opportunities to work against the regime, their actions so far have been limited to isolated sabotage and assassinations. Antigovernment activists have been unable to provoke sustained or widespread protests among Iraq's majority Shia Muslim community, despite its traditional aversion to a Sunni-dominated central government. Many Shias are unwilling to risk opposition to the regime for fear of punishment. [redacted]

Maintaining a psychology of fear is probably crucial to regime survival. Concessions to oppressed groups would probably be seen as weakness and would stimulate more active opposition. Withdrawal of the Army from Iran relatively intact, therefore, is vital to Saddam's prospects for maintaining internal control and preserving minority Sunni dominance of the country. [redacted]

Other Shias have been co-opted by the Ba'th Party. The party has been willing to allow Shia participation in government and party activities including the ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), which has at least three Shia members. Still others, in our judgment, do not want to see a disruptive Islamic revolution jeopardize the steady rise in their standard of living under the Ba'th Party. [redacted]

Moreover, Iraqi Shias are not so well organized as their Iranian coreligionists and seem less influenced by their religious leaders. Saddam removed a potential rallier in the spring of 1980 when he executed Ayatollah Baqr Sadr, the only Arab among Iraq's Shia hierarchy—the other prominent Shia leaders in Iraq are of Persian origin. The regime's expulsion since 1980 of over 50,000 Shias of Iranian origin has reduced a dangerous fifth column threat. [redacted]

The Ba'th also has skillfully exploited ancient—but still lively—Arab-Persian animosities to counter Khomeini's appeal. The Ba'th propaganda machine has made sure that Tehran's mistreatment of its Shia Arab minority has not escaped the notice of Iraqi Shias. [redacted]

Kurdish guerrilla leaders have been unable to take advantage of increased aid from Tehran and a significant reduction of government forces in the north since the beginning of the war with Iran. Kurdish strength also is dissipated by the continuing rivalry between the Barzanis and Jalal Talabani, the leaders of the two main antigovernment groups, and by apathy among the Kurdish populace. The Barzanis, in particular, have been discredited by their connections to Ayatollah Khomeini. [redacted]

The Kurds and Shias, as well as Iraqi Communists and renegade Ba'thists—split by personal, religious, ethnic, and political differences—are unlikely to combine forces against Saddam. Moreover, they have failed to secure enough financial and military backing to pose a military threat. [redacted]

**Succession Dynamics**

Saddam's systematic purge of rivals has left Iraq bereft of figures of national stature. A new government, therefore, is likely to lack a single strong leader initially and to have a collegial leadership with a neutral figure serving as president.<sup>1</sup> If Saddam were suddenly killed or removed from power in a palace coup, the leadership would seek to ensure that the attendant disruption did not jeopardize continued Sunni rule. [redacted]

The Tikrit clan would continue to play an important role in any Sunni-dominated regime. The Tikritis are scattered in important positions throughout the military and security services. Among the most important Tikriti clansmen who would play a role is Interior Minister Sa'dun Shakir. He controls an ubiquitous

<sup>1</sup> The Iraqi Constitution calls for the Revolutionary Command Council to elect a new president within seven days of a vacancy. [redacted]

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*Sunnis and Tikritis*

*Sunni Arabs, who comprise 25 percent of Iraq's population, have dominated Iraqi politics since independence. Their ascendancy resulted in large part from traditional Shia reluctance to become involved with the secular state. The Sunnis, for their part, willingly cooperated with colonial authorities, establishing a preeminence in the military and bureaucracy that has persisted into the 20th century.*

*Sunnis also control the Ba'th Party. Underprivileged Shia Arabs dominated the party in the 1950s and early 1960s, but before the end of the decade the party had been transformed into a Sunni organization. Shia control declined because:*

- *Discriminatory police practices allowed Sunni Ba'thists to escape with light punishment while Shia colleagues were treated severely.*
- *The leadership of the party was captured by army officers from Tikrit led by Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr and his kinsman Saddam Husayn.*

