



Directorate of  
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**Near East and  
South Asia Review**



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**Supplement  
1 February 1985**

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**Near East and South Asia Review**

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**Articles**

**Libya: Meddling in Central America and the Caribbean**

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Qadhafi's willingness to put his most radical advisers in charge of Libyan activities in Central America and the Caribbean almost certainly presages a more aggressive Libyan effort to undermine US interests there, but Libya's ineptitude in implementing its policies and constraints imposed by geographic distance and rivalry with Cuba will limit its success.

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**Egypt: Mubarak's Perspective on Arab-Israeli Reconciliation**

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President Mubarak has concentrated Egypt's diplomatic energies in recent months on advancing the prospects for Arab-Israeli negotiations, focusing on rekindling international interest in the talks and gaining acceptance for a PLO role in them.

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**Jordan-Iraq: Closer Military Cooperation**

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Jordanian-Iraqi military cooperation has grown steadily since the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980 and will probably continue to grow despite problems such as the serious deterioration of Jordanian roads and unpaid Iraqi bills, as both sides have common enemies and common fears if their neighbor is defeated.

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**Iraq's Elite Military Forces: Key Assets for Saddam Husayn—  
And a Spawning Ground for a Military Coup**

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The elite Republican Guard and Special Forces units are the most aggressive, competent, and disciplined elements of the Iraqi armed forces, but, if the war with Iran escalates and these forces face the prospects of heavy casualties, elements in the elite formations might consider ways of removing Saddam Husayn rather than have their units decimated.

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**Iraq: Shia Dissidents Remain Weak** [Redacted]

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Iran's efforts to cobble together an effective force of pliable Iraqi Shia dissident groups has left them more weakened and divided than ever, and, even if a widely respected Iraqi Shia leader were to emerge, Iran would probably undermine his influence. [Redacted]

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**Iraq: Barzani Asserts Himself** [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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Within the past year Mas'ud Barzani has fought his way back from virtual isolation within the Kurdish resistance movement, but, even though he will be able to increase his activities in Iraq, he will not become strong enough to challenge the government's control over key cities or the oil-producing area in the north. [Redacted]

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*Some articles are preliminary views of a subject or speculative, but the contents normally will be coordinated as appropriate with other offices within CIA. Occasionally an article will represent the views of a single analyst; these items will be designated as noncoordinated views. Comments may be directed to the authors, [Redacted]*

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Articles

**Libya:  
Meddling in Central America  
and the Caribbean** 

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Qadhafi's willingness to put his most radical advisers in charge of Libyan activities in Central America and the Caribbean almost certainly presages a more aggressive Libyan effort to undermine US interests there. Libya will try mixing tactics, including economic and military aid and intimidation, to strengthen regional radicals under US pressure, promote militant anti-US actions, and build capability for terrorist operations. Libya's ineptitude in implementing its policies, however, and constraints imposed on Tripoli by geographic distance and rivalry with Cuba limit its prospects for success. 

America. 

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Tripoli has sent Managua four SF-260 light strike aircraft, two to four MI-2 helicopters, a Boeing 720 VIP aircraft, antiaircraft guns, SA-7 surface-to-air missiles, multiple rocket launchers, and miscellaneous small arms. Five Libyan L-39s that were shipped to Bulgaria several months ago probably are intended for Nicaragua in fulfillment of a promise by Qadhafi to supply such equipment, although there are signs that Sofia is reluctant to ship these on Libya's behalf. We estimate that Libya has at least 50 military instructors and technicians in Nicaragua. 



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 Tripoli has supplemented this aid with probably over \$350 million in cash, oil, and other forms of economic assistance. Although sources of the US Embassy in Managua report that Libya threatened to curtail economic cooperation because of Managua's misuse of funds, press announcements that Libya and Nicaragua have recently concluded a new trade agreement suggest they have resolved their differences. 

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Qadhafi highlighted his determination to expand support for Central American and Caribbean leftists during festivities in Tripoli on 1 September commemorating the 15th anniversary of his takeover. The festivities were preceded by a "Conference for International Solidarity With the Libyan People" attended by Latin American leftist representatives from St. Lucia, Dominica, and Nicaragua. We believe Qadhafi's strong public indictments of US foreign policies during the ceremonies were intended to promote anti-US activities by regional leftists. 



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**Central America: The Nicaragua Connection**  
Nicaragua, in our view, is the linchpin of Libyan efforts to undermine US influence in Central



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**Involvement in the Caribbean**

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Libyans are arguing that a regime fashioned after Qadhafi's instead of Castro's would have lessened political tensions on the island and removed Washington's pretext for invading. In Panama, competition for influence between Cuban- and Libyan-backed groups has badly divided the leftist community.

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[Redacted]

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**Outlook**

[Redacted] Qadhafi has made only limited progress in expanding his influence despite his greatly increased cultivation of Latin American leftists in recent years. We expect Qadhafi's difficulties to continue. Libya's generally heavyhanded efforts to spread Qadhafi's radical ideology continue to antagonize potential supporters. Tripoli, in our view, also is hampered by geographic distance, cultural unfamiliarity with the region, lack of intelligence assets, and a reputation for not fulfilling its promises of aid. Moreover, we believe militant Libyan policies will conflict with Cuban advice to regional leftists to pursue moderation, which is intended to help strengthen their popular support.

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[Redacted] Qadhafi is trying to use aid and intimidation to press Caribbean leftists to increase their militancy. Libyan officials last year made clear they were angry with leaders of at least one leftist group for diverting Libyan aid intended to strengthen subversive capabilities. Tripoli demanded that leftist leaders from St. Lucia, Dominica, and Guyana demonstrate their radical credentials by sending members of their organizations to Libya for paramilitary training and indoctrination.

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[Redacted] Libyan officials last year began urging Caribbean leftists to use violence in pursuit of their political objectives.

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[Redacted]

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Tripoli is broadening its search for clients among regional leftists.

