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THE IRAQ CONFLICT AND ITS SECURITY IMPLICATIONS FOR TURKEY (2003-2007)

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THE IRAQ CONFLICT AND
ITS SECURITY IMPLICATIONS FOR TURKEY
(2003-2007)

A Master's Thesis

by

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October 2007

To My Family

“THE IRAQ CONFLICT AND ITS SECURITY IMPLICATIONS
FOR TURKEY (2003-2007)”

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of
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by

ANIL TÜRKEN

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October 2007

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ABSTRACT

THE IRAQ CONFLICT AND ITS SECURITY IMPLICATIONS FOR TURKEY (2003-2007)

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M.I.R, Department of International Relations

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This thesis evaluates the security threats posed to Turkey after the March 2003 invasion of Iraq. The newly emerging federal, democratic Iraqi state and its political, economic and ethnic make up is analyzed in detail in order to demonstrate the threats it may pose to Turkish national security. The thesis looks at the links between the terrorist organization the PKK and the Kurdish Regional Government in Iraq, as well as outlining mistakes of Turkish foreign policy in the region that have led to the current impasse. The Turkmen minority in Iraq, the status of Kirkuk and other disputed territories, as well as Iraqi and Kurdish legislation on Iraq's energy resources are also analyzed. This thesis aims to draw a roadmap for Turkish foreign policy in the region that would avoid past mistakes and address security concerns for the future, while guaranteeing Iraq's territorial integrity.

Keywords: Iraq, Kirkuk, PKK, Turkmen, Oil, KDP, PUK, ITF

ÖZET

İRAK SAVAŞI VE TÜRKİYE’NİN GÜVENLİĞİNE ETKİLERİ (2003-2007)

Türken, Anıl

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

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Bu tez Mart 2003 sonrası Irak’taki gelişmeler ve bu gelişmelerin Türkiye’nin güvenliğine oluşturduğu tehditleri değerlendirmiştir. Mart 2003 sonrası federal, demokratik Irak devletinin politik, ekonomik ve etnik yapısını detaylı bir şekilde analiz edip, Türkiye’nin güvenlik sorunlarına olan etkilerini incelemiştir. Terör örgütü PKK ve bu örgütün Kürt Bölgesel Yönetimi ile olan bağlarını analiz edip, Türk dış politikasının geçmişteki hatalarını ve bu hataların bugünkü çıkmaza gelinmiş olunmasındaki katkılarını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca bu tez Irak’taki Türkmen varlığını, Kerkük ve benzeri tartışılan bölgelerin geleceğini ve Irak’ın enerji kaynaklarının paylaşımı ile ilgili yasa tasarılarını detaylı bir şekilde inceleyerek, gelecekte Türk dış politikası için bir yol haritası çizmeye çalışmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Irak, Kerkük, PKK, Türkmen, Petrol, KDP, KYB, ITC

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the security situation in post-March 2003 Iraq and its effects on Turkish national security. By giving the reader an in depth analysis of the different ethnic and religious groups that have emerged as power brokers in the new federal, democratic Iraq, this thesis aims to provide a roadmap for future Turkish foreign policy alternatives in the region. As this thesis will demonstrate, Turkish foreign policy in the region has been plagued by poor decisions, and one dimensional thinking which has deeply damaged its national security interests. While there have been many academic studies conducted on Turkish-Iraqi relations, very few have focused on the emerging political landscape after the toppling of the Saddam regime.

This thesis can be divided into five major parts which are all interrelated and necessary for the reader to get the complete picture on the realities on the ground. The first part of the thesis will focus on the Kurdish terrorist organization, the PKK. Responsible for over 30,000 deaths, the PKK has long been a major

roadblock in Turkish-Iraqi relations. The sensitivities of the Turkish state on this issue has and will continue to shape its foreign policy initiatives in the region. By demonstrating the historic links of the PKK to the geography of northern Iraq, and its relations with Kurdish politicians and tribesmen in the region, the reader will get the necessary background information on the tense relations between Turkey and the Kurdish Regional Government.

In the second part of the thesis, the role of the United States in post-March 2003 Iraq will be looked at. This section aims to give the reader an understanding of the complicated nature of Iraqi politics that have emerged after the Saddam regime. We will look at the strategies and policies of the United States in Iraq, from the time period leading up to the invasion of Iraq until the ‘The New Way Forward Plan’ of 2007. The long and painful process leading up to the first democratic elections in Iraq, and the Iraqi permanent constitution will also be analyzed.

In the third section we will see how Turkey has responded to the developments in Iraq, and underline the policy mistakes which resulted in the current political mess. But most importantly, this section will outline recommendations on how Turkey must engage Iraq more actively in the political arena. Throughout the history of Turkish foreign policy in Iraq, Ankara has followed a one dimensional policy of only establishing strong relations with the Turkmen while ignoring other political actors among the Arab Shiite and Arab Sunni communities. Through the analysis of the major players in Iraqi politics, this thesis will show that there are other actors in Iraq which share some of the security

concerns that Turkey does on a number of important issues, such as the territorial integrity of Iraq.

In the fourth section of the thesis we will shift our attention to Northern Iraq. We will look at the makeup of the Kurdish Regional Government and the territories which fall under its domain. Our analysis will include the Turkmen minority in the region, their historical origins, political aspirations and links to Turkey. By gaining this understanding we will then have the necessary background information to look at the status of Kirkuk, and other disputed areas in the region. Why is Kirkuk so important? What are the current constitutional decrees on these territories? How much oil is there in the region? What will be the status of the proposed referendum in Kirkuk? All these questions will be addressed.

In the fifth and final section, the thesis will analyze the proposed draft ‘Federal Iraqi Oil Law’ and the ‘Kurdistan Petroleum Law’. By taking an in-depth look at both of these documents, we will get a clear picture as to how the oil revenues will be distributed in Iraq. This will answer such questions as: Are Turkish concerns on Kurdish domination of energy resources in the north of Iraq valid? Who benefits the most from the draft ‘Oil Law’? What are the major disagreements? What is the relationship between the ‘Kurdistan Petroleum Law’ and the federal oil law? Which one takes precedence over the other?

This thesis will follow an empirical methodology. By each section building on the other, the reader will be given all the necessary information on the political, economic and security situation on the ground in Iraq. This paper is unique in that

it provides the reader with three perspectives on the Iraq conflict: the Turkish perspective, the American perspective and the Iraqi perspective. The Iraqi perspective is far from being a homogenous one, therefore it is further divided into the Kurdish, the Shiite Arab, the Sunni Arab, and the Turkmen perspectives. Once looking at the issue from the viewpoint of all the players in the region, the thesis will be able to lay out a roadmap of foreign policy for Turkey which actively engages the different political players in the region in order to suit its national interests.

The sources that were used in the thesis include official Turkish, Kurdish, Iraqi and American government sources, as well as reports of major think tanks and their analysis of the developments. Memoirs of experienced politicians that served in the region, interviews with key political players as well as archive research of major news and media organizations are also included. Special attention was given to keeping the sources as diverse as possible so as to give the reader the viewpoint of all sides involved.

CHAPTER II

THE PKK

2.1 Introduction

Ever since the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States by al-Qaeda, the term ‘Global War on Terror’ has been coined to try to forge an international alliance on the fight against terrorism. Turkey, as a country that has long suffered from terrorism plays an active role in the global war on terror. However as this chapter on the PKK will illustrate, Turkey’s own security concerns not only lacks the support of the international community, but its terror problem is supported by both regional and western states. In order to understand the Turkish security concerns regarding the developments in Iraq after March 2003, it is essential that we analyze the origins and goals of a terrorist organization that is responsible for over 30,000 deaths in less than three decades.

One of the main reasons for the sensitivity of the Turkish state towards the developments in Northern Iraq is the Kurdish terrorist organization, PKK. Other names or aliases the PKK has used or is known by are as follows; *Partiya Karkeren*

*Kurdistan, Kongra-Gel, Halu Mesru Savunma Kuvveti (HSK), Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress, Kurdistan People's Democracy Congress, Kurdistan People's Congress (KHK), People's Congress of Kurdistan, The People's Defense Force.*¹ The PKK was founded in 1974 by Abdullah Öcalan, a Kurdish student at Ankara University's Political Science Department. The Kurdistan Workers Party has a multi dimensional political as well as military strategy aimed at the creation of an independent Kurdistan carved from the southeastern territories of the Turkish Republic.

Our analysis of the PKK will consist of three parts. First we will look at the ideology of the organization, and how it has evolved over the years. This will be followed by a look at what the Turkish State has done to battle this terrorist organization, both politically and militarily. We will then look at the foreign support the organization receives, its links to Turkey's neighboring states and the cost of their decades of violence, in terms of lives lost and the economic impacts.

The PKK should not be looked at as an isolated entity. Instead we will see that it is an organization with links to governments and intelligence services all over the world. Therefore this analysis of the PKK will demonstrate two important points. The first point is that the PKK enjoys its success when there is a lack of authority prevalent in the region. When the terrorist organization first emerged, the Turkish security forces were not prepared to engage an enemy of this nature. With the use of unconventional hit and run guerilla tactics, the PKK aimed to erode the

¹ U.S. Department Of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, (2005), "Country Reports on Terrorism 2005", <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/65462.pdf>, pg.206

authority of the Turkish Armed Forces in southeastern Turkey, and show the local population that the only authority in the region was the PKK. In the 1990's the reforms in the mentality and organization of the Turkish security forces, the investments in the modernization of the military combined with heavy troop deployments to the region, began to put the PKK on the defensive. However, regional developments in Turkey's neighboring geography and the lack of authority in the border regions led to the PKK using Turkey's neighbors as a base for their operations. This will bring us to the second and more important point in our analysis of the PKK. We will see that successful military engagement of the PKK was not enough to solve the problem. The amount of foreign support going to the terrorist organization and the safe havens it enjoyed in states like Syria, and the one it is continuing to take advantage of in Northern Iraq have made it extremely difficult to isolate and engage the PKK within the borders of Turkey itself. Therefore the caution and alarm felt by Turkish authorities at the presence of the PKK in Northern Iraq will be understood as we analyze the links of the organization to circles outside of Turkey, and how it uses this to continue its status as the bloodiest terrorist organization in the world.

