DOSSIER PART 2:

Overview

CONTENTS:

1. The Madrid International Seminar on the Assassination of Iraqi Academics (p 2)

2. Call for assistance in documenting and registering assassinated Iraqi academics (p 32)

3. Action Needed Over Detention of Iraqi Education Ministry Officials. Unknown numbers murdered, dozen still illegally held (p 33)

4. Selected Media Reports from April 2006 (p 38)

5. Ghosts of Jadiriyah. A survivor's testimony (p 96)

READ ALSO DOSSIER PART 1:

http://www.brusselstribunal.org/pdf/AcademicsDossier.pdf

1. Context
2. Urgent Appeal to Save Iraq’s Academics
3. Selected Principal Endorsers of the Appeal
4. Selected Media Reports until April 2006
5. List of Assassinated Academics
6. Frequently Asked Questions
7. UNHCR Guidelines on Asylum
8. The BRussells Tribunal Committee

WEBSITES:

http://www.brusselstribunal.org/
Email: info@brusselstribunal.org

http://iraqsolidarity.org
Email: iraq@nodo50.org
1. The Madrid International Seminar on the Assassination of Iraqi Academics

Final Resolution of the Madrid International Seminar on the Assassination of Iraqi Academics and Health Professionals

22-23 April 2006

This weekend participants from 8 countries — including Iraq — met in Madrid, along with active committees working within the framework of the conclusions of the World Tribunal on Iraq and participants from Spanish universities, to discuss and hear firsthand the plight of Iraqi academics and medical professionals who struggle to live amid constant threats, physical violence, kidnappings and the operation of death squads.

To date, over 220 Iraqi health professionals have been murdered. The BRussells Tribunal and The Spanish Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI) has, with the help and support of Iraqis, compiled a list of over 190 assassinated Iraqi academics.

During the second day of the international seminar, participants focused on what actions can be taken to bring global attention to the destruction of Iraq’s intellectual and professional resources and hold accountable those directly responsible, including occupying powers that have failed their obligations under international law to protect the lives of Iraqi civilians.

We affirm the following:

- The defence of Iraqi academics and medical professionals should begin by condemning the illegal war and occupation that created the situation in Iraq where assassinations are endemic and go unpunished
- Occupying powers and their collaborators are responsible for the protection of the lives of Iraqi civilians and imputable under international law for the failure to do so
- The assassination of Iraqi academics and health professionals is part of a conscious attempt to prevent Iraq from regaining its just independent and sovereign status
- Defending Iraqi academics and health professionals is not separate from the necessity of being in solidarity with the Iraqi people and their national anti-occupation movement
- Iraqis, like all people, have a right to science and education and to enjoy the inalienable rights of freedom of thought, expression, research and innovation
- The right of families of assassinated health professionals and academics to have the killing of their loved ones investigated by an independent and competent body, and compensation paid, must be assured in all cases
In terms of action, delegates reaffirm their commitment to work with determination to raise at all levels the issue of the criminal destruction of Iraq’s professional and intellectual wealth. In particular, delegations committed to:

- Demand that UNESCO act in defence of Iraq’s intellectuals and professionals
- Demand that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights fulfil its duty to protect the lives and human rights of Iraqi doctors and academics, and all Iraqi civilians
- Spread awareness of the issue of the assassination of Iraqi academics and doctors with the appreciated commitment of Autonomous University, Madrid, to transmit the key concerns of this campaign to Spanish universities, the International Federation of Universities and the Association of Arab Universities of the Arab League
- Call upon the world’s media to understand that the killing of Iraqi academics and health professionals is a result of the occupation, not sectarian civil war
- Continue working to build an international solidarity campaign linking Iraqi academics in exile and in Iraq with their peers in universities worldwide
- Press national and regional parliaments to raise and discuss the criminal destruction of Iraq’s intellectual and professional class

The undersigned affirm that they will continue to cooperate in their denunciation of the occupation and its numberless crimes and always stand in solidarity with the people of Iraq.

The Iraqi delegation of witnesses

The Spanish Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI)
http://nodo50.org/iraq/

The B\textit{Russell}s Tribunal
http://brusselstribunal.org

The International Action Center
http://iac.org

Women’s Will Association (Iraq)
http://iraqiwomenswill.org/

Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm
http://iraksolidaritet.se

Iraq Tribunal Initiative, Germany
http://iraktribunal.de

Tribunal-Iraque (Portugal)
http://tribunaliraque.info
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

The National Association of British Arabs
http://naba.org.uk

Medical Aid for the Third World
http://m3m.be

STOP USA (Stop United States of Aggression), Belgium
http://stopusa.be

Iraqi Patriots in Media and Culture

Plaforma Aturem la Guerra de Barcelona
http://www.brusselstribunal.org/SeminarMadrid.htm

---

**Condemnation by the Conference of Rectors from Public Universities in Madrid of violence in Iraq and the assassination of Iraqi University Professors**

**Statement by CRUMA**

Conference of Rectors from Public Universities in Madrid, Madrid, 12th June, 2006

IraqSolidaridad (www.iraqsolidaridad.org), 15th June, 2006

After the compromise acquired by the team of Madrid Autónoma University Direction on the occasion of the International Seminar about the killing of University Professors and Health Personal in Iraq, *A War Launched to Erase both the Culture and Future of the Iraqi people*, organized in Madrid last 22nd and 23rd April [1], and at the proposal of the Rector of the mentioned University, Mr. Ángel Gabilondo, the Conference of Rectors from Public Universities in Madrid (CRUMA) has approved in its meeting of 12th June, 2006, an institutional statement condemning the killing of Iraqi University Professors and the situation of violence that Iraq is going through.

The Spanish Campaign against Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (SCOSI) wishes to express its gratitude to the Rectors of Madrid Universities Complutense, Autónoma, Alcalá de Henares, Politécnica, Carlos III and Rey Juan Carlos I, as well as its satisfaction for the approval of this document, a first step towards the institutional condemnation—in the Spanish State and at international level—of this campaign of killings against Iraqi University Professors, another particularly grave facet of the situation of violation of Human Rights, defenselessness and violence that the Iraqi people is suffering as consequence of the occupation by US and its allies.

This document has been addressed for its approval to the Conference of Rectors of the Spanish State Public Universities (CRUE). [Note by SCOSI]
Document approved in the Conference of Rectors from Madrid Public Universities (CRUMA), Complutense, Autónoma, Alcalá de Henares, Politécnica, Carlos III y Rey Juan Carlos I, in its meeting held in Madrid, 12th June, 2006

On generalized violence in Iraq and the killing of Iraqi University Professors

Iraq suffers a horrible situation of indiscriminate and generalized violence that is growing day by day affecting all and sundry of the sectors in Iraqi society. Together with the destruction of the basic living conditions of its population, this critical spiral of terror is giving rise to an internal process of destruction that brings the Iraqi society at the edge of its definitive collapse. Iraq, a country founded on the enriching coexistence of communities that was formed throughout its millenary History, faces today its effective extinction in a crash of sectarian violence. The systematic killing of University Professors has a particular importance for the future of the country.

Last 14th April, 2006, the General Director of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, denounced the killing of Iraqi University Professors from the beginning of the occupation of this country in April, 2003 (Press Release, n° 2006-31). In October, 2005, the Iraqi High Education Ministry acknowledged the killing of 146 University Professors in that period of time. Currently, the number of Iraqi University Professors killed surpasses already the amount of 180, as different credible sources vouched for, among them the Iraqi University Professors Association. Last 8th May, the Iraqi newspaper az-Zaman reported on a circulating new list of 461 Intellectuals, Scientists and Academics threatened to be killed.

A revision of the available list of professors killed [2], allows to understand the magnitude of the problem: Professors of all Universities of the country, pertaining to all academic fields, are being killed, the biggest part of them high skilled figures in their specialization, heads of Departments and members of the new university bodies democratically elected.

Besides this systematic campaign of killings of Professors, two carbombs exploded for the first time last 24th April in Al-Mustansiriya University, in Baghdad, causing death to five students.

Facing these facts, the Conference of Rectors from Madrid Public Universities (CRUMA) agrees on the following:

1. To express their extreme consternation and their severe condemnation for the terrible and generalized violence that the Iraqi society is suffering, and specifically the one affecting the Iraqi University Professors, preventing the future cultural and scientific development of the country, that is bringing about a massive exodus of Iraqi Professors as well as the collapse of the University as institution.

2. To promote before the competent international bodies the denunciation of these facts and the adoption of specific steps to protect the Iraqi University Professors community, in particular UNESCO, the International Federation of Universities and the Arab Universities Association in the frame of the League of the Arab States.
3. To address the Spanish Government and urge that it demands the Iraqi authorities and the countries with military forces deployed in Iraq to fulfill their obligations related to the protection of Iraqi citizens, and in this particular case, of the University Professors community, and ask for a reliable investigation in the assassination campaign against Iraq’s academics.

Ángel Gabilondo Pujol, Rector of Madrid Autonoma University

María Jesús Sastre Arranz, Rector of Complutense University, Madrid

Virgilio Zapatero Gómez, Rector of Alcalá de Henares University

Javier Uceda Antolín, Rector of Politécnica University, Madrid

Gregorio Peces-Barba Martínez, Rector of Carlos III University, Madrid

Pedro González-Trevijano, Rector of Rey Juan Carlos I University, Madrid

Notes by IraqSolidaridad and the BRussell’s Tribunal:

1. See IraqSolidaridad:

2. See IraqSolidaridad: http://www.iraqsolidaridad.org/2004-2005/docs/represion_11-11-05.html (Spanish) and http://www.brusselstribunal.org/academicsList.htm (English)

3. See BRussell’s Tribunal: www.brusselstribunal.org/Academics.htm for the campaign against the assassination of Iraq’s academics.

Conference of the Rectors of the Spanish Universities condemn the killing of Iraqi academics (14 November 2006)

The Conference of the Rectors of the Spanish Universities (http://www.crue.org/) firmly condemns the killing of Iraqi Academics in a document approved in the meeting they held last 14 November, 2006.

The document was introduced by Professor Ángel Gabilondo Pujol, the Rector of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, taking into consideration a parallel condemn made by the Rectors of the six Madrid Public Universities before summer (http://www.iraqsolidaridad.org/2006/docs/represion_15-06-06.html).
In this extremely important document, the Chancellors express "[…] their deeply consternation and their absolute condemnation of the terrible and widespread violence exerted against the whole Iraqi society and specifically against the Iraqi professors, investigators, teachers and intellectuals from all the Universities in the country. This is a very serious outrage against the cultural and scientific future of Iraq, which provokes both the massive forced exile of the professors and the collapse of the University as institution."

In the declaration, the Spanish Rectors declare their involvement in "[…] promoting the denounce of these facts before the Spanish government and before all the International incumbent organizations and to compel those organisms to take all the advisable measures to protect the Iraqi academics."

According to Iraqi sources, more than 210 professors have been killed in Iraq from the beginning of the USA occupation in April, 2003. These academics came from all fields of studies and from all the universities in the country, as it is stated by the Spanish Campaign against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI, Spanish Acronym), a platform of Spanish organizations that last 22 April in Madrid held an International Seminar on this issue, sponsored by the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and the National Library.

From the beginning of the current university year, around 20 academics have been killed in Iraq, including the President of Iraqi Teachers, Isam al-Rawi, who was killed last 30 October.

Few days ago, on 13 November, more than a hundred of civil servants of the Ministry of Superior Education were abducted in the ministry building in Bagdad. Up to now more than 20 are still held.

**Talk given by John Catalinotto at the Madrid Conference 22 April**

In the name of the International Action Center of the United States and of former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, I would like to thank the other sponsoring organizations, the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM), the Escuela Julián Besteiro and the National Library, and salute the international guests, especially the representatives of the Iraqi people and also the peoples of the Spanish state who have given us an opportunity to participate part in today's seminar.

Three years ago today, on May 1, 2003, U.S. President George Bush made his famous landing on the aircraft carrier USS Lincoln in a secret flight and sent his congratulations to the sailors and pilots while standing under a banner that read: "Mission Accomplished." At that same time, when Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld still believed he could "shock and awe" all of Iraq into accepting these plans, the U.S. leaders might have believed they could set up a single weak and submissive Iraqi puppet government.

Within months of the April 2003 Pentagon takeover of Baghdad, however, the Iraqi resistance made it clear that the U.S. occupation would not be easy.
By now the generals have spent almost $300 billion. They have carried out merciless offensives, killed over 100,000 Iraqis, destroyed cities, towns, and villages and imprisoned and tortured tens of thousands of Iraqis. And the result has been to widen and deepen the resistance.

In other words, the U.S. commanders are telling Bush openly that this is not a misión accomplished, but that they have been sent to carry out a Mission Impossible—to subjugate the Iraqi people and force them back into a colonial relationship.

I would like to show that once the U.S. plan for a rapid conquest of Iraq fell apart, Washington began to search for other means to dominate that country. The U.S. rulers have a motive to carry out the worst atrocities against the Iraqi people, including the systematic assassination of all types of Iraqi leaders and representatives. They also have the experience of have used such tactics in Vietnam and El Salvador.

The strategists began to propose other methods.

Washington ignored its legal responsibility for protecting the shrine.

U.S. imperialism’s responsibility, however, goes far beyond the mere breaking of the rules of occupation. The Bush administration consciously spread lies in an attempt to justify the illegal invasion of Iraq. The U.S. then set up an occupation regime to seize Iraqi oil and to establish permanent military bases and a center of operations to control the Middle East and Central Asia.

By November 2003, U.S. think tanks were already proposing that Iraq be split into three parts. Leslie H. Gelb, president emeritus of the powerful Council on Foreign Relations, wrote, “The only viable strategy, then, may be to correct [Iraq’s] historical defect and move in stages to ward a three-state solution: Kurds in the north, Sunnis in the center and Shiites in the south.” (New York Times, Nov. 25, 2003)

Toward the end of 2004, the Rand Corporation conducted a study on behalf of the U.S. Air Force. One of the primary objectives of the study was to “identify the key cleavages and fault lines among sectarian, ethnic, regional and national lines, and to assess how these cleavages generate challenges and opportunities for the United States.”

U.S. allies in the region, especially the British, have their own experience in using “divide and rule” against colonial nations. The British instilled hostilities by encouraging the partition of colonial India into India and Pakistan in 1948. In the northern part of Ireland, the British colonialists provoked sectarian violence to justify their occupation and repression of the mostly Catholic community that was
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Russell Tribunal and

Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

for freedom from British rule. The U.S. and European imperialists used differences among the peoples of Yugoslavia to break up that socialist federal republic into a half-dozen more easily ruled mini-states

Some U.S. strategists began at the end of 2004 to suggest the U.S. occupation adopt the “Salvador option.” The headline in a Jan. 14, 2005, Newsweek article was: “The Pentagon may put Special-Forces-led assassination or kidnapping teams in Iraq,” just as it did in El Salvador to kill Salvadoran progressives, unionists and any civilians in the way. The U.S. also supported and trained the “death squads” to carry out those assassinations, and U.S. diplomatic personnel helped members of these “Death Squads” escape justice.

U.S. agents carried out similar assassinations on even a larger scale in Vietnam. There it was called the “Phoenix Program,” another death-squad venture in Vietnam set up by the CIA from Saigon in 1966. Phoenix was a program aimed at "neutralizing"—through assassination, kidnapping, and systematic torture—the civilian infrastructure that supported the Vietnamese resistance fighters in South Vietnam. Tens of thousands of village leaders were killed, tortured and/or jailed.

In Iraq, Washington’s agents don’t have only the motive to carry out these assassinations, they also have the means. The Iraq puppet government’s interior minister, up to now someone who cooperated with the U.S. occupation, has admitted that death squads and unauthorized armed groups have been carrying out sectarian killings in the country. In a BBC interview on April 11, Bayan Jabr denied these groups were his responsibility. He added that there are non-governmental armed groups called the Facility Protection Service, set up in 2003 by the U.S. occupation, that number 150,000 effectives. Jabr said these 150,000 hired guns are “out of order, not under our control,” along with another 30,000 private security guards.

Since Feb. 27, almost two months after the explosion, no organization or state had publicly accepted responsibility for the bombing. This alone shows that whoever carried out the bombing intended to throw the blame for it on other forces. The bombing was certain to incite battles between the two major Arab communities in Iraq—Shiite and Sunni. If such warfare broke out on a large scale, it could lead to fragmenting Iraq into multiple mini-states more easily manipulated by imperialism.

I believe we have shown that it is reasonable to believe that the occupation forces had the motive, means and incentive to carry out the assassinations, that Bush and his gang really want a civil war in Iraq to split the people apart. Pero sin importar quién haya asesinado los intelectuales o explotado la catedral a Samarra, las fuerzas de ocupación lideradas por los Estados Unidos son las responsables por estos asaltos adicionales contra la población iraquí.

I would like to finish by saying something about the progressive movement inside the United States. The next major anti-war and anti-occupation demonstration is scheduled for the 29th of April and it
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The BRussells Tribunal and

Campana Estatal contra la Ocupacion y por la Soberania de Iraq

will say “U.S. out of Iraq now.” Two days later is May 1. You probably know that usually, in the U.S., there is no big May 1 march of workers as there is in many other countries. But this year, because of a new struggle that rose up quickly – one of immigrant workers – May 1 could be an enormous outpouring of workers.

We in the International Action Center will be at both demonstrations. It is important that some protests be clearly anti-war. But the best way the people of the United States can help the people of Iraq end the occupation is if we can carry out the class struggle inside the United States, and that is what the immigrants—those without papers—are doing.

Long live the struggle of the Iraq people against the occupation.

Stop the assassinations of Iraqi professionals.
Let’s find out the truth about the killings in Iraq.

John Catalinotto, Madrid, 22 April 2006.
http://www.brusselstribunal.org/SeminarMadrid.htm

---

International Seminar in Madrid 22-23 April 2006
About the assassination of Iraqi academics.
Dirk Adriaensens, BRussells Tribunal

First let me congratulate the Spanish people for the fierce opposition against the war and occupation of Iraq. And the Spanish government that has listened to its people and has decided to withdraw from Iraq because it became clear that this war was based on lies and was illegal under international law.

The BRussells Tribunal was originally a hearing committee composed of academics, intellectuals and artists in the tradition of the Russell Tribunal, set up in 1967 to investigate war crimes committed
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The BRussells Tribunal and
Campana Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

during the Vietnam War. The BRussells Tribunal was directed against the war in Iraq and the imperial war policies of the Bush II administration. Its main focus was the ‘Project for the New American Century’, the think tank behind this war, in particular three of the co-signatories of the mission statement: Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney and Paul Wolfowitz.

At a networking conference set up by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation at the end of June 2003 in Brussels, it was decided that a series of hearings would be held in different places all over the world, culminating in a final session in Istanbul. The BRussells Tribunal was one of these commissions of inquiry, the opening session of the World Tribunal on Iraq. The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation accepted to support the initiative. The World Tribunal on Iraq evolved as a worldwide initiative and had Tribunal sessions and associated events in some 25 cities and countries worldwide. Many of the people present here were involved in the WTI and we are still cooperating, as this seminar shows. We work together on the basis of the platform text and the conclusions of the WTI.

After our Tribunal session, we were facing the question what to do next, how to proceed according to our conclusions. We decided to ACT. The ongoing atrocities in Iraq need our monitoring and the Iraqis need our support. A lot of our international friends, who organised similar events, share this viewpoint. That’s why we established a cooperation and bundled our efforts. And let it be very clear: not only do we monitor the occupation, we act against the war, against the illegal occupation of the sovereign state of Iraq, and we support all attempts of the Iraqi people to regain its sovereignty. We are a citizen’s initiative, meaning that we work independent from political parties.

This independent, consistent and effective way of working has attracted some fine and influential people like Harold Pinter, José Saramago, Eduardo Galeano, Samir Amin, Denis Halliday and Hans von Sponeck, Margarita Papandreou, Naomi Klein etc. It’s an explosive mixture of academics, activists, lawyers, artists, journalists and intellectuals. They seem to believe in the format and the potential of this network. In a way it’s reassuring, also for them, to belong to an active group and be able to discuss recent developments and actions. This is necessary in order to better understand the situation in Iraq.

All these people are connected with each other and can ask or give advice, bring ideas to the forum, spread important news, and so we attempt to help the peace movement solve some difficult questions as f.i. should we support the resistance, should the MNF-I leave Iraq etc. We also act as a sort of hub to connect people. The way this committee works is a rather new concept, I don’t know about any similar initiative. And it’s very workable.

The backbone of our committee is composed of patriotic Iraqis, both from inside Iraq and from the Diaspora. They belong to different currents. We have the chairs from different Human Rights organisations, medical associations, academic associations inside Iraq. This choice wasn’t made accidentally. They are better aware of the pitfalls. They know better than all of us the realities on the
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The BRussells Tribunal and
Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

They know better what has to be done in the current situation and can help on a different number of issues. They understand what’s going on in Iraq. It’s their country. If we want to spread correct information and viewpoints to the Western audiences, we need the Iraqis to advise us. The BRussells Tribunal is about THEIR country. So we want to be a bridge between the Iraqi and the Western peace movement. We publish regularly eyewitness accounts and Iraqi Human Rights reports that we receive. That has helped us a lot because the situation of Iraq is extremely complicated for outsiders like us. We cannot make a decent analysis without their help or support.

Now, I tell all this to give you some background and a context of who we are and why we think we can speak with some authority about Iraqi issues.

About the Academics campaign

The pattern of academics assassinated appears to substantiate claims that a campaign exists and is being conducted to erase a key section of the secular middle class in Iraq — a class that has largely resisted the US occupation of Iraq and refused to be co-opted by the so-called “political process” or Iraq’s US-installed puppet government. Academics are not the only ones being killed: 311 teachers killed the past 4 months, 182 pilots, 416 senior military officers killed in the first 3 months of 2006. 20,000 people kidnapped since the beginning of 2006.

It were the Iraqi intellectuals who asked us to start a campaign to create awareness for this problem. When we started, it was clear we had to avoid some traps and pitfalls. I’ll sum up a few of the most important.

1. we had to avoid complicity in any way with the occupying forces and its puppet government. We don’t want to humanize this dreadful occupation. That’s why we appeal to international human rights organisations and the UNHCHR to investigate this matter, and not to the Iraqi puppet government and the occupying forces, who are the perpetrators of these crimes.
2. We had to make sure to work with many different Iraqi anti-occupation organisations and individuals, in order to be as inclusive as possible.
3. We had to avoid putting this issue in the context of a sectarian strife between Sunni’s and Shia. I will develop this point later.
4. We had to avoid to look at this issue as being a sort of revenge against academics of the previous government. The so-called Debaathification was the first step in the destruction of Iraq’s educational system. It was used by the US to divide and destroy Iraq. Most of these so-called “revenge killings” that took place after the war can be attributed to the occupying forces and collaborators.
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The BRussells Tribunal and

Campana Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

5. We had to counter the claims of the Iraqi puppet government, the US occupiers, and the recently started campaign to safeguard the Iraqi academics, backed by both the government of Iraq and UNESCO, that criminal gangs are committing these assassinations.

6. Also, we had to mention the possible role of the Mossad in these assassinations, even though we have no hard evidence to substantiate the many assertions that Israel in involved.

7. We have to carry out this campaign in the most effective and prudent way, in order not to put the Iraqi academics even in a more dangerous situation. This requires close contacts on the ground and a lot of consultation. We distributed questionnaires from UNHCHR to the families of the victims. Not one has returned until now. The reason that is being given is that the families are too afraid to openly accuse the perpetrators. They are even too afraid to ask the police for details about the crime.

We drafted our petition very carefully, in cooperation with the Iraqis of the BRussells Tribunal network. The result is that besides over 8.000 academics worldwide, all the different patriotic currents and Iraqi anti-occupation movements have signed our petition. It was the first time something like this happened. So ours is a unifying rather than a divisive action.

Death Squads and the Salvador option

I would like to look into one major point of concern connected to this issue, and that is the so-called sectarian issue: some commentators claim that the assassination campaign of academics is part of a so-called civil war between Sunni and Shia. That’s it’s the ignorant Islamist Shia who receives direct orders from Iran to kill intellectual Sunni’s, and that it is unfortunately beyond the control of the US now. And thus the occupying forces should remain in Iraq to restore law and order. Mainstream media are raising this smokescreen to hide the truth from getting out.

Another smokescreen is the claim that most of the assassinations are carried out by criminal gangs, who first kidnap their victims, and then a ransom is paid. And after that either they are assassinated, and if not, they flee the country.

I want to put this campaign in the context where it ought to be.