[Redacted]

These constraints still leave Qadhafi with several options that he will pursue despite their mixed prospects for success:

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- He will mix intimidation and aid to urge regional leftists to undertake militant anti-US activities. Most Caribbean leftist organizations are unlikely to go beyond demonstrations and propaganda, however, because of their concern that violent actions would damage their domestic political standing and risk government retaliation. For their part we believe most Caribbean governments are suspicious of Libyan intentions and are likely to keep Qadhafi at arm's length.

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**The Cuban Angle**

Libyan activities in the region almost certainly are being closely monitored by Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Although some Libyan economic cooperation with Cuba continues—the two countries signed a limited economic and technical agreement last July—Qadhafi and Castro have never developed close personal ties because of equally inflated egos and competing revolutionary philosophies.

- Qadhafi also will do what he can to strengthen his position with the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua including pushing ahead with delivery of additional weaponry and economic aid to ensure a continuing Libyan role in reducing Managua's vulnerability to US pressure.

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[Redacted] Tripoli blames Cuban meddling for destabilizing Grenada before the US intervention in 1983.

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- Qadhafi will increase military and financial aid to promote opposition to political settlements between Central American insurgents and pro-US regimes, although such assistance is unlikely to affect the balance between insurgents and government forces on the battlefield. [Redacted]

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Libya will become even more aggressive in the region if Qadhafi believes Libya is coming under greater US military or economic pressure. He asserted in a policy speech several months ago that Libyan involvement in Latin America is in retaliation for US naval operations in the central Mediterranean that threaten Libya. The threat of Libyan-backed terrorism against US interests in Central America and the Caribbean will grow if Qadhafi continues to develop his relations with radical fringe groups. [Redacted]

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**Egypt: Mubarak's Perspective  
on Arab-Israeli Reconciliation** [Redacted]

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Since Jordan resumed formal relations with Egypt last September, President Mubarak has concentrated his government's diplomatic energies on advancing the prospects for Arab-Israeli negotiations. Cairo's efforts have focused on rekindling international interest in the talks and gaining acceptance for a PLO role in them. [Redacted]

peace treaty with Israel, claiming that the Israelis themselves have broken it by not seeking to resolve Arab-Israeli problems through peaceful means. A renewal of Egypt's leadership in achieving Arab aims against the perceived opposition of the United States and Israel is one way to counter such criticism. [Redacted]

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**Mubarak's Motivation**

Mubarak sees an Egyptian drive to advance the prospects for negotiations between the moderate Arabs and Israel as an effective means to promote and reconcile several of his key goals, including:

**Encouraging International Involvement**

The Egyptians are concerned that the United States, Europe, and even the Arab world no longer feel any urgency to resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute, and they evidently saw in the restoration of ties with Jordan an opportunity to begin public and private efforts to revive that urgency. [Redacted]

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- *Rapprochement with the Arab world.* Mubarak believes that championing the Palestinian cause will restore Egypt's Arab credentials despite its peace treaty with Israel. Mubarak may be resigned to waiting for some action by the Arab League reversing its diplomatic boycott of Egypt before additional Arab states restore formal ties. He probably hopes, however, that his efforts on behalf of the Palestinians will encourage early action by the league.

[Redacted]

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- *Maintaining the flow of US economic and military aid.* Mubarak will press for increased funds and greater flexibility in their use when he visits Washington in March. He probably believes that Egypt's firm commitment both to Camp David and to pushing for Arab-Israeli reconciliation, combined with recent conciliatory gestures toward Tel Aviv, will enhance Egypt's image with the US Congress. Even so, concern about domestic and Arab opinion makes him reluctant to return an Egyptian ambassador to Tel Aviv.

Mubarak believes that the appearance of action is preferable to no action and that discussion may eventually generate movement. For example, the Egyptians have asserted that a PLO peace initiative would force the United States and Israel to respond. Mubarak's frank criticism of the Arabs' lack of solidarity on Arab-Israeli issues is also designed to stimulate discussion. [Redacted]

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- *Neutralizing domestic criticism.* Mubarak is mindful of his vocal political opponents, almost all of whom criticize Egypt's close ties with the United States. They also insist that Egypt abrogate its

The Egyptians are not looking for a new initiative from the Europeans but are encouraging the European Community to facilitate Arab-Israeli negotiations based on common elements of existing plans. Mubarak urged renewed European involvement

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during a trip to Paris and Bonn in late October and early November and again during Italian Prime Minister Craxi's visit to Cairo later in November. Egyptian officials voiced approval when the EC, following its summit meeting in December, reaffirmed its belief that the PLO must be associated with the peace negotiations and declared its readiness to assist "in any way open to them in attempts to identify common ground between the parties." Mubarak will pursue the subject in forthcoming contacts with Europeans, including a visit to Cairo by the Italian President in mid-February and Mubarak's own stops in London and Paris in conjunction with his trip to the United States next month. [Redacted]

Cairo is seeking to exploit its extensive informal ties with several Arab states in addition to capitalizing on the windfall presented by its restored formal ties with Amman. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Recently improved relations with Algeria present an opportunity for informal cooperation with Algiers in advancing Arab and Arab-Israeli reconciliation, particularly in Algeria's efforts to dissuade Syria from trying to control the PLO. [Redacted]

Senior Egyptian officials have called for Syrian participation in any peace negotiations, largely because they believe Damascus would obstruct any talks in which it was not included. Cairo has adamantly denied any intention to form a Cairo-Amman-PLO axis to counter Syrian influence. [Redacted]

For similar reasons, the Egyptians also believe that Soviet participation is essential for eventually resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute. In the near term, however, they probably believe that Moscow has little to contribute except in helping moderate Syrian policy toward the PLO. Cairo privately welcomed the announcement of renewed exchanges between Washington and Moscow on the Middle East, and shortly thereafter Mubarak discussed prospects for furthering Arab-Israeli reconciliation with the visiting East German Foreign Minister. [Redacted]

**Emphasis on PLO Participation**

Cairo has made clear that it will not resume the Palestinian autonomy talks with Israel in the format outlined in the Camp David accords. The Egyptians do not want to incur renewed Arab criticism that they are usurping the PLO's role. They may also believe that there are already enough irritants in Egyptian-Israeli relations. Although renewed discussion on Palestinian autonomy would be initially viewed by the Israelis as a major concession, continued divergence in the definition of autonomy would lead to renewed frustration. [Redacted]