2.2 Formation, Development and Ideology of the PKK

According to Prof. Dr. Ümit Özdağ, one of the leading experts on the issue of PKK terrorism and the organizations links to foreign state sponsors, the PKK's emergence goes back all the way to 1973. He states that the PKK spent the years

from 1973 to 1980 cementing its ideological development and the training of its leading cadre. Taking Mao Ze Dong's 'Guerilla Warfare' tactics as its modus operandi, Öcalan and his followers aimed to erode the authority of the Turkish Armed Forces in the southeast, and force the local population, through fear and intimidation, into accepting the PKK as the only authority figure. Prof. Özdağ states that this so-called 'People's War' by the PKK would begin in 1984 through the *Eruh* and *Şemdinli* attacks on Gendarmerie outposts of the Turkish Armed Forces, thus beginning its long and relentless brutality in the region.²

The PKK has always taken advantage of the lack of authority in Turkey's neighboring geography, especially in northern Iraq, in order to set up huge camps of operations for their hit and run tactics across the border. This was the case during 'Operation Provide Comfort', which began on July 24th, 1991 and ended on 31st of December, 1996.³ This was a humanitarian aid operation that was aimed at providing assistance to Kurdish refugees fleeing from Saddam Hussein. Protecting the Kurdish refugees from the onslaught of the Iraqi troops also resulted in a power vacuum in Northern Iraq. This vacuum was taken full advantage of by the PKK, which solidified its presence in the region. Similar circumstances were present all throughout 'Operation Northern Watch', which was aimed at enforcing the no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel.⁴ It began on January 1st, 1997 and lasted until May

² Özdağ, *Türk Ordusunun PKK Operasyonları: 1984 – 2007 (PKK Operations of the Turkish Army: 1984 – 2007)*, (Istanbul: Pegasus, 2007), pg.11 & pg. 12

³ James E. Kapsis, "From Desert Storm to Metal Storm: How Iraq has Spoiled US – Turkish Relations" *Current History*, Vol. 104, No.685, (Nov. 2005), pg. 382

⁴ James E. Kapsis, "From Desert Storm to Metal Storm: How Iraq has Spoiled US – Turkish Relations" *Current History*, Vol. 104, No.685, (Nov. 2005), pg. 382

1st, 2003. It prevented the Iraqi Air Force and helicopter gun ships from targeting Kurds. What it did at the same time was leave the PKK free to roam around the area as it saw fit. Both of the above mentioned operations were conducted by the United States and United Kingdom, as well as France which took part in the former but not the latter. The operations were conducted with the full permission and cooperation of the Turkish government.

Before we go on any further it is important to point out that the status of the PKK as a terrorist organization has been confirmed by France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Japan, and the United States, all having added the organization to their lists of terrorist organizations. The PKK has been listed in the annual report of the US Department of State ‘Patterns of Global Terrorism’ for more than a decade. PKK has been recognized as a terrorist organization by NATO and it has also been on the ‘European Union Terrorist Organizations and Entities List’ since April 2nd, 2004.⁵ Despite this, the PKK has devoted special attention to using Western Europe in particular as a base of financial activity aimed at generating revenue to fund the organizations activities through all sorts of illegal activities which we will look at in detail later on.

Abdullah Öcalan during an interview with Turkish Journalist Hasan Cemal said the following striking words, “I put politics on the mind of the shepherd in Hakkari.”⁶

⁵ Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Building up of International Solidarity*, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MainIssues/Terrorism/Buildingupofinternationalsolidarity.htm>; (accessed August 6th, 2007)

⁶ Cemal, *Kürtler (Kurds)*, (Istanbul:Doğan Press, 2003), pg.41

This above mentioned quote taken in 1993, gives us a glimpse into Öcalan's mind. The main goal of the PKK was not just reigniting Kurdish nationalism within Turkey, but also gradually assuming a role of being the leader of all Kurds, whether they be in Iran, Syria, Iraq or Turkey. This ideology inevitably put the PKK on a collision course with Messud Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party and Jalal Talabani, the head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. We will look in detail at the complicated relationship between the three parties later on, but let us keep in mind that in a region as complicated as Northern Iraq, there was never a clear cut alliance or hostility between these groups, these perceptions changed as the conditions changed, with only one certainty, they all competed for the same position with the same goal, lead the wave of emerging Kurdish nationalism.

2.3 Chronology of Kurdish Rebellions

Kurdish nationalism did not emerge with the PKK: It had been existent decades before. The PKK just reignited old flames. Although it is not the aim of this paper to go into in detail the historical causes of Kurdish nationalism, it is crucial to realize that the movement long preceded the PKK, and will continue long after the PKK is gone. Let us briefly look at some of the major rebellions aimed at the Turkish state which were sparked by Kurdish nationalism.⁷

The first of these was the *Ali Batı* rebellion in May of 1919. The attempts to

⁷ For a more detailed account into the history of Kurdish nationalist movements in Turkey, please consult, Uğurlu, Nurer. 2006. *Kürt Milliyetçiliği – Kürtler ve Şeyh Sait İsyanı (Kurdish Nationalism-Kurds and the Sheikh Sait Rebellion)*, Istanbul: Örgün Press.

create an autonomous Kurdish region in southeastern Turkey were unsuccessful and it was defeated by military means. The second rebellion was the *Cemil Çato* rebellion of May 1920. This was a joint effort between Armenians and Kurds to establish an Armenian state in eastern Turkey. It was defeated through military means. The third rebellion was the *Milli* tribal rebellion of June, 1920. Through French support, the uprising of the Kurds to establish an autonomous Kurdistan within Turkey was the goal. But due to lack of support from other Kurdish tribes in the region the rebellion was put down by military means. This was followed by the *Koçgiri* rebellion of March 1921. Angry at the rejection of the Sèvres Agreement by the Turks, the Kurds involved in the rebellion tried to set up an independent Kurdistan in the southeast of Turkey. It was put down by military means in 1921. After the creation of the Turkish Republic another major rebellion by the name of *Sheikh Sait* took place in February of 1925. With religious ideology as its base, it was a Kurdish Muslim rebellion aimed at destroying the secular Turkish regime and bringing back the caliphate and Islamic rule. Only through large scale military intervention was the rebellion finally brought under control and defeated by June of the same year.⁸

The latest rebellion of Kurds against the Turkish state is regarded as the formation of the terrorist organization PKK. But before we go back to our analysis of the terrorist organization we will take a brief look at the Sèvres Agreement.

⁸ The source for the dates and description of the *Ali Batı*, *Cemil Çato*, *Milli*, *Koçgiri* and *Sheikh Sait* Kurdish rebellions is, Uğurlu, *Kürt Milliyetçiliği: Kürtler ve Şeyh Sait İsyanı*(*Kurdish Nationalism: Kurds and the Sheikh Sait Rebellion*), (Istanbul: Örgün Press, 2006), pgs. 64, 65 & 72

Signed by the Ottoman government on August 10th, 1920, it was designed to carve out independent Armenian and Kurdish states from the territory of southeastern Turkey. As we saw in our previous look at the Kurdish rebellions, the rejection of the Sèvres agreement by Mustafa Kemal and his followers was a development that resulted in further Kurdish rebellions.

2.4 Sèvres Agreement

Let us look for a moment at what the Sèvres Agreement entailed. The 62nd, 63rd, and 64th Articles stated:

East of the Euphrates River, an Armenian border to be determined in accordance with the 27th Article, sections two and three. Those areas of majority Kurdish population north of Syria and Iraq and within Turkey, will be autonomous.⁹

In the 63rd Article:

The Ottoman government declares from now that it will accept any decision and act upon it within three months, that is made by the committee to be. One year after this agreement goes into effect, the Kurds mentioned in Article 62, if those in regions where they make up the majority, can prove that they wish to be independent from Turkey, can apply to the League of Nations, provided that they met the necessary requirements, Turkey declares that it will accept all the decisions made and relinquishes all its claims and rights on the region. If this relinquishing of rights and claims by Turkey takes place, when it takes place, the parts of Kurdistan that have remained in the Mosul province until now with Kurds residing in it, can if they will it, join the independent Kurdish state.¹⁰

This agreement not only carved out an Armenian state within Turkish

⁹ Uğurlu, *Kürt Milliyetçiliği: Kürtler ve Şeyh Sait İsyanı*(*Kurdish Nationalism: Kurds and the Sheikh Sait Rebellion*), (Istanbul: Örgün Press, 2006), pg.61

¹⁰ Uğurlu, *Kürt Milliyetçiliği: Kürtler ve Şeyh Sait İsyanı*(*Kurdish Nationalism: Kurds and the Sheikh Sait Rebellion*), (Istanbul: Örgün Press, 2006), pg.62

borders, but it also paved the way for the creation of an independent Kurdistan within Turkey. The Turkish nationalists, led by Mustafa Kemal, rejected the agreement and based their movement in Ankara, thus paving the way for a War of Independence. To this day any talk of autonomy or independence for Kurds in northern Iraq is a very sensitive subject in Turkey. Some see a future independence for Kurds in northern Iraq as a return of the Sèvres Agreement being imposed on Turkey once again. Others say this is mere ‘Sèvres Paranoia’ created by Turkish nationalists in order to bring to a halt the reforms necessary in gaining entry into the European Union.

In a letter to President Jimmy Carter in February of 1977, Mustafa Barzani had this to say about the Sèvres Agreement:

The 1920 Sèvres Agreement in equivalence with other nations that made up the Ottoman Empire, gave Kurds the right to determine their own destiny. But international interests prevented Kurds from realizing this goal.¹¹

Such views that have been voiced freely and without any reservations by the leaders of the Kurdish movement throughout the decades that followed the Lausanne Treaty, caused rightful suspicions and fears among Turks about the true intentions of the Kurds that were asking for autonomy and independence in northern Iraq.

Now that we have taken a brief look at the major acts of rebellion instigated

¹¹ Öznur, *Cahşların Savaşı – Kuzey Irak Kürt Hareketi ve Musul-Kerkük Meselesi (War of the Cahş - Northern Iraq Kurdish Movement and Mosul, Kirkuk Problems)*, (Ankara: Altinküre Press, 2003), pg.242

by Kurdish nationalism, let us get back to the latest rebellion begun by the PKK in 1984. It shares certain characteristics with the previous rebellions in that foreign support is abundant, and it aims for the creation of an independent Kurdistan. It also requires the support of the local population to succeed. But the PKK differs in that, instead of conventional warfare with the state, it relies on unconventional guerilla tactics, aimed at canceling out the military superiority of the Turkish Armed Forces.

2.5 Turkish Military and Unconventional Warfare

The PKK initially avoided direct contact with the security forces. There were two reasons for this. The first was it was not yet ready militarily to engage the armed forces, potential defeats could have damaged the prestige of the organization in the eyes of the local population for which so much depended on if the PKK wanted to succeed. And the second reason was that the PKK first needed to eliminate rival revolutionary groups active in the region which also aimed to establish their own authority. Such groups were leftist in ideology and relied on Marxist principles much like Öcalan and his followers did. These groups that were forcibly put out of the equation by the PKK were; ‘People’s Revolutionary Union’, ‘People’s Freedom’, ‘Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Union’ and other smaller groups active in the region.¹² This strategy was successful in that it established their authority and grasp on the region very early on, and gave a warning to all those that

¹² Özdağ, *Türk Ordusunun PKK Operasyonları: 1984 – 2007 (PKK Operations of the Turkish Army: 1984 – 2007)*, (Istanbul: Pegasus, 2007), pg. 33

stood in their way that they meant serious business. The Turkish security forces were caught by surprise at the success the PKK enjoyed in the late 1980's. The PKK had successfully planted its militants in major cities all throughout the southeast of Turkey, and was actively waging a war of propaganda by eroding the trust of the local population on the government's security forces. Successive ambushes on military targets and the targeting of civilians in rural villages had caused the local population to fear the organization. The state was caught unprepared to fight an unconventional war with an enemy that farmed his land, or tended his livestock by day and picked up his AK-47 by night.