What we are witnessing is the result of a carefully planned US campaign to liquidate every Iraqi who opposes the occupation of his country, the so-called “Salvador option”. In fact, since 1945 the U.S. developed counterinsurgency policies based on the model of Nazi suppression of partisan insurgents that emphasized placing the civilian population under strict control and using terror to make the population afraid to support or collaborate with insurgents.
On January 1, 2004, Robert Dreyfuss stated that: “part of a secret $3 billion in new funds—tucked away in the $87 billion Iraq appropriation that Congress approved in early November 2003—will go toward the creation of a paramilitary unit manned by militiamen associated with former Iraqi exile groups.

Experts say it could lead to a wave of extrajudicial killings, not only of armed rebels but of nationalists, other opponents of the U.S. occupation and thousands of civilian Baathists—up to 120,000 of the estimated 2.5 million former Baath Party members in Iraq. “They’re clearly cooking up joint teams to do Phoenix-like things, like they did in Vietnam,” said Vincent Cannistraro, former CIA chief of counter-terrorism. The bulk of the covert money will support U.S. efforts to create a lethal, and revenge-minded, Iraqi security force. “The big money would be for standing up an Iraqi secret police to liquidate the resistance,” said John Pike, an expert on classified military budgets at www.globalsecurity.org. “And it has to be politically loyal to the United States.” It’s also pouring money into the creation of an Iraqi secret police staffed mainly by gunmen associated with members of the puppet Iraqi Governing Council. Those militiamen are linked to Ahmad Chalabi’s Iraqi National Congress (inc), the Kurdish peshmerga (“facing death”) forces and Shiite paramilitary units, especially those of the Iran-backed Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq. Technically illegal, these armed forces have been tolerated, even encouraged, by the Pentagon.” End of quote.

This was written on the 1st of January 2004. Soon after this blood-money was drained to Iraq, the consequences of this secret operation became clear. According to an article published in New York Times Magazine, in September 2004, Counsellor to the US Ambassador for Iraqi Security Forces James Steele was assigned to work with a new elite Iraqi counter-insurgency unit known as the Special Police Commandos, formed under the operational control of Iraq’s Interior Ministry.

Many of the same men in charge of training El Salvador’s right-wing counter-insurgency forces during its bloody civil war are revealed to be advisors to Iraqi security forces.

Max Fuller, a specialist in Latin-America, has investigated this matter thoroughly. He writes: “From 1984 to 1986 then Col. Steele had led the US Military Advisory Group in El Salvador, where he was responsible for developing special operating forces at brigade level during the height of the conflict. These forces, composed of the most brutal soldiers available, replicated the kind of small-unit operations with which Steele was familiar from his service in Vietnam. Rather than focusing on seizing terrain, their role was to attack ‘insurgent’ leadership, their supporters, sources of supply and base camps. In military circles it was the use of such tactics that made the difference in ultimately defeating the guerrillas; for others, such as the Catholic priest Daniel Santiago, the presence of people like Steele contributed to another sort of difference:

“People are not just killed by death squads in El Salvador – they are decapitated and then their heads are placed on pikes and used to dot the landscape. Men are not just disemboweled by the Salvadoran
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The B\textbf{Russell}s Tribunal and

Campana Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

Treasury Police; their severed genitalia are stuffed into their mouths. Salvadoran women are not just raped by the National Guard; their wombs are cut from their bodies and used to cover their faces. It is not enough to kill children; they are dragged over barbed wire until the flesh falls from their bones, while parents are forced to watch. (Cited by Chomsky)". The responsible person for these atrocities was John Negroponte, then Ambassador to Honduras from 1981-1985, appointed as US Ambassador in Baghdad.

Iraq's interior minister Bayan Jabr, has admitted death squads and other unauthorised armed groups have been carrying out sectarian killings in the country. In a BBC interview on April 11 2006, he denied these groups were his responsibility. He added that there are non-governmental armed groups called the Facility Protection Service, set up in 2003 by the U.S. occupation, that number 150,000 effectives. These 150,000 hired guns are "out of order, not under our control," along with another 30,000 private security guards, Jabr said.

But the prime minister, Ibrahim Jaafari, described the Badr organisation last summer as a "shield" defending Iraq, while the president, Jalal Talabani, claimed the Badr organisation and the peshmerga were patriots who "are important to fulfilling this sacred task, establishing a democratic, federal and independent Iraq".

John Pace, the outgoing head of the UN human rights office in Iraq, told the March 2 British Guardian that many killings were carried out by Shia militias linked to the interior ministry run by Bayan Jabr, a leading figure in the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI)”. SCIRI is the main party in the coalition of Shiite religious parties that heads the US-backed Iraqi government. "The Badr brigade [SCIRI's militia] are in the police and are mainly the ones doing the killing", said Pace. "They're the most notorious."

However, I tend to believe Bayan Jabr. I think he knows very well what's going on, but I believe him when he says these groups are not his responsibility, because I think that these militia's, who were created, financed, armed and trained by the occupying forces, are under the direct control of the US. Steven Casteel works as a senior vice-president of Vance, a security company. "\textit{Just prior to joining Vance, Mr. Casteel was selected by the White House to be Senior Advisor to Iraq's Ministry of Interior under the Coalition Provisional Authority and later the Department of State. In that capacity he advised former Ambassadors Bremer and Negroponte on non-military security matters, set policy, and led the creation and operations of the Ministry's critical services. Services included the new Iraqi Police, Border Police, Immigration, Customs Service, Civil Defense and Fire Programs. Responsibilities included recruitment, training, equipping, and deployment of services and personnel}" (http://www.vanceglobal.com/whoweare/leadership/casteel/). So he was involved in overseeing the training and creating of Iraqi police forces.
As a former top DEA man, he was involved in the hunt for Colombia’s notorious cocaine baron Pablo Escobar, during which the DEA collaborated with a paramilitary organization known as Los Pepes, which later transformed itself into the AUC, an umbrella organization covering all of Colombia’s paramilitary death squads.

Like Colombia’s death squads, Iraq’s Police Commandos deliberately cultivate a frightening paramilitary image. During raids they openly intimidate and brutalize suspects, even in the presence of foreign journalists. Significantly, many of the Commandos, including their leader, are Sunni Muslims. Many of the highest-ranking officers in the Wolf brigade f.i. are Sunnis and, when asked about other minorities, Abul Waleed, a 41-year-old three-star general from the old regime, mentions Kurds and even a Yazidi, as members of these brigades. General Adnan Thabit, a Sunni and general under Saddam Hussein, is the leader of Iraq’s Special Police Commandos.

Of course some of the sections of these militia’s may follow an Iranian agenda, or a sectarian agenda, but if you look at the composition and actions of these death squads, they should certainly not be called “Shiite death squads”, but “anti-resistance death squads”.

Putting the primary blame for these killing on criminal gangs or on Iran, is serving the US interests in the region. Continuously linking “Shiite” to “death squads” also serves the US agenda by fuelling sectarian strife and so contributing to the deliberate disintegration of the country.

Many of the murdered academics are Shia, and what most of those killed academics have in common, is their opposition to the US occupation of Iraq.

Patrick Lang, former chief of Middle East analysis for the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency says: “What those of us in El Salvador learned was that American policy might call for surgical action, but once the local troops are involved, they’re as likely to use a chain-saw as a scalpel. And that, too, can serve American ends. In almost any counter-insurgency, the basic message the government or the occupiers tries to get across to the population is brutally simple: “We can protect you from the guerrillas, but the guerrillas can’t protect you from us, and you’ve got to choose sides.” Sometimes you can win the population’s hearts and minds; sometimes you just have to make them more frightened of you than they are of the insurgents.” And for this aim they use the Wolf Brigade, the Scorpions Brigade, the Lions Brigade, the Peshmerga’s and the “security forces” of the Ministry of Interior.

We receive many eye-witness reports from inside Iraq. They are published on the BRussells Tribunal website.

One report describes a case where people are arrested by the Badr Brigade, with the help of US forces and brought to secret prisons under the control of the Badr brigades.
Another report describes how in the aftermath of the bombing of the Askariyah shrine in Samarra, the village of Al Fursan, south of Baghdad, is ethnically cleaned by black-clad militias and police commandos while American tanks are standing by, watch what happens and don’t interfere while people are being slaughtered, houses being burned.

The latest report dates from 17 of April. Men in police uniforms attacked the Al-Adhamiya neighbourhood in Baghdad. The Ministry of Interior claimed the uniformed men didn’t belong to the puppet forces, but local residents are quite sure they were special forces from the Ministry of Interior, probably Badr brigades. The neighbourhood was sealed off and electricity was cut off.

When the uniformed forces entered the neighbourhood, the National Guards that are usually patrolling the streets left. Young armed men from the neighbourhood fought side by side with mujahedins against the attacking forces to protect Al-Adhamiya. Several residents have been killed in the streets. US troops also entered the neighbourhood. At first, they only stood by and watched; later on they, too, fired at the locals, who tried to repel the attacks. These reports show that there is at least complicity of the US forces in the actions of the militia’s.

These examples show that there is at least complicity of the US forces in the actions of the militia’s. To conclude I would like to denounce the total lack of interest in human lives by the occupying forces and the Western mainstream press. There is obviously a lot of racism involved in the way this occupation is handled by the MNF-I and covered by the media. Some of the academics assassinated were among the finest scientists not only in the Middle East, but worldwide. Nevertheless, none of these murders have been investigated, and very few commemorations appeared in the Western press when these famous academics were killed. And that is another crime.

Dirk Adriaensens.
Member BRussell’s Tribunal Executive Committee

- Thanks to Robert Dreyfuss (“Phoenix Rising”, http://brusselstribunal.org/ArticlesOnIraq.htm#Phoenix) and Max Fuller (a.o. “For Iraq, "The Salvador Option" Becomes Reality”, http://globalresearch.ca/articles/FUL506A.html ) whose articles are extensively quoted

- A comprehensive dossier about death squads can be found as a PDF file: http://brusselstribunal.org/pdf/DeathSquads.pdf.


January 14, 2005: Newsweek breaks the "Salvador Option' story. (Newsweek)
January 25, 2005: Human Rights Watch releases a damning report alleging torture and mistreatment of detainees by the new Iraqi government. (Human Rights Watch)


May 1, 2005: Many of the same men in charge of training El Salvador’s right-wing counter-insurgency forces during its bloody civil war are revealed to be advisors to Iraqi security forces. (NYT Magazine)

May 16, 2005: 55 dead bodies are discovered in Iraq. (CNN)

May 22, 2005: An elite group of commandos known as the Wolf Brigade is profiled by Knight Ridder. The group is notorious for its brutal treatment of detainees. (Knight Ridder)

June 12, 2005: 20 bodies are found around Baghdad. Many of them show signs of torture. (CNN)

June 28, 2005: Numerous Sunni males turn up dead after being detained by men wearing police uniforms. (Knight Ridder)

July 7, 2005: Horrifying descriptions of torture by Iraqi security forces emerge. (The Observer)

September 8, 2005: The U.N. expresses concern over abuses by pro-government forces in Iraq. (Reuters)

September 16, 2005: CBS reports on the torture and execution of numerous Sunnis. (CBS News)

October 7, 2005: At least 537 bodies have been found since April, many of them Sunnis. (Associated Press)

October 12, 2005: Sectarian hatred extends itself into the Iraqi military. (Knight Ridder)

November 15, 2005: U.S. Forces discover a secret torture center run by Iraq’s Interior Ministry. (Washington Post)

November 27, 2005: Former Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi claims that the human rights situation in Iraq is just as bad, if not worse, than it was under Saddam. (CNN)

November 28, 2005: Abuse of prisoners in Iraq is called routine. (Knight Ridder)

Interior Minister Bayan Jabr defends the alleged torture camp. (CNN)


December 11, 2005: Torture is discovered at a second Interior Ministry run prison in Iraq. (Washington Post)

December 27, 2006: US refuses to handover jails and prisons to Iraqis until conditions improve(Times Online)

January 22, 2006: Iraqis attempt to find officials without ties to militias. USA Today

January 25, 2006: Sunni leaders urge followers to defend against deadly house raids. (Knight Ridder)

February 5, 2006: 14 blindfolded tortured bodies found in Baghdad, called common occurrence. (Washington Post)

February 16, 2006: Iraq’s government launches investigation into death squad claims after US general catches Iraqi policemen about to execute a Sunni. (BBC News)

February 23, 2006: 47 predominantly Sunni workers are stopped at a checkpoint and massacred outside Baghdad. (Knight Ridder)

February 26, 2006: Andrew Buncombe and Patrick Cockburn report that hundreds of Iraqis are being tortured to death every month by Interior Ministry death squads. (The Independent)

February 28, 2006: Violence since mosque explosion kills more than 1,300 Iraqis. (Washington Post)

March 2, 2006: Director of the Baghdad morgue claims that up to 7,000 people have been killed by death squads in the past several months. (The Guardian)

March 8, 2006: the State Department criticizes the Iraqi government’s human rights violations in its annual report. (State Department)

Gunmen dressed up as Interior Ministry commandos raid a private security company and abduct 50 people. A US Military patrol comes across a bus with the bodies of 18 men piled up inside. (Washington Post)

March 12, 2006: Iraqi officials admit to the existence of death squads operating from inside the government. (Knight Ridder)

March 14, 2006: Iraqi authorities find 80 dead bodies over the course of two days. (BBC News)

March 20, 2006: The US continues to arm and train the same Iraqi security forces accused of having a sectarian bent and committing numerous massacres. (Time)

March 22, 2006: The U.N. demands that the Iraqi government reign in their abusive security forces. (UN News Centre)

Col. James Steele and General Abul Waleed (Responsible person of the Wolf Brigade) in Samarra

http://www.brusselstribunal.org/SeminarMadrid.htm
Monday, May 15, 2006

Iraq: The Assassination of Academics: The Jalili Report

By Sarah Meyer

This article originally published 4/5/2006.

A conference recently took place in Madrid which focused on the 190 murdered academics and 224 murdered health officials in Iraq since the occupation. CEOSI (Statewide Campaign to End the Occupation and Restore the Sovereignty of Iraq) hosted the conference. CEOSI was supported by the respected BRussels Tribunal. Both of these organizations have taken an interest in collating information concerning the criminal assassination of highly esteemed intellectuals in Iraq. A petition, URGENT APPEAL TO SAVE IRAQ'S ACADEMICS can be found at http://www.brusselstribunal.org. The final resolution of the Madrid conference may also be found here, along with a wealth of information which world leaders and Mainstream Media ignore – to the detriment of “democracy and freedom.”

Dr. Ismail Jalili, who is on the advisory committee of the BRussels Tribunal, gave a detailed presentation about the assassinations (see below) at the Madrid conference.

Dr. Ismail Jalili is an Iraqi living and working in England. “I was a student in medical school in Baghdad. I was also the editor of a medical school journal. The security forces arrested me in 1969 and took me to Qasr el-Nihaya (Palace of Termination) because I was a political activist. I suffered political detention for a few months. I was tortured. After I was released, I decided to leave for Cairo. If I had stayed, I would have had to co-operate at the expense of my integrity, and be subjected to ongoing arrests. This was before I graduated, so I had to lose a year in the process of moving medical schools. In Cairo, I completed my studies and graduated in 1971. After graduation, I came directly to the UK to do post graduate studies. I started training in surgery. However, because there was a shortage of ophthalmologists in Iraq (there was only one), I decided to study and train in this field in the United Kingdom. I married; we have two sons.

I have friends and relatives who have been suffering for a very long time - first with the sanctions, and now with the lack of security following the invasion in Iraq. I feel helpless.”

However, Dr. Jalili does not respond in a ‘helpless’ manner. I have rarely met such an active and
involved person. In spite of his recent operation, he has a large workload. “I work in several fields,” he said. As well as his involvement with the BRussels Tribunal, his kudos include:

1. Past President of the Iraqi Medical Association in the United Kingdom
2. Member of the Executive Council of the British Arab Medical Association, Founding member and Past President.
3. Chairman of the National Association of British Arabs
4. Chairman of the Stamford Liberal Democrats and Vice Chair of the Grantham & Stamford Constituency Party

Dr. Jalili is currently focusing his efforts on the plight of Iraqi doctors and academics and the deteriorating human rights situation in Iraq.

I asked him why he chose this focus. “It is an obligation and a commitment. I am most interested in the human rights issues of Iraq, and focusing on the academic and medical assassinations, threats to life and the pressure on them to leave Iraq. There are so many challenges – Iraq, Palestine, the rest of the diaspora. We have an obligation to lead the way.”

Following is Dr Jalili’s report, published with his permission.

The Jalili Report on the Assassination of Academics

Plight of Iraqi Academics

Presentation by Dr Ismail Jalili
FRCS, DO, FRCOphth
Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon, UK

Presented at the Madrid International Conference on the Assassinations of Iraqi Academics, 23-24 April 2006
Updated 1 May 2006

Assassinated Iraqi Academics and Doctors

Sources of Data

- Association of University Lecturers in Iraq aul__iraq@yahoo.com
- BRussels Tribunal Lists (www.BRusselsTribunal.org)
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The BRussell's Tribunal and
Campana Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

- The Spanish List as provided by Madrid Campaign
- Personal communications with Iraqi academics
- Almosul Website (http://www.almosul.org)
- NABA Website (The Iraqi Human Rights Monitor) http://www.naba.org.uk/
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The Russellians Tribunal and

Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

Qualifications of Murdered Iraqi Academics and Professionals April 2003 - April 2006

- Bachelor: 1%
- Master: 4%
- Medical: 17%
- PhD: 62%
- Degree n/a: 16%

Murdered Iraqi Academics and Doctors by Specialty

Main Fields of Specialization of Murdered Iraqi Academics

- Medical: 23%
- Sciences: 31%
- Social Sciences: 12%
- Humanities: 21%
- Unspecified: 13%

Murdered Iraqi Academics in the Field of Humanities

- Languages: 23%
- Law: 16%
- Theology: 11%
- History: 16%
- Literature: 5%
- Arts: 20%
- Philosophy: 5%
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The B.Russells Tribunal and

Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

Murdered Iraqi Academics
in the Field of Social Sciences

Murdered Iraqi Academics
Science Specialities

Murdered Iraqi Academics
University Staff by Positions
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The Russell Tribunal and
Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

Assassinated Medical Professionals in Iraq

Deputy Iraqi Health Minister’s Statement (Feb 2006) - Since April 2003:

- Over 1000 doctors have fled Iraq
- Over 220 doctors have been killed in Iraq

Medical Fields of Murdered Iraqi Health Professionals

*Note: The pie chart shows the distribution of murdered professionals by field, with Medicine being the most affected at 90%, followed by Dentistry at 6%, Veterinary Medicine at 2%, and Pharmacy at 2%.*
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Brussels Tribunal and

Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

Distribution of Assassinations
Other Non-Fatal Incidents

- Many assassination attempts resulted in the death of other family members and escorts which have not been included or referred to in this study.
- Multiple assassination attempts are ongoing.
- Repeated threats to life are made to force people to leave Iraq.
- Considerable numbers of threats to life go unreported.
- In the last week of April 2006, a mass campaign was reported in Mosul of threats to doctors calling on them to leave Iraq.
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The Russell's Tribunal and
Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

Temporal Trends in Assassinations

Temporal Trend in Assassinations in cases with available dates April 2003 to April 2006
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Russell Tribunal and

Número de asesinatos de académicos iraquíes por año

Número de asesinatos de académicos iraquíes por año

Total Incidencias - Aumentos trimestrales

(casos con fechas disponibles)

Todas las incidencias - Aumento anual

(casos con fechas disponibles)
Conclusions

Plight of Iraqi Academics

- A new phenomena in Iraq.
- Never existed prior to April 2003.
- The pattern indicates a sinister campaign and motives.
- Similar pattern to El-Salvador see: Death-squad style massacres for Iraq, "The Salvador Option"
  Becomes Reality - Mike Fuller.
- The assassinations, kidnaps and threats to life forcing academics and doctors to leave Iraq do not follow any religious or sectarian pattern.
- The only dominant pattern is that the absolute majority of victims are ethnically Arabs.

Madrid International Seminar on the Assassinations of Iraqi Academics
Final Statement on: http://www.brusselstribunal.org/SeminarMadrid.htm#resolution

This presentation can be downloaded as a PDF file.

The url for Iraq: The Assassination of Academics; The Jalili Report is:
http://indexresearch.blogspot.com/2006/05/iraq-assassination-of-academics-jalili.html

This article originally published 4/5/2006.

Sarah Meyer is a researcher living in Sussex, UK
Her email address is sarahmeyer@freedom255.com
2. Call for assistance in documenting and registering assassinated Iraqi academics

Urgent action appeal:
Call for assistance in documenting and registering assassinated Iraqi academics

Saving Iraqi academics is saving the future

Greatly alarmed by the assassination of academics in Iraq, The BRussells Tribunal, in cooperation with the Spanish Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI), collected information since 2005 and alerted world public opinion on the situation of Iraqi academics.

We established a list of the assassinated in order that mandated human rights authorities investigate the killings and find a way to protect Iraq’s academics and cultural wealth.

The assassinations, kidnappings, emigration and arrests of academics continue. The vast and horrific increase in civilian deaths at the hands of death squads and the emigration and killing of some of our sources prevent us from registering and documenting new victims.

We appeal to families, friends, educational associations, universities, colleges, schools and journalists to look at our list and inform us if someone is missing.

The list can be found here: http://www.brusselstribunal.org/academicsList.htm and here: http://nodo50.org/iraq/2004-2005/docs/represion_11-11-05.html

These crimes must be investigated. Until now nothing has been done. Victims should not be forgotten and Iraq’s intellectual heritage and wealth should be saved.

To document these atrocities is an obligation for every academic who believes that passing on knowledge is a duty, not a crime.

The BRussells Tribunal Committee
http://brusselstribunal.org
The Spanish Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI)
http://iraqsolidaridad.org

In English or Dutch, contact Dirk Adriaensens: dirk.adriaensens@skynet.be
In Arabic, contact Abdul Ilah Albayaty: albayaty_abdul@hotmail.com
In French or English, contact Hana Albayaty: hanaalbayaty@yahoo.fr
In Spanish, contact Carlos Varea: carlos.varea@uam.es

URL: http://www.brusselstribunal.org/home.htm#urgent
3. Action Needed Over Detention of Iraqi Education Ministry Officials

Unknown numbers murdered, dozen still illegally held

[For urgent release]
* About the campaign to save Iraq's academics.

Summary of Events

On Tuesday 14 November paramilitary gunmen in the uniforms of Iraqi National Police commandos raided a building belonging to the Ministry of Education in Baghdad’s Karrada district and arrested around 100 members of staff from two departments and around 50 visitors, according to lists compiled by the Minister of Education.

The raid took place in broad daylight, 1km from the Green Zone, in an area that contained several high-security compounds, including the department where passports are issued. According to a BBC correspondent the Karrada area, occupying an isthmus in the River Tigris, is ‘well protected with a heavy presence of Iraqi troops and several checkpoints’. The paramilitary force estimated at between at least 50 and 100 arrived in a fleet of some 20-30 camouflage pickup trucks of the kind employed by the Interior Ministry and rapidly established a cordon of the area. They stated that they were from an anti-corruption unit and were carrying out arrests ahead of a visit by the US ambassador. The paramilitaries made their arrests according to lists, confirming the identities of those present by their ID cards, then handcuffed and blindfolded the detainees and put them into the backs of pickups and into two larger vehicles.

The paramilitaries then made their exit through heavy traffic without opposition, despite the reported presence of a regular police vehicle. According to some witnesses, the paramilitaries made off in the direction of Sadr City.

The Iraqi government quickly declared that the number of detainees was far lower (18 guards, 16 members of staff and five visitors) and by Wednesday claimed that all of the detainees had been released after a series of dramatic police raids. A number of senior policemen, including the district police chief and the commander of a National Police paramilitary commando brigade and three other officers were reportedly detained for questioning over possible complicity. According to one report, an Interior Ministry spokesman claimed the senior police commanders ‘should be held responsible’.

Prime Minister Maliki declared that this was not a case of terrorism, but a dispute between ‘militias’.

The Education Ministry insisted that both Sunnis and Shīites were among those illegally detained.

US commanders stated that they would support all efforts to free the detainees.
By Thursday the Education Minister stated that around 70 of 150 detainees had been released and reported that some of those released had been tortured (some legs and hands had been broken) and that there were allegations that others had been killed.

On Friday Mowaffak Rubiae, the National Security Advisor, stated that all of the detainees had been released, although an Interior Ministry spokesmen claimed that all of the Education Ministry personnel had been released but some of the visitors detained were still missing.

One of the detainees, who refused to reveal his actual name, said that his arm had been broken while in detention. He also described seeing three security guards suffocated to death and hearing a number of senior academics who had been put in a separate screaming in agony; according to the witness their cries were cut off abruptly.

The witness also said that he had not been released as the result of a dramatic police raid. His captors had simply dragged him and others from the building where they were held, put them back into trucks and dumped them at various locations around Baghdad. His account is confirmed by earlier reports, which stated that those released had been blindfolded and deposited in various parts of Baghdad.