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In early November, Mubarak publicly called upon the PLO to "correct the picture of Palestinian objectives" and present its own peace initiative, apparently in the belief that this would help establish it as a legitimate political entity. [Redacted]

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Mubarak welcomed Hussein's proposal, presented at the Palestine National Council meeting in Amman in November, to develop a joint PLO-Jordanian negotiating position based on UN Resolution 242 and the concept of "land for peace." In the joint communique on the occasion of Hussein's visit to Cairo in early December, Mubarak publicly endorsed the need for an international conference based on Resolution 242. [Redacted]

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US Embassy reporting indicates, however, that the Egyptians believe US and Israeli opposition will prevent such a conference from convening. They are also aware that even moderates in the PLO reject any peace position based on Resolution 242 because it only refers to the Palestinians as refugees and ignores their right to self-determination. [Redacted]

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Mubarak's three meetings with Hussein since the restoration of formal relations have been aimed at encouraging PLO-Jordanian collaboration and at keeping informed on its progress. He may also have encouraged Rome and Athens, during surprise visits to these capitals in mid-January, to support PLO moderates by meeting publicly with PLO chief Arafat. According to reporting from the US Embassy in Cairo, Greece and Italy are the only EC members that have not refused to consider this suggestion. [Redacted]

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**Outlook**

Mubarak wants to come to Washington backed by at least a partial Arab consensus on how to proceed with peace negotiations with Israel. He probably is optimistic that he will be able to report some progress. He will continue to encourage Jordanian-PLO negotiations on a joint peace position by maintaining close contacts with King Hussein. An additional meeting between the two is likely before March. The Egyptians also will continue their efforts to persuade Arafat that Resolution 242, because it condemns the seizure of land by force, is an appropriate basis for negotiations. [Redacted]

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Mubarak will continue trying to bolster Arafat's position and that of moderates in the PLO. His efforts probably will be restricted to diplomacy and public statements of support. He almost certainly remains too concerned about the political volatility of the PLO to permit Arafat to relocate elements of his organization to Egypt. He may, however, agree to a summit meeting with Arafat and Hussein outside of Egypt. [Redacted]

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**Jordan-Iraq:  
Closer Military Cooperation** [redacted]

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Jordanian-Iraqi military cooperation has grown steadily since the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980, a dramatic contrast with the countries' strained relations in earlier years. This cooperation has taken many forms, including exchanges of military delegations, the temporary deployment of Jordanian troops to Iraq, the positioning of Iraqi radars in Jordan, and the transshipment of Iraqi-bound military materiel through Jordan's only port, Al Aqabah. [redacted]

ties with the traditionally radical Ba'thist regime of Saddam Husayn and fears the repercussions that an Iranian victory would have on Jordan and the Middle East. The King also believes he could count on at least limited Iraqi support in the event Jordan became involved in hostilities with Syria. [redacted]

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The King's senior military officers and the Jordanian populace do not always share his convictions regarding the benefits of closer ties with Iraq. They worry that the King may eventually involve Jordan in the war, associate Jordan too closely with the war's possible loser, or pave the way for hostile Iraqi Ba'thists to undermine Jordan's Hashemite monarchy. [redacted]

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Military cooperation between the two countries has expanded despite their limited resources. Until the demands of its war with Iran became financially draining, Baghdad provided generous financial assistance to Jordan. Even now, Baghdad continues to provide limited financial aid to Amman. In the interest of expediting military-related transshipments, Iraq also has funded expansion of port facilities at Al Aqabah and improvement of Jordanian roads. For its part, Jordan has allowed Iraq to use a major portion of the Al Aqabah facilities, despite competing domestic requirements. [redacted]

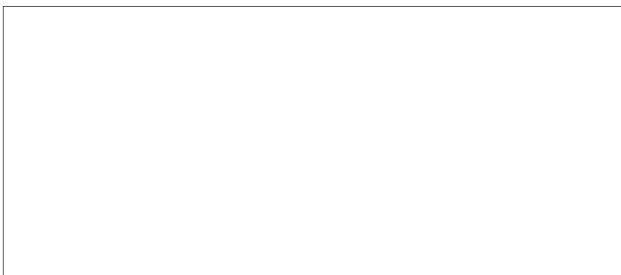
Memories of tense relations between the two countries before 1978 persist among many Jordanians. The King himself harbored resentment against Iraq because of the assassination of his Hashemite relatives in Iraq during the Ba'thist Revolution of 1958. Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, Iraq sponsored subversive activities by Ba'thist sympathizers in Jordan, smuggled arms and ammunition into Jordan, and provided terrorist training to groups such as Black June which conducted an attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Amman in 1976. [redacted]

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**Hussein's Hopes**

King Hussein has been the primary impetus behind Jordan's better relations with Baghdad. He hopes that cooperation will establish a basis for cordial postwar

**Early Cooperation**

The Arab League Summit in 1978—called to establish an Arab consensus against Egypt and the Camp David accords—almost immediately led to improved relations between Jordan and Iraq. Although initially reluctant to attend, the King left

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Baghdad very impressed with Saddam Husayn, then vice chairman of the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council, [Redacted] At the summit, Iraq pledged to pay Amman an annual subsidy of \$186 million, which it paid until 1983 when the costs of its war with Iran forced Iraq to conserve its financial resources. [Redacted]

Iraqis surprised the King by asking him, in the fall of 1982, to withdraw the volunteer force. [Redacted]

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**The Chinese Connection**

Jordan's role as a conduit for arms going to Iraq began in 1981 when, at Iraq's request, Amman concluded a \$300 million deal with China. Iraq wanted the arms because of a temporary Soviet embargo on weapons deliveries, and [Redacted]

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Efforts to improve joint air defense cooperation began soon after the summit meeting. These included the stationing of Iraqi radars near an Iraqi-built airfield in eastern Jordan [Redacted]

[Redacted]

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King Hussein declared his support for Iraq at the outset of the Iran-Iraq war, but much of this early support was logistic in nature and did not feature arms transshipments that have since become common. He provided safehaven for Iraqi civil and transport aircraft in Jordan and training on some of the US military equipment that Iraq had captured from Iran.