The period from 13th of December 1983 to 9th of November 1989 corresponded with the Özal government's period in power in Turkey. Turgut Özal, Prime Minister at the time, initially never took the PKK threat seriously. He looked at the PKK as a bunch of anarchist youth, and did not realize the potential of the threat.¹³ As a result many of the precautions that needed to be taken, such as re-training the security personnel to deal with a mobile, unconventional threat, fortifying security outposts in rural areas, cutting foreign funding to the terrorist organization and shifting the security responsibilities of the region from the Gendarmerie to better trained Special Forces, were all neglected. Below is what General Necati Özgen, who was in charge of the period between 1991 to 1993 as the head of Regional Gendarmerie Security in South Eastern Turkey, had to say in an interview with Turkish journalist Hasan Cemal:

¹³ Cemal, *Kürtler (Kurds)*, (Istanbul:Doğan Press, 2003), pg.72

Summer of 1991, when I took over as head of Gendarmerie, the region was a fire zone, there was no state! We were not ready. The Gendarmerie stations held up to 20, sometimes 10 troops. But those stations were all built to engage smugglers. Only later were the outposts fortified, the district Commando units, tanks, helicopters, night vision equipment, snow vehicles were all brought in. Special Forces training were given to specialized units. These developments began to speed up especially in 1992.¹⁴

As Özgen's experience shows, the Turkish Armed Forces were unprepared during the 1980's. That decade was enough time to give PKK a psychological advantage in that it was able to terrify the local population into submission. Here is what one villager in the south east had to say regarding the PKK; "You are at the foot of the mountain. The man comes (PKK). Yes, you are loyal to your country and people, but the man will kill everyone in the village if you don't comply. What can you do but comply?"¹⁵

The period starting from the formation of PKK until the year 1992, in which the Turkish Armed Forces began to put the PKK on the defensive, the terrorist organization conducted three so-called Congresses. The first of these was on November 27th, 1978 in Diyarbakır.¹⁶ This was the Congress which declared Abdullah Öcalan as the head of the PKK. It was used as a meeting to cement his authority among his followers. The 2nd Congress was to be held from August 20th to 25th, 1982 in the Bekaa valley under Syrian control.¹⁷ This Congress was important

¹⁴ Cemal, *Kürtler (Kurds)*, (Istanbul:Doğan Press, 2003), pg. 163

¹⁵ Cemal, *Kürtler (Kurds)*, (Istanbul:Doğan Press, 2003), pg. 71

¹⁶ International Strategic Research Organization, (2006), "Chronology of the PKK Terrorist Organization, 1978 – 2006", (accessed Sunday May 27, 2007), www.usakgundem.com/pdfs/USAK_PKK_Kronoloji.pdf

¹⁷ International Strategic Research Organization, (2006), "Chronology of the PKK Terrorist Organization, 1978 – 2006", (accessed Sunday May 27, 2007), www.usakgundem.com/pdfs/USAK_PKK_Kronoloji.pdf

in two respects. The first of these was that it was made possible due to the sponsorship of Syrian intelligence, which had introduced Öcalan to members of the ‘Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine’ (PFLP).¹⁸ The PFLP would be crucial in both training PKK militants in guerilla tactics and explosives as well as providing training camps in the Bekaa valley for PKK use. These were the same camps which had trained ‘Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia’ (ASALA) militants previously, a hotbed of terrorist activity right under the eyes of the Syrian government. The second reason this particular congress was important is because the PKK decided to move into Northern Iraq. Northern Iraq meant Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) territory, but this was not a problem since Messud Barzani did not refuse when Syrians approached him for permission. Some militants crossed directly through to northern Iraq. Those that couldn’t because of Iraqi security controls, were transported through Iran with the help of the Iranian intelligence.¹⁹ The triangle of Syrian, Iranian and KDP/PUK assistance allowed the PKK to maneuver freely across the region.

The third Congress of the PKK was held from October 25th to 30th, 1986 in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon.²⁰ This Congress signaled a move by Öcalan to start targeting loyalist villages and soft targets such as teachers, doctors, and other public servants in the hopes of eroding any hopes that villagers in the region may

¹⁸ Özdağ, *Türk Ordusunun PKK Operasyonları: 1984 – 2007 (PKK Operations of the Turkish Army: 1984 – 2007)*, (Istanbul: Pegasus, 2007), pg. 38

¹⁹ Özdağ, *Türk Ordusunun PKK Operasyonları: 1984 – 2007 (PKK Operations of the Turkish Army: 1984 – 2007)*, (Istanbul: Pegasus, 2007), pg. 43

²⁰ International Strategic Research Organization, (2006), “Chronology of the PKK Terrorist Organization, 1978 – 2006”, (accessed Sunday May 27, 2007), www.usakgundem.com/pdfs/USAK_PKK_Kronoloji.pdf

have had of resuming a normal life. A system was set up in 1985 by the Turkish government which created temporary village guards to assist the security forces in protecting rural areas. The extremely rugged and mountainous terrain of southeastern Turkey made it almost impossible for the security forces to protect the thousands of villages located in remote areas, thus making them vulnerable to PKK ambushes. To alleviate this threat, a law was passed which allowed village volunteers to be assigned a salary and arms for protection by the state so that they could protect their own villages from the terrorist threat. This system irritated the PKK, as certain government-loyal villages began to cause the PKK considerable casualties. Öcalan wanted to make an example out of these loyalists so that in the future all villagers would think twice before taking up arms against the PKK. The decision taken in the third Congress served this goal. As a result the PKK began attacking villages suspected of aiding the security forces, killing all inhabitants of the villages in the process.

2.6 PKK – Financing of Activities

There is no shortage of financial resources for the PKK as it has links to many intelligence networks around the world. Öcalan, in his own words admits during an interview in April of 1993:

You take a movement from zero, and bring it to where it is today. But we are still not taken seriously, Can this be? The West takes us seriously, offers for meetings are flying in from everywhere, yet Ankara pretends like we don't exist. In the West, government and state doors are open to aid the PKK. At first even the West was not like this with us. However they saw that the PKK gained real strength. They decided to change their policies

towards us. The Prime Minister of Finland met with me. Belgium is still meeting with me. United Kingdom parliament is also holding talks with the PKK. Our representatives go to the United States. The same is true with Iran. There are talks being held in all Caucasian countries. Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan are all areas in which we are active. Support for the Kurdish people is at its peak. Compared to before we are both militarily and politically stronger. Turkey's public opinion is supporting us. But still we are ignored in Ankara.²¹

Even if we take all of the above mentioned as purely a terrorist's propaganda, this does not mean the PKK secures its financial needs only through legal means. According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the main sources of PKK funds are generated through extortion of Turkish and Kurdish businessmen both within Turkey and abroad, drug trafficking into Europe through Turkey, arms smuggling, smuggling of refugees to Western countries, sales of publications, and organizing of special fund raising concerts and nights.²² The US Department of State, in its 'Country Reports on Terrorism – 2005', states that the PKK has received safe haven and aid from Syria, Iraq and Iran. The report also mentions that two media outlets were located in Belgium that served as the mouthpiece of PKK: *BRD Corporation Media Production Company* and *ROJ NV*.²³ The *ROJ NV* also moved its operations to Denmark later on, and was the cause of a crisis between the governments of Denmark and Turkey. However this channel continues to air its terrorist propaganda under the protection of the Danish government.

²¹ Cemal, *Kürtler (Kurds)*, (Istanbul:Doğan Press, 2003), pg. 38

²² Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Financing of Its Activities*, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MainIssues/Terrorism/Financingofitsactivities.htm>

²³ U.S. Department Of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, (2005), "Country Reports on Terrorism 2005", <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/65462.pdf>, pg.206

The Newspaper '*Özgür Politika*' which is PKK-owned, continued to be sold freely in Germany until September 5th, 2004 when it was banned.²⁴ However, an appeal made to German judiciary by the PKK sympathizers resulted in the ban being lifted soon after. The newspaper continues to be sold today in Germany, with revenues going directly to financing of PKK terrorist activity.

'EUROPOL', which is a European Police Force aimed at fostering the cooperation of European Union member countries to battle terrorism, drug trafficking and other illegal activities taking place within the Union, has also been active in tracking PKK activities. EUROPOL states that the PKK takes part in kidnappings, smuggling of illegal immigrants into the EU, trafficking of drugs and running prostitution rings in order to raise funds.²⁵

With such a network operating worldwide, from the Middle East, to the European Union to Canada and beyond, the PKK is quite successful in obtaining the financial backing it needs to continue its operations. This is not an issue the Turkish government can tackle alone; it needs the cooperation of all states involved within the framework of the 'Global War on Terrorism'.

2.7 PKK in the 1990's

Beginning with the new strategy adopted by the Turkish Armed Forces in 1992, the PKK began to find itself losing ground on all fronts. Successive cross

²⁴ U.S. Department Of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, (2005), "Country Reports on Terrorism 2005", <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/65462.pdf>, pg.206

²⁵ Çağaptay, "How Can Europe Address its PKK Problem?", Transatlantic Institute Briefing (accessed January 2007), www.washingtoninstitute.org/opedsPDFs/45783105c171b.pdf

border operations by the Turkish military in the 90's would further erode its power base and camps in northern Iraq.

Let us look at some statistical figures given by General Yaşar Büyükanıt, Chief of Turkey's General Staff, during his Turkish General Staff Press Briefing on 12th of April, 2007. General Büyükanıt stated:

In the year **1992: 496** soldiers died in action, **955** wounded due to the battle with PKK terrorism, in **1993: 538** soldiers died in action, **996** wounded, in **1994: 867** died in action, **206** wounded, in **1995: 615** died in action, **342** wounded. **Today you cannot generate solutions by keeping the PKK separate from Northern Iraq, and Northern Iraq separate from the rest of Iraq. They are all organically related.** The first turning point in the war against the PKK was the first Gulf War. During this war Turkey gave full support to the Coalition forces. But in the end Turkey ended up suffering as a result. At the end of the war hundreds of thousands of refugees piled up at Turkey's borders.²⁶

The second turning point according to General Büyükanıt was the no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel:

The no fly zone also established a protected area for PKK forces to operate in. This situation still continues. The list of casualties I stated previously, all correspond to this time frame, this was the turning point. Unfortunately the third stage has also been as a result of another Gulf War. Turkey has once again been hurt by the war for two reasons. The first being, it has been locked into its geography. The second being, PKK has gained immense freedom and huge amounts of weapons and ammunitions have fallen into its hands from the remains of the former Iraqi army. You might ask this: 'Should a military operation be conducted in northern Iraq?' Yes it should. This has two dimensions. The first, when looked at through the eyes of the military, yes it should be conducted. Will it have benefits? Yes it will.²⁷

The messages given in this speech were loud and clear. First and foremost it

²⁶ "Büyükanıt'ın Konuşmasının Tam Metni ", *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (12th April, 2007), http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/6321761_p.asp; (accessed April 12th, 2007)

²⁷ "Büyükanıt'ın Konuşmasının Tam Metni" , *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (12th April, 2007), http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/6321761_p.asp (accessed April 12th, 2007)

was a green light to the ‘Justice and Development Party’ (AKP), and Prime Minister Erdoğan, to take the necessary steps so that the Turkish Armed Forces could enter northern Iraq. The second message was that northern Iraq under its current conditions will continue to be a base for PKK terrorists. The power vacuum left by the Kurdish Regional Government’s tolerance and support of the PKK was the reason for the recent escalation in PKK attacks on security forces. As mentioned before in the paper, the PKK has always prospered when Turkey’s neighboring regions have been unstable. General Büyükanıt draws the same conclusions as he states that during the first Gulf War, due to the refugee crisis and the no fly zone safe haven, the PKK had been able to deliver such blows to the security forces. Today a similar climate exists in northern Iraq, and a military operation is necessary to disrupt the comfort and safety under which the PKK operates. The important question here is, what had the Turkish Armed Forces achieved in the 1990’s with cross border operations? Were they effective in battling the PKK? How many were conducted and under what legal basis? Let us now answer these important questions, which will also shed some light on whether or not such an operation in the future will be as effective as General Büyükanıt claims it would.