Five more detainees were reportedly released on Friday. They had been tortured.

On Saturday the Education Ministry continued to insist that 66 people were still missing.

The Interior Ministry spokesman said that all of the detainees had been released and the matter was now closed.

Joint US and Iraqi forces conducted a raid on a mosque in Sadr City on Saturday. None of the detainees were found.

On Sunday a further four detainees were released, who reported seeing one Ministry official, Hamid al-Jouani, killed.

On Monday joint US and Iraqi forces conducted another raid in Sadr City. None of the detainees were found.

**Unanswered Questions**

From the above description of events drawn from mainstream media sources (please see references at end) making use of government statements and eyewitness testimony it is clear that the raid on the Interior Ministry was carried out as a complex military operation requiring detailed intelligence, careful preparation and extensive training. In fact, everything about this raid conforms with what we should expect of an operation conducted by Iraq’s new US-trained, armed and supported specialist counterinsurgency paramilitary National Police commandos, who are specifically trained to conduct cordon and search operations of this kind.
It is impossible to believe that any forces but officially sanctioned ones could have made such a daring daylight assault in one of the most secure areas of Baghdad. It is equally impossible to believe that any forces but Interior Ministry ones could have assembled a fleet of Interior Ministry camouflage pickup trucks. The designation of the paramilitaries responsible for this outrage as Interior Ministry commandos is fully confirmed by eyewitness testimony, which specifies that at least some of the raiders were wearing blue camouflage uniforms of a type very recently introduced to National Police commandos, specifically intended to prevent any other parties from masquerading as National Police commandos. The digitally designed uniforms are supplied by the US. A US Army spokesman was so convinced that the uniforms would have been impossible to replicate that he stated that the raiders could not have been wearing such uniforms. Of course, he was not at the scene. Eyewitnesses contradict him.

The fact that the raid was conducted by Interior Ministry forces was in fact confirmed by Iraqi government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh, who claimed the mass detention was the work of militiamen who had infiltrated the Interior Ministry.

Since it is almost certain that the raid was carried out by National Police commandos, it is imperative that the following questions are answered immediately and publicly.

- Which National Police or other Interior Ministry force carried out the raid?
- Under whose authority was the raid authorised?
- From whom did the Interior Ministry force obtain the lists of names that were used to select individuals for arrest?
- Where were the international advisers (Special Police Transition Teams) that are embedded with each battalion of National Police Commandos and work with them on a daily basis?
- Where did the police commandos take the detainees?
- Why were aerial surveillance assets not immediately deployed to follow a fleet of pickup trucks through heavy traffic in Baghdad? How many such aerial assets were operating over the Green Zone and other parts of Baghdad at that time?
- Who operates the facility where the detainees were held?
- If detainees were freed as a result of police raids, why have no large scale arrests been made and why has the only detainee to speak on record stated that no such police raid occurred?
- What are the names of the individual police officers who have been held for questioning?
- Have they been charged and if so what have they been charged with?
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Russell Tribunal and

Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

Why is the Interior Ministry insisting that the case is now closed, when the Education Minister has provided a list of the name of further detainees and the subsequent release of additional detainees demonstrates that he is wrong.

Why is the Interior Ministry insisting that none of the detainees were killed when eyewitnesses reported seeing people brutally murdered in front of them?

How is it that paramilitary/militia death squads can operate from the Interior Ministry, making full use of US-supplied government equipment, without the knowledge of embedded international training teams and advisors within the Interior Ministry?

It is absolutely clear that neither in this case nor in any of the multitude of other equally harrowing cases that show Interior Ministry involvement with extrajudicial killing can the Iraqi government be trusted with carrying any sort of investigation. In the case of the Jadiriyah torture facility discovered in November 2005, the government has still to make public findings that were promised within weeks. It should also be noted that at that time, US officials promised to increase their efforts to oversee Iraqi detention facilities and police commando units, stating that they would double the number of embedded trainers. Since that promise, extrajudicial killings at the hands of Interior Ministry forces, mostly inside detention facilities, appears to have grown exponentially.

It is equally clear that US authorities in Iraq have no interest in carrying out an investigation or restraining the killers.

It is therefore imperative for teams of international investigators to take on the task with the full cooperation of British and American forces. Manfred Novak, the UN rapporteur for torture has indicated his willingness to undertake such a mission. Such a mission must be immediately supported by all those who honestly claim to seek to halt the genocidal violence in Iraq; those who will not support such a mission must be considered accomplices to crimes against humanity.

References

Five police chiefs arrested after mass kidnapping
Fate of Iraq Education Ministry abductees remains unclear
Desperate search after mass-kidnapping of Sunnis ends with hostages found alive
http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/article1984455.ece
Iraq hostages ‘freed by police’
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6149110.stm
Iraq: Kidnapped People Have Been Freed
http://www.abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory?id=2655349
Iraq minister says some hostages tortured, killed
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The BRussell's Tribunal and
Campana Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq


Iraq ministry hostages 'tortured
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6153316.stm

Arrest of Sunni Leader Sought in Iraq
http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/story/0,,-6219741,00.html

US warns Iraq against sectarianism
http://timesofmalta.com/core/article.php?id=243588

Coalition Forces Conduct Raid in Iraq
http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/story/0,,-6227509,00.html

Bloodshed piles pressure on Iraq govt
http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3867624a12aT,00.html

Iraq police rebrand to foil fakes
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6034975.stm

New uniforms to tackle Iraq killings
http://english.aljazeera.net/news/archive/archive?ArchiveId=36667

The appeal to save Iraqi academics, launched in January 2006 by the BRussell's Tribunal, a network of human rights activists, intellectuals and artists, has called for the protection of local academics and higher level educational institutions, in cooperation with CEOSI (Spain), the Portuguese hearing of the WTI, Iraktribunal.de (Germany), the Swedish Antiwar committee, the International Action Center (USA), the International Association of Middle East Studies (IAMES), the German Middle East Studies Association (DAVO), the European Association for Middle Eastern Studies (EURAMES), and several personalities, like Harold Pinter, José Saramago, Dario Fo, Howard Zinn, Tony Benn, Eduardo Galeano, John Pilger, John Coetzee, Michael Parenti and many others. See the list of principal endorsers: http://www.brusselstribunal.org/AcademicsPetitionList.htm. The BRussells Tribunal, part of a worldwide network (the International Anti-Occupation Network), devoted to campaigning against the US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq, notes the "systematic liquidation of the country's academics" and is planning further actions to protect the brains that can contribute to the development of the Iraqi society. You can read and sign the petition online at http://www.petitiononline.com/Iraqacad/petition.html. More info: contact info@brusselstribunal.org

http://www.brusselstribunal.org/PressRelease221106.htm
4. Selected Media Reports:

- More than 250 Iraqi college professors assassinated *(08 Nov 2004)*
- Death is the price for speaking out in Iraq - Haifa Zangana, 05 March 2006.
- About the assassination of Iraqi academics - Dirk Adriaensens, *BRussells Tribunal*, 22 April 2006 - Presentation at the International Seminar in Madrid 22-23 April 2006
- IRAQ: “The Occupation is the disease” - Sarah Mayer, 01 May 2006.
- Why many of Iraq’s elite don’t flee - CS Monitor, 22 June 2006.
- Scientists become targets in Iraq - Nature, 29 June 2006 [PDF].
- Iraqi intellectuals targeted by assassins - 04 July 2006.
- Threatened teachers fleeing the country, IRIN, 24 Aug 2006.
- University Professors in Iraq and Death Anxiety, *BRussells Tribunal*, October 2006.
- Dr. Issam Al Rawi, Sunni activist professor, killed in Iraq, 30 Oct 2006.
- Dr. Issam Al Rawi has been murdered - Dirk Adriaensens, *BRussells Tribunal*, 30 Oct 2006.
- Iraq: Brain drain poses threat to future - 16 Nov 2006.
- Iraq’s education under siege, Dahr Jamail, 21 Nov 2006.
- For better and for worse - 25 Nov 2006.
More than 250 Iraqi college professors assassinated

http://www.aaup.org/Issues/international/country/Iraq.htm

The International Coalition of Academics Against Occupation (ICAAO) has issued the following statement on the assassination of Iraqi intellectuals (8/11/04):

Even after the ‘transfer of authority’ the U.S. Government remains in de facto military occupation of Iraq. The idea that the escalation of violence can be put to an end by the ‘interim’ government, while 140,000 U.S. troops remain in control of major Iraqi cities like Mosul and Baghdad, is far from the reality on the ground.

Overlooked by the U.S. Press is the escalating assassination of Iraqi academics, intellectuals, and lecturers. More than 250 college professors since April 30, 2003, according to the Iraqi Union of University Lecturers, have been the targets of assassination. Among the 250 professors assassinated to date include: Muhammad al-Rawi, President of Baghdad University (July 27, 2003); Dr. Abdul Latif al-Mayah a Professor of Political Science at Baghdad’s Mustansiriya University (late January 2003); Dr. Nafa Aboud, a Professor of Arabic Literature at the University of Baghdad; Dr Sabri al-Bayati; a Geographer at the University of Baghdad; Dr. Falah al-Dulaimi, Assistant Dean of College at Mustansariya University; Dr. Hissam Sharif, Department of History of the University of Baghdad; and Professor Wajih Mahjour of the College of Physical Education.

Whoever is responsible for these targeted assassinations, the U.S. and its Coalition of Allies, all of them commanding and controlling the ongoing de facto occupation of Iraq—bear an international responsibility and obligation to protect civilians living under occupation and who are protected by the 4th Article of the Geneva Convention.

The Geneva Convention, which the U.S. and others nations have signed without reservation, holds all occupying authorities responsible for the condition pertaining to the lives of Iraqi intellectuals, professors, and civilians of all types, including the further undermining of the already sanctioned and utterly destroyed system of education in Iraq. We, the undersigned, deplore the killing of professors, intellectuals and other civilians, and urge a full Congressional investigation into the circumstances that led to the ongoing, systematic and targeted assassination of Iraqi intellectual, academics, and professors. According to Union of Iraqi Lecturers, if “the stream of assassinations” continues Iraqi Colleges and Universities will be left without a qualified teaching staff.

Victims of unknown assassins

Among the scores of senior academics who have been killed since the start of the western occupation are:

Muhammad al-Rawi, president of the University of Baghdad; Dr Abdul-Latif al-Mayah,
professor of political science at Baghdad’s Mustansiriya University; **Dr Nafa Aboud**, a professor of Arabic literature at the University of Baghdad; **Dr Sabri al-Bayati**, a geographer at the University of Baghdad; **Dr Falah al-Dulaimi**, assistant dean of college at Mustansiriya University; **Dr Hissam Sharif**, from the history department of the University of Baghdad; **Professor Wajih Mahjoub** of the College of Physical Education; **Professor Sabah Mahmoud**, ex-dean of the Education College, Mustansiriya University; **Professor Abdul Jabbar Mustafa**, head of the politics department at Mosul University, **Dr Layla Abdul Jabbar**, dean of the Faculty of Law in Mosul (and her husband); **Dr Ali Abdul Husain Jabok**, of the College of Political Science at the University of Baghdad.

Recent examples of killed Academics

**August 5 2005**

Three university lecturers were assassinated by unknowns, by shooting. The source from university of almustansiria university said that, some unknowns fired a flow of bullets, Dr Zaki Bakir Alaany, the lecturer in college of literature and Dr Hashim Abdulameer, the lecturer in college education, while they were on their way out from the university gate. On the other hand Dr Sameer yelda was kidnapped from outside the gate of the university, the day before yesterday. It is known that 55 university professors were assassinated after the fall of the past regime; this forced many university professors to leave IRAQ.

**University Professor in Basrah is kidnapped**

**Reference:**
Aliraqnew
12/9/2005

Unknown armed group has kidnapped Dr professor Haithem Ooda, deputy head of chemical engineering department in the University of Albasrah while he was on his way to office on Monday. Eye witnesses said that unknown car has stopped the professor while he was on his way to the office, then three armed men forced him to inter their car and took him to unknown direction. It is mentioned that university professors from Basrah city, south of IRAQ were targets of assassinations, arresting and eliminating by armed groups linked with the incoming parties from outside the borders together with US occupation.

University professors are worried from these accidents in the beginning of the new academic year.

**30 medical doctors were killed and 220 others were forced to immigrate abroad during the past period**

**Bahrain Gulf News 18-09-2005**

After Dr Basil Abbas Husain ; the hurt specialist was martyred by the US forces on the fifth of this month ,by mistake as they claimed...and the discovery of a car bomb which was about to explode the Karame hospital; the ministry of health announced a campaign to speak about the doctors who were victimised because of their human duties and who are exposed to kidnapping or forcing their families to pay ransoms also the number of doctors who left the country for good became hundreds. The
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Brussels Tribunal and

deputy health minister Dr Jaleel Alshammary declared that the martyred doctors so far are 30, whereas those who were forced to immigrate or threatened to immigrate abroad are more than 220 medical doctors, in addition to those who were kidnapped. The ministry of high education announced that the number of immigrated university professors are more than 2000 so far. This obliged the ministry to close down 125 high degree branches whereas Jordan and Syria became full of the Iraqi medical doctors who are looking for jobs, so the Syrian government has opened a new hospital composed of the Iraqi doctors who emigrated from their own country.

The Dean of the college of political science in the University of Mosul was saved from assassination. Dr Talal Aljaleely, the Dean of the political science college, and his son were saved from an attempt to assassinate them by a group of armed men, after they opened fire of light weapons against them, in front of their house, which is located in the university site, while they were about to leave out.

A medical source from the hospital of educational alzahrawy hospital declared that Dr Aljaleely was shot in his back, while his son was shot in his leg. The source assured that their state became stable after they received a surgical intervention.

Iraqi police source announced that Dr Jasim Mohammed the dean of literature college of the university of al-mustansiria has escaped from an assassination attempt that caused the death of his driver, while he was wounded. The sources has pointed out that unknown armed men had attacked a car belongs to the ministry of high education, opening fire towards it, that lead to the killing of the car driver promptly and caused dangerous injuries to the dean of the college, who was transferred to the hospital.

**Assassination of one of the distinguished specialists in malignant deseases**

Dr Sami Aymen was assassinated by unknowns in his house, that is located in the west of tikreet city. The family of the victim declared that a group of armed group had surrounded his house and killed him in front of his sons and escaped. Dr sami aymen was one the distinguished specialists in the field of malignant and chronic diseases

**The Iraqi university staff had lost a new martyr, who was assassinated by gun men today, in the west of Baghdad.**

A spokesman from the ministry of interior affairs said that, criminals attacked the martyred saad yaseen al-ansary, the professor in the University of Baghdad, while he was driving his car in saydia district, accompanied by his wife, who was injured by the betrayal bullets, then transported to the hospital. A source has mentioned a police man was martyred in the same district today, by unknown criminals, while others had assassinated an engineer in al-ameen district, in addition to that, a dead body was found with his hands bound together and his eyes wrapped in sulaik district, and then shot dead.
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Brussels Tribunal and

Campaign Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

The ministry of high education announces, the assassination of three scientists from the university of Baghdad

Baghdad: The ministry of high education and scientific research had announced, the assassination of three scientists and professors, working in the university of Baghdad, during the past few days. The ministry has named the assassinatees as; Dr Haikal Mohammed al-Moosawy, from the Kindy medical college, who was assassinated in alsulaik district in Baghdad, and Dr Saad yaseen al-Ansary the professor from the college of science, who was assassinated just outside his house, in addition to Dr Raad Muhsin Mutar al-Mawla, the head of the biological sciences in the college of science, who was assassinated in his clinic.

24-11-2005

Assassination of the deputy head of the college of education in the University of Al-Mustansria

Unknown armed men had assassinated the deputy head of the college of education in the Al-Mustansiria University on Wednesday night and his car driver. Major Raed Ali Salih from Baghdad police declared that; unknown armed men had attacked Dr kadhim talal husain the deputy dean of the college of education in the Al-Mustansiria University; on 6pm tonight, while he was in AlSulaikh district, in the north east of Baghdad, and shot him dead. The source added; that the car driver was shot dead in that attack as well, while the armed men had escaped after committing their crime.

Islamic memo(special): the Islamic memo correspondent in Al-Basra city, south of Iraq said that more than 20 medical doctors and university professors, had received threats to be killed during the past two days, by unknowns. The correspondent said that one of the distinguished heart surgeons in Al-Basra city received a written threat that says (get out of from Al-Basra city or you will be killed), whereas another professor from the university of Al-Basra city said; that he found a paper on Saturday morning saying (get out you dirty sunny, or you will be slaughtered like the camel)

Our correspondent said that all the professors and medical doctors are thinking to flee from the city after the threats, that they described as serious, accusing elements of Badr brigade, the military wing of the IRSC, islami revolution supreme council, in Iraq, that is lead by Abdul Azeez` Al-Hakeem.

It is mentioned that two of those who received the threats, were assassinated within the past two days; namely Dr Saad Alrubaiiee and the professor of the biological sciences in the college of science Dr Omer Fakhri

Assassination of academic from the institute of fine arts 26-12-2005

Unknown armed men had assassinated a university professor of the institute of fine arts, on Monday morning in Toopchy district in Baghdad. A source from the ministry of defence said that; armed men fired a stream of bullets towards professor Nawfal Ahmed, on eight morning, while he was getting out of his house, heading to his working office. No detailed information was available about the causes of this incident so far.
25/12/2005

Police source in Babylon had announced today; that police patrols had found the body of the university academic Muhsin Suleiman Alageely, who was working in the university of Babylon, in his house, which is located in the forest area in Hillah city.

The source added that eyes witneses said that armed unknowns had stormed the house of the university professor and killed him, before fleeing away. It is mentioned that many similar cases had occurred with no claim of responsibility.

Assassination of a Doctor and surviving another one in Al-Saidiah - 23-01-2006

Unknown armed men assassinated on Monday morning a veterinary surgeon, Dr Atheer Husham Abdul-Hameed in Al-Saydiah-district, while Dr Hilal AlBayaty- Head of the Iraqi institution of computers survived an assassination, on the main road which is located between Al-Saydiah and Al-Baya3 district. Major Ali Salih from Baghdad police said an armed men fired their guns towards Dr Atheer Husham, while he was getting out of his house in AlSaydiah, heading towards his office in Al-Sinag district in the middle of Baghdad, and shot him dead instantly. He added that two cars carrying armed men shot a stream of bullets towards the car of Dr Hilal Al-Bayaty from both sides, that caused wounding two of his companions, while he survived the assassination. This is one of the attempts of targeting the scientific figures in the country.

Assassination of distinguished Academic Abdul-Razzaq Alnaas in Baghdad - 29-1-2006

Police said that gunmen had killed Iraqi academic, distinguished and political analyst in his car in one of Baghdad streets last saturday. Police added that Abdulrazzaq Al-Naas was well known figure in Al-Jazeera station, he was just getting out of his office in the college of information in university if Baghdad in the middle of Baghdad.

The Iraqi Academic has criticized the US forces existence in Iraq many times. He criticized the government which is dominated by Sheea,s and, saying that this government is unable to lead the country.

The Tawafuq front, the largest political group among the Sunnis Arab in Iraq said that Al-Naas paid the price of his honourable stands.

Dafir Al-Aany, the spokesman of the front said that US forces and the Iraqi government are responsible for the security of the academics & politicians.

Some Iraqi academics were killed during the past few years after the US forces toppled the Iraqi president Saddam Hussein in march 2003.

Incomplete list of killed Iraqi academics - Lista de profesores universitarios asesinados en Irak
Death is the price for speaking out in Iraq

BY HAIFA ZANGANA

5 March 2006

IN A letter to a friend in Europe, Abdul Razaq al-Naas, a Baghdad university professor in his 50s, grieved for his killed friends and colleagues. His letter concluded: "I wonder who is next!" He was. On January 28 al-Naas drove from his office at Baghdad University. Two cars blocked his, and gunmen opened fire, killing him instantly.

Al-Naas is not the first academic to be killed in the mayhem of the "new Iraq". Hundreds of academics and scientists have met this fate since the March 2003 invasion. Baghdad universities alone have mourned the killing of over 80 members of staff. The minister of education stated recently that during 2005, 296 members of education staff were killed and 133 wounded.

Not one of these crimes has been investigated by the occupation forces or the interim governments. They leave that to international humanitarian groups and anti-war organisations. Among them is the Brussels Tribunal on Iraq, which has compiled a list to persuade the UN special rapporteur on summary executions to investigate the issue; they do so with the help of Iraqi academics, who risk their lives in the process. Their research shows that the victims have been men and women from all over Iraq, from different ethnic, religious and political backgrounds. Most were vocally opposed to the occupation. For the most part, they were killed in a fashion that suggests cold-blooded assassination. No one has claimed responsibility.

Like many Iraqis, I believe these killings are politically motivated and connected to the occupying forces’ failure to gain any significant social support in the country. For the occupation’s aims to be fulfilled, independent minds have to be eradicated. We feel that we are witnessing a deliberate attempt to destroy intellectual life in Iraq.

Dr al-Naas was a familiar face on al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya TV. He had often condemned the continued presence of US-led troops in Iraq, and criticised the sectarian interim governments and their militias. His case echoes the assassination of the academic Dr Abdullateef al-Mayah. A prominent human rights campaigner and critic of the occupation, Mayah was killed only 12 hours after he had appeared on al-Jazeera denouncing the corruption of the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council.

Militias have replaced the disbanded Iraqi army, applying their own rule of law. Some units operate under a semblance of "legality" — the "wolf brigade", attached to the interior ministry, is infamous for its terror raids on mosques and the torture of civilians.

Last month the journalist Abdul Hadi al-Zaidi accused the government’s militias of targeting intellectuals. He is one of a group of Iraqi journalists who, in the aftermath of al-Naas’ assassination,
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Russell Tribunal and Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq went on strike, demanding an immediate investigation into the "systematic assassination campaign" against intellectuals opposed to the occupation.

After the London bombings, Tony Blair promised the British people to "bring those responsible to justice". In Iraq, the British government does exactly the opposite. The law of occupation states that: "All foreign soldiers, diplomats or contractors implicated in the killing of Iraqi civilians are immune from arrest or trial in Iraq." Both the British and US governments turn a blind eye to the systematic violations of human rights and murders committed by their clients in Iraq.

It has become obvious that the occupation forces, with their elite troops and $6bn-a-month budget, cannot hold Iraq. The only honourable and realistic way out is genuine dialogue with the Iraqi resistance over a complete withdrawal of foreign troops and adequate reparations and debt-cancellation to rebuild the country.

Haifa Zangana is an Iraqi-born novelist and former prisoner of Saddam’s regime; a longer version of this article will appear in Not One More Death.

MONDAY, MAY 01, 2006

IRAQ: “The Occupation is the disease”

INDEX RESEARCH

from Sarah Meyer

The following information is from three highly esteemed Iraqi professional people. Their lives are in danger. Two people's names and professions have, by request, thus been withheld.

ONE: “There is no way out of this ‘Camp Iraq.’ “

Iraq is worse than during sanctions ...

“By February 2006, 224 (health professionals) had been killed. 1000 had left the country. Since February, I personally know six more highly specialised doctors who have been killed ... Many in medical training have also left Iraq ... Post graduate studies have closed down because of lack of teaching staff. So a (generation) gap has been created. Experienced doctors are unable to pass on their experience to new doctors ... Specialised health services have declined.

The airport road used to be a lovely area, with trees and roses. Families used to go there for picnics. An American soldier threw a stone at me because I didn’t stop. My architect friend was killed – shot dead on this road by Americans. If you don’t stop, the Americans will shoot you ...

The US kill civilians and blame the resistance ...
A doctor friend of mine was shot in front of his home by Americans. There was no apology. Why have doctors been killed – some by Americans? Some are kidnapped. In Fallujah, why did the Americans go inside the operating theatre and kill? Why go to a house at night? At 2 AM, there were helicopters and bombs. He was a neighbour of mine. His name was Riad Khammal.

A child runs to his mother when he hears a helicopter. A child is now afraid of helicopters ...
Once a bullet came into my office, towards me, but it hit the metal on the window...

Omar Salem Khattab, a urology surgeon, was taken by the US - trained Iraqi police and National Guard when he was trying to help people in a bomb blast. He was taken away for detention. I went to ask about him. The doctor had been abused and hit. He was released. He left Iraq ...

There is a difference in the study of history. In the West, one learned a little about western history, but nothing about the rest of the world. In our country, we studied the history of Europe and of the world.

Education had been free since Saddam. Books were free. It was compulsory for children to go to school until 1993. Literacy was compulsory for everyone who didn't know how to read or write, no matter how old they were. Before the Gulf War, 92% of the children attended school. And now? The schools are closed; 362 schools are closed in Baghdad because of the difficult situation. Dijula school was bombed. Children are not going to school. People are afraid ... I have a daughter. It is dangerous for her to go out.