Chinese arms deliveries to Iraq increased dramatically in 1982. On Iraq's behalf, Jordan concluded a second arms deal with China—a \$355 million contract calling for unspecified military equipment [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

**The Yarmuk Brigade**

King Hussein wanted to increase Jordanian assistance to Iraq in early 1982 but could not because of Jordan's own shortages and supplier sensitivities. The King instead called for volunteers to form an expeditionary force—the ill-fated Yarmuk Brigade. Approximately 2,000 volunteers eventually went to Iraq, but most had little previous military training. Many joined because of the promise of generous pay and became disgruntled when this pay did not materialize. [Redacted]

Iraq bought 80 F-7 fighter aircraft (the Chinese version of the Soviet-made MIG-21) as part of the second deal, [Redacted]

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[Redacted] The Yarmuk Brigade became such an embarrassment that the

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Jordan allowed Iraq to increase its use of Al Aqabah for transshipments of combat equipment last year. East Germany shipped military trucks to Iraq through Al Aqabah in early 1984. A Soviet shipment of 50 BMP armored personnel carriers was delivered to Al Aqabah last August, for example. A second shipment of BMPs was delivered to the port last October. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Iraq probably would feel obliged to offer at least token military assistance to Jordan in the event of a Syrian-Jordanian conflict or a broader Arab-Israeli war. This assistance would be limited because Iraq probably will have to keep the bulk of its military assets along its Iranian border for years. Iraqi military assistance during a crisis might feature temporary deployment to Jordan of additional radars, a brigade-size troop contingent, and older Iraqi MIG-21 aircraft. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

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**Outlook**

Cooperation between the Jordanian and Iraqi armed forces probably will continue to grow, despite problems such as the serious deterioration of Jordanian roads and unpaid Iraqi bills. They almost certainly will continue developing more efficient and more secure communications links to provide warning of Israeli overflights. In its role as an intermediary for Iraqi arms acquisitions, Jordan may deal with increasingly diverse arms suppliers. The two countries probably will continue to exchange military delegations that will provide briefings on military equipment and tactics of mutual interest. [Redacted]

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With memories of the Yarmuk Brigade still fresh, closer cooperation between the two countries almost certainly will not lead to the dispatch of Jordanian troops to Iraq. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

If Iraq appeared to be in serious danger of losing the war with Iran, however, King Hussein probably would try to provide Iraq with whatever military assistance he could muster, including troops if Iraq requested them. [Redacted]

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**Iraq's Elite Military Forces:  
Key Assets for Saddam Husayn—  
And a Spawning Ground for a  
Military Coup**

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The elite Republican Guard and Special Forces units are the most aggressive, competent, and disciplined elements of the Iraqi armed forces. Since their inception these forces have helped ensure the survival of Saddam Husayn's regime, both on and off the battlefield. These units, however, are also potential spawning grounds for a military coup.

[Redacted]

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The Republican Guard and Special Forces comprise only a small percentage of the Iraqi Army, but they are the best trained and best equipped combat forces under Saddam Husayn's command. The Republican Guard division consists of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Republican Guard Brigades; the 10th Armored Brigade;

The Republican Guards now have the dual role of providing armored and mechanized support to critical battlefield situations and, on a rotating basis, furnishing the battalion-size guard force at the Presidential Palace in Baghdad. As part of the overall expansion of the Iraqi Army since the war began, Republican Guard forces have been increased to at least five brigades under a division-level command structure. The division is equipped with the latest Soviet weaponry, including T-72 tanks and improved BMP-1 armored personnel carriers. Each brigade normally has three or four maneuver battalions consisting of between 400 and 600 men.

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**The Republican Guards**

Before the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war the existing Republican Guard brigade, supported by the 10th Armored Division, was responsible for the defense of Baghdad and for protecting the President. The war has led to a significant increase in the size of the Republican Guards and to an important change in their primary mission,

[Redacted]

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In the early years of the conflict the Republican Guards were used as a strategic reserve. Their primary mission remained the defense of Baghdad and the regime, but elements of the brigade were frequently dispatched to the frontlines for crucial battles such as at Khorramshahr in October 1980.

**Special Forces**

The Special Forces are considered the elite fighting force of the regular Iraqi Army. Traditionally, these units have sought to recruit, train, and maintain only the best soldiers.

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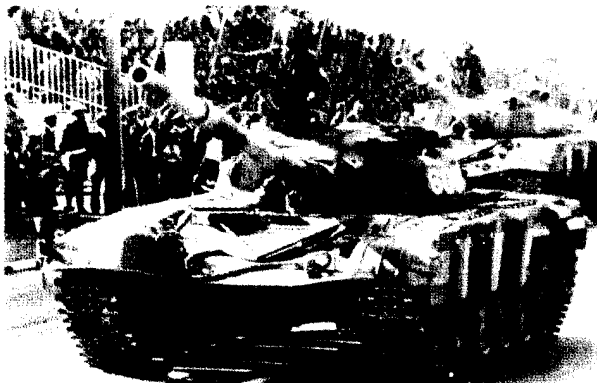
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T-72 tank [Redacted]

As long as the conflict with Iran remains a low-intensity war of attrition, Republican Guard and Special Forces units probably will retain their present missions. They will be held in strategic reserve, ready to support other units engaged in battle, and will be used for frontline reconnaissance and patrol duties. Under these conditions, the combat preparedness of the elite units will improve further as they hone fighting skills. In all likelihood, their morale will remain high. [Redacted]