2.8 Hot Pursuit

The legal basis for the 24 cross border operations the Turkish Armed Forces conducted from 1983 to 1999 was the February 1983 treaty between Turkey and

Iraq on 'Border Security and Cooperation'.²⁸ This treaty gave both sides the permission to engage in hot pursuit of terrorists. The term 'Hot Pursuit' was actually based on a 1982 United Nations Maritime Law which allowed states to pursue those which have violated its laws into international borders if need be.²⁹ Through a bilateral agreement, both Iraq and Turkey agreed to extend this law to encompass land forces. It is important to point out that in 1988, Iraq requested permission from Turkey so that its troops could cross into Turkish soil in pursuit of Kurdish refugees; however Turkey refused permission on the grounds that the refugees did not present a national security threat to Iraq.³⁰ As a result, Iraq cancelled the 'Border and Security Cooperation Treaty' in 1988. The subsequent operations Turkey conducted in northern Iraq drew the protests of the Iraqi government and coincided with a time period when the Saddam Hussein regime was supporting the PKK terrorists.

According to Serhat Erkmen, an expert on the Middle East desk of 'Eurasia Strategic Research Center' (ASAM), throughout the period from 1991 until 1998 Turkey was the most active force within northern Iraq. He states that the factors that contributed to this effective role in the region included the need for Turkish support by the different groups in northern Iraq (KDP & PUK), the issuing of

²⁸ Fırat, Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt II (Turkish Foreign Policy : Facts, Documents and Interpretations from the War of Independence Until Today, 2nd Volume)*, pg. 133

²⁹ Keskin, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt II (Turkish Foreign Policy : Facts, Documents and Interpretations from the War of Independence Until Today, 2nd Volume)*, pg. 134

³⁰ Fırat, Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt II (Turkish Foreign Policy : Facts, Documents and Interpretations from the War of Independence Until Today, 2nd Volume)*, pg. 138

Turkish diplomatic passports to Barzani and Talabani, economic aid given to these groups by Turkey, multi-national NGO's entering the region through Turkey, black market petroleum flow into Turkey from Northern Iraq, the entrance of basic goods from Turkey into Iraq, the Turkish military and Special Forces presence in the region, and cross border operations.³¹ The decade of 1990 also saw the two prominent Kurdish parties in the region, the KDP and PUK, collapse into armed conflict. Turkey took advantage of this division and acted both as a broker of peace, as well as using the differences between the KDP and PUK to its own advantage. As a part of the peace force that was deployed to the region, Turkey was able to place its intelligence personnel as well as Special Forces in the major cities in northern Iraq. Intelligence was the number one priority, both in keeping PKK activity in the region under surveillance as well as monitoring KDP and PUK movements. Iran was also actively involved in the conflict, providing support to the PUK, while Turkey opted to shift towards the KDP, sometimes coordinating joint attacks on the PKK with Barzani's peshmerga (Kurdish Militia).

2.9 Cross Border Operations of the Turkish Military

Instead of chronologically going through each of the 24 cross border operations the Turkish Armed Forces engaged in, let us look at the major operations that took place and the effects it had on the PKK.

The Operation of 25th May, 1983 was the first military incursion into

³¹ Erkmen, "Türkiye'nin Kuzey Irak Perspektifi ve Hareket Alanı (Turkey's Northern Iraq Perspective and Areas of Movement)", Strategic Analysis, (June, 2007), <http://www.asam.org.tr/>

northern Iraq by the Turkish Armed Forces.³² At the time the PKK had settled into the camps owned and operated by the KDP. These camps were located very close to the Turkish border. Main aim of PKK was to engage in hit and run tactics on Turkish security outposts in a region the PKK referred to as ‘*Botan*’.³³ It included the provinces of Siirt, Van and Hakkari, the strongholds of PKK militant activity.³⁴ The operation targeted KDP camps. Included 7,000 troops that crossed 5km. into the Iraqi border.³⁵ The success of the operation can be measured by the words of Şemdin Sakık, the PKK’s top militant at the time. The Turkish Armed Forces captured Şemdin Sakık in a secret raid in northern Iraq on April 13th, 1998. Charged and convicted for the deaths of more than 200 people, about half of them civilians, including the killing of 33 unarmed Turkish soldiers, who were dragged off a bus and executed.³⁶ Sakık recalled, “I was at the KDP controlled ‘*Haftanin*’ Camp on 22nd May, 1983 (Time period of the Turkish Military Operation). We felt defeated, destroyed. On 15th of June, 1983, I crossed back into Şırnak.”³⁷

Shortly after the operation, the KDP and PKK signed a protocol of

³² Fırat, Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt II (Turkish Foreign Policy : Facts, Documents and Interpretations from the War of Independence Until Today, 2nd Volume)*, pg. 133

³³ Please refer to Appendix A for a map of southeastern Turkey and the region referred to as ‘*Botan*’ by the PKK

³⁴ Özdağ, *Türk Ordusunun PKK Operasyonları: 1984 – 2007 (PKK Operations of the Turkish Army: 1984 – 2007)*, (Istanbul: Pegasus, 2007), pg. 42

³⁵ Fırat, Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt II (Turkish Foreign Policy : Facts, Documents and Interpretations from the War of Independence Until Today, 2nd Volume)*, pg. 133

³⁶ “World – Europe Kurdish Leader Goes to Trial”, BBC, (September 3rd, 1998), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/163622.stm>, (accessed August 15th, 2007)

³⁷ Günay, *Şemdin Sakık Anlatıyor: Kobralar Üzerimize Gelince Aklımızı Kaçırtıyorduk (Şemdin Sakık Describes: When the Cobra’s Came at us, We Used to Lose Our Mind)*, (Istanbul: Doğan Press, 2007), pg.30 & pg.31

cooperation, ‘PKK, KDP Cooperation Principles’ in July of 1983. The protocol was signed in Damascus, and the main points it entailed are as follows:

1. To be against imperialism of all sorts, especially American,
2. To fight the fascist regimes of Turkey and Iraq which are the enemies of the people in the region,
3. Instead of quarreling among ourselves, among ideological lines, and aiding our enemy, we should act together in our struggle, and to settle any disputes through talks and not the use of arms,
4. Not to intervene in each others domestic affairs,
5. Aim of victory for the Kurdish nation.³⁸

The alliance between the KDP and PKK would last until the year 1987, when the KDP decided, both due to disagreements with Öcalan and to its mounting losses as a result of Turkish military activity and political pressure, that it was time to cancel the protocol of alliance.³⁹ The complicated nature of the hostile relations between Barzani and Talabani played a big role as well. Soon after KDP broke off with PKK, the PUK stepped in and would sign a similar protocol of alliance with the terrorist organization.

As mentioned before, in a region like northern Iraq, there are no long term alliances or hostilities. All agreements and disagreements are temporary and subject to change according to developments. If one wants to gain a healthy understanding of the relations between the Kurdish groups in the region, one must keep in mind that it is not just a chess game that all sides are playing, it is more like a multi

³⁸ Öznur, *Cahşların Savaşı – Kuzey Irak Kürt Hareketi ve Musul- Kerkük Meselesi (War of the Cahş - Northern Iraq Kurdish Movement and Mosul, Kirkuk Problems)*, (Ankara: Altinküre Press, 2003), pg.622 & pg.623

³⁹ Fırat, Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt II (Turkish Foreign Policy : Facts, Documents and Interpretations from the War of Independence Until Today, 2nd Volume)*, pg. 136

dimensional chess game that is all intertwined and going on simultaneously. To decipher this enigma let alone formulate successful strategies to deal with it, is an extremely difficult undertaking. As Turkish policy makers have figured out through painful experience, winning the military aspect of the conflict does not ensure success in the region. The politicians need to make wiser decisions based on first hand information on the ground. This can only be done through access to first hand and reliable intelligence. As Serhat Erkmen had pointed out in his analysis of Turkish foreign policy in the region, access to such intelligence had been at the disposal of Turkish policy makers in the 1990's. Therefore, the trend we see in the Turkish Military incursions into northern Iraq tends to portray a series of well coordinated and focused pinpoint Special Forces and Commando raids into PKK camps. This strategy worked in a way in that it eliminated PKK shelters and ammunition storage facilities which made survival in winter conditions extremely difficult. Night vision equipment, attack helicopters that could operate at night, and other similar gear was obtained as a result of the increased spending the Armed Forces took in the 1990's for modernization purposes, all paid dividends in the fight against the PKK.

According to Professor Özdağ, a large amount of spending on the modernization of the Turkish Armed Forces had only begun in the 1990's because the Özal government had largely held back extra funds needed for the Armed Forces. The ability to conduct night time operations with the assistance of attack helicopters was obtained in 1990 through the purchase of AH-1 W *Super Cobra*

Attack Helicopters. By 1994, the military had at their disposal 27 AH-1 Cobra and 10 AH-1 Super Cobra Attack Helicopters.⁴⁰ This meant that the PKK, once located, could be targeted immediately with deadly force.

The real progress in the war against the PKK came during the Demirel and Çiller governments. During the Demirel era, the military was given the funds necessary to modernize its equipment. However it was during Tansu Çiller's term as Prime Minister that the whole resources of the Turkish state were mobilized against the PKK.