*The Tikriti dominance of the Ba'th Party goes far in explaining Iraqi political dynamics. Institutions such as the Ba'th Party and the military, which touch all levels of Iraqi society, play important roles in legitimizing the exercise of power, but individual and group loyalty based on common family, tribal, and religious ties is still the key to understanding politics in Iraq.*

*Institutional debate or competition has little impact on decisionmaking in Iraq because the process is dominated by a small group of individuals—Tikritis and their loyal followers—who hold important party, government, and military posts. The key institution is the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), where supreme legislative and executive power resides. Saddam, for example, is chairman of the RCC, President of the Republic, head of the Ba'th Party, and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. Saddam's colleagues on the RCC likewise have overlapping functions; every Council member holds at least one other major position in the cabinet, the party, or the National Assembly.*

*Since coming to power in 1968, Ba'th leaders have made skillful use of mass organizational techniques and the media to secure public acquiescence to government policies. The government has stressed party ideology with its emphasis on Arab nationalism, secularism, and social justice to overcome the country's serious sectarian and ethnic differences. Ba'th officials take party doctrine seriously, but in recent years the leadership's strict adherence to ideology has weakened. Narrower state interests now assume greater weight in defining domestic and foreign policies.*

internal security apparatus involving tens of thousands of police, spies, and informers. Shakir has ruthlessly served Saddam's interests since the Ba'th revolution in 1968, including service as a member of the regime's assassination squad and head of Baghdad's infamous "Palace of the End" prison. Barzan Ibrahim, Saddam's half brother, is the chief of the Mukhabarat, the RCC's strong arm for intimidating and eliminating antiregime elements. Although he

owes his position to family connections, Barzan has had several years to put his own imprint on the Mukhabarat. If a lone assassin removed Saddam, Barzan's long-term position would weaken, but in an immediate post-Saddam period he might play an important role.

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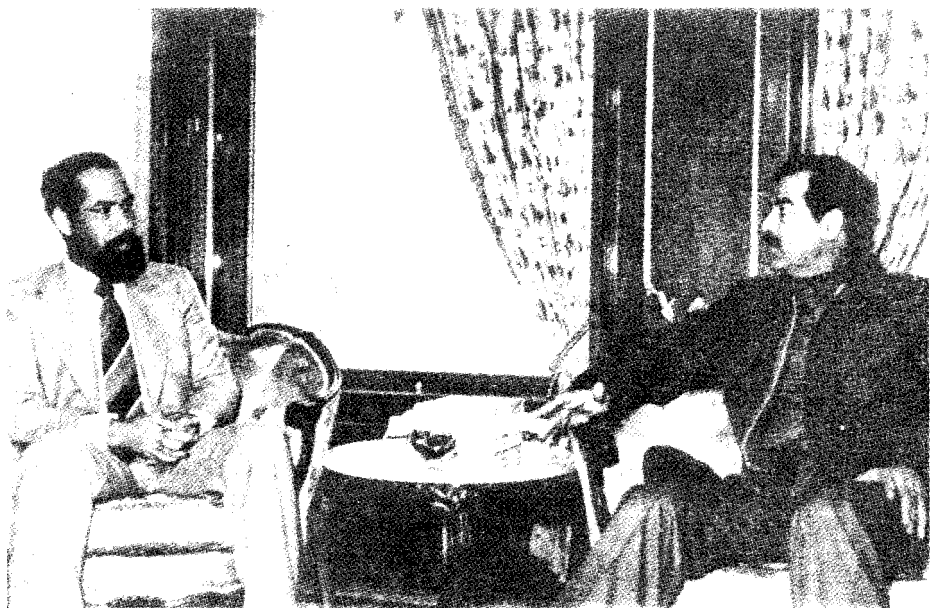
*Sa'dun Shakir and Saddam  
Husayn at Interior Ministry  
on 19 August 1981*