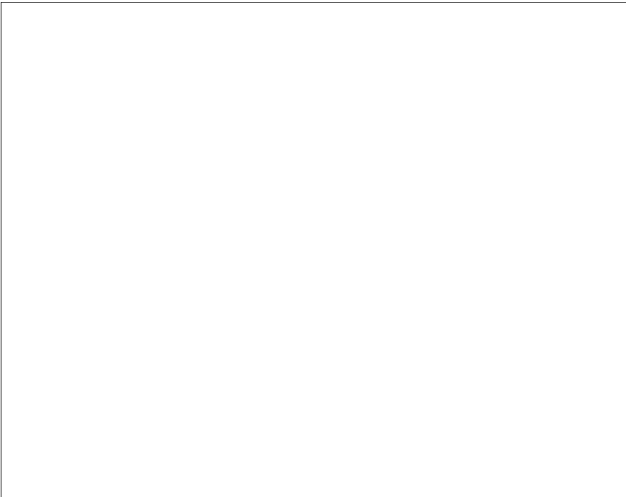
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If the war escalates, however, elite forces will again face the prospect of heavy casualties as they are deployed to the most important and dangerous situations. Should this occur, we believe that elements in the elite forces might consider ways of removing Saddam Husayn rather than have their units decimated. [Redacted]

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**Elite Forces—Spawning Ground for a Coup?**

Despite his proven ability to ensure military loyalty, Saddam Husayn's regime remains vulnerable to a military coup. Although we believe prospects for a military coup are slim, renewed fighting on the order of the early years of the war would increase the risk of a coup attempt. Moreover, we believe Iraq's elite forces, which thus far have been among the principal guarantors of Saddam's power, would pose the greatest potential threat to him. If Republican Guard and Special Forces units remain loyal to Saddam, a coup probably would not succeed. If, however, elite units support a coup attempt, its likelihood for success would be greatly enhanced. [Redacted]

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Over the last two years most of the Special Forces units have been brought back to full strength, reequipped, and restored to full operational capacity. Along with the rest of the Iraqi Army, the Special Forces also have expanded. [Redacted]

Too great an emphasis on political loyalty in the appointment of key military officers proved costly for Saddam in the early years of the war. [Redacted]

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[Redacted] orders issued by the High Command in Baghdad were unrealistic and frequently resulted in lost opportunities or costly battlefield defeats. Should these conditions recur, we believe they would provide the impetus and justification for a coup led or supported by professional Army officers in elite units. [Redacted]

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**Implications for the War**

In our view, the elite forces of the Iraqi Army have fully recovered from the losses they sustained during the early years of the war with Iran. They have been expanded and, more important, over the past two years have acquired valuable combat experience. Iraqi elite units, we believe, are now manned by a corps of battle-hardened veterans. [Redacted]

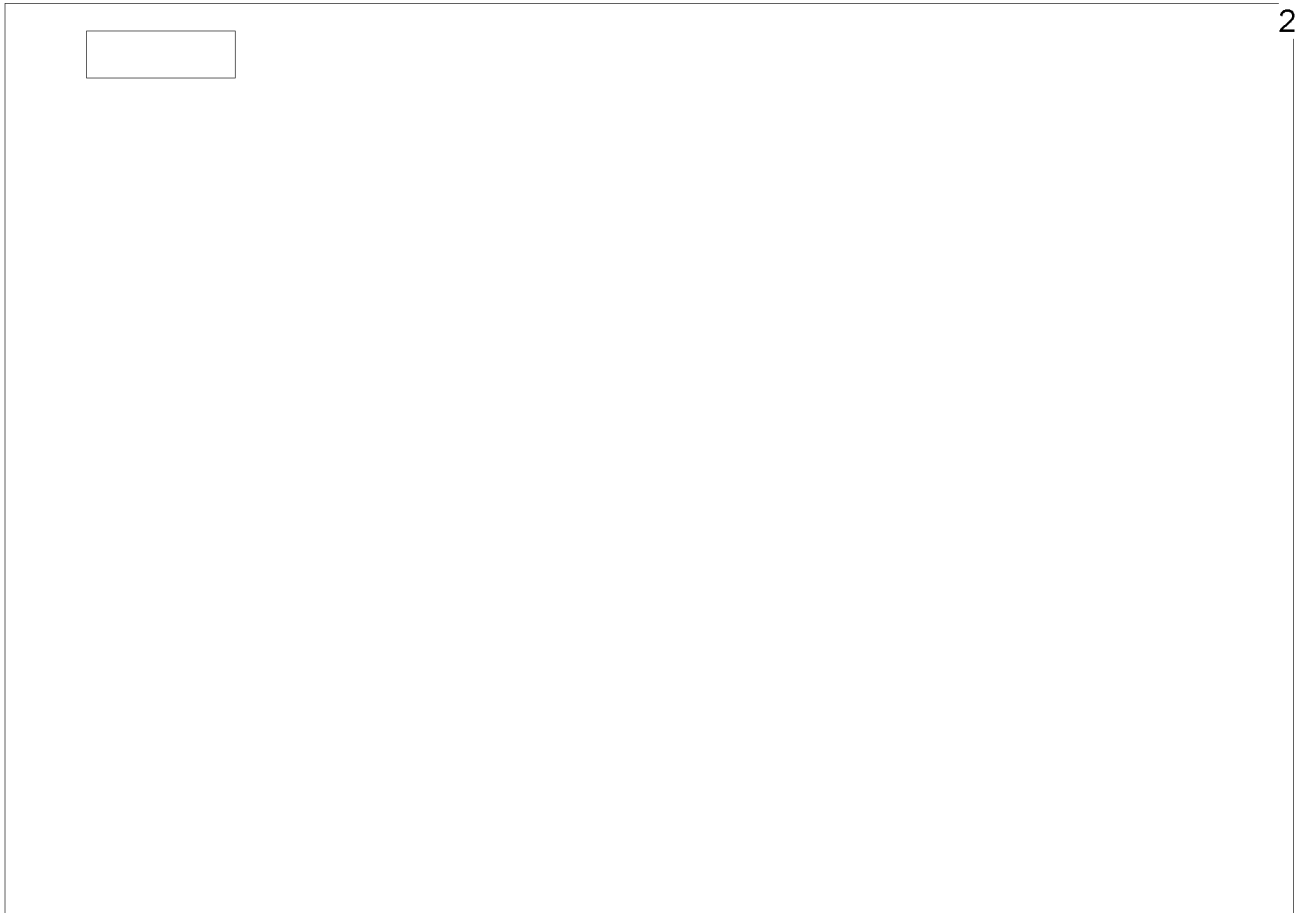
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Overly centralized decisionmaking was another significant weakness hampering Iraqi field commanders during the initial stages of the war.