There were three major military incursions into northern Iraq during the Demirel and Çiller governments. The first of these was the *Hakur Operation* of October of 1992 during the Demirel Government. Attempts of the PKK to create 'salvaged' areas free of the presence of Turkish Armed Forces were dealt a severe blow with this operation.⁴¹ Under the Çiller government the *Zeli Operation* of January of 1994 took place. It was an Air Force supported operation, with heavy bombing and troop incursion into northern Iraq.⁴² The second major incursion into northern Iraq under the Çiller government was 'Operation Steel' of March of 1995. It was the biggest military operation conducted by the Turkish military outside of its borders to that date. Around 35,000 troops with air support entered into northern

⁴⁰ Özdağ, *Türk Ordusunun PKK Operasyonları: 1984 – 2007 (PKK Operations of the Turkish Army: 1984 – 2007)*, (Istanbul: Pegasus, 2007), pg. 119

⁴¹ International Strategic Research Organization, (2006), "Chronology of the PKK Terrorist Organization, 1978 – 2006", (accessed Sunday May 27, 2007), www.usakgundem.com/pdfs/USAK_PKK_Kronoloji.pdf

⁴² International Strategic Research Organization, (2006), "Chronology of the PKK Terrorist Organization, 1978 – 2006", (accessed Sunday May 27, 2007), www.usakgundem.com/pdfs/USAK_PKK_Kronoloji.pdf

Iraq.⁴³ The main target was the city of *Zakho* close to the Turkish border. It was believed at the time that due to the high degree of casualties that the PKK suffered as a result, and the degree of the destruction of their camps, that they would cease to be a major threat to Turkish security forces any longer. Below is what then-Prime Minister, Tansu Çiller had to say about the operation in March of 1995:

This is not a 10 day operation! We will stay until we are a 100% satisfied that we have met our objectives. We did not limit our operation in time or in scope. This will be a decisive blow to the PKK. We needed to clean Northern Iraq to fully control the regions on our side. Due to the lack of authority present there, and disputes between Barzani and Talabani, PKK was able to gain strength in Northern Iraq.”⁴⁴

As stated before, Çiller not only gave the green light for the most comprehensive cross border military operation in the history of Turkey, but she also mobilized all the resources of the Turkish state in the war against the PKK. This was done with the assistance of the Turkish Police Forces. Head of Turkish Police at the time (July, 1993) was Mehmet Ağar, a man that would later enter politics and rise to the top in the same party that Tansu Çiller headed, ‘True Path Party’ (DYP). Deeply trusted by then-Prime Minister Çiller, Mr. Ağar was given the task of creating a ‘Special Operations Unit’ within the Turkish Police. Mehmet Ağar immediately called on Korkut Eken, a former member of the National Intelligence Agency (MIT) and member of the ‘Special Warfare Unit’ within the Turkish Armed Forces, to pick and train the personnel that would make up this

⁴³Lyons, “Turkish Jets Blast Kurds in Iraq”, *The Independent Newspaper*, (March 21st, 1995), www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-4705951.html , (accessed July 21st, 2007)

⁴⁴ Cemal, *Kürtler (Kurds)*, (Istanbul:Doğan Press, 2003), pg. 260

specialized unit.⁴⁵ The Special Operations Units made their way to the trouble spots in the southeast and were very effective in combating PKK militants.

If one year could be picked out that would be deemed as the most successful year in combating the PKK, it would be 1995. By the end of that year, the rank and file members of the organization were scattered around northern Iraq, and hiding out until the PKK could re-group. In the sixth Congress of the organization, held through May 1st, 1996 to May 15th, 1996, Öcalan decided to adopt the strategy of suicide attacks.⁴⁶ This was interpreted by many analysts as a last ditch attempt by the PKK to prove its status as a major threat to Turkish national security. Although several suicide attacks were carried out by the PKK after the decision of the sixth Congress, it did not live up to the expectations of Öcalan who had envisioned a level of violence parallel to those that Palestinian suicide bombers had caused in Israel.

2.10 Foreign Aid to the PKK

The PKK had been on the verge of collapse by the end of 1995, and it was in dire need of support. The distress signal sent by Öcalan produced immediate results in the form of a combination of Greek, Armenian, Syrian, Iranian, Iraqi, and Kurdish support to the organization.

The period from 1996 up until February 16th, 1999, when Abdullah Öcalan

⁴⁵ Öztürk, *Madalyalı Mahkum (Convict With a Medal)*, (Istanbul:Doğan Press, 2007), pg.109

⁴⁶ International Strategic Research Organization, (2006), “Chronology of the PKK Terrorist Organization, 1978 – 2006”, (accessed Sunday May 27, 2007), www.usakgundem.com/pdfs/USAK_PKK_Kronoloji.pdf

was caught in Kenya by Turkish authorities, was marked by fascinating yet shocking evidence of a number of states being caught red handed in supporting a terrorist organization. Before we go any further, it is important to keep in mind that the problem of PKK terrorism was used as a trump card by Turkey's neighboring states. And under such circumstances, no matter how successful or comprehensive the Turkish Armed Force's incursions into northern Iraq were, the results would only be short term.

Steven A. Cook, an expert on U.S. Middle East policy as well as Turkish politics, was interviewed by Bernard Gwertzman of the 'Council on Foreign Relations' (A highly respected and non-partisan think tank in the United States). Cook called the rising tensions between the United States and Turkey as the great underreported story of the 2003 war in Iraq. He stated, "On the political level everything that the Turks said they feared would happen, and would negatively affect their security, has in fact happened in Iraq. And their concerns are, as we started talking about, the PKK & Kurdish nationalism."⁴⁷ There are two very important points here. The first of these is that no matter how much Turkey tries to keep the issue of PKK terrorism on the global agenda, its efforts tend to be fruitless. The second important point being that, Turkey has always pointed to what its security needs are before hand, giving advanced warning to all states in the region as to the problems that might occur in the future if the PKK continues to

⁴⁷ Council on Foreign Relations, "Cook: Turkish – US Tensions: Great Underreported Story of Iraq War", (May 29th, 2007), <http://www.cfr.org/publication/12963cook.html> , (accessed July 2nd, 2007)

base its operations in northern Iraq. However these warnings have so far fallen on deaf ears, and the situation has reached its boiling point.

Let us first look at the Syrian patronage of the PKK and the events leading up to the ultimatum given to Syria by General Atilla Ateş on September 16th, 1998. Head of the Turkish Land Forces at the time, during a visit to the Hatay province, in a move planned out and calculated before, General Ateş pointed to the Syrian border and stated:

As the Turkish state we are trying to establish good relations with our neighbors. Despite our good intentions and efforts, some of our neighbors, and I will state the name clearly, Syria, is misjudging our good will. They have caused Turkey to suffer from the evil of terrorism due to their support of the terrorist Apo (Abdullah Öcalan). All troubles originate from Syria.⁴⁸

Going hand in hand with this ultimatum, President Demirel also made it clear to Syria that if it did not change its policies towards the PKK, Turkey would take action. Troop deployments to the Syrian border were simultaneously conducted by the Turkish Armed Forces. The message was clear, stop supporting PKK, or we will declare war. Shortly afterwards, Öcalan was asked to leave Damascus by the Syrian authorities.

Below is what Abdullah Öcalan had to say regarding PKK's ties to Syria in April of 1993:

As for Syria's support for us, or what you label as support, there is no decrease, but an increase. But I am not making an analysis stating that Syria used to support us more, or is now supporting us more. Syria's role in our struggle is stronger and longer in validity.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ "Suriye'ye Sabrımız Kalmadı (No more Patience for Syria)", *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (17th September, 1998), <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=-38649>, (accessed July 14th, 2007)

⁴⁹ Cemal, *Kürtler (Kurds)*, (Istanbul:Doğan Press, 2003), pg.41

Head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), Jalal Talabani seems to corroborate Öcalan's words in an interview he gave to PUK's weekly publication, Al-Wasat in February of 1999:

Reporter: "Where did you first meet Öcalan?"

Jalal Talabani: "When I first met him, he was a young refugee, He lived in our party's headquarters in Syria."

Reporter: "Were your relations good with Öcalan?"

Jalal Talabani: "I saw him a couple of times in Damascus. The PKK's relations with our party were going well. Öcalan was in favor of an immediate beginning to armed struggle. Others were reluctant. Thanks to us, Öcalan met Palestinian resistance fighters."⁵⁰

Jalal Talabani had similar statements during a meeting with officials of the Turkish Foreign Ministry at the Foreign Ministry in Ankara on the 26th of June, 1992:

PKK is at the moment using Iran and Armenia as a base. On the other hand I doubt that Syria has distanced itself from this organization. Syrians are playing this role of distancing themselves from the PKK as a part of their game plan. However it is hard to believe the PKK has exited this country.⁵¹

The above admissions of Abdullah Öcalan and Jalal Talabani of the role of Syria in relation to PKK help explain why the Turkish Armed Forces and government felt the need to make such an ultimatum to Syria. What followed was more like a world tour for Öcalan, after he was forced out of Syria on October 9th, 1998. He was sent to Moscow, where he stayed a little over a month. After Turkish Intelligence contacted Russian authorities and informed them about their

⁵⁰ Öznur, *Cahşların Savaşı – Kuzey Irak Kürt Hareketi ve Musul- Kerkük Meselesi (War of the Cahş - Northern Iraq Kurdish Movement and Mosul, Kirkuk Problems)*, (Ankara: Altinküre Press, 2003), pg.736 & pg.737

⁵¹ Özkan, *Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı: MİT'in Gizli Tarihi (The Secret History of the National Intelligence Agency- MIT)*, (Istanbul: Alfa Press, 2005), pg. 528

knowledge of Öcalan's whereabouts, the Russians, despite denying the allegations, forced Öcalan out the backdoor. In November of 1998, Öcalan arrived in Rome and stayed there until January of 1999.⁵² The next stop on Öcalan's world tour was Athens. Greeks decided that keeping Öcalan in Athens was too much of a risk and sent him to their embassy in Kenya. Through the help of the CIA with its large Nairobi office, Öcalan was finally caught by Turkish authorities on February 14th, 1999, after he exited the Greek embassy in Nairobi.⁵³

The capture of Öcalan while under the protection of the Greek Foreign Ministry was broadcast worldwide and was the cause of a big political scandal in Greece. According to Neophytos G. Loizides, an academic expert on Greco-Turkish relations, politicians in Greece often used the unresolved problems with Turkey as a trump card during domestic political campaigns, hoping to gain quick spikes in the polls.⁵⁴ The issue of PKK terrorism was another trump card which both the Greek government and its intelligence services were using against Turkey. The prime minister in Greece during the Öcalan crisis of February 1999 was Kostas Simitis of the 'PASOK' party. He was heavily criticized by the opposition in Greece for making a mess of the Öcalan issue, and damaging Greece's image in international relations. Below is what Öcalan had to say about Greece's actions and the reasons for Greek support to the PKK during an interview with Turkish

⁵² Uzgel, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt II (Turkish Foreign Policy : Facts, Documents and Interpretations from the War of Independence Until Today, 2nd Volume)*, pg. 296

⁵³ Fırat, Kürkçüoğlu, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, Cilt II (Turkish Foreign Policy : Facts, Documents and Interpretations from the War of Independence Until Today, 2nd Volume)*,pg. 296

journalist Tuncay Özkan:

What is important is the role of Greece. This has to be seen clearly. What Greece did is horrendous. It was done on purpose. They are not honest. Greece through me being eliminated wanted to spark a Turkish – Kurdish war in Turkey. Pangalos (Theodoros Pangalos, Foreign Minister of Greece during the Öcalan crisis, was forced to resign after the scandal) insisting incredibly that I be thrown out of the Greek Embassy in Kenya was a horrible incident and plan. Me going to Greece initially was due to his invitation. They wanted to use us, but when I failed to cooperate in their plot, they then wanted to eliminate me.⁵⁵

The words of Öcalan speak a great deal as to just how complicated and multifaceted the international chess game on the PKK was and still is. At this juncture to call the PKK a Turkish problem would be a gross misjudgment. From the PKK bases that were in Syria, Iran, Armenia to the involvement of Greek officials, to the role of Russian intelligence, CIA, MOSSAD, and to northern Iraq, the present day home of the PKK, what we are seeing is the PKK being used as a tool to damage Turkey's stability and security. We often hear of the phrase 'The Global War on Terror', however here we see an example of the reverse in effect, 'The Global Support of Terror.' And unfortunately in the latter case the intelligence personnel of these states seem to be cooperating much more efficiently.