There is poverty. The children are outside, begging. Begging is greater than in the ‘70s or ‘80s. There is malnutrition. Iraqi people want to eat just like all other people.

Why destroy the electricity, water supply, waste product system? ... The aim is the complete destruction of Iraqi society ... The healthy aspects of home life have disappeared. There is no water, no electricity. There are no drugs in the hospitals; no theatre gloves. Hospitals need to be renewed. They were destroyed in the sanctions, and now we can't renew them. Twice my hospital has been destroyed – first in 1991, when it then took two years to rebuild; and again in 2003, it was destroyed when an American bomb hit the building beside the hospital, causing the hospital roof to collapse. The hospital needed to be renewed again, but there was no money - and there was the occupation. The hospital was out of action for 8 months. Now, the generator is sometimes not working. This is a danger to the patient during an operation, as the generator has to be worked by hand.

It is difficult and frustrating for a patient to go to hospital. There are bombs, no oxygen, no drugs, can't do surgery. In the private sector, it is better.

Those inside the wire are not like those outside the wire. We need courageous men inside the wire.
Do you fight, or do you negotiate? If you negotiate, will you not be killed anyway? How can you say ‘fight’ when are also speaking for the children, who will be killed?

There is no way out of this ‘Camp Iraq.’

The US should announce that their forces will go out by – X - this date. And on this date, the UN should move the security forces to Iraq, so no one can then criticize anyone.”

TWO: Heart of Darkness

Another Iraqi source told me that there is a DU (Depleted Uranium) project in Baghdad supported by the University of (!) Texas. “Congenital abnormalities and stillborn children increased five-fold during the 90s, particularly in the Basra region … DU is killing thousands … Cancer increased 1 year after the bombing in Basra; there were 460 cases that year.”

My source suffers from “bad memories – first from the severe sanctions, then war and imprisonment in a 3x3m cell, now with the occupation.

It is a long pain, an interruption of peaceful living. … To live under occupation is Hell. We have elusive enemies we do not know. We don’t know why they are targeting us …

Many academics had senior posts; for example, they were the head of a department. Academics have been subjected to four types of hassle. First, to being interrogated and detained, right after the war. This was due to an accusation of participating in the (non-existent) WMD secret programme. Detention was from a few days to three years. Two women scientists, Dr. Huda Amash and Dr. Rehab Taha, were only recently released after confirmation that there was no such secret programme.

The second hassle is that many have been subjected to ‘de-Baathification.’ Hundreds were fired from their jobs because they were members of the Baath party, although all of them were seniors in different scientific fields.

The third problem is having to endure threats and intimidation by students who are motivated by different political and sectarian parties. Academics receive threatening letters, asking them to leave the institute and the country. Or they find a bullet in their letterbox. Some letters are written by students who are not doing well – a kind of blackmail – but we cannot take chances.

The forth problem is the assassination list. Those who are still alive try and survive in the heart of
danger – the heart of darkness. Many are trying to leave Iraq. Iraq is very chaotic ... The academics need temporary jobs or fellowships to get them away from the risks. They are the treasures of Iraq. The heart of darkness is overshadowing them.”
I ask: And if the US leaves Iraq?
“America is the germ. We need to flush the germ out. The symptoms can then be treated and relieved. Then we can restore our living.”

THREE: “We need international support”

Eman Khamas is a journalist, author and human rights advocate. She is passionate about her work; driven by and dedicated to injustice.

Eman says:
“With every dead man, woman and child, Iraq is killed anew. The bombing continues to this minute. The US bombs hospitals, and bury the people under the rubble. Schools are bombed and destroyed. Every time, all Iraqi’s rights are violated.

It is criminal to kill thousands of people because there are a few individual criminals. Almost 300,000 Iraqis have been killed in the last 3 years. 1,400 Iraqi civilians were killed in the last month. Students cannot go to school. Professors cannot go to school. Many girls do not go to school. It is dangerous for girls. The roads are closed, or there is a curfew, or bombs, or suicide bombing. People have to walk for miles to get to their school. For some, it is a two-hour, dangerous walk ... We had a demonstration under the window of the dean of a university. He wouldn’t look out the window ...

We have never had this phenomena in the past – only since the occupation. 224 (health professionals) have been killed. 1000 are in exile. The only thing these people have in common is that they are Iraqi and intellectual. If they are in jail, they are tortured, released, and then they disappear ... People are assassinated by Americans and insurgents. We don’t know who they are. There are lists on the wall of people who are going to be killed – so these people leave Iraq. They are afraid of retaliation. People are threatened either by being accused by the occupation or by those who are giving information to the
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The B\textit{Russell}\text{\textsc{s}} Tribunal and Campa\text{"{n}}a E\text{"{i}}statal contra la Ocupaci\text{"{o}}n y por la Soberan\text{"{i}}a de Iraq

occupation. If one talks about the occupation, one is fired. It is dangerous to talk about the occupation.

The United States and the United Kingdom have programmes. There is collaboration. They are only interested in scientists with certain qualifications. They want to ensure those scientists stay in the country, and not to go to the ‘Axis of Evil’ countries. They say, ‘come attend a workshop in Jordan,’ for example. There are ‘trainers.’ They might organise something for environmental health, for example, in Oman.

There is no information from any institution. They are not allowed to give information to journalists ... What is the future of Iraq under occupation? The killing is done by the militias – political militias, using the religious emotions of the Iraqi people to gain power. The US know they can do this and get away with it. There are no official Iraqi investigations. The people in government are behind this killing ...

What about the families of those who have been assassinated? Displacement, too, is a problem because of the bombing and fear. These people need everything. They cannot wait. They need help NOW. There are widows, orphans. They have no financial help. Their husbands have been killed or are in jail. There are homeless families, living in tents or in unsafe structures. There is a problem with a shortage of medicines. The US apologises for bombing hospitals, but this means nothing.

We need to work to educate people. It is the right of any people to resist occupation. Iraqis have resisted because of the killing of civilians – the bombing of cities. Mainstream Media does not understand the urgency ... The US and Mainstream Media concentrate on political success, elections, democracy. All of this is irrelevant to the Iraqi people.

The occupation is responsible for everything that happens. What happens are the symptoms. The occupation is the disease. The occupation works on division. The issue they are working on now is civil war. We have never had civil war in our history. Because the occupation is in Iraq, there is violence. The US says that Iraqis are not capable. This is a lie. There are many Iraqis who are capable, given a chance.

We need international support for the Iraqi intellectuals ... I have a recommendation ... to call for Spanish universities and then to the International Federation of World Universities and the Association of Arab Universities, and ask them to raise the issue in regular meetings ... Scientists are national treasures.”

+
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Brussels Tribunal and Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

The Dead and Homeless

Refugees. The number of Iraqi refugees is up for grabs. The Displacement and Migration Ministry said two weeks ago that the number of refugees was about 60,000. A 28.04.06 Reuters article quotes the Iraqi vice president as recently saying that there are around 1/2 million refugees.

The number of widows in Iraq is increasing. There is a rising number of orphans. Families hunt for Iraq’s Lost.

Murdered Academics & Doctors.

On 01.06, The Washington Post reported on the Exodus of Iraqi educated professionals. The Iraqi Minister of Health has just declared that “220 health professionals” have been assassinated. Approximately 190 academics have been murdered. See the BRussels Tribunal list, report and Madrid conference resolution here. The Spanish website CEOSI, (Statewide Campaign to End the Occupation and Restore the Sovereignty of Iraq) has further details.

For latest information on doctors in Mosul, see 01.05.06 Reuters report. The BRussels Tribunal needs help from the Iraqi people themselves to substantiate the number of doctors and academics killed, when, and how. The dead are victims of war crimes.

Murdered Journalists.

Reporters without Borders says that 88 journalists and media assistants have been killed since the start of fighting in Iraq in March 2003. Two are still missing. To put this in perspective, “around 63 journalists were killed in Vietnam during the 20 years from 1955 to 1975.” Read their March ’06 report, Three Years of Slaughter, here.

Dead Iraqi Civilians.

The Iraq Body Count, 38,661 killed, appears to be incorrect. Mr. Sloboda has tried to defend his figures. Both Media Lens and Gabriele Zamparini at The Cat’s Dream have disputed the Iraq Body Count figures, backed by evidence. William Bowles does not find Mr Sloboda’s Newsnight defense convincing.

In 2004, The Lancet, a UK medical journal, wrote a report, Mortality before and after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: cluster sample survey. This report said there were approximately 100,000 dead Iraqi civilians.

The estimated number of civilian dead now is estimated at between 250,000 - 300,000+. Iraqis are afraid to go to the police if a relative has been killed.
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Russell Tribunal and

Suicide Bombers.

There have been rumours that in Iraq, the US secretly puts bombs in cars and then sets them off from a helicopter. These rumours are now becoming more substantiated. See The Independent, 29.04.06, Robert Fisk

The url for Iraq: The Occupation is a Disease is: http://indexresearch.blogspot.com/2006/05/iraq-occupation-is-disease.html

Sarah Meyer is a researcher living in Sussex, UK.
Her email is: sarahmeyer@freedom255.com

AAAS Science and Human Rights Program

Threatening and Killing of Scientists in Iraq

"Assassins are targeting Iraqi university professors in a coordinated, liquidation process to force well-known scholars to leave the country and thus hinder the country’s reconstruction.‖ - Issam al-Rawi, geologist at Baghdad University and head of the Association of University Lecturers.

"I received a threatening letter saying, 'Do not nominate yourself to the dean’s post, or it will cost you your life.'" - Iyad al-Ani, assistant dean of Al-Nahrain University in Baghdad

"We feel there's a campaign to kill every scientist in Iraq.” - Nahi Yousif Yaseen, director general of the Iraqi Center for Cancer and Medical Genetics Research in Baghdad

The Situation at a Glance

Since the March 2003 invasion of Iraq by U.S. forces and the subsequent violence waged by insurgent groups, it is estimated that at least 100,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed (as of October 2004, according to a study in British medical journal The Lancet), mostly by aerial bombardment. Scientists, medical professionals, and other academics have been killed alongside the general civilian population, however they have also been sought out specifically, due to their status or position as scientists, for intimidation and assassination. As indicated in the quotes above, the situation is extremely dire for scientists and academics remaining in Iraq.

Since the fall of Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq, academics working at universities and hospitals
have been specifically singled out for attack. Dr. Issam al-Rawi, geography professor, member of the Association of Muslim Scholars and chair of the Iraqi Association of University Lecturers, has reported that over 250 academics and professors have been assassinated, and many others have disappeared. The list of those killed includes Arabs, Kurds, Sunni Muslims, Shiite Muslims, and Christians: scientists and academics from all backgrounds. In response to these killings and general unrest, it is estimated that an additional 1,000 scientists have fled the country.

Estimates for these numbers are coming from individual reports by colleagues of the dead/disappeared. A partial list of assassinated academics has been collected and posted at the website of the Brussels Tribunal (a Belgium-based anti-war group) by a Baghdad University professor, who wishes to remain anonymous for security reasons. To date, there has been no scientific study of patterns of threats or attempt to collect data on the deaths in a methodical way.

It is unclear who is doing the killing. Some scientists believe that the majority of the killing is being carried out by the Badr Brigade, the military wing of an Iraqi Shia rebel group that has been in exile in Iran. It is affiliated with a group known as the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq which worked first to overthrow Saddam Hussein, and is now focused on pushing for the full withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq.

Level of violence
Some professors have received letters claiming to be from students, threatening death should the student not receive a certain grade. Others might claim the professor favors a particular ethnic group - Sunni or Shia. Still other academics have received anonymous messages accusing them of working with U.S. government forces and demanding they leave the country. Mohammed Abdulazis, an English literature student and son of Saadoun Abdulazis, an assistant dean of Al-Nahrain's science faculty, was kidnapped while Saadoun was at a conference in England. He was released after his parents paid a ransom, but was given a message to relay to his father: "You must leave Iraq. You don't belong here. This country belongs to us."

In general, morale is low in the Iraqi scientific community. Although there has been some rebuilding, many labs have not yet recovered from the looting that went on after the fall of Saddam. Many scientists are fleeing not just because of the danger, but because they have no equipment or resources, and thus nothing to do. They see more opportunities in other countries. For example, Syria recently opened a new science and technology university last year and the teaching staff is now made up of almost 70% Iraqi exiles.

The dismal state of laboratory science compounded with the danger faced by scientists and academics in the country have additionally worried funders. At a September 2005 meeting on science in Iraq, held in Jordan, conference co-chair Arian Pregenzer, a senior scientist at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico said "I sometimes question the ethics of what we're doing." Any grants
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The B\textit{Russell}\textsuperscript{\textcopyright}S Tribunal and
Camp\textsuperscript{\textcopyright}na Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

for work in Iraq "are keeping scientists in a war zone," she says. "It's a terrible dilemma."

In a recent UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization press release, UNESCO's director-general, Koichiro Matsuura said, "By targeting those who hold the keys of Iraq's reconstruction and development, the perpetrators of this violence are jeopardising the future of Iraq and of democracy."

This crisis clearly has grave implications for the stability in Iraq, as well as that of surrounding regions. It is vitally important that the international scientific community takes up the cause of their colleagues in Iraq.

\textbf{Actions to Take}

\textbf{Resources}
- Iraq War Dead: From the \textit{Lancet} From the BBC Iraqi Body Count
- Background information on the Badr Brigade (NPR)
- Center for Economic and Social Rights reports on Iraq
- World Tribunal on Iraq

\textbf{Scientists Under Attack}
- Dr. Issam al-Rawi killed (Associated Press, The Mercury News)
- Saving science in Iraq (The Boston Globe, Alan Leshner)
- Iraqi intellectuals seeking exile: Last 18 months have seen 28 administrators and professors killed (Chronicle of Higher Education)
- Nearly 200 Iraqi academics killed since 2003 (SciDev)
- How can Iraq's scientists be protected? (SciDev)
- Iraqi scientists get free access to research journals (SciDev)
- Iraq killings prompt calls for US to evacuate weapons scientists (Nature)
- Partial list of academics murdered in Iraq since the invasion (BRussels Tribunal)
- A collection of news releases re attacks on academics (BRussels Tribunal)
- Iraqi Academics in the Killing Zone (BRussels Tribunal)

\textbf{Rebuilding Scientific Infrastructure}
- Iraqi Science: In the Line of Fire (Science)
- Iraqi scientists get free access to research journals (SciDev)
- Virtual Library Offers Reams of Data - and Hope - to Embattled Iraqi S&T Community (AAAS News)
- Between Saddam and the American Occupation: Iraq's Academic Community Struggles for Autonomy (AAAS News)
- Rebuilding Science in Iraq, one scientist at a time (AAAS News)
- AAAS Fellow wins State Department Award (AAAS News) - Alex Dehgan, a field biologist who risked his life in an effort to recruit former Iraqi weapons scientists into reconstruction efforts, has received the prestigious Superior Honor Award from the U.S. State Department.

\textit{Updated 05/09/2006. Please send any corrections or additions to: shrp@aaas.org}

AAAS is not responsible for the content of external websites.

http://shr.aaas.org/emerging_issues/iraq.htm

52
Why many of Iraq's elite don't flee

After two of Hussein's lawyers were killed, Khamees al-Ubaidi stayed on the job out of duty. He was murdered Wednesday.

By Scott Peterson | Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

BAGHDAD

Masked gunmen in security-force uniforms dragged one of Saddam Hussein's top defense lawyers from his Baghdad home and killed him Wednesday. Khamees al-Ubaidi is now the third defense attorney of the Iraqi High Tribunal to be murdered.

Despite the dangers, Mr. Ubaidi stayed here, instead of shuttling to safer neighboring countries as many top lawyers did, even though he expressed doubt that a fair trial was possible in the midst of chronic insecurity.

"I leave it in God's hands," Ubaidi told the Monitor last October. "My job requires me to defend any accused man, and I couldn't accept backing down now."

Ubaidi was one of a shrinking number of Iraqi professionals who chose to remain in their violent homeland. Many others who have stayed say they do it out of a sense of duty to a nation that needs their experience and expertise now more than ever. Others have family obligations that prevented them from joining the exodus.

But all face a daily diet of fear and intimidation, threats and even attempts on their life - dangers that cause family members living safely abroad to call them "crazy."

The judge

The threats come scribbled on pieces of paper, or as text messages sent to the phone of Judge Zuhair al-Maliky, the former head of the Central Criminal Court of Iraq.

The latest one, a month ago, read: "Death to the traitor!" Days later, a bomb destroyed one of the cars lined up in front of Mr. Maliky's house to provide a makeshift security cordon. An attack last year wounded three bodyguards; in another one his car was shot at.

"We had great hopes of a better future, a better life and a better country," says the lawyer, who brought corruption charges against top officials and the well-connected politician Ahmed Chalabi in 2005 and was soon pushed out.

"I feel depressed a little, because I was dreaming of having a real judiciary, of having judges able to stand against all kinds of pressures," says Maliky. "I lost every hope here, and thought it would be better to start elsewhere.... Everyone told me: 'Keep your mouth shut, and keep your position.' So what was left to stay for?"
So last fall, Maliky moved his family out of Iraq and landed a good job in Europe. He had his visa stamped in his passport, and was packing his bags. But his neighbors implored him to stay, promising that “we will be your bodyguards.” Then “crazy Zuhair,” in his words, changed his mind.

"I thought maybe we still have a chance," says Maliky. Then he echoes a common refrain among stalwarts. "If I leave, and others leave, who will stay?"

Now Maliky is drafting the new military penal code and tax reform - and is certain of his decision to stay. He says he has a high salary, a big house, and a family that stand by him in Iraq - though his children still marvel at the pistol he sometimes wears, and at his bodyguards.

But as Iraq continues to suffer brain drain, Maliky is also increasingly alone: Of the group of 20 or so lawyers he worked with in 2003, only two remain. Four have been killed. Maliky speaks often to those abroad; "many" want to come back, though the judge estimates it will be five years before Iraq improves.

Hopes soared for Maliky's family, as they did for so many Iraqis, during two elections and a referendum. But they dropped soon thereafter, as car bombs and death squads again became part of the daily grind.

"I like Iraq, my homeland. I want my kids raised here," says Maliky. "Even the air is different [in Iraq]. I don't want to sound melodramatic, but here I feel safer, in my own country."

"It's very risky. A lot of good colleagues have lost their lives," says Maliky, whose mobile-phone ring tone builds to a rousing "Charge!" "But I think this is the tax we should pay.

"My wife wants me to go, and tells me: 'You will be the reason for our death,' " he says. 'I say: 'Death is in God's hands, and no one knows when that will be. One day I will die, but I want my children to be proud of me.'

"She says: 'They would prefer that you are alive.' "

The professor

The senior professor stays in Iraq, but is torn by his family's competing needs. His elderly parents won't leave Baghdad, so he cares for them. One son lives with him, finishing his own university degree; another studies in London.

And then there are his three brothers and three sisters, all abroad, and spread from New Zealand to the Gulf.

"The only thing I hear from them is: 'Why are you still there? Why don't you come out?' " says the professor, who asked not to be named.

He has many reasons to leave, including one from last week. The son of a friend, a trained engineer of mixed Shiite and Sunni parents, was woken by an early morning knock on the door.

"They shot him and left, just like that," says the professor, shortly after returning from the funeral. "Nobody knows why. His family is shattered. He represented the [mixed] Iraqi society. There was nothing like this before you [Americans] came to liberate us."
Such events are too common for many Iraqis, and this summer, after final exams, this family will make a decision. "My son tells me that only stupid people stay in this country - only people with no brains."

But the professor also has several reasons to stay. "I love my country, and would like to serve my country," he says, wistfully aware that at 58, his options abroad are limited. Caring for his parents is also an "enormous job."

"These are the real reason to stay; not because I like the life, because it is almost impossible," says the professor. "We've been given no choice but to survive."

Indeed, the figure shared among academics is that 2,500 university professors have been killed, kidnapped, assassinated, or told to leave the country. Once a stickler for students being in class on time, this professor finds he often can't be on time himself for his twice weekly classes, because violent attacks disrupt traffic.

"At the beginning, everyone was thinking 'This is the New Iraq,' and now they find it worse than before," says the professor. Before Hussein was toppled, people had to join the Baath Party to help guarantee good results and a decent life; today, he says, the same system is in place, but it is run by sectarian militias. "Nothing happens [for anyone] without a recommendation letter now."

The professor predicted disaster at the outset of the US invasion in 2003, but few, even among his neighbors, believed him. He recounts the 1991 war, the tough US-led United Nations sanctions throughout the 1990s, and the mistaken WMD intelligence that justified the war. "You expect me to believe that the people who did that came to liberate us and help us?" he asks.

The doctor

Dr. Abdallah could not be more low-profile. He treats patients at his clinic and teaches at the medical school, and now lives alone in a house where his family once cheered the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in early 2003 when they watched it live on TV.

His family is safely abroad, fed up with the violence, and pushing him every day to leave Iraq. On the wall are pictures of three generations of graduates, and of weddings enjoyed during safer days in Iraq.

The doctor travels often to conferences abroad, but can't tear himself away from Iraq for good, even though he has insisted that his family leave.

"I have a commitment to my country, to my people," says Abdallah, a pseudonym for a doctor who says that he has yet to be threatened. He would leave "within 24 hours" if a threat came, because "you are taking a chance with everything you have made for yourself."

"I don't know how they choose people," he says. "But I always expect some person to come and kill me, or kidnap me. A kidnapping is worse, because there is humiliation and torture."

Such calculations are more than the rest of Abdallah's family can take. Last year, his wife told him that "enough is enough; I can't live here anymore." She sends him regular text messages: "I'm so worried about you," says one. "[Do] you want to destroy our family?"
When she hears of a bomb, she calls to make sure Abdallah is safe. "Probably she is right," says the doctor, after making tea for a guest in his large kitchen. His furniture is draped with dust covers. "When you are outside [Iraq], it seems impossible to live. When I come back, I ask myself 'Why?' "

Abdallah figures that one-third of his colleagues have left the country. Many are in their mid-40s, he says. "It's a bad thing, the people with experience have gone. The reserve of the country are leaving; they lost faith, and they left."

His family did, too, and not just because of the bombs. The new conservatism that is gripping some parts of Baghdad mean past tolerance is disappearing.

"Keeping [the family] outside is good for them, they are young and live a good life," says Abdallah. "I don't want my daughter to wear hijab [head scarf] and feel restricted in her life. And they don't have to worry about roadside bombs."

For Abdallah, the state of violence today is a betrayal of their high hopes in 2003.

"We were so happy, so optimistic about what the Americans had done, but Saddam Hussein is very humane compared to what is happening now," the doctor says. "I'm sorry to say that - I hate him - but the Saddam time was much better. I blame the Americans; they made so many mistakes. They are the big players."

Still, Abdallah persists in Baghdad. "Iraqis are so committed to our country - it's something in our hearts," he says. "It's not like the Lebanese who go to Brazil, or the Philippinas who go here and there."

The good news, Abdallah says, is that his students "are even more committed to learning than before." The bad news is that, "in the back of their minds, they all want to go abroad."

And his patients? Even when he goes to a conference outside Iraq for a few days, the message is the same, says Abdallah: "Doctor, please don't leave us."

Full HTML version of this story which may include photos, graphics, and related links
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The B
Russell's Tribunal and
Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

Iraqi intellectuals targeted by assassins

Sophie Hebden and Wagdy Sawahel, 04 July 2006 06:00

Iraqi assassins are being asked to take aim at hundreds of intellectuals whose names appear on a hit list circulating in the country by an unknown group, according to reports on the Science and Development Network's website, SciDev.Net.

The list's existence suggests that the ongoing assassination of Iraqi academics is more organised and systematic than previously thought. Leaflets calling for the murder of 461 named individuals were described in an article published last month by the newspaper Az-Zaman.

The United States-based magazine Science reported this week that it has obtained a copy of the list, verified as authentic by several Iraqi scientists. It names scientists, university officials, engineers, doctors and journalists in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities.

Since the invasion of Iraq in April 2003, the number of attacks on academics has risen steadily. The death toll is difficult to determine, but estimates range from 200 to more than 1,000. The authors of the hit list are unknown. Iraqi investigators are looking at claims that Iranian intelligence agents are involved, reports Science.

Also unknown are the motives for the killings, but religious and political sectarianism appear to be playing a significant role. Former members of Saddam Hussein’s Ba’ath party are implicated in the killings as assassins, while some scientists associated with the old regime have been murdered in apparent acts of revenge.

Meanwhile, Sunni militias are targeting Shi’ite academics, and vice versa. Money is certainly a motivating factor behind many attacks, as kidnappers often demand a ransom before they commit a murder, reported the journal Nature this week.