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Baghdad Observer ©

*Barzan Ibrahim (left) with  
Saddam*



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Left to right, Ibrahim, Saddam, and Ramadan [redacted]



Baghdad Observer ©

Senior Tikriti officers and their supporters from other important Sunni clans permeate the military establishment. Gen. 'Adnan Khayrallah, who has family ties to both Saddam and former President Bakr, is Defense Minister and Deputy Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, as well as Deputy Prime Minister and a member of the Revolutionary Command Council. Khayrallah reportedly is a competent professional soldier, but he is disliked because of his rapid, politically influenced advancement. Top military intelligence and police functions as well as the commands of the Baghdad garrisons, which play essential anticoup roles, are in the hands of trusted officers. [redacted]

Shia RCC members such as National Assembly leader Naim Haddad would probably play a prominent role in a collective regime as symbols of the Ba'th's commitment to Shia participation in governing Iraq. [redacted]

'Izzat Ibrahim, the current Vice Chairman of the RCC, in our judgment seems the most likely candidate to assume the presidency. His apparent lack of ambition and poor health [redacted]

[redacted] make him a

nonthreatening interim figure attractive to behind-the-scenes power brokers with leadership aspirations of their own. Ibrahim, a non-Tikriti, is a longtime Ba'thist who has served the regime loyally in a number of sensitive posts over the past decade. Unlike his more secular-minded Ba'thist colleagues, Ibrahim is a devout Sunni Muslim. He has had little contact with Westerners throughout his career. [redacted]

Taha Yasin Ramadan, RCC member and First Deputy Prime Minister, also is a likely contender to succeed Saddam. Ramadan, 44, is an intelligent, crafty politician who has held many responsible party and state posts involving both domestic and foreign policy functions. His political skills make him a contender in a post-Saddam period. His political power is strengthened by his command of the People's Army, the 350,000-man Ba'th Party paramilitary force. Ramadan not only survived the leadership purge that followed the alleged coup plot against Saddam in July 1979 but was elevated to First Deputy Prime Minister, making him de facto prime minister and number-two man in the government. [redacted]

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Leadership figures who are wary of Ramadan's power and ambition would probably try to block him from moving to the presidency, and he may not be strong enough to overcome concerted resistance. Distrust of Ramadan may be particularly strong among clannish Tikritis because he comes from Mosul. Nor does Ramadan seem well positioned to seize the top job. The People's Army by itself would be no match for the regular forces, and Ramadan's apparent lack of important allies in the security forces and military would make a strong-arm bid for the presidency risky.<sup>2</sup> [redacted]

**Foreign Policy Implications**

A collegial regime in which the Sunnis were strongly motivated to maintain group unity to ensure their continued domination would be unlikely to produce dramatic foreign policy changes. Foreign policy continuity also could be achieved if a strongman emerged swiftly from a collective leadership. [redacted]

The first priority of a Sunni-dominated regime, assuming the war with Iran was still in train, would be to end the war. Iraq might initially attempt to improve relations with the radical Arabs in hopes that these states could persuade Iran to suppress its desire for revenge against Iraq. Iran would not countenance a lasting reconciliation with a secular Ba'th government. [redacted]

At the same time, genuine improvement in Baghdad's relations with Moscow would be unlikely. The USSR is seen as an unreliable ally. Ba'thist leaders are suspicious of Moscow's support for rebellious Iraqi Communists and would not easily forget the Soviet arms embargo, Moscow's arms sales to Iran, and Soviet support for Iraq's enemy, Syria. Baghdad, however, would try to avoid a break with Moscow until it secured significant alternative arms sources. [redacted]

Close contacts with the West would be maintained to facilitate rebuilding of the economy and the military. The pace of modernization would be slowed by economic austerity as well as a political need to reemphasize Islamic values and traditions. France would be

<sup>2</sup> For further information on Khayrallah, Ibrahim, and Ramadan, see the appendix. [redacted]

especially well placed to benefit from Iraq's development and reconstruction needs because of its fulfillment of military supply commitments despite the war with Iran. Baghdad's dissatisfaction with the quality of Soviet and East European goods has led to a sharp decline in recent years in the Soviet share of Iraq's nonmilitary imports. [redacted]