This support of the PKK resulted in the deaths of more than 30,000 civilians and Turkish security forces, according to Press Statement released by the U.S. Department of State on August 14th, 2006.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Neophytos G. Loizides, "Greek - Turkish Dilemmas and the Cyprus EU Accession Process", *Security Dialogue*, Volume 33, Number 4, pg. 434

⁵⁵ Özkan, *Abdullah Öcalan: Neden Verildi? Nasıl Yakalandı? Ne Olacak? (Abdullah Öcalan – Why was he handed over? How was he caught? What will happen?)*, (Istanbul: Alfa Press, 2005) pgs.2 – 4

⁵⁶ United States Department of State, McCormack, "Turkey:22nd Anniversary of PKK Violence", (August 14th, 2006), <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/70550.htm> , (accessed July 2nd, 2007)

As tragic and striking as these numbers are, it is important to point out that they do not take into account unreported crimes and deaths. The PKK is known to execute many of its own militants due to insubordination and escape attempts, and these figures are not included. The economic impact of the years of extraordinary security precautions taken in the region, the lack of investment, unemployment and military expenses is said to have cost the Turkish state around 100 billion US Dollars since the mid 1980's.⁵⁷ With that amount of money spent on the fight against terrorism, instead of being channeled to building more schools, hospitals, factories, dams, and other investments badly needed in the region, the situation has turned into a cycle of unemployment, rise in volunteers for joining the PKK and mass migration to the western cities of Turkey from the southeast.

⁵⁷ Eligür, "Turkish-American Relations Since the 2003 Iraqi War: A Troubled Partnership", Brandeis University , Center for Middle Eastern Studies, <http://www.brandeis.edu/centers/crown/publications/MEB/MEB9.pdf> , (accessed May 1st, 2007)

CHAPTER III

POST-MARCH 2003 IRAQI POLITICS

3.1 Introduction

We have had a detailed look at the PKK in our previous section, analyzed its ideology, methods of operation and its links to foreign state sponsors. Now let us shift our attention to Iraq. As General Yaşar Büyükanıt stated during his press statement on April 12th, 2007, it is impossible to find a solution to the problem of PKK terrorism without looking at Iraq and its role. This section of the thesis is aimed at answering some key questions regarding post-March 2003 Iraq. Was there sufficient planning by the Pentagon on how to control a post-war Iraq? Who are the key players in Iraqi politics? What is the nature of the partnership between the Kurds and the United States? Why hasn't the United States taken concrete steps in dealing with the issue of PKK activity in Iraq? And will Iraq remain a unitary state or end up falling apart on sectarian grounds? All of these questions have direct consequences for the national security of Turkey and the rest of the region.

According to a report published by the 'Iraq Study Group' in December of

2006, a bipartisan group chaired by James A. Baker and Lee H. Hamilton, the situation in Iraq is grim. Their findings state that the current security situation in Iraq is very complex. The Sunni insurgency, Shiite militias and ‘death squads’, the presence of al-Qaeda and widespread criminality are tearing Iraq apart, they state, especially in the capital of Baghdad.⁵⁸ Other striking figures that the report contains include the number of displaced Iraqi nationals within Iraq at 1.6 million, and put the figure of those that have fled the country at 1.8 million.⁵⁹ With a total population of Iraq at approximately 26 million, the above stated numbers mean 13% of the Iraqi population is displaced. This, coupled with the degree of violence existent on a daily basis, figures of which we will look at in more detail later, and the lack of sufficient number of U.S. troops, lack of training of the Iraqi security forces, have made Iraq into a living hell. Under such circumstances, the report of the ‘Iraq Study Group’ made a recommendation of a short term increase in the level of U.S. troops in Iraq, to be followed by a gradual reduction in the numbers to come into effect in 2008. At the time the report was published, the number of U.S. troops in Iraq was at 141,000. There were 16,500 more troops in Iraq from 27 coalition partners which included the second largest contribution made by the United Kingdom, 7,200 troops.⁶⁰ Ever since the report was published, more Republican think tanks began to push for an increase in U.S. troop levels in Iraq. One such organization was the

⁵⁸ Iraq Study Group Report, “Iraq Study Group Report”, (Published December 6th, 2006), pg.6
http://www.bakerinstitute.org/Pubs/iraqstudygroup_findings.pdf

⁵⁹ Iraq Study Group Report, “Iraq Study Group Report”, (Published December 6th, 2006), pg.10
http://www.bakerinstitute.org/Pubs/iraqstudygroup_findings.pdf

⁶⁰ Iraq Study Group Report, “Iraq Study Group Report”, (Published December 6th, 2006), pg.12
http://www.bakerinstitute.org/Pubs/iraqstudygroup_findings.pdf

‘American Enterprise Institute’, in their own words, ‘a conservative think tank dedicated to preserving and strengthening the foundations of freedom.’ The influence of AEI is deemed as far reaching in both the Pentagon and the White House, and their proposal quickly set the stage for an increase in troop numbers and a new strategy on Iraq. Frederick W. Kagan, a fellow scholar at the AEI and a specialist on defense issues and the American military was a major driving force behind the AEI’s new plan. Kagan stated:

The Bush administration, its generals, and external proponents of the current strategy have been clear from the outset: the surge of forces in Iraq is, and always was, intended to be temporary. The key point is that the reduction of U.S. forces in Iraq, according to this plan, will be driven by changes in the circumstances on the ground. The decision rests with the commanders on the ground.⁶¹

Here Kagan was talking about the ‘Troop Surge’ in Iraq, which President Bush announced in his address to the nation on January 10th, 2007.⁶² It was a part of a new plan called ‘The New Way Forward’, presented by the Bush administration as a new shift in the strategy in Iraq. The experts at AEI were pushing for such a surge as early as December 2006. According to Kagan, the biggest threat to the success of the United States in Iraq were politicians from the Democratic Party who were trying to put a timeline on the U.S. presence in Iraq. Kagan’s views were paralleled in the U.S. administration, as it embarked on a full scale campaign to tell the American people that if the United States withdrew

⁶¹ Kagan, “Timelines and Defeat”, (August 28th, 2007), *National Review Online*, http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.26706/pub_detail.asp , (accessed August 28th, 2007)

⁶² White House, “President’s Address to the Nation”, (January 10th, 2007), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-7.html> , (accessed Jan. 14th, 2007)

prematurely from Iraq, the credibility of the United States in the eyes of the international community would be shattered, a historic opportunity would be missed to form a democratic Iraq, as well as handing Iraq over to al-Qaeda and risking future 9/11 style attacks on the United States. In a nutshell, everything was at stake in Iraq, and the last thing that was needed was a ‘timeline’. Let us now analyze the steps and actions proposed by ‘The New Way Forward’.

3.2 The New Way Forward

During his address to the American people on January 10th, 2007, President George W. Bush stated, “The new Strategy in Iraq I outline tonight will change America’s course in Iraq, and help us succeed.”⁶³ These words marked the beginning of Bush’s unveiling of ‘The New Way Forward’, meant to be a cure for the unparalleled level of violence in Iraq. During his address, Bush outlined the successes of the elections of 2005 in Iraq, and the formation of democratic institutions in his introduction. But the part that was highly anticipated was his decision to undertake an increase in the number of troops in Iraq, more specifically in Baghdad. Two important points he made during his speech were; a) 80% of the sectarian violence in Iraq occurred within 30 miles/50 kilometers of the capital and that there were not enough Iraqi and American troops to secure neighborhoods that had previously been cleared of any threats, and b) the troops that did operate had too many restrictions placed on them, were therefore limited in their capacity to

⁶³ White House, “President’s Address to the Nation”, (January 10th, 2007), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-7.html> , (accessed Jan. 14th, 2007)

react. And then Bush came to the most important part of his address when he stated, “The Iraqi government will deploy Iraqi Army and National Police brigades across Baghdad’s 9 districts. This will also require an increase in American force levels. So I’ve committed more than 20,000 additional American troops to Iraq. The vast majority of them will be deployed to Baghdad.”⁶⁴ The exact figure of American troops included in the surge would be close to 30,000, as the total number of American troops in Iraq would reach a record high of 168,000 by June, 2007.⁶⁵

‘The New Way Forward’ strategy contained six basic steps:

- (1) Let the Iraqis lead
- (2) Help Iraqis protect the population
- (3) Isolate extremists
- (4) Create space for political progress
- (5) Diversify political and economic efforts
- (6) Situate strategy in a regional approach⁶⁶

‘Let the Iraqis lead’ meant an increase in efforts to strengthen the Iraqi security forces, the police force and the military. In the new strategy, the goal of increasing the Iraqi Army from 10 divisions to 13 as well as increasing the 36 existing Army brigades to 41 and the 112 battalions to 132 were set. Here is what

⁶⁴ White House, “President’s Address to the Nation”, (January 10th, 2007), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-7.html> , (accessed Jan. 14th, 2007)

⁶⁵ “US Surge Plan in Iraq ‘Working’”, *BBC*, (10 September, 2007), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/6986461.stm> , (accessed 10 September 2007)

⁶⁶ White House, “Fact Sheet: The New Way Forward in Iraq” (January 12th, 2007), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-3.html> (accessed Jan. 20th, 2007)

Army General David H. Petraeus, Commander of Multinational Force in Iraq had to say in his testimony to the 'House Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committee' on September 10th, 2007:

Iraqi Security Forces have continued to grow, develop their capabilities, and to shoulder more of the burden of providing security to their country. There are now nearly 140 Iraqi Army, National Police, and Special Operations Forces Battalions in the fight, with about 95 of those capable of taking the lead in operations, albeit with some coalition support.⁶⁷ Currently, there are some 445,000 individuals on the payrolls of Iraq's Interior and Defense Ministries.⁶⁸

The second part of the six steps of 'The New Way Forward' states, 'help Iraqis protect the people'. Steps that need to be taken to achieve this goal includes efforts at curbing the meddling of Syria and Iran into Iraqi affairs, increasing U.S. military presence as well as training more Iraqi security forces.⁶⁹

The role of Iran in Iraq is undeniable, however one must understand the motives behind Iranian policy. First of all a democratic Iraq would suit Iran's interests, because in a democracy the Shiites would have the power. Iraq is 97% Muslim in religious affiliation, around 60 to 65% of those Muslims are Shiite, while the remaining Muslims are Sunni, and there is around a 3% Christian

⁶⁷ It is important to point out that the Iraqi security forces are not sufficiently trained and have sectarian motives. The former Minister of Interior of Iraq was a man by the name of Bayan Jaberr (April 2005 to May 2006). He was in charge of the Iraqi Police Force. Member of the SIIC party, he was instrumental in converting certain members of the Badr Militia, an armed wing of the Shiite SIIC party, into the Iraqi Police Force. Many eyewitnesses in Iraq have come forward to accuse the Iraqi Police Forces of illegally detaining Sunnis and engaging in torture as well as mass killings.