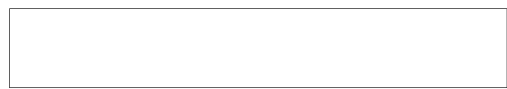
[Redacted] In our view, elite units again faced with a similar situation would be more inclined either to initiate a military coup or support one instigated by other professional Army officers. [Redacted]

Recently Saddam agreed that tactical decisions up to brigade level can be made by field commanders,

[Redacted] Although this may alleviate some dissatisfaction among professional military men, especially in elite units, decentralization also will weaken Saddam's control over the military. This could potentially enhance the prospects of a successful coup attempt. [Redacted]

Finally, Saddam's use of elite units as shock troops at the front and the expansion of these units during the last few years have created an opportunity for opposition elements to acquire the military expertise and position essential to a successful coup. [Redacted]

[Redacted] there is a large percentage of Mosul-origin Ba'th Party members within the Republican Guards. Although we see no evidence of disloyalty among these personnel, the officers are thought to be a close-knit group and, like many other Iraqis, may resent the dominance of Saddam Husayn and his fellow townsmen from Tikrit. In our view, a resumption of full-scale, yet indecisive, warfare with Iran could encourage coup plotting among a Mosul clique within the Palace Guard itself. [Redacted]



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**Iraq: Shia Dissidents  
Remain Weak** [redacted]

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Iran's efforts to cobble together an effective force of pliable Iraqi Shia dissident groups have left them more weakened and divided than ever. Iraqi Shias have largely resisted Tehran's attempts at domination but are split over ideological, leadership, and strategy issues. Even if a widely respected Iraqi Shia leader were to emerge, Iran probably would undermine his influence. [redacted]

Tehran is partly to blame for dividing and weakening the opposition by demanding subservience to its concepts and authority. Iraqi Shia dissidents are split over the *velayat-e faqih* concept, which holds that Ayatollah Khomeini is the supreme guide of all Shias worldwide. Of the four most important Iraqi Shia dissident groupings, the Iraqi Mujahidin accepts both the concept and Iranian control. The Islamic Action Organization also accepts some control from Iran. Dawa and Rabitat Ahl al-Bayt, on the other hand, reject both the concept of *velayat-e faqih* and Iranian control. [redacted] factions of Dawa also adamantly oppose Iran's plans to establish an Iranian-controlled state in southern Iraq. Despite their differences with Iran, all the groups including Dawa continue to accept support from Tehran. [redacted]

**SAIRI: A Leaky Umbrella**

[redacted]

The Iranians created SAIRI in 1982 to serve as an umbrella organization to coordinate the activities of Iraqi Shia dissidents and some non-Shia oppositionists such as Kurds and to enhance Iranian influence over the rebels. [redacted]

[redacted]

**Dawa—The Primary Recalcitrant**

Dawa (Islamic Call Party) is probably the oldest, largest, and most prestigious Iraqi Shia dissident group. [redacted] Dawa was formed essentially as a political party in the late 1950s and went underground in 1980 after the Iranian revolution. Dawa estimated that its ranks had swelled to 30,000 to 40,000 inside Iraq by 1980, but [redacted] repression by Iraq's ruthless security services during the past several years has decimated the party inside Iraq. The creation of SAIRI and Iran's efforts to dominate the Iraqi opposition movement have reduced the influence of Dawa's principal leaders in exile. [redacted]

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Dawa appears to be led by a coalition of leaders including Muhammad Mahdi al-Asifi and Murtada al-Askari, both Iranians. It favors the establishment of a democratic and secular Iraqi government guided by Islamic principles in which Sunni Arabs and Kurds would participate. [redacted]

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**Rabitat Ahl al-Bayt**

Rabitat Ahl al-Bayt (League of the Followers of the Prophet) is another Shia group that is reluctant to accept orders from Tehran. It brings together factions from SAIRI, Dawa, and other groups not resident in Iran. Mahdi al-Hakim, elder brother of SAIRI's leader, founded the organization in August 1983 in London, [redacted] Mahdi formerly was closely identified with Dawa, and his organization appears to engage largely in propaganda efforts similar to those of Dawa. We have no estimates on its size, but its weekly newspaper *Al-Tayyar Al-Jadid* has a circulation of 70,000. We believe that the group's independence gives it more appeal in Iraq than rival organizations headquartered in Tehran. [redacted]

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**Principal Iraqi Shia Dissident Organizations<sup>a</sup>****Pro-Iranian or Leaning Toward Iranian Control****Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq:**

- **Leader:** Muhammad Baqr al-Hakim, Iranian origin, official title, spokesman.
- **Other officials:** Twenty-five, elected every six months, including:
  - Mahmud Hashemi, Iranian from Shahrud, formerly in Jama'at al-Ulema al-Iraqiyin (Community of Iraqi Ulema), a small but apparently influential grouping of clerics, chairman.
  - Ali Hairi, Iranian from Yazd.
  - Sadri Qobbanchi, Iraqi, chief assistant to Hakim.
  - Muhammad Baqr Muhri, Iraqi, formerly in Jama'at al-Ulema al-Iraqiyin, treasurer.
  - Shaykh Ali Kurani, Lebanese, formerly of Dawa.
  - Morteza Shariati, Iranian, head of the Assembly's Cultural Committee for Iraqi Prisoners.
  - Javad Khalesi, Iraqi.
  - Fnu Bashiri, Iraqi, from Dawa.
  - Muhammad Hadi al-Modarasi, Iranian, chief of the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain and brother of Muhammad Taqi al-Modarasi, head of the Islamic Action Organization.

Also includes representatives from the Iraqi Kurdish Democratic Party, a secular group of Sunni Kurds seeking autonomy in Iraq. Iranian leaders pressed Hakim to drop his objections to the KDP's inclusion following the KDP's help during the Haj Umran offensive.