US help in reconstruction also would be sought, especially in the oil sector. Some Iraqis would even push for arms purchases from the United States. Recent moves by Washington to upgrade bilateral relations—approval of civilian aircraft sales and the removal of Iraq from the list of states that support international terrorism—have been welcomed in Baghdad, but a major improvement probably would depend on changes by the United States in its position on the Arab-Israeli dispute, Iraq's perception of the threat from Iran, and its dissatisfaction with the state of Soviet-Iranian relations. [redacted]

Iraq's friendly ties with moderate Arab neighbors probably would continue under a collegial regime drawn from the current leadership in Baghdad. Even if the war with Iran were to end, tension between Baghdad and Tehran would continue, leaving Iraq with the need for financial assistance, secure trade routes across Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Jordan, and Arab political support. Moreover, so long as a hostile regime remained in Damascus and it cooperated with Iran, Iraq probably would continue to improve relations with Egypt. [redacted]

**Breakdown of Collegial Rule**

Collegial rule, however, would be under great strain. Individual ambitions would not stay restrained for long, especially in the absence of a dominant figure to arbitrate disputes. We cannot make confident predictions about who would ultimately seize power, but given the conspiratorial backgrounds of the current leadership, the struggle almost certainly would be violent. [redacted]

An unrestrained internal power struggle would weaken the central government and accentuate the serious sectarian and ethnic divisions in Iraqi society among

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Muslim sects, Christians, Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans, Assyrians, and others. A battle at the top could usher in a period of instability similar to the turbulent era between the fall of the monarchy in 1958 and the consolidation of the Ba'th regime's power in the early 1970s. [REDACTED]

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The breakdown of collegial rule would affect Baghdad's foreign policy outlook, disrupting trends toward alignment with moderate Arabs and closer economic and political ties with the West. The length and duration of the disruption would depend on who comes out on top from among the various Ba'thist, military, and opposition group contenders. [REDACTED]

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Nevertheless, any Sunni-dominated government in Baghdad—even one preoccupied with consolidating control internally—would have certain constant foreign policy goals. These include:

- Competition for Arab leadership with Egypt and Syria, which will frequently see two of the states allied against the third.
- Rivalry with Iran for domination of the Persian Gulf.
- An anti-Israeli outlook as long as the Palestinian issue remains unsettled.
- A willingness to use oil leverage to secure advantages for Iraq. [REDACTED]

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**Appendix <sup>3</sup>**



**'Izzat Ibrahim**

*Vice Chairman, Revolutionary Command Council*

A member of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) since 1969, 'Izzat Ibrahim became Vice Chairman of the RCC in July 1979 when Saddam Husayn assumed the RCC chairmanship and the presidency. Ibrahim seems respected by the Iraqi people, but he lacks an independent political base and is not a charismatic personality. For many years Ibrahim has been influential in agricultural and general economic matters and in the formulation of Iraq's Persian Gulf policy. Health problems have recently slowed his activity.

UPI ©

[Redacted]

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Ibrahim was arrested three times during the late 1950s and early 1960s for participating in Ba'th-sponsored antigovernment activities. After the coup in July 1968 that brought the Ba'th Party to power, he became a supervisor of provincial development projects. Ibrahim has served in the cabinet as Minister of Agrarian Reform (1969-72), Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform (1972-74), and Minister of Interior (1974-79). He has been a member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command since 1972 and a member of the Ba'th Party National Command since 1977. In 1975 Ibrahim was appointed chairman of the politically sensitive Ba'th Party Military Bureau. This organization ensures military loyalty to the regime by controlling appointments, transfers, retirements, and promotions of military officers.