⁶⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, Petraeus, "Report to Congress on the Situation in Iraq", (10-11 September, 2007), pg.5, <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/Petraeus-Testimony20070910.pdf>, (accessed September 14th, 2007)

⁶⁹ White House, "Fact Sheet: The New Way Forward in Iraq" (January 12th, 2007), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-3.html> (accessed Jan. 20th, 2007)

population.⁷⁰ What emerged during the first democratic elections in Iraq was a Shiite dominated government. And this trend will certainly continue in the future, because Iraqis tend to vote along religious lines. Therefore, the involvement we get from the Iranians in Iraqi politics is not one geared towards the disruption of the political process, as this would prevent the Shiites rising the power. It is al-Qaeda that engages in all sorts of activity, from devastating bomb attacks to threatening Sunni tribesmen and recruiting young unemployed Sunni Iraqis for future attacks in order to bring the democratic process to a halt.

In the recommendations that were made by the ‘Iraq Study Group’, it called on Iran to ‘respect Iraq’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, and use its influence over Iraqi Shia groups to encourage national reconciliation.’⁷¹ In this sentence is the key to the main U.S. concern about the role of Iran in Iraq. On the surface, what Iran is doing is not illegal provided that they are not caught using violence through their intelligence services. As long as this can’t be proven, what Iran is doing is simply using its weight on the ‘Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council’ (SIIC) and via the Grand Ayatollah Ali Hussein al-Sistani to bring Iraq closer to the model of the Islamic Revolution that had taken place in their own country in 1979. This is not to mean that Iran wants there to be a revolution in Iraq, there is no need for that. The Shiites that make up two thirds of the country can achieve this democratically. Or

⁷⁰ CIA World Factbook, “Iraq”, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html> , (accessed April 3rd, 2007)

⁷¹ Iraq Study Group Report, “Iraq Study Group Report”, (Published December 6th, 2006), pg.6 http://www.bakerinstitute.org/Pubs/iraqstudygroup_findings.pdf

they might decide to secede from Iraq. Either scenario will benefit the Iranians. What the 'Iraq Study Group' recommends and the Bush administration is stuck in a dilemma about is, trying to befriend Iran so that this influence could be used for American interests. However, the ongoing fears about Iranian President Ahmedinejad developing nuclear weapons, and the sanctions that were imposed on Iran, make such a relationship impossible.

This unease about the role of Iran did not emerge recently in the White House. As early April of 2003, there were warnings issued by the Bush administration. Below is an excerpt from Ari Fleischer's briefing to the press at the White House, he was President Bush's Press Secretary until July of that year. Fleischer stated:

We have concerns about Iranian agents operating in Iraq, and we have well-known channels of communication with Iran, we have made it clear to Iran that we opposed the outside interference in Iraq's road to democracy. Infiltration of agents to destabilize the Shiite population would clearly fall into that category.⁷²

The above mentioned statements, in combination with President George W. Bush's insistence that there will be no talks on Iraq with Iran as long as Iran continues to enrich uranium, have put all sides into an impasse that looks unlikely to be breached in the near future. An American force that is stuck in Iraq, and has all its forces tied up in Iraqi territory, will surely benefit Iran. It will divert attention away from Iran's uranium enrichment program.

Another important point that needs to be made about 'The New Way

⁷² "White House Warns Iran on Iraq", *CNN*, (April 24th, 2004), <http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/04/23/sprj.irq.war.main/> , (accessed June 15th, 2007)

Forward' plan is, is it as new as it claims to be? We saw from the White House briefing in early 2003 made by Mr. Fleischer that the Bush administration has been concerned with the role of Iran and other neighbors of Iraq from the beginning. They had made efforts then to stop Iranian and Syrian meddling, and they continue to do so today. The results are clear: it doesn't work. Now 'The New Way Forward Plan' states in America's so-called new vision and strategy for Iraq that the U.S. will stop the meddling of Iraq's neighbors in Iraqi domestic affairs. And we are lead to believe that this time by some miracle it will work. The reality on the ground and past experiences suggest otherwise. The only thing new about the 'The New Way Forward' strategy is the troop surge that took place. The other segments of the plan seem like a sugar coating to appease American public opinion about the war efforts having led to no productive results. As American public opinion on the war is looking bleak for the administration, and the 2008 presidential elections approaching in the United States, the plan of the White House seems two phased. The Bush administration, taking the election cycle into account, has gone ahead with the troop surge this year. As the administration enters 2008, an election year in the United States, they will try to portray the image that they are cutting down on troop numbers, that 'the boys are coming home', so to speak. Even if they reduce the troop numbers to pre-surge levels in 2008, while nothing will have changed in the initial numbers of troops that were present in Iraq before the surge, Americans will be given an illusion that the administration is delivering on its promises. Whether or not the electorate will be that naive remains to be seen.

We have taken a look at the ‘The New Way Forward’ plan, one that is filled with very vague terms and hopeful remarks as to improving the situation in Iraq. Even if one were to just skim the document that laid out the steps of the new strategy, certain phrases immediately jump out at the reader; ‘Victory in Iraq is a Vital U.S. interest’, ‘The fate of the Middle East hangs in the balance’, ‘Failure is not an option’, ‘The enemy is diffuse and complicated’, ‘Victory will take time’, ‘No war has ever been won on a timetable’...Countless other statements of a similar kind are all over the document presented as ‘The New Way Forward’. Those with little knowledge of the realities on the ground in Iraq once reading the new strategy get a feeling that the administration is engaged in ‘the mother of all battles’ as in Saddam terminology. While it may be true that success in Iraq is of vital importance to the United States, let us also look at some numbers that will give us an idea as to the costs of this war. As this new plan in Iraq was being unveiled, the death toll in Iraq was at a record number.⁷³ According to the United States Department of Defense figures, as of May 15th, 2007, the U.S. military losses were at 3,390 soldiers killed since the beginning of the war in Iraq.⁷⁴

As for the number of civilian deaths in Iraq since March 2003, it has reached horrendous proportions. According to a website that keeps track of the violent civilian deaths in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion, the number of Iraqis

⁷³ Please refer to Appendix D for a detailed look at the casualty figures of Coalition troops since the beginning of hostilities in Iraq.

⁷⁴ “Iraq War Deaths Total Number”, *The Washington Post*, (May 15th, 2007), <http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/washingtonpost/access/1270857711.html?dids=1270857711:1>, (accessed May 15th, 2007)

that lost their lives is estimated at between 72,000 to 78,000.⁷⁵ The ‘Iraq Body Count’, name of the website that delivers these statistics based on an extensive database of confirmed and reported attacks which resulted in civilian deaths, states that they have gathered their data from “cross-checked media reports, hospital, morgue, NGO and official figures to produce a credible record of known deaths and incidents.”⁷⁶ These figures are only the reported and archived incidents, if we take into account the number of unreported incidents resulting in death we would get a figure closer to 100,000.

The death toll in Iraq is certainly at unacceptable levels. ‘The New Way Forward’ plan claims that it can reduce the violent trend in Iraq through the introduction of more troops and the training of more Iraqi security forces. But it seems that the newly placed importance on Iraqi security forces is a case of ‘too little too late’. From the beginning of post-invasion military operations of the US, we see a contradiction in the approach to forming the Iraqi security forces. While the Sunni resistance fighters were outcast and classified as a military threat to Iraqi security, the militias of the Shiite and Kurdish groups were allowed to continue their operations. This strategy backfired on the U.S. because of the religious and sectarian hatred prevalent in Iraq. To get a better idea of the trickiness of the situation, let us take a look at what Dr. Gareth Stansfield, an affiliate of the Chatham House think tank of the United Kingdom, had to say about the subject. He stated, “There is not one civil war going on in Iraq, but many civil wars and

⁷⁵ “Iraq Body Count”, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/>, (accessed September 6th, 2007)

⁷⁶ “Iraq Body Count”, <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/>, (accessed September 6th, 2007)

insurgencies involving a number of communities and organizations struggling for power. Regional powers have a greater capacity than either the U.S. or UK to influence events in Iraq.”⁷⁷ Chatham House analysis of the situation in Iraq goes on to state that the violence has shifted from one that used to target coalition forces to a situation in which it has become sectarian, meaning Iraqis killing Iraqis. Dr. Stansfield has broken up the violence in Iraq into separate geographic locations within the country; an emerging conflict between the Kurds and non-Kurds in Kirkuk, a Sunni-US conflict in the center and north of the country, a Shia Sadrist/US & UK conflict in the center and the south, and a Sunni/Sunni conflict in the governorates of *Anbar*, *Nineva* and *Diyala*⁷⁸ between tribes that have varying loyalties and goals.⁷⁹ This is a good start at trying to convey the complicated nature of the violence in Iraq. Majority of public commentary on the developments in Iraq tend to describe the situation as a Sunni-Shiite civil war. This is an oversimplification. Sunni groups are not homogenous, neither are the Shiites: perhaps the only homogenous entity in Iraq at the moment are the Kurds. Even the Kurds have their differences, for example on an issue as basic as language, the Kurds are divided. The many different dialects of Kurdish spoken, such as the *Kurmanji* dialect spoken in many areas of northern Iraq differs from the *Sorani*

⁷⁷ Stansfield, “Accepting Realities in Iraq”, *Middle East Programme Briefing Paper*, Chatham House, (May 2007), pgs.1 & 2, <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/publications/papers/view/-/id/501/>, (accessed May 12th, 2007)

⁷⁸ Please refer to Appendix E for a map of the Anbar, Nineva and Diyala regions of Iraq

⁷⁹ Stansfield, “Accepting Realities in Iraq”, *Middle East Programme Briefing Paper*, Chatham House, (May 2007), pg.3, <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/publications/papers/view/-/id/501/>, (accessed May 12th, 2007)

dialect spoken among the rest of the Kurds.⁸⁰ Majority of the correspondence between Kurds in Turkey and propaganda conducted by the PKK is in Turkish. The reason is that this is the only language that all Kurds understand in Turkey. Besides the language barriers within Kurds, the divisions between the many Kurdish tribes and the PUK/KDP conflict remains a major obstacle to long term Kurdish unity. However for the moment the Kurds in Iraq have managed to put these differences aside, this therefore greatly increases their political power against their divided rivals in the country. We will now analyze these separate political forces at play within post-war Iraq.

The long and painful process leading up to the first democratic elections in Iraq can be summed up with a look at some important milestones. It is important to get a good understanding of these steps because each of them had to be achieved by trying to find a compromise between the many political actors within the country, and had to be achieved under strict deadlines.