- **Subsidiary organizations:** The Iraqi Mujahidin and Hezbollahis, headed by Sadri Qobbanchi. Assigned to intelligence and paramilitary operations inside Iraq. The Foundation of the Martyr Sadr conducts missionary work among Iraqi prisoners of war.
- **Publications:** Al-Jihad (The Struggle), Ash-Shahada (The Witness), and At-Taqrir As-Siyasi (The Political Report).

**Iraqi Mujahidin (Iraqi Strugglers):**

- **Leader:** Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim, Iranian origin, about 28, youngest of the three Hakim brothers.
- **Activities:** Military arm of SAIRI. Has conducted 25 known terrorist attacks inside and outside Iraq. Relatively inactive since April 1983. Cooperates with the Kurdish Democratic Party led by Iraqi dissidents Mas'ud and Idris Barzani. Hakim also directs Iraqi Shia prisoners of war who have been formed into the Islamic Iraqi Army to fight with Iranian troops at the front.

**Islamic Action Organization (also known as Amal):**

- **Leader:** Muhammad Taqi al-Modarasi
- **Shia support:** Composed largely of low-level Iranians who lived in Iraq for some time before Iraq deported them to Iran for their political activity.
- **Activities:** Pursues terrorism inside and outside Iraq that belies its small size. SAIRI has given Modarasi responsibility for the training and operations of Shia terrorist groups.

**Jund al-Imam (The Army of the Imam):**

- **Leaders:** Abdullah Shirazi and his son Muhammad Ali Shirazi.
- **Activities:** Small group. We believe it concentrates on securing power among Shia leaders in Tehran.

**Independent Organizations****Dawa (Islamic Call Party):**

- **Leaders:**
  - Muhammad Mahdi al-Asifi, Iranian, originally sought only to protect Shia rights from encroachment by Sunnis.
  - Shaykh Kasim al-Hairi, Iranian.
  - Murtada al-Askari, Iranian, described as Dawa's faqih or guide. Askari leads a faction of older Shias who want to restrain ideological excesses of other factions that consist largely of young persons. Wants to restore the modus vivendi that previously existed with the Sunnis.
- **Other senior personalities:**
  - Shaykh Ali Kurani, ethnic Lebanese and fanatic Shia, advocates the supremacy of Shias over Sunnis.
  - Shaykh Baqr al-Nasari, Iraqi, believes Iraqi opposition groups should make independent decisions if Iran occupies southern Iraq.
  - Dr. Abu Ali Muwaffaq Al-Rabi, Iraqi, resident in London.
  - Bashir al-Nassiri.
  - Mahmud al-Hashimi.
  - Muhammad Husayn bin Hamad Sadr, head of the Beirut branch.
- **Shia support:** Principally from the urban middle class. Particularly well organized in Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf, Basra. Open to non-Shias.
- **Activities:** Began primarily as a political party but has acquired a military wing, including a token presence on Iraq's Majnoon Islands, which are partly occupied by Iran. Has tried to assassinate Saddam several times; the last reported attempt was on 8 July 1982. Despite use of terrorism, advocates political organizing as principal means to gain power. Has links with the Kurdish Democratic Party stemming from forced resettlement of Iraqi Kurds to Shia territory in the mid-1960s.
- **Subsidiary organizations:** The Islamic Union of Iraqi Students and the Islamic Union of Iraqi Engineers, in Tehran and Qom.
- **Publications:** Monthly and weekly Arabic and Kurdish magazines, both named Al-Jihad (The Struggle).
- **Finances:** [ ] wealthy Shia merchants in Bahrain and Kuwait are the main contributors. They provide funds stemming from religious and social obligations. [ ]

**Rabitat Ahl al-Bayt (League of the Followers of the Prophet):****Leaders:**

- Mahdi al-Hakim, eldest of the Hakim brothers.
- Muhammad Baqr al-Ulum, deputy.
- Akbar Ghadawi, Iraqi Shia cleric residing in Pakistan, secretary.
- **Shia support:** Elements from various Shia groups, including Dawa, the Jama'at al-Ulema, and SAIRI. Nonleftist Iraqi exiles in the West, including writers, doctors, lawyers, and students opposed to Saddam. Appeals to Iraqi Shia dissidents outside Iran, most of whom resent Iranian domination of SAIRI.
- **Publications:** Weekly Arabic and English newspaper At-Tayyar Al-Jadid (The New Current), published in London.
- **Activities:** Engages primarily in propaganda and solicitation of funds. Mahdi has close connections with Iraqi Kurdish dissidents. [ ]

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**The Iraqi Mujahidin (The Iraqi Stugglers)**

The Mujahidin appears to be SAIRI's primary military wing. It was established in 1979 and is led by Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim, younger brother of SAIRI leader Muhammad al-Hakim. [Redacted]

[Redacted] Mujahidin is based in Haj Umran, the Iraqi salient occupied by Iran in mid-1983, where it is supposed to cooperate with Iraqi Kurdish dissident leader Mas'ud Barzani. The Mujahidin is composed at least partly of Iraqi prisoners of war and expelled Iraqi refugees of Iranian origin. [Redacted]

**The Islamic Action Organization**

The Iranians also appear to have considerable control over the Islamic Action Organization (IAO). The group is also known as the Islamic Work Organization or Amal but is distinct from the terrorist Amal group in Lebanon. The IAO, an offshoot and rival of Dawa, is headed by Muhammad Taqi al-Modarasi, an Iranian who has close ties to Ayatollah Khomeini. The IAO has conducted terrorist operations inside and outside Iraq, but none is known to have been directed at US interests. [Redacted]

**Prospects**

Iraqi Shia dissidents face a dilemma. Without Iranian backing and a presence in Iran, independent groups would be too weak and too distant to build an effective movement inside Iraq. The acceptance of Iranian backing and control, however, antagonizes many Iraqi Shia leaders and taints the groups, in the eyes of Iraq's Arab Shias who hold a deep-rooted animosity against the Persians. [Redacted]

The Iraqi Shia oppositionists appear divided along class and ethnic lines. [Redacted]