Dlawer Ala’Aldeen, an Iraqi microbiologist at the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom, told Nature that the insurgency has undermined much-needed university construction efforts "beyond belief". More than 2,000 scientists are thought to have fled Iraq. Those staying put are trying to keep the universities open, but the killings -- which usually happen on their way to and from work -- are unlikely to stop soon.
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Brussels Tribunal and

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation has called for international solidarity and action to protect the researchers. "We cannot stand by and watch the custodians of Iraq’s culture and learning be threatened, abducted or murdered," said the organisation's director general, Koichiro Matsuura.

Matsuura said Iraq has a centuries-long tradition of academic excellence. "By targeting those who hold the keys to Iraq's reconstruction and development, the perpetrators of this violence are jeopardising the future of Iraq and of democracy," he said.

The Belgium-based anti-war group Brussels Tribunal has compiled a list of 220 murdered academics and says hundreds more are missing and thousands have been driven into exile. It says nobody has been arrested in connection with the murders.

Malik Alasmar, an Iraqi researcher based at the University of Ghent in Belgium, told SciDev.Net that university students are also being targeted and that thousands of scientists have fled Iraq because of the instability that followed the US-led invasion in 2003. -- SciDev.Net


Professors’ Associations Decry Violence Against Academic Colleagues in Iraq (pdf version)

Issued July 5, 2006


The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) express continuing concern about the dangers facing academic life in Iraq today.

Virtually every Iraqi institution of higher education is at risk. Universities, colleges, and research institutions operate under severe political duress and without adequate resources, transparent funding mechanisms, or the civil and legal protections needed to nurture and promote a vibrant intellectual climate and civil society.

Iraq’s intellectual and academic community, long oppressed by the highly restrictive and paranoid policies of Saddam Hussein’s government, have been unable to recover in the pervasive atmosphere of lawlessness and political violence that has followed the U.S.-led invasion and occupation of the
country. All campuses and scientific institutions suffered heavily from the months of looting that followed the collapse of the former régime.

The present government of Iraq has done little to ensure the safety of academics since it took office. A significant portion of the current violence against academics has been perpetrated by sectarian militias affiliated with the ruling political coalitions. Professors have been threatened, harmed, kidnapped, and assassinated because of their actual or alleged political affiliations, or because they failed to respond positively to demands of students for special treatment. Communities of students are becoming politicized in a way that threatens the institutionalization of tolerance and the protection of intellectual diversity.

Moreover, the continuing generalized insecurity in the country has forced thousands of Iraq’s best-educated academics, doctors, and professionals to flee, taking with them the intellectual capital for building a stable, democratic, and free nation.

With this statement, we register our profound alarm at this state of affairs. With it, we also pledge our collective determination to take steps, together and with sister organizations, to promote programs and policies in Iraq and on behalf of the international community of scholars and researchers that will positively address this disturbing situation.

- more -

The American Association of University Professors is a nonprofit charitable and educational organization that promotes academic freedom by supporting tenure, academic due process, and standards of quality in higher education. The AAUP has about 45,000 members at colleges and universities throughout the United States.

The Middle East Studies Association of North America was founded in 1966 to promote scholarship and teaching on the Middle East and North Africa. The preeminent organization in the field, MESA publishes the International Journal of Middle East Studies and has more than 2,600 members worldwide. MESA is committed to ensuring academic freedom and freedom of expression, both within the region and in connection with the study of the region in North America and elsewhere.

http://mesa.wns.ccit.arizona.edu/about/statements.htm#IraqJuly2006
IRAQ: Threatened teachers fleeing the country

[This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations]

BAGHDAD, 24 Aug 2006 (IRIN) - “When I was a child, I dreamt of being a professor so that I could give knowledge to thousands of people in my country,” said Hala Juneiri, an engineering professor at Mustansiriyah University in Baghdad. “I fulfilled my dream - but today I’m fleeing Iraq for my own safety because violence has reached the classroom.”

Juneiri and her family are packing their bags and will leave the country in the next few days after she received threats and two of her colleagues were killed for doing their jobs.

“Gangs want to destroy the scientific minds of Iraq and with the current lack of security, even giving a low mark to a student in an exam can be reason enough to be threatened or killed,” Juneiri said.

Being a teacher in Iraq today has become as dangerous as being a soldier in action, teachers say, and it’s a risk many are not willing to take.

Ever since a Shi’ite shrine was attacked last February in Samarra, 125km north of Baghdad, sectarian violence has raged throughout the country, creating a climate of lawlessness that criminal gangs are exploiting. Teachers are one segment of Iraqi society that is suffering the consequences.

According to the Iraqi Health Ministry, 3,438 Iraqis were killed in July – 1,855 because of sectarian or political violence, and another 1,583 from bombings and shootings. This is the highest number of violent deaths in any month since the United States-led occupation of Iraq began in April 2003.

Since February, nearly 180 professors have been killed and at least 3,250 have fled Iraq to neighbouring countries, according to the Ministry of Higher Education.

“The number of teachers leaving the country this year is huge and almost double those who left in 2005,” said Professor Salah Aliwi, director general of studies planning in the Ministry of Higher Education. “Every day, we are losing more experienced people, which is causing a serious problem in
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Russell Tribunal and
Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

the education system.”

**Students targeting teachers**

Such is the prevalence of violence in Iraq, that students have started killing professors.

“My husband was a professor at Baghdad University. One of his students was not doing well and he had to fail him for this year,” said Salua Muhammad, 51. “He was killed on 26 July. His colleagues said the reason was that he failed a student who got upset and shot him at the door of the college.”

The victim, Dr Barak Farouk, 58, is one of dozens of other professors who have been killed in similar circumstances, according to the Ministry of Higher Education.

Ali al-Kafif, 53, was another professor at Baghdad University who was murdered ostensibly for not passing students.

“He received threats in the form of letters saying that if he didn’t pass all the students in his class, he was going to die - and it became reality. He was killed on 5 August after three students were failed,” said Fua’ad Yehia, 49, a colleague of al-Kalif.

“He was considered a good professor and a friend by students and his death was really a surprise to us,” Yehia added. “They left a note near his body saying: ‘Death for those who are responsible for oppression in the classrooms’.”

Dr Essam al-Rawi, president of the University Professors Union of Iraq (UPUI), said that such targeting by students is driving teachers out of the country. This, he said, has created a big hole in the education system.

“We cannot approve [or pass] someone who is not up to it,” al-Rawi said. “But today we are in a situation where sectarian violence is forcing us to do it and whoever does not accept this has fled Iraq for their won safety.”

Some teachers have been targeted because they were former members of the dissolved Ba’ath Party or because they belong to certain sects in the country, al-Rawi added.

**Shortage of teachers**

There are no reliable statistics on how many professors have left Iraq since the US-led coalition forces
began occupying Iraq three years ago, but UPUI statistics show that more than 10,000 professionals in general, including doctors, have already gone.

“Universities are worried about the number of professionals left because for sure when the new term starts there will be a lack of professors to teach students. The better ones had already left in the early years of the [US] invasion,” Aliwi said.

The Ministry of Higher Education is trying to lure professionals back to Iraq by offering higher wages, but continuing instability is putting people off from returning.

“I will not return to Iraq until I see that it has become a secure country,” said Dr Ami n Youssef, a professor of medicine who is now based in Amman, the Jordanian capital. “The ministry offered me an excellent salary, but I have a family to look after and no amount of money can protect us from violence.”

AS/SZ/ED
[ENDS]

Iraq’s health crisis, brain drain
By Robert Dobrow
Published Oct 26, 2006 10:45 PM

Last week, Workers World and most of the world’s press reported on a study in the highly respected medical journal The Lancet, arguing that hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, estimated at about 655,000, have died as a result of the U.S. invasion and occupation.

Iraqi doctors now charge that as many as half of these deaths might have been avoided “if proper medical care had been provided to the victims.” Writing in the British Medical Journal this month, a group of Iraqi medical professionals appeal for international support in the face of staggering problems. “Many emergency departments,” they state, “are no more than halls with beds, fluid suckers, and oxygen bottles. . . . Our experience has taught us that poor emergency medical services are more disastrous than the disaster itself.”

Of the 34,000 physicians in Iraq before 2003, some 12,000 have left the country and 2,000 have been killed, according to the conservative Brookings Institution’s just-released Iraq Index. The global health group Medact puts the number who have left closer to 18,000. Medact says that the most basic treatments are lacking. “Approximately 50 percent of Iraqi children suffer from some form of
malnourishment,‖ their report says. “Easily treatable conditions such as diarrhea and respiratory illness caused 70 percent of all child deaths.”

On top of this medical emergency sits a water, sanitation and electricity crisis. The U.S.’s own Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction [sic!] in a recent audit states that only 32 percent of Iraqis have access to potable water and a mere 19 percent have “sewerage access.”

Electricity levels in Baghdad are at the lowest levels since 2003. Electricity is only turned on about 2.4 hours per day, compared to an average of 16-24 hours per day before the invasion, according to the Brookings study cited above.

Baghdad is home to almost six million people. The temperature there this week is in the 90s (Fahrenheit)—with virtually no electricity for refrigeration, fans, lights, or power.

“Imagine yourself trying to operate on a patient in a two-hour surgery and the power goes out. . . . You pray to God, and you sweat,” Dr. Waleed George of Baghdad told Medact. Record numbers of teachers and intellectuals are also fleeing the country in the face of systematic violence. The Iraqi university system, once considered among the best in the Arab world, has been ravaged. Isam Kadhem al-Rawi, president of the Association of University Teachers, estimates that 2,000 professors have left Iraq since the invasion, on top of the 10,000 who left in the 12 years since the first Gulf war. Iraqis report that academics who have been killed are often victims of professional assassinations, not the car bombs or sectarian killings that get the focus of media attention.

“We don’t know who is threatening us,” said Rawi, “but we do know that when we report killings and kidnappings those responsible are never found.” These statements were given to the Christian Science Monitor over two years ago. And the violence has gotten much worse. The Monitor reported that a “widely accepted theory” of who is behind the killings “is that the U.S. and Israel are encouraging Iraq’s instability and brain drain because, as Rawi says, ‘they want a weak Iraq.’”

The British Independent’s veteran Middle East correspondent Robert Fisk has written, “University staff suspect there is a campaign to strip Iraq of its academics to complete the destruction of Iraq’s cultural heritage, which began when America entered Baghdad.”

The BRussell’s Tribunal in Belgium, the Spanish Campaign against Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq, the International Action Center in the U.S. and many others have joined forces to demand an investigation into and to stop the assassination of Iraqi academics and medical personnel (www.brusseltribunal.org).
Lest anyone think this is just “conspiracy-mongering,” recall the then-secret, but now well-documented Operation Phoenix program the U.S. organized in Vietnam in the 1960s. The Phoenix program was a CIA-led campaign of assassination and terror. Among those targeted were Vietnamese intellectuals who sympathized with the resistance.

Forty years later, the following exchange with Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence Lt. General William Boykin lies buried at the end of a New York Times (Feb. 4, 2005) report on Iraq: “Boykin was asked whether the government should re-establish a program of identifying and assassinating specific adversaries, like Operation Phoenix, conducted in Vietnam by the CIA.

Emphasizing that he was giving his personal opinion, General Boykin said that America’s conventional military forces and its Special Operations teams in Iraq and Afghanistan were ‘doing a pretty good job of that right now. ... I think we’re doing what the Phoenix program was designed to do, without all of the secrecy.’”

University Professors in Iraq and Death Anxiety

An Iraqi Academic (identity withheld at the author’s request)

Professor of Psychology.

(Baghdad Oct 2006)

* Read also: Death in life in Iraq (Stephen Soldz, Advisory Committee of the BRussells Tribunal, 30 Oct 2006)

Spinoza "1632-1677” wrote in hopeful insight: "A free man scarcely thinks of death, because his wisdom is to contemplate life, not death”

But what if death thinks of the free man non-stop, follows him in the cities streets, lurks in the ally to his home, comes out even in his sleep and deepest apprehensions, while he is keeping to his room, thinking of any meaning of life?! What if a whole nation waits in a queue with an invisible end, but with a guillotine at the beginning, going up and down with the time pendulum?
Is it a universal irony or psycho-historic that the "death anxiety" is connected with "eternity anxiety" for the Iraqis, and with the tragic search for a coherent explanation of the existence-annihilation absurdum? When Gilgamesh found out he is two thirds god and one third human destined to die, like his friend Enkido

He sadly said:

_Death frightened me, so I wandered aimlessly about,

If I die, would not my destiny be like Enkido's,

To Otonabishtim, I took the way, and hurried

To ask about the life-death enigma!

Death Psychology

Apart from death essence, its religious or philosophical root, whether it is annihilation or a face of another life, modern psychology dealt with death as "total stopping of consciousness or feeling, the brain stops its work as a maestro of all lower sense and movement, and upper mind functions", studying clinically and on the ground, the responses of those who lost a supporter or a loved one...responses that can be sadness and mourning, or depression and suicide, explaining the movement and feelings phenomenon which accompany these responses, its effect on psychological, body, and professional health, their negative attitudes to death, what in general we call "death anxiety" which Dickstein defined as "conscious contemplation in the reality of death, and the negative estimation of this reality"

Some psychiatrists went further. Milan Klein found that the fear of death is the origin of all anxieties, the root of all human aggressive behaviours. Freud (1856- 1939) wrote on death and war: "we can not really imagine our death, and if we do, we do it as living audience, that is why psychology analysis school confirms that deep inside man has an unconscious feeling and belief in eternity".

Death anxiety has three dimensions: fear of dying, fear of what happens after death, fear of the life stopping. On the other hand, four aspects of death could be distinguished: fear of death of the ego, dying of the ego, others death, others dying. Accordingly, four independent factors were generated: fear of the unknown, suffering, loneliness, and personal vanishing.

Death Anxiety in Iraq

These four aspects and factors of the psychology of death anxiety, became now the most impressing phenomenon in the Iraqi reality, in deed we can say that most daily life details were diverted and deformed in their biological, social, and psychological contents to suit the idea of death inevitability, and its overwhelming dominion. The Iraqi individual, no matter what his class or affiliation is, realizes
that the highest or most precious goal of life becomes just "to survive", "not to die", instead of "to live", with full realization that death means assassinations, explosions, and rains of lost bullets.

The educated and the technocrat are among the first who look for "not to die". It is extremely difficult to get precise numbers, but events and studies indicate that medical doctors and academics are especially targeted. In a report for Human Rights Watch in November 2005, some academics explained that it is a way of eliminating the educated elite in Iraq. One of the Iraqi universities vice president said "the victims are among different scientific interests, political directions, and religious sects, the only thing common among them is their distinguished scientific achievement. I think this is a plan to evacuate Iraq of its scientific backbone".

According to the Iraqi Ministry of Health, between April-2003 to June 2006, 720 medical doctors and health professional were killed. Other unofficial estimations said that 2000 Iraqi doctors emigrated from the country running away from killing and kidnapping.

According to another previous study by the Iraqi Ministry of Health, up to April 2005, 160-300 Iraqi medical doctors were kidnapped by armed groups which killed 25. Until that date, 1000 doctors left the country, an average of 30 monthly.

In a statement of "the Voices of Iraq" news agency, the head of the University Teachers Associations in Iraq, said that up to summer 2006, 172 university teacher were killed, But if we add the numbers of lecturers and the consultatives, it would exceed 300. This number does not include the medical doctors, engineers, religious teachers with higher degrees in religious studies.

Dr. Ismael Al-Jalili, a consultative doctor, indicated in a study presented in the International Conference about the assassination of the Iraq Academics, held in Madrid in April 2006, statistics show that 80% of the assassinations targeted people working in the universities, and that half of them are either professors or professor assistants, that half of the assassinations happened in Baghdad university, third of them were in Basra, then Mosul and Al-Mostansiriya University. The study mentioned that 62% of the assassinations were PhDs.

One third of them are specialized in natural sciences and medicine, 17% are practicing doctors, and three quarters of those who were exposed to attempted assassination were actually killed. This "systematic" killing, confirms Dr. Jalili's belief that these assassinations and kidnapping are similar to the Salvador death squads, which was in fact, series of assassinations supervised by the American CIA in many Latin American countries.

Without going into analyzing the political and security dimensions, these data and statistics present a primary indicator of the destructive psychological impacts that anxiety puts on university professors because of kidnapping and killings. Studies done in relatively stable eastern and western societies, show that death anxiety is in direct proportion with depression, unsociability, over sensitivity, tension, obsessions, phobias; but it is in contrary proportion with self confidence, social skills, extroversion, endurance, self respect, self accomplishment, positive attitude to ones' self, strong ego, sense of the aim of life.
Other studies show that the more intelligent a person is, the less he is frightened of death, that the middle class are more afraid of dying pains, that the more educated a person is the less he is afraid of death, and that women are more afraid of death than men. There is no agreement on the relation between death anxiety and age or religion.

As a pioneer contribution in investigating the psychological paths that death anxiety would take within the Iraqi educated personality, we put a 15 point scale, to be answered in 5 different answers each, ranging between "totally agree" and "totally disagree", applied to Baghdad and Mustansiriya university professors, who have MA, MSC, and PhD, of different ages and scientific degrees (professor, assistant professor, teacher and assistant teacher), the results were as follows:

*All professors suffer death anxiety
*Afraid of painful death (91%)
*Thinking of death of loved ones (81%)
*Afraid of body deterioration that accompany slow death (72%)
*Worried about dying very painfully (69%)
* Feeling that death is every where (66%)
*Terrified of seeing a dead body (66%)
*Obsession of getting killed any minute (66%)
*Thinking of my personal death (53%)
* Prefer not to attend a dying friend (53%)
*Would avoid death no matter whatever it takes (50%)
* Think of death directly before going to bed (47%)
*Death is better than a painful life (38%)
*Feel closer to death than to life (31%)
*Extremely afraid to die (31%)
*Terrified by the idea of decomposition after death (28%)

Conclusions:

*Death anxiety is spread among this sample of Iraqi university professors, regardless of age and scientific degree which signifies that its effect is widely spread. Women, though, were more worried about death than men, a result consistent with the psychological literature mentioned above which says that women feel less secure; hence her death anxiety is higher. Gender rules, too, demand that men should be "brave" and do not show fear or anxiety in this sense. In addition to that, women's death anxiety is related to themselves personally and to their husbands, too.

*The fear of dying painfully is high among the sample individuals, then loved ones death, signifying psychological agony and tense feeling of threat that a professor has on his way from home to class.

*More than two thirds of the sample have anxiety of painful death and of seeing a dead body, in addition to compulsive thoughts that death is surrounding them and that they are exposed to death
any minute. This signifies that obsessive and oppressive elements are pervading the university professors' thinking.

*Quarter-half of the sample's thoughts were centred on avoiding death, thinking of it, fearing it, and how close to it... signifying a relative carelessness about the conventional concept of death if mentioned with out the idea of pain and threat of killing.

The essential task of the academic personality is to create life in its highest aims, beginning with lectures, scientific research, whether theoretical or inside laboratories or fields, and to accumulate the eternal truths in the human mind library. Is it possible for such a creator of life to coexist with deep and objective anxiety of assassination and death pain??

The Iraqi situation every day now proves that death anxiety does not prevent the Iraqi universities academics of their deep civilized awareness that desperately defending life culture is the only effective way to pull out death's treacherous fangs, and to rehabilitate the concept of "eternity" as an alternative to all cultures of annihilation and elimination.

---

**Death in life in Iraq**

*By Stephen Soldz (October 30, 2006)*

Two new articles remind us how death is overtaking life in Iraq. A new article by a Baghdad academic - University Professors in Iraq and Death Anxiety -- reports on a survey of university professors in Baghdad and Mustansiriya regarding death anxiety. It found:

* All professors suffer death anxiety
* Afraid of painful death (91%)
* Thinking of death of loved ones (81%)
* Afraid of body deterioration that accompany slow death (72%)
* Worried about dying very painfully (69%)
* Feeling that death is every where (66%)
* Terrified of seeing a dead body (66%)
* Obsession of getting killed any minute (66%)
* Thinking of my personal death (53%)
* Prefer not to attend a dying friend (53%)
* Would avoid death no matter whatever it takes (50%)
* Think of death directly before going to bed (47%)
* Death is better than a painful life (38%)
* Feel closer to death than to life (31%)
* Extremely afraid to die (31%)
* Terrified by the idea of decomposition after death (28%)

Perhaps most disturbing among these findings is that 66% of these professors felt that death was everywhere and that half (47%) think of death before going to bed. Iraq has now become a country of death in life for those whom it is not simply a country of death.
The author tries to maintain a ray of hope by reminding us that the academic vocation, like teaching in general, is oriented toward the future, toward life:

The essential task of the academic personality is to create life in its highest aims, beginning with lectures, scientific research, whether theoretical or inside laboratories or fields, and to accumulate the eternal truths in the human mind library. Is it possible for such a creator of life to coexist with deep and objective anxiety of assassination and death pain??

The Iraqi situation every day now proves that death anxiety does not prevent the Iraqi universities academics of their deep civilized awareness that desperately defending life culture is the only effective way to pull out death's treacherous fangs, and to rehabilitate the concept of "eternity" as an alternative to all cultures of annihilation and elimination.

A New York Times article -- Iraqis See the Little Things Fade Away in War's Gloom -- gives a further sense of what death in life looks and feels like:

Private lives have been dented and squeezed into uncomfortable positions. Houda, a 40-year-old layout designer for a magazine in Baghdad who would not give her last name, said the violence had cast her and her husband in the roles of emergency room doctors, shouting orders and performing urgent tasks. Little time remains for intimacy. The last time she remembers feeling happy together was a year ago.

"Something has changed," she said. "There is a kind of dryness between us now."

One conversation that comes up daily is about leaving Iraq, but there are no answers.

It is a daily struggle not to shout at her two teenage girls, one that she usually loses. She has stopped hugging and kissing them, a strange byproduct of extreme stress, she said. Recently, her 15-year-old called to say she missed her, though they had not been apart.

"I feel surrounded by threats," she said. "When I go to work. When they go to school."

Even the ability to think, to remember, is gradually disappearing:

As the violence tears the fabric of society, breaking communities and long-established social networks, even peoples' thinking is muted. Plans for the future are too painful, too breakable, many Baghdad residents say, and so their thoughts stay fixed on the immediate.

"The events are too big to comprehend, and the mind stops thinking," Ms. Attiya said. The result, she said, is a distracted population with vastly diminished ambitions.

With jobs too difficult or too dangerous to find in many cases, young people in particular have put aside their dreams. In such an environment, the allure of populist leaders and militias offering protection, a sense of purpose and belonging has become compelling.

For the women - secular, middle class, employed and part of an increasingly slender slice of Iraq's
population - the effects have been on a more personal scale.

Many reported a new difficulty with memory, particularly of numbers and dates.

For Houda, it happened in front of a television set. She sat down to turn on her favorite Egyptian television show a few days ago, and for several minutes she could not remember the channel.

"It was a blankness," she said. "My brain is loaded. It is not active like before."

One aspect of the Iraqi situation that is different from many other civil war situations is the breakdown of even local community. The fear of going outside means that families have trouble getting together, and that even conversing with neighbors is dangerous:

Life was also hard under Saddam Hussein, the women pointed out. Plans were equally impossible to build. But the basic fabric of life, visiting family, attending weddings and funerals, was for the most part intact. Now Iraqis are letting go even of those parts.

The ministry employee sat at the table looking agitated. She attended the funeral for the mother of a good friend this month. The family was Christian, large and respected in the community, and before the war, such a funeral would draw hundreds. Instead, 10 people came to the church service, and only one, the dead woman’s son-in-law, risked following the casket out to the cemetery. Even her daughter stayed home.

In many parts of Iraq, where mixed neighborhoods are being broken apart, the distrust is even greater. There is no sense of all being in it together. Your neighbor may be an enemy, or at least, one of those to be blamed for the horrors. Throughout much of the country, the militias provide one of the few opportunities for community, which is, probably, among their attractions.

People are resilient. Should, somehow, the violence stop, daily life will gradually revive. But wounds will remain. Imagine children growing up knowing only fear, fear should they step outdoors to play. Fear every time they go to school, when they go to school. Fear when father or mother leaves the house.

We have an obligation to put ourselves in the shoes of the Iraqis and try and imagine, however difficult, what life must be like there, in a world of death and of fear at every moment. A world where joy has taken a long vacation. We must not forget. And, when the occupation and the civil war end, we must be there to help in whatever ways we can.

URL: http://www.opednews.com/articles/opedne_stephen__061030_death_in_life_in_ira.htm
Authors Website: http://soldzresearch.com/stephensoldz

Authors Bio: Stephen Soldz is psychoanalyst, psychologist, public health researcher, and faculty member at the Institute for the Study of Violence of the Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis. He is a member of Roslindale Neighbors for Peace and Justice. He maintains the Psyche, Science, and Society blog. He is a member of the BRussells Tribunal Advisory Committee.
BAGHDAD, Iraq - A leading Iraqi academic and prominent hardline Sunni political activist was fatally shot by three gunmen Monday as he was leaving his Baghdad home, police said.