[Redacted]

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Ibrahim, about 40 years old, is a Sunni Muslim. [Redacted]

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<sup>3</sup> Material in this appendix was contributed by [Redacted]

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Camera Press ©

**Taha Yasin Ramadan**

*First Deputy Prime Minister; Member, Revolutionary Command Council; Commander in Chief, People's Army*

Taha Ramadan is an ambitious and crafty politician who probably would like to be president of Iraq. Often said to be one of President Saddam Husayn's most formidable political rivals, he has survived over the years while others have been executed, jailed, or exiled. The President regards Ramadan as a reliable spokesman on Iraqi policy and has delegated to him many government and Ba'th Party duties. In addition, Ramadan frequently travels abroad as Saddam's official representative. [redacted] 25X

Since 1970 Ramadan has held concurrent key positions in the cabinet, the Ba'th Party, and the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). He has been a member of the party Regional Command since 1966 and of the RCC since 1969. He became Commander in Chief of the People's Army, the party militia, when it was established in 1975, and has been a member of the party National Command since October 1977. His appointment as First Deputy Prime Minister came during the government shakeup in July 1979 that accompanied Saddam Husayn's assumption of the presidency. [redacted] 25X

Ramadan has many supporters in the Ba'th Party, the civil service, and the People's Army. He is reputed to be unpopular with the Tikriti clique, and the military may resent him for having secured an enhanced role for the People's Army during the Iran-Iraq war. [redacted] 25X

For over a decade Ramadan has played a key role in Iraq's economic and industrial expansion. He was influential in formulating and implementing development programs while serving as Minister of Industry (1970-76), acting Minister of Planning (1974-76), and Minister of Public Works and Housing (1976-79). Appointments as chairman of the foreign economic relations and trade regulation committees in July 1979 give him authority to oversee the formulation of foreign aid and trade policies. He has also participated in the activities of the Iraqi-Soviet Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation, which was established in 1972. [redacted] 25X

Born in Mosul, where he completed his elementary and secondary education, Ramadan probably attended the Military College in Baghdad. During the 1960s he was involved in antigovernment activities, which eventually led to his expulsion from the military and arrest. He participated in the coup in July 1968 that brought the current regime to power. During 1969-70 Ramadan served in the politically sensitive position of director of the Ba'th Party Military Bureau. This organization ensures the loyalty of the military to the regime by controlling appointments, transfers, retirements, and promotions of military officers. [redacted] 25X

Ramadan, about 44, is a Sunni Muslim. [redacted] 25X

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Syigma ©

**'Adnan Khayrallah**

*Deputy Prime Minister; Minister of Defense; Deputy Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces; Member, Revolutionary Command Council*

A hard-working career military officer, Staff Gen. 'Adnan Khayrallah owes his positions to his family connections. He is a cousin and brother-in-law of President Saddam Husayn and a son-in-law of former President Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr. Khayrallah was appointed to the Revolutionary Command Council in September 1977 and succeeded the aging Bakr as Defense Minister a month later. In October 1979, three months after Saddam became President, Khayrallah was appointed Deputy Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. Saddam trusts Khayrallah and relies on him to ensure the military's loyalty to the regime. [REDACTED]

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Khayrallah has not been a popular figure among the officer corps. He was promoted over other senior officers and viewed as a symbol of political interference in military affairs. Since at least 1977 he has advocated curtailing Iraq's reliance on Soviet-made weapons, which he considers inferior to Western armaments. [REDACTED]

Khayrallah, about 42, is a Sunni Muslim. He is the son of Khayrallah Talfah, who is Saddam's uncle and Bakr's brother-in-law. Khayrallah and Saddam were raised in the same house in Tikrit. Khayrallah graduated from the Military College in 1961, the Staff College in 1970, and the College of Law and Politics of al-Mustansiriya University in Baghdad in 1976. During the 1970s he was a member of the Ba'th Party Military Bureau and head of the Baghdad Branch Military Office. He also commanded the politically important Baghdad-based Republican Guard Brigade. Khayrallah has been a member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command, the ruling body of the party, since January 1977. [REDACTED]

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