[Redacted] lower-class Iraqis and Iraqi Shias of Iranian origin generally are willing to accept Khomeini as their supreme guide and to back pro-Iranian groups such as the Islamic Action

Organization. Middle-class Iraqis, however, favor Iraqi independence and support such groups as Dawa and the Rabitat Ahl al-Bayt. [Redacted]

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US diplomats in Baghdad report that, even though Iraqi Shia religious leaders desire the overthrow of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, they are concerned that thousands of Iranians would flood into Iraqi cities containing some of Shia Islam's most revered shrines. They also are worried that Iranian religious leaders would demand precedence over their less numerous Iraqi counterparts. [Redacted]

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We see little chance of an effective Shia dissident movement emerging from the badly splintered rebels. The chasms between them appear too numerous and too wide to be easily bridged. The emergence of a native Iraqi Shia leader with widespread popular support among Iraq's Shias would improve the rebels' prospects, but Iran probably would view him as a challenge to its authority and undermine his influence. [Redacted]

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**Iraq:  
Barzani Asserts Himself** [redacted]

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Within the past year Mas'ud Barzani has fought his way back from virtual isolation within the Kurdish resistance movement. The Iraqi guerrilla chief has secured important pledges of support from Syria and Libya. Barzani hopes that increased aid from these states will enable him to expand his operations in northern Iraq. At the same time there are strong pressures from Turkey and Iran to restrain Barzani. In our view, Barzani will be able to increase his activities in Iraq but will not become strong enough to challenge the government's control over key cities or the oil-producing area in the north. [redacted]

**Background**

At the outset of the Iran-Iraq war, Mas'ud Barzani lived in exile in Iran with several thousand of his tribesmen. He had been driven there in 1975 after a failed attempt by his father—the legendary Kurdish guerrilla chief Mulla Mustafa Barzani—to overthrow the government in Iraq. With the fall of the Shah, Mas'ud—who had taken control of the tribe on his father's death—allied with Khomeini and agreed to suppress an Iranian Kurdish revolt against the Ayatollah's government. Barzani's move generally was condemned by Iranian and Iraqi Kurds, who viewed him as a traitor. Subsequently, the Iranian Kurdish rebels, under the leadership of Abdur Rahman Qasemlu, took control of most of northwest Iran. [redacted]

In 1983, Barzani's guerrillas spearheaded an Iranian assault on Iraq at Haj Umran. Important Iraqi Kurdish tribes resisted the invasion, fearing an Iranian victory would deprive them of their tribal lands. In addition, Jalal Talabani, leader of a major Iraqi Kurdish guerrilla group and a longtime rival of Barzani, sided with Baghdad. With Kurdish leaders in Iran and Iraq united against him, Barzani was virtually isolated within the Kurdish resistance movement. [redacted]

**Fortune Smiles on Barzani**

In the middle of last year, Barzani's fortunes began to improve as those of his rivals declined. Iran mounted a major offensive against Qasemlu. It pursued a scorched-earth policy in the northwest and bribed and coerced many Kurds to collaborate. The Iranian Kurdish rebels were forced to give up important bases and retreated to the mountains, from which they have been staging attacks against Iranian garrisons. [redacted]

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At the same time, Talabani suffered a major setback. His cooperation with Baghdad ended abruptly after leading Iraqi political figures apparently pressed Iraq's President Saddam Husayn to repudiate his truce with the Kurds. Many of Talabani's followers subsequently deserted him, according to diplomatic sources in Baghdad. [redacted]

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Barzani now is one of the few remaining effective leaders of the Kurdish resistance. His position is stronger than either of his rivals—his guerrillas carved out several secure bases in northern Iraq during the Haj Umran assault which they have managed to preserve. [redacted]

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**Barzani Asserts Himself**

Last August, Barzani opened negotiations in Damascus with Syria's President Assad [redacted]

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[redacted] Barzani claims Assad pledged full support for the guerrillas, and the President requested that Barzani join a front of Iraqi opposition groups Syria was forming. [redacted]

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[redacted] Barzani next traveled to Tripoli, where he met with Colonel Qadhafi, who pledged as much arms, money, and support as Barzani

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needed, even tanks if they could be obtained. [Redacted]

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Barzani believes the Syrians and Libyans plan a second front against Iraq and want his guerrillas to launch the operation. Barzani has several thousand fighters who could pose a serious threat to the Iraqis if armed with sophisticated weapons. [Redacted]

Barzani almost certainly is correct in his claim that Tehran needs him. The defeat of his forces in northern Iraq would represent a serious setback for the Iranians. Iraq is embarrassed by its continued inability to eliminate Barzani, and his presence in the north requires Baghdad to garrison the area with troops that might better be employed in the south repelling Iran's forces. [Redacted]

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**Iran Makes Trouble**

[Redacted]

**Outlook**

We believe Tehran will continue limiting the number and kinds of weapons Barzani receives. Tehran will give him enough arms and ammunition to continue harassing Iraq, but not enough to make him a free agent. Iran's strategy against Barzani probably will succeed in the short run. Barzani will take the weapons Iran gives him since he has no other choice, and it is not likely Syria can prevail on Tehran to provide more sophisticated arms as long as the Turks are opposed. [Redacted]

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Iran apparently is responding to Turkish pressures to curb Barzani. Turkey—which has the largest Kurdish population in the Middle East—is upset that radical Turkish Kurds use Barzani's bases as safehavens and recently have staged cross-border raids into Turkey, attacking paramilitary posts. [Redacted]

As the war between Iran and Iraq drags on, however, we believe Barzani's position will improve. A long war will further erode Baghdad's control over the north, with opportunities for Barzani to assert himself. Barzani probably will not raise a popular revolt. He will instead gradually encroach on territory held by tribes loyal to Baghdad. Barzani maintains that most of the land in the north rightfully is the property of his tribe; the Iraqi Government seized it from the Barzanis when they were driven into exile in 1975. If Barzani is successful, he will emerge as the paramount leader of Iraq's Kurds, a position he has long coveted, but the government will remain in control of the major cities in the north and the oil-producing area near Kirkuk. [Redacted]

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