The killers escaped in a car after gunning down Essam al-Rawi, head of the University Professor’s Union and a senior member of the influential Association of Muslim Scholars, according to police Lt. Maitham Abdul-Razaq.

The association is a Sunni organization believed to have links to the insurgency raging against U.S. forces and their Iraqi allies. The group has boycotted elections and stood aside from the political process.

An association official confirmed the killing of al-Rawi, a geologist, saying he was behind the wheel of his car and had just left his home for the drive to work at Baghdad University accompanied by two bodyguards.

The gunmen drove in front of al-Rawi’s car, forced it to stop, then sprayed it with automatic weapons fire, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he feared reprisal. One of al-Rawi’s bodyguards was killed and the other was wounded, the official said.

The association was independently investigating the killing and would issue a statement later, the official said.

Although al-Rawi was likely targeted because of his political views, Iraqi academics have increasingly fallen victim to the country’s religious extremists and other violent groups. About 180 professors have been murdered and at least 3,250 have fled Iraq since the outbreak of widespread sectarian violence in February, the Higher Education Ministry said in August.

With law and order in free-fall, some professors have also been killed by students angered over poor grades or other grievances, or because of their past membership in the Baath Party of former dictator Saddam Hussein.

Dr. Issam Al Rawi has been murdered (+ 30 October 2006)

---

Dear friends,

we received this disturbing and sad message from Baghdad today:

Dear Dirk,

I am sure you have heard about the assassination of Dr Issam Al-Rawi. Dr Al-Rawi was the head of the Iraqi Universities Professors. He helped unveiling all the crimes committed against his colleagues by pro-government militias including Bader and Jaish Al-Mahdi and other security gangs. His death is a great loss. He refused to leave, even though like the others he was threatened many times to leave Iraq. He felt that he was mostly needed to protect his colleagues to keep the Iraqi universities going on in this critical time of his beloved country. Dr Al-Rawi got killed because he believed that one day things will get better in Iraq and he has to work hard to see that day coming. I guess his assassination concludes how far that day is!!

(name withhold for security reasons)

Dr. Issam Al Rawi was a major source for our list of murdered Iraqi academics, and he was a bell-ringer about the dreadful situation of the Iraqi academics, and thus a source of inspiration for our campaign about the Iraqi academics.

Read the article Approximately 300 academics have been killed - 17 Jan 2005.

Listen to Dr. Essam Al Rawi in a BBC interview - 07 June 2005.

Dr. Issam Al Rawi was an example of the courage of the Iraqi people under occupation, an example for us all. He refused to leave his homeland and decided to help his colleagues.

We wish to offer our sincere condolences to the family of Dr. Issam Al Rawi. He will never be forgotten.

The occupation must end, now !! 650,000 victims: enough is enough.

The BRussell's Tribunal executive committee.

http://www.bruselstribunal.org/AlRawi.htm
Sunni activist professor killed in Iraq

SINAN SALAHEDDIN
Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq - A leading Iraqi academic and prominent hardline Sunni political activist was fatally shot by three gunmen Monday as he was leaving his Baghdad home, police said.

The killers escaped in a car after gunning down Essam al-Rawi, head of the University Professor's Union and a senior member of the influential Association of Muslim Scholars, according to police Lt. Maitham Abdul-Razaq.

The association is a Sunni organization believed to have links to the insurgency raging against U.S. forces and their Iraqi allies. The group has boycotted elections and stood aside from the political process.

An association official confirmed the killing of al-Rawi, a geologist, saying he was behind the wheel of his car and had just left his home for the drive to work at Baghdad University accompanied by two bodyguards.

The gunmen drove in front of al-Rawi's car, forced it to stop, then sprayed it with automatic weapons fire, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he feared reprisal. One of al-Rawi's bodyguards was killed and the other was wounded, the official said.

The association was independently investigating the killing and would issue a statement later, the official said.

Although al-Rawi was likely targeted because of his political views, Iraqi academics have increasingly fallen victim to the country's religious extremists and other violent groups. About 180 professors have been murdered and at least 3,250 have fled Iraq since the outbreak of widespread sectarian violence in February, the Higher Education Ministry said in August.

With law and order in free-fall, some professors have also been killed by students angered over poor grades or other grievances, or because of their past membership in the Baath Party of former dictator Saddam Hussein.
**Dr. Issam Al-Rawi: the death of a distinguished academic and patriot**

Dirk Adriaensens (31 Oct 2006)

"I am sure you have heard about the assassination of Dr Issam Al-Rawi. Dr Al-Rawi was the head of the Iraqi University Professors. He helped unveiling all the crimes committed against his colleagues by pro-government militias including Badr and Jaish Al-Mahdi and other security gangs. His death is a great loss. He refused to leave, even though like the others he was threatened many times to leave Iraq. He felt that he was mostly needed to protect his colleagues to keep the Iraqi universities going on in this critical time of his beloved country. Dr Al-Rawi got killed because he believed that one day things would get better in Iraq and he has worked hard to see that day coming. I guess his assassination concludes how far that day is!!"

Dr. Issam Al Rawi was a major source for our list of murdered Iraqi academics, and he was a bell-ringer about the dreadful situation of the Iraqi academics, and thus a source of inspiration for our campaign about the Iraqi academics. Read the article Approximately 300 academics have been killed - 17 Jan 2005, written one year before we started our campaign.

The following information is directly from the closest circle to Dr Issam Al Rawi.

Just a while before being attacked, Al-Rawi was interviewed TV urging the Iraqis to comply with Mecca Code leaving aside the sectarian violence. He was attacked in Al-Dawoodi neighborhood, west Baghdad, where his house is, shortly after leaving his home for Baghdad University. Two other profs were with him; the both were wounded. The attack took place monday morning 30 October.

According to his friends and family, the Death Squads were after his assassination. Here are some facts to prove this accusation.

Dr. Issam Al Rawi used to travel around without bodyguards. In the same article Approximately 300 academics have been killed Dr. Al Rawi stated: "I deal with other human beings in a very normal way. I can't deal with them normally if I'm carrying a pistol, or if I have guards behind me." In the same article, Dr. Al Rawi says: "In a country with distinct political, ethnic and religious fault lines, the university killings seem to follow no pattern. The dead have been Shiites and Sunnis, Kurds and Arabs, and supporters of various political parties. "They have a common thing: they are Iraqis,"

Monday morning, while leaving his house, a white four wheel drive vehicle blocked his car, then began shooting him. The vehicle, a Land Cruiser 2004, is almost always used by the high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Interior and this vehicle is the “trade mark” of the Shiite death squads backed by some high-ranking officers and officials inside the ministry. There were four persons in the Land Cruiser: the driver, one who was protecting the other two who shot Dr. Al-Rawi. The car escaped in front of a National Guards check point toward Al-Mansour area.
Many previous reports confirmed that the former minister of the interior, the minister of finance now, Bayan Jabr and the former Prime Minister Al-Jaafari, gave tens of such vehicles to the death squads.

Additionally I would like to point out some other background facts:

- **The occupation forces and the “Iraqi” Special Police Forces raided his office** (the League of the Iraqi University Professors, which was established by him to defend the professors’ rights and lives) on Oct 19. The Iraqi special police forces are almost Shiites; many reports confirm its links with death squads. He issued a communiqué on Oct 28 condemning the raid, that damaged the offices: the doors were broken, the library was messed up; the office of Dr. Al-Rawi, the president of the league and his deputy office were searched. He finished the communiqué by saying, “we are putting in front of the honest people in the world and the patriot Iraqis some of the acts of the alleged democracy and liberation.”

- He taught in Erbil University from the late eighties until April 2003; there he established relations with the Islamic Kurdish parties; he kept this relationship until his martyrdom. The two leading Kurdish parties PUK of Talabani and PDK of Barzani have no good relation with the Islamic Kurds, who are opposing those parties’ relations with US and Israel.

- Many parties in Iraq; especially Al-Qaeda and the Mahdy army are trying to shut down the educational system in Iraq, while Al-Rwai was insisting to go to the school of science, geology department, where he was a prof. (by the way: the first PhD in geology at Baghdad University was given to Dr. Issam Al-Rawi in the late seventies).

Those criminals who killed Dr. Issam Al-Rawi, hit many birds with one stone:

- They killed the most moderate voice of the Association of Moslim Scholars;
- they killed a leading Sunni personality who used to visit and talk with the Shiite clerics;
- and they killed the professor who led the organisation that used to defend the professors; thus the message is clear: the whole proffs are an open target.

Another Iraqi wrote us:

Friends may be interested to know that Dr Al-Rawi was murdered days after he appeared on Al-Jazeera severely and courageously criticising the Al-Qaida decision to declare their emirate in parts of Iraq. Whoever murdered him was targeting Iraqi unity, and it is important not to be rash with unsubstantiated accusations.

Iraqi intellectuals are being killed on the daily base and nobody is saying a word. There is no investigation.

A week before Al-Rawi, Dr Saad Shlash, a professor in journalism, was killed along with his wife in their home in Baghdad. He was the director of the editing board of Rayat Al Arab newspaper issued by the Arab Nationalists.

By the way 20 media men and women were killed in Iraq in the last three weeks!!
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!
A campaign of The Russell Tribunal and
http://www.brusselstribunal.org/AlRawi.htm
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

Breaking into AUL Headquarters

In the morning of Thursday 19-10-2006, an Occupation force with an Iraqi Police special force broke into the headquarters of the Association of University Lecturers. They broke the doors in the presence of the building guards who offered to them every possible help; they gave them the keys of the doors and the phone number of the head of the AUL. Yet, the soldiers insisted on doing the job on their Cowboy way. They savagely broke the doors and messed up the documents and the books of the library.

Among all these recurring done on purpose aggressive acts against academic foundations and academic figures we wonder: When will such miserable situation come to end?

Dr. Issam K. Arrawi
Head of AUL

Iraq – Baghdad – Al-Khadra’a – 633/55/1 – tel.Fax: 5551544
E-mail: aul_iraq@yahoo.com
Baghdad Bulletin: Death Stalks the Campus

The killing of two top academics in a week shows why Iraq's teachers are fleeing for their lives — crippling the country's education system

By APARISIM GHOSH/BAGHDAD

Geology and theology — Essam al-Rawi saw no contradiction between his two passions. "Being a scientist makes me appreciate God better," he told me last summer. "My education and training give me a better understanding of His creation, so I feel a greater sense of awe toward Him." Both soft-spoken and outspoken, Al-Rawi was entirely comfortable being a professor of geology and a prominent member of the Association of Muslim Scholars — Iraq's main Sunni clerical group, long suspected of ties to the insurgency.

Recently, the professor had taken on a third role: As president of the University Professors' Union, he was trying to draw attention to the many dangers that now lurk on Iraq's campuses and the daily perils facing their professors. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein, more than 180 Iraqi academics have been murdered. Some were targeted by terrorists determined to sow chaos into post-Saddam Iraq; others were victims of a murderous campaign by Shi'ite death squads against former members of Saddam's Ba'ath party. "In Saddam's day, you had to be a member of the party if you wanted to be a teacher," al-Rawi told me. "Most of us were members only in name, not by conviction — but now it's come back to haunt us. Any day now, I expect them to come for me."

They did.

Monday morning, as the professor left his home in the Dawoodi neighborhood, three unknown gunmen stopped his car and sprayed it with automatic weapons. Police say al-Rawi and one of his bodyguards died instantly. Another guard is in hospital, seriously hurt. TIME's bureau in Baghdad had previously been in Dawoodi; the professor was our neighbor.

We may never know exactly who killed Prof. Al-Rawi, or why they did it. Baghdad police, faced with scores of murders every day, rarely bother to investigate. Even though Al-Rawi insisted that his membership of the Association of Muslim Scholars had more to do with his faith than his politics, his killers may simply have seen him as a Sunni activist, the sectarian enemy.

But it's equally possible that he was just another victim of an ongoing campaign to eliminate academics — on Thursday, gunmen shot dead yet another prominent professor, Jassim al-Asadi, dean of the
University of Baghdad’s school of administration and economics. Al-Assadi, his wife and son were shot dead as they drove through the mainly Sunni Adhamiya neighborhood. The al-Assadis were Shi’ites. Unsurprisingly, many Iraqi teachers fear for themselves and their families. Sectarian violence has become a fact of life on many campuses, with Shi’ite political parties and religious groups goading students to attack Sunni teachers. Many educators have simply thrown in the towel, taking their skills to other countries. In August, the Ministry of Higher Education said over 3,250 professors had fled Iraq since the outbreak of sectarian killings in February, when the major Shi’ite shrine in Samarra was bombed.

The exodus has forced many universities to fast-track underqualified teachers to full professorship, or simply to suspend entire departments. This means Iraq’s students are getting a poor education, with disastrous consequences for the country’s future. It’s hard to believe now, but in the 1960s and ‘70s, Iraq’s academia was the envy of the Arab world. Now, it lies in tatters.

Prof. Al-Rawi would likely have left, too, if it hadn't been for his interest in the AMS — and his commitment to the professors’ union. "If we all leave, we condemn the next generation of Iraqis to backwardness," he told me. "Without an intelligentsia, our society will retreat to the Middle Ages."

In the end, it doesn’t matter which one of Prof. Al-Rawi’s passions led to his murder. He once told me it would take "men of science and men of God to work together, to rebuild the body and soul of this country." This week Iraq has lost two more people who could have made a difference.

http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1553793,00.html

A Testimony Of An Iraqi Academic

Baghdad / November 2006

Yesterday there was very heavy rain in Baghdad. Our college and many regions in Baghdad (specially the poor and deprived) were covered with water (almost sank). I had to walk through lakes of muddy water, just to get out of the college and return home. This is not new, since the gulf war of 1991 when drainage systems were damaged and left without repairing till now. Let us imagine this depressive scene: "Hundreds of professors, instructors and students walk silently through dirty waters, under gray cloudy rainy sky, just because they are Iraqis, and they have to lose their dignity everyday in various ways, as a cheap price in benefit of globalization plans".

However, I still believe strongly in what "Hemingway" said in The old Man and the Sea : "Man could be destroyed, but never defeated".
I lived all my life (in Iraq) with terror and tyranny, so I think nobody can document this truth, except those who lived it. What happened inside us is much more than estimation and imagination. We (Iraqis) are accustomed to be victims and hostages for no obvious reason. We are survivors everyday. We have developed a very dialectical truth: "Although they (Fascists & Americans) succeeded in destroying everything vivid inside us, nothing vivid actually has been destroyed. We lost the pleasure of life forever, but we still keep and maintain many high meanings of life".

I am typing now with the help of a small noisy smoky electricity generator, with fading light. There is no electricity in Baghdad for 18 – 20 hours a day. I feel very deprived and persecuted, but I shall never give up!

Let us start from the beginning:

In the moment of dramatic collapse of Baath regime at April 2003, a promising civil progressive movement begun to develop, aiming at restoring liberty, justice and civil rights, especially inside universities and other cultural institutions. But the Americans started immediately, continuously till now, to block that rational stream, by adopting the following policy:

1) Encouraging leaders of religious groups and parties (from different sects) to be influential politicians, regardless of their ignorance, selfishness and closed minds; in parallel with dismissing secular trends (liberals, socialists, technocrats ...).

2) Fabricating terrorism inside Iraq (religious terrorism has no roots in our enlightened Iraqi society, even among religious groups). The Americans gave green light to the governments of Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia to export thousands of brainwashed "terrorists" who do not have any idea about social and intellectual fabric of the Iraqi society.

3) Doing nothing to stop (if not involving in) the planned assassinations of brilliant doctors and academics.

4) Fabricating continuous crises of severe shortages in electricity power, water supply, and fuel.

This subtle strategy, simultaneously with "democratic" slogans, has succeeded in:

1) Dividing the Iraqi Identity into several weak conflicted sub identities (sectarianism & ethnocentrism).

2) Absence of collective humanistic rationalistic voice, which is substituted by pre-state, primitive emotions.
3) Keeping the people busy with their physiological and security needs (No time to think or protest).

4) Transforming social energy that should be directed to restore fairness, liberty, and human dignity, into motives of violence and aggression towards imaginary enemies.

So, the final result is very familiar (nothing new beneath the sun): It is again the old story of how capitalism exploits, humiliates man, and sucks bloods of people, just to accumulate new mythical wealth. Americans are very pragmatic, heartless and faithful to this principle. But the problem is: "Why this deceived world (except conscious elite) does not want to wake up?!"

Iraq as a nation is not "artificial invention" of the Brits. Iraq is one of the oldest societies in history. When the Brits occupied the country, they (implicitly) helped the Iraqi people to restore their social identity after long centuries of the Turkish tyranny, and gradually accomplished independence as an unified country of multiple races, religions and sects, as many nations in the world. There is a very strong feeling of the Iraqi identity among our people (obvious patriotism). We have common social memory, folklore, arts, songs, architecture, and political movements. Most of Iraqi families and tribes consist of several races and sects.

In every residence area in Baghdad, you can find mosques besides churches. It is very usual that a man from "Shiite" sect marries a woman from "Sunni" sect, and vice versa. Also, there are some cases of marriage between Muslims and Christians. This tolerance was spread widely even among religious people.

The tragedy and crises of Iraqi identity began with American occupation 2003 as mentioned, specifically when the American authority imposed an Iraqi Governing Council established according to various races, religions and sects, not according to participation of political, cultural, and civil progressive rational movements.

The Americans insisted on starting this dangerous tradition which was unfamiliar in our modern political history. Our people are very conscious victims, completely aware of this dirty game (Blood for Petrol), but they are powerless in front of the American stormy strategy.

The majority of our people are peaceful, cultured, motivated to adopt normal secular values. They like and are proud of their desirable main identity: the "Iraqi identity".

In spite of the complete crime committed in Iraq, I still feel optimistic, and many others do so. I do believe that our social fabric will resist this conspiracy for a long time, and never surrender easily. We are a civil and cultured unified community, not tribes in the desert!
I agree there is a serious danger that the Iraqi people may incorporate this sort of ethnic/religious mindset into their way of thinking. But, in the same time, there is an obvious intentional collective resistance against this sort of thinking. I do feel (as an instructor in university) that students (regardless of their origins) become more insistent on the word "Iraqi" through discussions and conversations. Further, they tend to avoid other ethnic or religious terms, or underestimate them. Nobody can imagine our conditions in university: studying and doing the exams, with explosions around us. Yet, my students surprised me every time by their clever scientific answers, as if they were living in normal and ideal conditions. Their answers reinforce my belief of the Iraqi immortal spirit.

Our conditions in Baghdad become more and more dangerous day after day. The clashes are everywhere, even in the streets surrounding our college. To put you in the picture, imagine this: We are in Bab Al-Moadham University Compound (Central Baghdad where the old Campus of Baghdad University is), completely and daily surrounded by fire belts of bombs, car bombs, almost daily clashes in light weapons among different groups and squads. For example: in the sectarian fighting in Al-Fadhil area (close to the Compound), during the last 3 months, the Iraqi security forces and the Americans were raiding the area, turned Bab Al-Moadham into a real battle field. Unknown numbers of civilians and students were killed, gun bullet fires pierce through the walls and windows glass of our offices many times. We had to hide always when we enter or leave the college, or we have to conceal our selves temporarily, or run away through back doors, to evade the clashes that often reach the college gate. The way from home to college, and vice versa, is an absolute adventure, where each one of us faces his destiny alone, in a daily infinite philosophical test of the meaning of a ripped off life, and an absurd death.

Many of our academic colleagues have been killed or threatened, often by unknown hands. Others are insulted or frightened by prejudiced Islamic students. Two months ago, some armed strangers hysterically raided the campus, from Bab Al-Moadhem gate, which was not the first time, supported by the university guards!! They roamed the college corridors and rooms, shouting, calling the names of some professors from a list they were holding in their hands, threatening them of death if they show up in the college. This aggression was the worst in the College of Languages, which was closed for 2 weeks after. Many administrative officials resigned after they got open threats. May be these activities are not categorized as assassinations, but they give a summary image of the gravity of the physical threat, the humiliation, and the mind liquidation to which the Iraqi university professor is exposed nowadays. But we still struggle quietly and patiently to maintain what could be maintained of the academic & secular values inside the university.

The campaign of assassinations against the Iraqi minds, takes many different shapes beside the physical assassination: the scientific blockade imposed on our almost closed university libraries, the religious groups’ control of the decision making bodies in the universities, terrorizing the professors by the oral and written threats, forcing them into silence, isolation and immigration, in addition to the
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Brussells Tribunal and Campaña Estatal contra la Ocupación y por la Soberanía de Iraq

horrible corruption. For example, during the last 3 years, the Ministry of Higher Education announced tens of PhDs scholarships in different Arabic and Western universities, I could not get any of them, in spite of the fact that I am the first (got the highest degrees) in the college, in my BA and MA degrees (I got excellent in both degrees, which, according to the Iraqi educational system means that I got more than 90 on a 100 scale). As an instructor, I am considered one of the distinguished. Those scholarships often went to others who have nothing to do with the academic milieu, and have no academic achievements whatsoever.

The Iraqi civil people still struggle to maintain their collective identity, where the militias and stupid politicians still fabricate this unnecessary violence. This is a very rare historical moment that the community is psychologically unified, while it is led compulsorily by irrational political factors to crumble.

The Iraqi people are peaceful, homogeneous, and open minded (in general). So, what happens now is a temporary offense resulting from sever US occupation. Perhaps it will take an unknown period of time, perhaps we will be victims of this madness, but eventually our social fabric shall prove its hardness! This is not a wishful thinking; it is prediction from a social researcher.

In moments like this, I fell freer (internally) because I become more certain of how our rational, secular and humanistic values, which we have adopted since our early intellectual beginnings, are quite true and brilliant!

http://www.brusselstribunal.org/ArticlesIraq3.htm#Testimony

Iraq: Brain drain poses threat to future

By Sumedha Senanayake

NEW YORK, November 16, 2006 (RFE/RL) - The mass kidnappings of an estimated 150 employees from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research building in central Baghdad on November 14 underscores a huge problem for Iraq: the dwindling of its professional class.

The lack of viable opportunities coupled with the devastating daily violence has caused many of Iraq's engineers, doctors, lawyers, and professors to flee the country while some of those who remain have been killed. The massive "brain drain" may eventually have a chilling effect on Iraq's future ability to rebuild itself.
The flight of its best and brightest professionals is nothing new in Iraq. Under Saddam Hussein, an estimated 4 million people fled into exile. After the fall of the Hussein regime, many emigres returned in the hopes that Iraq would become a center of learning, scientific research, and art in the Arab world. However, instability and violence have forced many professionals to flee the country, despite the government raising their salaries in an effort to keep them from leaving.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), an estimated 1.8 million people have fled to neighboring countries, mainly Syria and Jordan, since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. A November 3 UNHCR report said that 1,000 Iraqis a day are crossing over into Jordan and 2,000 a day into Syria. Based on those figures, the organization estimates that nearly 100,000 Iraqis are fleeing the country every month.

Professionals Targeted

While the data shows that there is a steady stream of Iraqis fleeing the country, there are also indications that there is a systematic assault on the professional class. Basil al-Khatib, a spokesman for the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, told Al-Jazeera satellite television on November 14 that 160 university lecturers from the ministry have been killed since 2003.

The nonprofit group Medact estimated in a report released in March that 120 doctors and 80 pharmacists have been killed and more than 18,000 physicians have fled Iraq due to threats since the U.S.-led invasion. And according to the November 2 Brookings Institution’s "Iraq Index," 40 percent of Iraq’s professionals have left since 2003.

While most Iraqis fear being killed by seemingly random high-profile strikes such as car bombs or suicide attacks, Iraq’s professionals are being targeted in part because of their status and wealth. Kidnappings have become increasingly common, and it has become something of a cottage industry since the fall of the Hussein regime. Anyone displaying signs of wealth, such as professionals and businessmen, are targeted for kidnapping and ransom, and payment does not always guarantee that a hostage will not be executed and their body dumped.

Driving Out The Elite?

There are also indications that some groups are intentionally trying to empty Iraq of its elite and intelligentsia. Abdul Sattar Jawad, a former editor of the now defunct "Baghdad Mirror" and a literature professor at Al-Mustansiriyah University in Baghdad, blamed Shi’ite militias for threats and harassment that drove him from Iraq last year, the "San Francisco Chronicle" reported on November 15.

"This is the rule of the militias, the mob, the riffraff of people. They don't like education, they don't like intellectuals, and now the campuses are overruled by the firebrand clerics, by the religious militias,” Jawad said.
Indeed, on Al-Iraqiyah television on November 15, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki blamed the mass kidnappings at the Higher Education Ministry on discord between rival militia groups. "What is happening is not against the background of terrorism, but rather against the background of differences and clashes among militias affiliated with various sides," he said.

Still, others have suggested that the intimidation of teachers, doctors, and other professionals is part of a concerted effort by the Sunni-led insurgency to keep Iraq unstable. The attack on the Higher Education Ministry was perhaps intended to send a message to the government that the insurgents can strike anywhere and no place is safe.

**Consequences For The Future**

The flight of so many Iraqi professionals has created a brain drain that will have lasting effects on Iraq's future. With the flight of the professional class, Iraq lacks human capital with the necessary skills to keep its institutions, bureaucracy, and economy running efficiently. This could lead, in the worst-case scenario, to the breakdown of Iraqi society, but more likely will pose major setbacks to Iraq's social and economic development.

More importantly, without skilled professionals and academics, Iraq will have no one to train and teach a new generation, which would make it extremely difficult if not impossible to rebuild a successful and independent nation.

Indeed, lacking a core class of competent professionals could force Iraq to become even more dependent on the international community for assistance. That in turn would mean the international community, including the United States, would be obligated to remain in Iraq for a longer period of time to help get it on its feet, since Iraq would lack the specialized human resources to do so itself.

Finally, a massive brain drain of Iraq's professional class and intelligentsia may make it more difficult to establish a stable democracy. Historically, these groups form the foundation of what is understood as civil society and have played an important role in democratic transitions around the world. Therefore, their weakness or absence could mean that Iraq would be more vulnerable into falling victim to authoritarian rule, an idea that would certainly cause great concern to the international community.

Lecturing in the Iraqi war zone

Academics in Iraq are being threatened, abused and killed. We must do something to help our colleagues, says John Akker, from the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics

Friday November 17, 2006
EducationGuardian.co.uk
This week's events at the ministry of higher education in Baghdad have exposed a key issue that has remained largely unreported since the invasion in 2003. The headlines may have been about the ministry, but the key factor was that it involved the kidnap and intimidation of those concerned with higher education and science. It is no accident that the Iraqi government immediately closed all universities. And we now learn that many of the hostages were tortured and have been killed, contrary to initial reports.

What lies behind this is the extent to which educators, and particularly those in higher education, have been targeted and how academics have been singled out for assassination. Since the occupation, more than 250 academics have been killed. The Brussels tribunal that has kept figures since 2003 lists 200, but that is a considerable underestimate. What is beyond doubt is that many more have been kidnapped, some with their families. Those who remain fear every day that their turn will come. Little wonder that many academics have gone to Jordan or have remained prisoners in their own homes for months fearing the death squads. Others have not returned from foreign visits and now don't know what to do.

The frightening thing is that the climate of fear engulfs those in the universities. Who are the security guards? "Will they shoot me instead of protecting me," was the phrase one academic repeated to me last week. The head of the university professors' union, Isam al-Raui, took all reasonable precautions. In fact he had four bodyguards. He was shot last week, together with one on his bodyguards, as he left his house.

Two weeks ago, a Baghdad University dean, Jassim al-Asadi, a Shiite, was returning home after picking up his son from school and his wife from her teaching job when gunmen drove alongside and sprayed his car using automatic weapons. All three were killed. Routinely, students are now threatening their teachers and it is now common for bullets to be sent to staff through the internal post. 

So why are academics being singled out? Iraqi universities have a proud history. The higher education system is one of the most respected in the Middle East. Many staff have travelled widely in the area and elsewhere. But they are seen as a major threat to those who are now competing for power and preparing for British and American troop withdraws. Iraqi academics are the intellectual class of that
country. Their purpose is to question and not accept what counts as the established truth. They are committed to equal opportunities for women and encourage their advancement through the education system. They are a key influencer of the young. They oppose extremism.

Many in Iraq are now saying there is effectively a genocide taking place against those who work in universities.

We believe that many people working in UK universities and elsewhere in the world will want to assist their Iraqi colleagues. The Council for Assisting Refugee Academics (CARA) was founded in 1933 to assist academics fleeing Nazi Germany. We supported 18 academics who became Nobel laureates. The parallel is not exactly the same, but we need to safeguard the intellectual base of Iraq before it is too late.

No one pretends that this is a simple matter, but CARA is establishing an emergency appeal to help support Iraqi academics who flee to the UK. Through this appeal, those coming to Britain will be given practical help so they can maintain their research and scholarship. This will, at least, ensure that some day they will be able to return. This is not a time for empty gestures, but practical support.

CARA also strongly believes that the government must adopt a strategy to assist those academics who wish to remain in Iraq or seek temporary refuge in the region. A meeting is to be sought with the prime minister. CARA is starting the process by launching its emergency appeal in London on November 29. We ask all those concerned to make a donation.

· John Akker is executive secretary of CARA
info.cara@lsbu.ac.uk
http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,,1950829,00.html

Murder, Fear Follow Iraqi Professors On Campus

By Christina Asquith
Nov 21, 2006, 06:55

BOSTON

Violence and lawlessness in Iraq is “dismantling” the country’s higher education system and creating a climate of terror on campuses, according to Iraqi professors who attended the Middle East Studies Association’s conference Sunday.

“The students are disappointed in America and they say it now openly, even on the television: ‘Bring back Saddam and we will apologize and he will restore order to the country,’” said Dr. Saad Jawad, professor of political science at Baghdad University.
The professors spoke on one of dozens of panels throughout the three-day conference, which featured Middle East scholars from the United States and around the world.

Speaking to a crowded conference room, the Iraqi professors’ bleak picture of a life under siege brought some in the audience to tears. Since the U.S. invasion in 2003, they said, thousands of Iraqi professors have fled the country. More than 200 have been assassinated and the rest live in fear of saying anything that might offend any number of groups, all suspected of murder and mayhem in Iraq. When asked who was behind the killings, the professors’ list was long: Sunnis, Shias, radical Islamists, Americans, Iranians, Israelis, Kuwaitis.

“The problems in Iraq are bigger than I can express,” said Dr. Taher Al Bakaa, the former minister of higher education in Iraq, now a visiting scholar at Harvard University. Hundreds of scholars have applied to come to the United States, but only a small percentage are accepted, according to the Scholars at Risk Network, a group that helps threatened professors.

Conference organizer Dr. Dina Rizk Khoury, associate professor of history and international affairs at George Washington University, says the panel was one of the weekend’s most critical. Talking about Baghdad University, she calls the situation in Iraq a “systematic attempt to dismantle what was once the premier institute of higher education in the Arab world.” Khoury says academic freedom in the country has fallen victim to anarchy.

Jawad, who had arrived in Boston three days earlier, said his classes are cancelled so frequently, he has taught only twice since the semester began in October. When not working, he rarely leaves his house. He said a death threat posted on his office door makes him afraid to go outside with his family in case an attempt is made on his life. Earlier in the month, his colleague, Jassim al-Asadi, dean of administration and economics at Baghdad University, was gunned down with his family in their car. Many of Jawad’s students have had relatives and friends killed, including one young male doctoral student whose father was gunned down in his doorway.

“Nobody knows the reason,” Jawad said. “I am depressed.”

Despite widespread reports of a brewing sectarian war between Shias and Sunnis, Jawad says students on campus are growing tired of the religious radicals and beginning to protest against them.

The professors put some of the blame on the radicals, but directed most of their ire towards the failed U.S. occupation. Bakaa, who was also president of Iraq’s second largest university, Al Mustansiriyah University, from 2003 to 2004, said he had received almost no additional funding for academic life since the occupation. Buildings destroyed during the first Gulf War were rebuilt in two months under
Saddam’s regime, yet the Americans have repaired nothing, he said. When professors are threatened or killed, there is never any investigation.

“Iraqi professors are being killed by everyone, and nobody has told us if any killers have been caught. Nothing has been done,” Jawad said. “One U.S. soldier was kidnapped and Baghdad is on full alert, but the killing of an Iraqi professor? Nothing happens.”

The professors said the problems began with attacks against scientists suspected of doing “weapons of mass destruction” research. Later, professors who had joined Saddam’s Baath Party were targeted. Now, roaming mafia groups have joined in and are kidnapping professors for ransom.

“We can see bodies mutilated and killed floating in our beautiful Tigris. The sparrows have fled and the doves are dead and the campuses are ruled by a forest of turbans,” said Dr. Abdul Sattar Jawad, professor of literature and journalism, who is now at Duke University.

“For better and for worse

Ali Flayih was from J’bala, a small village in between Baghdad and Hilla.

I have never heard of this village before, but staff in Al-Yarmouk Hospital in Baghdad knows Dr Flayih and J’bala very well. If a patient of the hospital says he is from J’bala, then he must have been referred by Dr Flayih.

He was a determined young man who fought hard to achieve his degree in medicine. His high grades enabled him to further his studies and become a qualified surgeon.

A shy man from a very reserved background and yet full of wit and enthusiasm. When asked about his future wife, he insisted then on choosing a very white woman whose family were registered as Baghdadis in the 1957 census. As it was a must if you want to buy a property in Baghdad under Saddam’s reign.

He ended up marrying a brunette doctor from Najaf!

For years he travelled back and forth from his small village to Al-Yarmouk hospital in Baghdad. As
security deteriorated, he decided to transfer to Hilla medical school for a teaching position in the morning, and practice in his clinic in the village as usual in the evening. He lived all his life in a mixed community and was lately upset because Wahabis were creeping into the area and accusing his people of being infidels. How could they? he said. Who are they to judge us? How dare they disturb our peaceful village?

The pride and joy of J’bala was killed last week on his way to work leaving two children and a devastated young wife.

A post that was meant to be a tribute to him and to all our invaluable academics and professionals whom we are loosing daily by death or desertion again sounds so futile compared to the recent massacres.

I’ve passed feeling upset, anger is my only sentiment. I feel as if I am facing someone I am madly in love with who went literally mad and uncontrollable. I want to slap him and wake him up or else sedate him to prevent his evil.

I don’t usually dream, but lately dreams are eating me up. Flashes from the past haunt me day and night.
If I was with my family, I would have established a survival instinct, but being very far all I do is worry about all Iraq. I worry about the trees as much as I worry about the young and old.

Our struggle is making everybody happy but us. We insist on looking for enemies rather than friends, and I wish we are identifying the right ones.

Is there a method behind this madness? I don’t believe there is, and if I am wrong, it is definitely not our method.

Look at Lebanon; they are turning to the Americans for help. Is there a limit to this stupidity? America who authorised a war just few months back, and kept silent watching them bombed and their country falling apart, let alone fuelling the war with their arms.

Why doesn’t America put more effort to find a solution for the Palestinians? They want to protect democracy in Lebanon, oh yes, a democracy that encourages hate and fragmentation. Look at us for heaven’s sake.

Unfortunately they are winning and their mission impossible has been achieved far much better than Tom Cruise.
One day they will leave and we will be left with a history of violence and wounds which are very hard to heal, and yet we will still be together.
Like a catholic marriage, no way out....
It is for better and for worse.

http://inlovewithiraq.blogspot.com/2006/11/for-better-and-for-worse.html

---

**Professionals Targeted in Iraq**

**Mohammed A. Salih, Electronic Iraq, 6 December 2006**

ARBIL (IPS) - The call from his mother changed Dr. Harb Zakko’s life. "Someone has been calling me to open the door, saying he has something for you," his mother said.

Soon after, apparently the same person called him at his clinic, asking personal questions. The doctor got the message. He returned home and asked his family to pack. Two days later they drove out of their ethnically mixed Karrada neighbourhood in Baghdad and headed for Arbil in Kurdistan to the north.

The calls had sounded like the beginning of an abduction threat. They came only ten days after a colleague's son was abducted. The family paid 10,000 dollars ransom, but got back only the body of their son.

Such stories are common in Karrada neighbourhood, home to many academics and professionals.

"It's a mess in Baghdad, there is no law thereâit's militias who are ruling the streets," Zakko told IPS. The doctor now works at a beauty centre in the predominantly Christian district Ainkawa north of Arbil.

Zakko is among hundreds of Iraqi professionals who have been leaving the "blind violence" behind them to move to Kurdistan, the northern region of Iraq, or to other countries.

This migration has created fears of a brain drain from a country already paralysed by years of isolation and wars. Iraq was placed under sanctions after the first Gulf War in 1991, and faced the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

Professionals seem to have become a particular target. "Experts and academics are killed almost daily," Fuad Massoum, head of the Kurdistan Alliance Slate in the Iraqi Parliament told IPS in a phone interview from Baghdad. "This will do tremendous harm to Iraq and its infrastructure, a significant part of which is these professional people."

He said that the issue of targeting of the professional elites has been discussed frequently in
parliament. "But it is the government that must take action on that since parliament has no executive authority."

There are varying, but alarming figures about the number of professionals being affected by violence in Iraq. According to the Washington-based Brookings Institute, an independent think-tank, 40 percent of Iraq’s professionals have left the country since 2003.

The Britain-based charity Medact says that 120 doctors and 80 pharmacists have been killed over the past three years, and more than 18,000 medical professionals have fled Iraq.

The Brussels Tribunal, an anti-occupation group, has produced a list of 281 university professors killed in Iraq from April 2003 to late November 2006. More than 70 other names are on a list of academics who have been threatened or kidnapped, according to the group.

Many professionals who move to Kurdistan are being employed in local government institutions, and have filled gaps in areas of their specialty.

Rezan Sayda, a senior official in the Kurdistan Regional Government’s health ministry told IPS that her ministry has employed 600 doctors who fled insecure parts of the country, and that another 320 doctors are on a waiting list for employment. Ten to 12 physicians move to the Kurdish region daily, among them some big names in their field, she added.

"The Iraqi government does not give permission to the doctors who want to be employed in Kurdistan, because they fear that will encourage other to come here," Sayda said. But the doctors come anyhow.

The motives of those who target professionals vary from political and sectarian to plain crime by highly organised gangs who kidnap for money.

"They target academics randomly, and the famous have been threatened a lot," said Dr. Qasim Hussein Salih, 57, a professor of psychology who left Baghdad in late 2004. Salih, who was educated in Britain, was head of Iraq’s Psychology Association.

"What is going on in Iraq now is an attempt to stop life in this country," said Salih, who now teaches psychology at Arbil’s College of Education. "If this continues, then the final disaster is only a matter of time."

The professor is struggling to survive. The salary he gets is not enough even for bare needs, he said.

Salih lost two of his colleagues during the mass kidnapping of staff at Iraq’s Higher Education Ministry
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The B[Russells Tribunal and Campana Estatal contra la Ocupacion y por la Soberania de Iraq](http://electroniciraq.net/news/2698.shtml)

last month. He says he can hardly bear the pain.

"When I am alone at night, I cry for my friends who were killed, and for my country," he said. "Iraq is a rich country and it is very sad to see Iraq like this, and I blame America for that."

---

Iraq's education under siege

By Dahr Jamail and Ali al-Fadhily

21 Nov 2006

BAGHDAD - The recent kidnapping of scores of academics in Baghdad highlights the desperate situation of the education system in occupied Iraq. Armed men wearing Iraqi police uniforms abducted as many as 150 academics from the Ministry of Higher Education.

Alaa Makki, the head of parliament’s education committee, called the action a "national catastrophe" and Minister of Higher Education Abed Dhiab al-Ujaili announced that teaching in all of Baghdad's universities would be halted "until we find out what happened", and because "we are not ready to lose more professors".

While 70 of the academics have been released since then, others remain missing.

Academics, along with other professionals, have been increasingly targeted by sectarian violence which continues unchecked across much of Iraq. Thousands of professors and university researchers have long since fled the war-torn country.

An administrator of a large university in Baghdad spoke with Inter Press Service (IPS) on condition of anonymity: "Iraqi universities have turned into militia and death squad headquarters ... Pictures of clerics and sectarian flags all over are not the only problem, but there is the interference of clerics and their followers in everything."

The university employee, who said he feared for his life each day he went to work, explained that religious clerics now had the authority to "sack teachers and students, forbid certain texts, impose certain uniforms and even arrest and kill those who belong to other sects or those who object to their behavior".

He angrily added, "Our government seems to approve all that, as no security office ever intervened to protect teachers and students or make any change to the situation."

Iraqi security forces have been accused of taking part in, or at least ignoring several mass kidnappings, which are widely believed to have been carried out by sectarian groups. The Sunni minority has
blamed many of the kidnappings on armed groups from what are now the dominant Shi'ite political parties, who also control the Ministry of Interior.

The Higher Education Ministry is currently headed by a member of the main Sunni Arab political bloc.

The 2003 US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq, with the broken promises of reconstruction and rehabilitation of Iraq’s educational system, have not been the only cause of the current disaster.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) had reported before the 1991 Gulf War that Iraq had one of the best educational performances in the region. Literacy rates were extremely high and primary school enrollment was 100%.

The number of schools in Iraq under the Saddam Hussein regime (1979-2003) increased due to the compulsory learning law enacted in the 1970s. A huge campaign for the eradication of illiteracy was organized and people had to send their children to school to avoid legal repercussions.

The Ba’ath Party had influence on the kind of subjects studied concerning religion. In addition, education administrators and teachers preferred to join the ruling party, mostly for job security, but they still had to be scientifically qualified as teachers.

Being members of the Ba’ath Party when the US-led occupation began, particularly when CPA (Coalition Provisional Authority) Administrator L. Paul Bremer instituted the "de-Ba’athification" plan, caused most teachers and administrators to be fired, arrested or later to be assassinated by death squads and replaced by others who were selected by new ruling parties, which tended to be Shi’ite religious fundamentalists.

These factors, in addition to the harsh economic sanctions and the current occupation, have left Iraq’s education system in shambles. "The newly employed teachers are either selected for being members of Islamic parties in power or those who paid bribes in order to get the job," a chief education supervisor in Baghdad told IPS, speaking on condition of anonymity.

He has managed to keep his job since he had never joined the Ba’ath Party, and added that other problems had arisen because, "Some of them [teachers] are too old to teach and others brought fraudulent graduation certificates that we could not deny because they were sent to us by parties who have militias."

Billions of dollars were supposedly spent for rehabilitating schools that were severely bombed by US planes during the 2003 invasion. However, the quality of work by foreign contractors, such as Bechtel Corporation, and their sub-contractors was so poor that thousands of schools across the country remain in a state of disrepair.

Most of the money was spent on repainting and supplying the schools with cheap equipment that has not stood for long.
"The money for rebuilding schools just vanished between the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council and the Western contractors and so we still need a lot to be done," Abdel Aziz, an education manager, told IPS. "We are doing our best to facilitate the educational operation, but we are facing a great deal of problems with the capacity of our schools and teachers."

Another problem in some areas is the misuse of school buildings. People in conflict-ridden areas like Ramadi and parts of Baghdad have complained that US soldiers use school buildings as combat posts, especially for snipers.

Other schools are used by militias and death squads in areas of Baghdad and southern provinces of Iraq.

Today, security is perhaps the major problem facing the education system. Teachers and students find it too dangerous to move between their homes and schools under such chaotic situations. Further complicating matters, there is great fear of abduction for ransom and an even greater fear of assassination by death squads.

And the poor state of Iraq's economy has exacerbated the situation. "There is no possible way for me to cover school expenses," Omar Jassim told IPS. A father of four from Baghdad, Jassim said, "I am unemployed and life became too expensive, as well as the high school bus fare and clothes for the children. I had to cut them from school and make them help me provide food for the family."

Many families have decided not to send their children to school and have instead pushed them to work as cleaning boys or beggars in the streets.

Last month, the Ministry of Education released statistics which indicated that only 30% of Iraq’s 3.5 million students were attending classes. This is less than half the number from the previous year, which, according to the Britain-based non-governmental organization Save the Children, was 75% attendance.

Attendance rates for the new school year which started on September 20 were at a record low, according to the ministry. According to the Ministry of Education, 2006 has been the worst year for school attendance since US-led invasion in March 2003. The immediate pre-war level of attendance in 2003 was nearly 100%.

At least 270 academics have been killed during the occupation, according to the Iraq study group Brussels Tribunal.

(Inter Press Service)

http://atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/HK21Ak05.html
Ghosts of Jadiriyah.

A survivor's testimony

One year after its discovery, the Baghdad detention facility synonymous with torture, clings onto secrets that could hold keys to Iraq’s sectarian violence

(Max Fuller 14 November 2006)

Articles by the same author: http://www.brusselstribunal.org/DiyalaFuller.htm

This article is partially based on an exclusive interview, conducted by Max Fuller on 7 October 2006 with Professor Tareq Sammaree, one of the survivors of the Jadiriyah detention facility.

Content:
1- the testimony
2- Nation of Fear
3- DeBaathification
4- Control of the Interior Ministry
5- Intelligence-based counterinsurgency
6- Deconstructing Iraq

The Testimony

‘Go, go! Don’t look back!’ It was with these words that a US soldier known only by the name Jackson emblazoned on his uniform bade farewell to Tareq Sammaree and two companions, the men that he had rescued from the Jadiriyah detention facility in Baghdad, which since its discovery on 13 November 2005 had become a virtual byword for medieval torture chamber.

Just three days previously, Jackson and the other soldiers from US Army’s Third Infantry Division must have seemed like angels to the 170 or so detainees that they rescued from the bunker in Eastern Baghdad. Tareq Sammarree, a 55-year-old professor from Baghdad University who was unable to walk after his spell in the facility, and some nine others in serious condition were rapidly evacuated to a nearby hospital.

After eight months of incarceration and around a dozen sessions of interrogation, Tareq’s injuries had mounted. Two of his upper teeth had been knocked out, three of his toenails had been extracted, his left shin was scarred from the application of a hot skewer, he had lost sensation in his left leg and his spine had
been damaged from blows with an electric cable. In addition, he had been stripped naked and left bound at night in a blackened corridor under threat of rape and his jailers had informed him that they were holding his daughters and would rape them if Tareq refused to talk.

But, despite the terror, the violence and the physical mutilation Tareq never did tell his abusers what they wanted. Not because he did not know, but because he believed that the moment they were satisfied with the information would be the moment he joined the ever-increasing statistics of the thousands of tortured victims who find their way to the Baghdad Morgue. In the face of unbridled savagery, this distinguished scholar held onto life, held onto hope, thinking of his family. In the cell that he shared, he memorized the messages scrawled by former detainees: pleas for any who might be released to take word of their whereabouts to their own families. Other inmates were less able to cope with the ordeal. Tareq and his cell mates all had panic attacks when they heard the screams of other detainees being tortured in the distance, but for one 16-year-old student from Mosul it was devastating: ‘the young boy was in a situation. He didn’t even speak. He was tortured very badly and psychologically he was ruined.’

The discovery of the Jadiriyyah facility sent shockwaves around the world, hitting the headlines of every international media outlet. The story encapsulated the situation in Iraq as many either saw or wanted to see it: US soldiers rescue abused Iraqis in their struggle to counter Iraq’s sectarian feuding. Tareq and the other detainees might have been expected to receive instant attention from the Iraqi government, from US authorities in Iraq, civilian and military, and from human rights groups, as well as the press. Instead, after just three days in the hospital, soldier Jackson hurried Tareq and two companions to an unguarded exit and told them to run for their lives. The three men took his advice and after reuniting with his family, Tareq found a smuggler willing to risk transporting him and his family across the border to Syria for around US$20,000. Months later, Tareq made his way by ship to Europe, where he is currently claiming political asylum. Understandably, Tareq’s first priority now is to bring his family out of danger.

Tareq was neither a terrorist nor an ‘insurgent’. In fact, he was among the most senior academics in Iraq prior to the US-led invasion and, as Professor of Pedagogy at Baghdad University, he was a teacher of teachers, as well as a senior consultant within the Directorate of Education. Tareq had gained his masters degree at Stuttgart and his doctorate at Kansas University as part of a national training program in the early 1980s. He was one of around 5,000 men and women sent to universities in Britain, the USA and the USSR to build a core of
academics intended to be the future leaders of Iraq. In America, Tareq was offered a generous package, including a house and car, to remain within US academia, but, unlike a handful of his peers, he returned to Iraq, determined to put his knowledge to use in his own country.

Tareq’s crime was to have been a longstanding member of the Baath Party, which he joined in 1966 and for whose goal of a unified, democratic, socialist Arab nation he remains unashamed. And it was primarily to reveal the locations of other members of the Baath Party, especially academics, and their families, that he was repeatedly tortured.

**Nation of Fear**

In the climate of chaos and fear following the US invasion, Tareq rapidly lost his job. Iraq’s academics did not see themselves as enemy combatants and the day after the fall of Baghdad Tareq and other senior members of staff returned to the university. What they found was US soldiers, anti-Baathist slogans and un-uniformed gunmen with pickup trucks on the prowl for academics who had been members of the Baath Party. A plethora of mass-produced posters spread around the campus carried images of Shiite clerics linked with the Daawa Party and the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq. A week later, when payday arrived, Tareq was warned not to come into the university to collect his salary, as his name had appeared fourth on a public list of Baathists within the university.

On 22 April, less than two weeks after the fall of Baghdad a meeting was held at the university to discuss a new curriculum and a new academic structure. Everyone was going to have to reapply for their jobs, but those like Tareq who had been members of the Baath were to be excluded. The atmosphere at the meeting was extremely intimidating despite the presence of US soldiers, with the names of Baathists publicly displayed on a screen. Eventually, Tareq and a colleague decided it would be prudent to leave the meeting, only to find that their cars had been torched in the car park.

At this point, Tareq withdrew his children from school and moved into his brother’s house in Yarmouk. On 27 July his friend and colleague, Muhammed al-Rawi, president of Baghdad University, was assassinated in his clinic. Within days Tareq fled Baghdad with his wife (also an academic) and children.

For the next year and a half the family lived in hiding at a family farm outside the town of Dulluaia, not far from Samarra. Every 10 days or so Tareq made a trip into Samarra to sell produce and collect medication for his eldest son, who is asthmatic. At 8pm on 3 March 2005 the door of Tareq’s uncle’s house in Samarra, where Tareq and his son were staying, was broken down. Ten masked men claiming to be from the government in three Toyota Land Cruisers had come to take Tareq away. When his son tried to intervene, he too was seized. No warrant was produced and Tareq had no recourse to any form of judicial process. Father and son were handcuffed, blindfolded and driven away to an unknown destination. Hours later they were separated. Tareq has not seen his son since and has no idea what has become of him. Jackson and the US soldiers were unable to help.
What might have prevented Tareq from being returned to Iraqi captivity, as other Jadiriyyah detainees were, is the fact that his other son lives and works in California as a plastic surgeon. After three days in the hospital seven of the 10 detainees were sent back to prison, while Tareq and two others remained due to their more serious conditions. One of them was Dr Mukalid al Mukhtar, a famous artist who was very seriously malnourished; the second was Dr Muhhamed Abdul All, the former president of Basra University, who had been badly injured with an electric drill applied to his head. When Dr Mukalid realized they would be sent back, he became frantic, insisting that he would rather die. It was at this point that Tareq entreated Jackson for help, passing on his son’s telephone number in the US. The call that Jackson made to confirm the story may well have saved Tareq and his companions’ lives.

DeBaathification

For many, Tareq’s terrible story only further epitomizes the collapse of Iraqi society, the rise of vengeful Shiite militias with links to Iran and the ultimate failure of US policy, dramatically underscored by Jackson’s powerlessness to do more than assist Tareq’s escape. But the reality may be much more sinister than that.

Tareq is amongst many former members of the Baath Party to be illegally detained or assassinated. Those murdered include academics, teachers, lawyers, doctors, as well as former members of the armed forces. The pattern was recognized as early as the end of 2003, when the Washington Post (20 December 2003) was able to report that over the last few months of that year, around 50 former senior security officials had been gunned down, while the death toll among neighborhood officials across Baghdad was even higher. In Sadr City the death rate in December was as much as one or two per day. According to both the Post and Knight Ridder (22 December 2003), local police officers described some of these killings as ‘absolutely organized’ and ‘meticulously planned’, with one stating that the killers had ‘specific knowledge of the targets’ homes and usual driving routes’. Some claimed the targets were picked from widely disseminated lists that had been compiled by the Badr Organization, the armed wing of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq. In February 2004, the Deputy Interior Minister, General Ahmad Katham Ibrahim, claimed the killings of academics were carried out by Baathists who feared that they would divulge information about weapons programs. The charge was palpable nonsense given the range of disciplines from which the victims came and demonstrated the contempt with which the Interior Ministry held them.

Incredibly, it seems that no one ever drew the connection with a 15 December 2003 article in the New Yorker by veteran journalist Seymour Hersh. In it, Hersh, citing anonymous officials, claimed the Bush administration was planning to stand up a special forces group (Task Force 121), whose highest priority would be the ‘neutralization’ of Baathist ‘insurgents’ by capture or assassination, specifically targeting what was referred to as the ‘broad middle’ of the Baathist underground.

At about the same time the Washington Post (5 November 2003) announced that US proconsul Paul Bremer had agreed with the Iraqi Governing Council to the establishment of
an 800-strong Iraqi paramilitary unit, whose operatives were to be drawn from former security forces personnel and members of the armed wings of the five main opposition (exile) parties. The force was to include a domestic intelligence-gathering arm. The unit, which at the time would have been the most powerful force under Interior Ministry command, would work side by side with US special forces and be overseen by US military commanders.

We know almost nothing definite about this force and its activities, yet in March 2004 the Institute of War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) revealed the existence of a militia organization known as ‘Black Flag’, which was able to openly patrol on a main street in Baghdad’s Adhamiya district. The group’s banner incorporated the sword of Shiite founding saint Imam Ali, but, when interviewed, militia members claimed the group’s 5000 members included Sunni Arabs and Kurds. The group witnessed by IWPR had in its possession a list of 21 suspects, mostly belonging to two prominent Sunni tribes.

After this report, Black Flag more or less vanishes from the annals of contemporary Iraq, but it seems very likely that Black Flag was the cross-party paramilitary outfit brought into being by Paul Bremer. Could this militia account for many of the claims of Shiite militia men accompanying/conducting raids or should we think that the unit was eventually subsumed within the specialized paramilitary units of the Ministry of the Interior after the transfer of sovereignty?

These various forces were further supplemented, according to the Washington Post (3 August 2005) by teams of CIA-sponsored militia (paramilitaries) known as Scorpions, recruited from Iraqi exiles, who were employed immediately after the invasion to infiltrate resistance groups, to interrogate suspects and, from time to time, to do ‘the dirty work’, according to an anonymous intelligence official.

In Basra killings of former Baathists and government officials, including several teachers, began at the end of 2003 after the establishment of a new police intelligence unit, initially called the Special Operations Department. It was swiftly recognized by the Sunday Times (25 January 2004) that the killings emanated from the Special Operations Department, based at the Jamiat police station, yet, according to the New York Times (22 May 2006), US intelligence officers continued to operate from the Jamiat, supplying ‘tips’, despite the fact information was being leaked to death squads. Amnesty International reported that many of the killings were of middle ranking Baathists, perhaps the ‘broad middle’ of a political party driven underground through fear.

One group that has particularly stood out in Basra is a party/militia known as Tha’r Allah, Vengeance of Allah, identified by the commentator Juan Cole as a branch of the Badr Organization. According to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFERL), a group by that name first appeared in late 2003, when it was reported to have been operating in Baghdad, issuing a statement on 1 November in which it claimed that it was ‘hunting down and killing supporters of the Saddam Hussein regime’, specifically those who worked in security and intelligence. The group claimed its membership came from ‘all the factions’ of Iraqi people.
Associated French Press (AFP) reported that a group by the same name appeared in Basra later the same month, where it was under the leadership of Yusuf al-Musawi, who at that time claimed al-Qaeda was working with Hussein loyalists.

Evidence of Tha'r Allah’s involvement with political assassinations was given to the Times (4 August 2005) in August 2005, which interviewed an eyewitness who claimed that Tha’r Allah had tried to assassinate his father, a former naval officer. When the family had fought Tha’r Allah off, they were arrested by the police and tortured for over a week. Such complicity must have at least been suspected in March 2004, when, according to the Telegraph (7 April 2004), following a clash between British forces and Tha’r Allah, the British apologized and returned Tha’r Allah’s weapons.

In October 2005 the governor of Basra ordered a major raid on Tha’r Allah. According to a statement provided to the UN, police found around 50 people illegally detained, arrested a number of suspected members of death squads and found documentary evidence linking the party to Iranian intelligence. The Interior Ministry in Baghdad responded furiously, ordering the governor to release the suspected assassins, and the New York Times (22 May 2006) reported that in November a team, with US advisors was dispatched to shake up the Basra police. According to the testimony given to the UN, Yusuf al-Musawi works with police intelligence and is responsible for police vehicles. A January 2005 article in the Iraqi Al-Sabah newspaper (16 January 2005), stated that Yusuf al-Musawi, who is the head of the higher supervisory commission of the Basra Council, was appointed as a supervisor for Basra’s night time checkpoints, ‘subordinating for Basra Police leadership’. No explanation has ever been offered for the special protection that this party linked to political killings has received.

**Control of the Interior Ministry**

The killings of Baathists began at a time when the US was in full control over the government and the Interior Ministry and had established a range of paramilitary outfits composed, at least in part, of the very people who were popularly believed to be behind the killings and whose tasks, we must suspect, included the ‘neutralization’ of the ‘broad middle’ of the Baathist underground.

After the formation of the transitional government under Ibrahim Jafari in the Spring of 2005 it was widely reported that the Interior Ministry has fallen under the control of the Badr Organization, with persistent emphasis placed on the role of Bayan Jabr, a former Badr commander, who had been appointed Interior Minister. The seemingly inescapable conclusion was that paramilitary police operations launched from the Ministry had a sectarian, even pro-Iranian, bias. What has been much less often reported is that the top floor of the Interior Ministry remains in US hands according to the Los Angeles Times (9 July 2006), that uniformed and un-uniformed US personnel ‘are an obtrusive presence’ at the Adnan Palace where Jabr himself was based according to the New York Times (14 December 2005) and that Multinational Force-Iraq maintains a cell within the National Command.
Stop the Assassination of Iraqi Academics!

A campaign of The Brussels Tribunal and Centre of the Interior Ministry according to the November-December issue of Military Review. To this list of caveats, we may add the fact that the head of all Interior Ministry forces remains a Sunni former Baathist general and CIA conspirator.

In the case of the Jadiriyah complex we know that the facility was strongly linked with the new intelligence apparatus. According to the previous Interior Minister, Falah al Naqib, quoted in the New York Times (17 November 2005), the facility had originally served as the Interior Ministry headquarters. A month after the transfer of sovereignty, the headquarters was moved, but the minister maintained an office on the first floor and senior ministry officials continued to work from this ‘major operations center’.

After the discovery of the complex, it was quickly reported that the basement was being used by a police intelligence outfit referred to as the Special Investigations Unit. The Los Angeles Times (29 November 2005) subsequently claimed the detention centre had been run by an Iraqi colonel, who may be the senior interrogator identified by Tareq Sammaree as Abu Ali. According to anonymous US and Iraqi sources, the colonel and the Special Investigations Unit were affiliated with the Badr Brigade. No concrete evidence has been put forward to support this claim, but Dr Sammaree believes that Hadi al-Amery, the head of the Badr Organization, was present during one of his interrogations.

In response to questions regarding Badr involvement, Hussein Kamal, the directory of intelligence at the Ministry of the Interior as well as a Sunni Kurd, stated that he did not know whether the Special Investigations Unit was staffed by members of Badr. He did, however, say that all of the detainees had been arrested under judicial warrant. Whether that is or is not true (no such warrant was ever shown to Tareq; however, according to the head of Iraq’s central criminal court, certain Interior Ministry units can make arrests without judicial warrant, effectively sanctioning what would otherwise be extrajudicial detention), Kamal’s assertion strongly implies that this US appointee did not regard the detention facility as in any way illicit, although he balked at the evidence of torture. An eighteen-year-old guard in a special-forces uniform interviewed by Reuters at the complex claimed that detainees were arrested for criminal activity without regard to sect of ethnicity. For his part, Hadi al-Amery issued a statement that it is the Ministry of the Interior, not Badr, that runs the detention facility and that Americans were there every day.

While we should entertain strong reservations about Mr Amery and his organization, his statement rings essentially true. It is quite clear that the Jadiriyah complex was an Interior Ministry facility and, taken with Kamal’s comments, it would be sensible to assume that, whatever else they were, the Special Investigations Unit was staffed by Interior Ministry employees. That US operatives worked in the building on a daily basis is also extremely likely given the US presence at other Interior Ministry sites, and even the BBC concedes that ‘The Americans must clearly have been aware of the overall situation at the interior ministry as well as of the specific accusations being made’ (16 November 2005).
It is not hard to reconcile the different accounts of who was running the Jadiriyyah complex, bearing in mind the formation of paramilitary units from militia personnel and, as we shall come to, the creation of a new intelligence apparatus from the same source. It is therefore perfectly possible that intelligence officers have been or continue to be Badr members, including, perhaps, Hadi al-Amery himself.

The importance of the discovery of the Jadiriyyah facility is that for a few short days of media attention it provided a window into the murky world of Iraq’s new Interior Ministry. The Jadiriyyah bunker was not simply an Iraqi detention facility where abuse took place; it was a way point in a para-legal process whose end product is, in many cases, extrajudicial killing. Rapidly after their rescue, a group of the detainees compiled a list of 18 former prisoners who they claimed had been killed. The list was authenticated by US officials, but no follow-up has been forthcoming. Dr Sammaree endured under the conviction that he too would be killed and he knows that the corpses of several of those interred with him have subsequently been found, including the imam of the Omar bin al Khatab Mosque in Baghdad as well as another academic, Dr Kadim Mashoot, who had been with Dr Sammaree in the hospital before being returned to Iraqi custody.

**Intelligence-based counterinsurgency**

The relevant issue is not whether there are Badr members in the security forces, especially the intelligence apparatus, but from where they take their direction and to what purpose. In attempting to answer what is obviously an extremely complex and controversial question, it is important to bear two vital points in mind. Firstly, we must remember that the majority of the thousands of so-called sectarian killings taking place across Baghdad and the rest of Iraq every month appear to have been carried out in detention by members of the security forces in whatever capacity they are acting. This can be concluded for several reasons. Most importantly, we are told that the majority of the victims of ‘death squads’ are characterized by having their hands bound or cuffed, by being blindfolded and by bearing signs of severe torture. Not only are these indicators consistent with numerous accounts of arrest and detention, but they demonstrate that the victims had been detained against their will prior to death. We know of no other system capable of mass detention than the plethora of secret facilities, such as the Jadiriyyah bunker, operated by the Ministry of the Interior. On top of this there are numerous eyewitness accounts of arrest by Interior Ministry special forces leading to extrajudicial killing. And this picture is further reinforced by statistics compiled by the **Iraqi Organization for Follow-up and Monitoring** in Iraq, which reports that in 92% of some 3498 cases of extrajudicial killing that they examined, the victims had been arrested by Interior Ministry forces, as well as by the former United Nations human rights chief John Pace, who told the **Independent** in February 2006 (26 February 2006) that the majority of killings were being carried out by groups under the control of the Interior Ministry.

The second point that we must remember is that the US is conducting what is technically known as intelligence-based counterinsurgency operations in Iraq. What that means is that US soldiers and their Iraqi allies don’t just sit on street corners waiting for suspicious-looking
passers by; it means that intelligence operatives systematically set about acquiring information about suspected ‘insurgents’ and building up detailed profiles from which specialist counterinsurgency forces can make arrests.

The ability to compile data is critical to US counterinsurgency missions. In the case of El Salvador, the March-April 2004 issue of *Military Review* boasts of how US military personnel ran a horrific civil war that claimed tens of thousands of innocent lives, not only by training elite hunter-killer units, placing personnel in key positions within the Salvadoran command structure, but by providing the target folder packages that the Salvadoran intelligence apparatus was to use to build its lists of ‘subversives’. For Iraq we have a statement of work for the new intelligence apparatus detailing the creation of nationwide intelligence apparatus, including the numbers of cars and workstations to be provided for each office and, crucially, stressing the need for suitable database software to compile comprehensive lists of Iraqi suspects that could be overseen by coalition personnel.

In fact, we know that the entire Iraqi intelligence apparatus is a US creation. *Knight Ridder* (9 May 2005) reported that immediately after the invasion [given the obvious overlap between the Scorpions, CMAD and the paramilitary unit we may suspect that the whole process predated the invasion] the CIA took operatives from the militias of the six largest opposition (exile) parties, including Badr, which they welded into an organization known as the Collection Management and Analysis Directorate (CMAD), whose task was ‘turn raw data into targets’. This organization was subsequently to form the nucleus for Iraq’s new state intelligence apparatus, with branches in the interior and defence ministries and a special core of operative picked out to form a national intelligence agency. It is likely that these CMAD agents were joined by members of the former intelligence apparatus, teams of whom were quickly put to work penetrating the ‘insurgency’ according to Seymour Hersh.

Knight Ridder also revealed that the CIA retained control of the intelligence apparatus after the transfer of sovereignty, which was a source of resentment for the government of Ibrahim Jaafari. The retention rankled so much with the Badr Organization that Hadi al-Amery threatened that if the US did not hand it over, they would be forced to build an alternative structure. However, there is no evidence that such an alternative structure ever has been built and very little possibility that such an institution could exist side by side with the US-controlled state apparatus.

Many of the most senior appointments were not given to Badr people but to former military officers with whom the US had a history of cooperation, such as Gen. Hussain Ali Kamal, head of intelligence at the Interior Ministry, and Gen. Mohammed Abdullah Shahwani, the director of the national intelligence. Coordinating the whole edifice, the US placed Mowaffak Rubaie, a senior Daawa activist who had lived in London since the 1980s where, as Mow Baker, he headed a medical recruitment agency and became the moderate face of an exiled terrorist organization. All of these men have retained their positions despite the supposed ascendancy of Badr.
We can also conclude that a great deal of the so-called sectarian violence can be traced back to the paramilitary units created under US supervision after the transfer of sovereignty, which were specifically intended to give the Interior Ministry a strike-force capability. These units, which now number some 20,000 soldiers, have been variously known as special police commandos and public order brigades, but are now simply designated as National Police. Their constituent units have borne such notorious names as the Wolf Brigade, the Volcano Brigade and the Scorpions [this unit is actually a specialized SWAT force and is probably not the same as the Scorpions mentioned above]. Despite frequent charges of Badr infiltration, the ranks of the National Police are ethnically and denominationally mixed according to Colonel Gordon Davis, the head of the public order special police transition teams, and many recruits are said to have been drawn from former special forces and Republican Guard units. Their most senior commanders have been former Baathists and, most importantly, they have trained and operated under the constant supervision of embedded US special forces trainers, known as special police transition teams.

In line with US plans, these paramilitary units have increasingly taken the lead in cordon and search operations, often being seen as representatives of the Shiite-heavy government, rather than as agents of a foreign occupation. The point was spelled out with great clarity in Diyala province with the November 2005 Operation Knockout. According to UPI (18 November 2005), this division-sized raid provoked outrage among local Sunni representatives on the provincial council, who saw in it the hand of the Badr Organisation. Behind the headlines, however, the raid was planned by a US-sponsored Interior Ministry with meticulous precision, as an account in Military Review (November-December 2005) demonstrates. Two months before the operation the intelligence section of the Operations Directorate began preparing a list of suspects based on intelligence gleaned from local informers; the intelligence section produced dossiers on individual suspects; one week before the operation the intelligence section passed the list of suspects to the Public Order Division commander; the Public Order Division prepared folders on the individual suspects, making use of an airborne mapping capability; before commencement of the operation, last minute visual checks were made of individual suspects. And all of this was carried out under the scrutiny of the US military, right down to battalion level.

**Deconstructing Iraq**

Perhaps the single biggest stumbling block to comprehending the violence beyond the sectarian framework that is so commonly presented is the difficulty of appreciating why and how such a policy could be carried out by the US. There are plenty of precedents for such campaigns of violence, notably in Indonesia after the Suharto take-over, in Vietnam under the auspices of the Phoenix Program and during the civil war in El Salvador in the 1980s, mentioned above. But there is also a structural logic revealed with surprising candor in US army counterinsurgency field manual FMI 3-07.22. According to this 2004 publication, signals of increasing enemy activity include ‘increase in the number of entertainers with a political message’, ‘circulation of petitions advocating opposition or dissident demands’, ‘attempts to discredit or ridicule national or public officials’, distribution of clothing to
underprivileged or minority classes by organizations of recent or suspect origin, ‘agitation against government plans or projects’, ‘unusual gatherings among the population’, ‘nationwide strikes’, and ‘student unrest’. In short, any sign of popular political activism or organization is considered to be indicative of enemy action. What this suggests is that the object of counterinsurgency is suppression of political dissent by force, rather than achieving a monopoly on violence in order to allow the free functioning of society within a democratically chosen framework of rules. In the charged atmosphere of counterinsurgency warfare, it is not difficult to understand how those singled out for political divergence are turned into military targets. In the case of the Baath Party, adherence to its ideological program (Arab unity and socialism) is likely to be sufficient to brand someone a subversive according to this paradigm, with many of Iraq’s foremost professionals in every field falling de facto into the enemy camp, regardless of their actions, especially once, liked Tareq, they have been driven into hiding. In Iraq, senior Baathists are the political equivalents of the Communist cadres liquidated in other counterinsurgency campaigns.

In Iraq there is a second structural imperative for the violence, equally compelling, though much less candid. Despite public utterances, there is good reason to think that one of the goals of the US occupation has been the political dismemberment of the country. The notion of a federal structure had been agreed at the London conference before the invasion took place under the guiding hand of current US ambassador Zalmay Khalilzid. The idea has been repeatedly endorsed in the pages of the New York Times (25 November 2003, 1 May 2006) by president emeritus of the Council for Foreign Affairs, Leslie H Gelb, a guru of US imperial strategy. A sectarian framework was superimposed on the new Iraqi state from the outset of the occupation, with political representatives made to take their place within government according to their language, religion, sect and ethnicity rather than by political programmes. Most importantly, the US installed as National Security Advisor (probably the most senior Iraqi military post in the land) Mowaffak al-Rubaie, a dedicated champion of partition, who has contemplated as many as six statelets within a loose federal structure. Now, with the growing backing of powerful political figures in the US such as leading Democrat foreign affairs spokesman Joseph R Biden Jr and the de facto endorsement of the outgoing British ambassador, the break-up of Iraq seems close at hand. With Iraq holding the second-largest proven oil reserves in the world, it’s not hard to see why three fractionalized polities might appear a more desirable outcome than a strong, centralized Iraqi state.

An obvious question that remains is why, given the extent of US involvement with the Interior Ministry, did US soldiers conduct the 13 November raid on the Jadiriyah facility. The official story at the time was that US soldiers were investigating the disappearance of a 15-year-old [the boy was not discovered among the prisoners that were released; we still do not know what happened to him]. If this was the case, it would closely mirror an incident that took place in June 2004, immediately after the transfer of sovereignty to Iraq’s interim government. In this instance, members of the Oregon National Guard witnessed serious abuse taking place within an Interior Ministry compound from a nearby observation post. The Oregon unit took quick and decisive action, invading the compound, disarming the abusers and administering emergency first aid to detainees, many of whom were in a life
threatening condition. However, on this occasion, when the guardsmen called for support, they were ordered to stand down by senior US commanders.

In the Jadiriayah case, a variation on the prevailing narrative was offered by the *Independent* (16 November 2005), which stated that it was local Iraqi police forces that initially responded to allegations that missing persons were being held at the Interior Ministry facility, raising the possibility that senior US administrators might have felt that they had no choice than to intervene on their own terms.

Perhaps we will never know exactly how the discovery occurred. What mattered then and continues to matter now is that this, and cases like it, are thoroughly investigated. In response to the discovery of the Jadiriayah complex, the Iraqi government rapidly assured the world that a full investigation would be carried out within weeks. At the same time US officials promised that they would provide assistance, with Brig. Gen. Karl Horst promising a legal team to go through the detainees' files and a US embassy spokesman stating that Justice Department and FBI officers would provide technical assistance.

Such a government-lead investigation was far from the much-needed independent enquiry advocated by Manfred Novak, the UN rapporteur for torture, and that was being demonstrated for by Iraqi organizations in Baghdad. Yet the findings of even that minimal enquiry have failed, a year later, to materialize, despite repeated calls from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq.

The latest figures released by the UN drawn from hospital and morgue statistics indicate that around 1500 Iraqis are dying in Baghdad alone each month. These are the victims of death squads that according to every piece of available evidence emanate from Iraq’s new Ministry of the Interior. It is too late for the thousands of Iraqis who have been murdered since the discovery of the Jadiriayah torture chamber to know whether a full and open investigation might have lead to action that could have saved their lives, but it will never be too late to demand serious answers to the question of how a state security apparatus set up by British and US planners could appear to lie at the heart of one of the most violent civil conflicts in the world today. In countries like Chile where thousands were disappeared at the hands of US-backed security apparatuses, it would melt hearts of stone to hear a mother imploring only to know where her son’s body had been interred so that she could place flowers on his grave 20 years after his disappearance. In Iraq we absolutely owe it to a population suffering beyond our comprehension to provide them with real investigations and real answers, not only to try to find ways to bring an end to the violence, but to bring closure, joyous or otherwise, to those, like Tareq, still waiting to discover the fates of their loved ones.

http://www.brusselstribunal.org/FullerJadiriyah.htm