3.3 Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA)

Months before the March 19th, 2003 invasion of Iraq was to take place, the Pentagon was busy creating the ‘Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance’ (ORHA). It was created in order to take charge after the invasion was successfully completed in Iraq. Any damaged infrastructure such as oil fields, hospitals, roads, and vital telecommunications networks would have to be repaired

⁸⁰ “Kurdish Language”, *Britannica Online Encyclopedia*, <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9046467/Kurdish-language>, (accessed January 10th, 2007)

and maintained by the ORHA.⁸¹ It was made up mainly of civilian experts such as engineers, technicians and other needed workforce to carry out the jobs which required technical expertise. The man in charge of the ORHA was Retired General Jay Garner.⁸² He was handpicked for the job due to his past experience which included heading the humanitarian mission, ‘Operation Provide Comfort’. His familiarity with the geography and culture of Iraq was seen by the Pentagon as a guarantee that things would go smoothly after the hostilities came to an end. However, what transpired after the invasion was a different story. As victory bells were ringing in Washington due to the speed and effectiveness of the invasion of Iraq, and the fall of the Saddam regime was achieved with little resistance, it was thought that Iraqis would eagerly and peacefully transition into a democratic regime. What followed the invasion was something of a different nature, which could be described as the total collapse of authority and laws, widespread looting and anarchy, and a chaotic environment to which the Coalition forces did not have a well devised plan to deal with. In an estimate made several months after the looting had subsided, it was believed to have cost the Iraqi people around 12 Billion US Dollars.⁸³ Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense at the time, described the anarchy and looting in the streets of Iraq by the following words; “Stuff Happens...Its untidy, and freedom’s untidy, and free people are free to make mistakes and commit crimes and do bad things.”⁸⁴ Rumsfeld naturally did not

⁸¹ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.24

⁸² Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.24

⁸³ Packer, *The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg.139

⁸⁴ Packer, *The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg.136

admit that both the White House and Pentagon were caught unprepared by the events that unfolded. According to George Packer, author of the book, ‘The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq’, the ORHA were a “skeletal, disorganized, impecunious crew of fewer than 200 unarmed civilians wondering around in the dust of the Republican Palace (ORHA headquarters) searching for colleagues because they didn’t have phones to call one another”.⁸⁵

Amid the confusion, both the ORHA and the military patrolling the streets could do no more than watch the looting go on. The troops’ ‘Rules of Engagement’ only gave them permission to fire when fired upon and protect the sensitive location of the Ministry of Oil. Other than that, all the museums, other ministries, hospitals, schools were ransacked by mobs of Iraqis.

Seeing that General Jay Garner was being overwhelmed by the events transpiring in ‘post-hostilities’ Iraq, the Bush administration decided to appoint Paul Bremer, a counter terrorism expert, as the President’s Special Envoy to Iraq. On May 6th, 2003 it was officially announced that Ambassador Bremer would take the job from General Jay Garner.⁸⁶ The ORHA would come to an end, and the ‘Coalition Provisional Authority’ (CPA) would take its place.

3.4 Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and Ambassador Paul Bremer

As soon as Bremer came to office in Baghdad, he made two important

⁸⁵ Packer, *The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg.142

⁸⁶ “Bremer’s Task: Regain Momentum in Iraq”, *The Christian Science Monitor*, (May 14th, 2003), <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0514/p02s02-woiq.html> , (accessed August 18th, 2007)

decisions on behalf of the CPA. The first of these was the ‘CPA Authority Order No.1: De-Baathification of Iraq’. The law stated, “Top three layers of management in every national government ministry, affiliated corporation, and other government institutions, including universities, institutes, and hospitals would be reviewed for possible connection to the Baath Party.”⁸⁷ What this law basically meant was that all qualified civil servants in the country were now out of their jobs. During the Saddam regime, senior level managers in all government institutions were Baath Party members. Although some of them were hardcore Baathists, most were not. A comparison could be made here to the era of the Soviet Union when almost everyone who wanted to further their career was a part of the Communist Party. In Iraq people joined the Baath Party because the system left them little choice. Ambassador Bremer, partly due to his lack of knowledge of the Iraqi culture and history, and partly due to the pressure from the Shiites and the Kurds, passed such a law. It was a self destruct button that he pushed because now not only did the country not have the infrastructure necessary due to the looting that took place, it also didn’t have the manpower to run its ministries, hospitals, factories and other related sectors.

Paul Bremer than passed another CPA order called, ‘CPA Order No. 2 – Dissolution of Entities’. This law dissolved the Defense Ministry, National Security Ministries, the Republican Guard, the Special Republican Guard, the Baath Party Militia, and *Fedayeen* Saddam (Specially trained Saddam loyalist security force).⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.40

⁸⁸ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.57

In other words it dissolved Iraq's military with a single 'order'. This meant that a country of 26 million people already with prevalent sectarian hatred, which had experienced a total collapse of their regime, had to be secured by the Coalition Forces alone. There simply were not enough troops on the ground to make this possible. Therefore this was an impossible task, and a reason why the United States tolerated 'militias' of the Kurds and Shiites to operate freely in Iraq. The militias would take a portion of the burdens and responsibilities off of the Coalition forces in these initial stages of the occupation of Iraq. When Bremer dissolved the Iraqi Army, it was met with joy by the Shiites and the Kurds. Below is a conversation Bremer had with Messud Barzani shortly after the 'Dissolution of Entities' order was issued, in Barzani's home at Salahaddin, Iraq:

Barzani: Congratulations on formally abolishing Saddam's army. It's a wonderful thing you've done. It proves that the Coalition is serious about creating a new and united Iraq.

Bremer: You know, some were encouraging us to reconstitute a smaller version of Saddam's army.

Barzani: That would have been a big mistake, we Kurds would have left Iraq, seceded. We've fought the Baathists' army from the beginning. For twelve years, we've enjoyed autonomy. If they returned, we'd fight again...a civil war.

Bremer: Syria, Turkey, Iran...and here we are in Iraq, all countries with Kurds. That civil war would have become a regional war.

Barzani: But now we have escaped this disaster.⁸⁹

This conversation shows us that what Bremer did by dissolving the army was satisfy Kurdish demands. The Kurdish leader Barzani, while portraying himself as someone who is willing to cooperate with the Coalition authorities for the good of Iraq, was actually in the process of blackmailing the Coalition

⁸⁹ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.59

Provisional Authority. Kurdish demands ranged from maintaining their autonomous status under a federal Iraq, to the classifying of their militias as security forces of the Kurdish Regional Government, thus preventing the CPA from asking them to turn in their arms. They also wanted guarantees of significant representation in a possible future interim government of Iraq, to receive a larger portion of national oil revenues due to the 'unfair' distribution of oil income under the Saddam regime, and the holding of a referendum in Kirkuk to determine its future status. All of these demands were put on the table, with no room for compromise. In return, they kept the Kurdish regions of Iraq stable and free from the violence that gripped the rest of the country. As a result, the United States, seeing the only stable region in the country under Kurdish control, did their utmost to keep the Kurds active and cooperative in Iraqi politics. Messud Barzani and Jalal Talabani were able to put their differences aside and represent a united front to other groups in Iraq thus increasing their bargaining power.

3.5 Governing Council

With Bremer in charge, the CPA then proceeded on selecting a 'Governing Council' to help govern Iraq. It would be made up of prominent Iraqis who had made their names while touring the seminars and conferences conducted by opposition groups before the March 2003 invasion. This Council would remain in charge until an interim government was formed and sovereignty handed over to the Iraqis. Here is what Bremer had to say about the criterion for selecting the members

of the Governing Council:

We assumed that the Shia would have to be a majority of the Council, since they made up 60% of the population. We also needed to find effective, patriotic Sunni members. Finding them brought us face to face with a major structural problem, lack of credible Sunni leaders. The Kurds would require representation in rough proportion to the Kurdish/Arab population, about 20%. There were Christians, Turkmen and other minorities whom it was important to include in some way.⁹⁰

On July 13th, 2003, the Governing Council was announced. It would remain in office until June 1st, 2004 after which the Iraqi Interim Government took charge. The Governing Council was made up of 13 Shiites, 5 Sunni Arabs, 5 Kurds, 1 Turkmen, and 1 Assyrian.⁹¹ As soon as the Council was formed, there were disagreements on which group or person would become president and for how long. Through deliberations and compromises the system of a rotating presidency was decided upon among select members of the Council.

Let us briefly look at some of these figures which made up the rotating presidency. The group included Ahmad Chalabi, who was a secular Shiite Arab and head of the former opposition group 'Iraqi National Congress'. Eyad Allawi also a secular Shiite, was included in the presidential cycle. He had lived in exile during the Saddam years and was an active opposition leader. The other secular Shiite included was Ibrahim al-Jaafari, spokesman of the Islamic Dawa Party.

Among the secular Sunni Arab members was Adnan Pachachi. He was the former Iraqi Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 1959 to 1965

⁹⁰ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.93

⁹¹ "Iraq Governing Council", *GlobalSecurity.org*,
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/igc.htm>; (accessed July 12th, 2007)

and former Foreign Minister of Iraq from 1965 to 1967. In the year 1971, he was exiled by the Saddam regime.⁹² Gazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawer was also a Sunni member of the rotating presidency. He is head of the Sunni Shammar tribe.⁹³

The Kurds were represented by Messud Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party and Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. Another Kurd which represented a more religious ideology on the rotating presidency was Mohsen Abdel Hamid, he was Secretary General of the Iraqi Islamic Party.⁹⁴

Among those representing the religious Shiite were; Mohammed Bahr al-Ullum, an Arab Shiite Islamic leader, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, a Shiite Arab theologian and head of the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC), and Izzedine Salim, another Shiite Arab theologian.⁹⁵

While in power, the Governing Council also created the ‘Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period’, or otherwise known as TAL. This document would serve as a basis for the future constitution of Iraq and would be a guideline for the Governing Council during their time in office. The handover date for sovereignty to an Iraqi government was established as June

⁹² “Iraq’s Governing Council”, *Middle East Reference.org*, <http://middleeastreference.org.uk/iraqgc.html>; (accessed July 12th, 2007)

⁹³ “Iraq Governing Council” *GlobalSecurity.org*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/igc.htm>; (accessed July 12th, 2007)

⁹⁴ “Iraq’s Governing Council”, *Middle East Reference.org*, <http://middleeastreference.org.uk/iraqgc.html>; (accessed July 12th, 2007)

⁹⁵ “Iraq Governing Council” *GlobalSecurity.org*, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/igc.htm>; (accessed July 12th, 2007)

30th, 2004 in an agreement by all sides, called the ‘November 15 Agreement’.⁹⁶

3.6 Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period (TAL)

Due to TAL’s temporary status, we will not go into the document in much detail, however some important points it contained that would make up the basis of the future constitution of Iraq will be briefly looked at. The document contained 62 articles in total, focused primarily on the protection civil rights and liberties.

Article 2: ‘The elections for the National Assembly should take place no later than January 31st, 2005’,

This article set a strict timeline for elections to be conducted in Iraq. The main aim for this clause was to satisfy Grand Ayatollah Ali Hussein al-Sistani, spiritual head of the Iraqi Shiites who insisted on an elected body writing the constitution of Iraq, instead of an appointed one.

Article 9: ‘Arabic and Kurdish are the official languages of Iraq’,

There was not much choice on this matter as all sides were forced to accept such a deal, or else the Kurdish parties threatened secession from Iraq.

Article 61: ‘Assembly should write a permanent constitution no later than 15 August, 2005. The draft permanent resolution would be presented in a referendum to the Iraqi people by 15 October 2005.’,

By putting clear dates for the writing of the constitution by an elected body, and it being submitted to the Iraqi people for approval, the Coalition Provisional

⁹⁶ Packer, *The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg.316

Authority wanted to make sure no lengthy debates or disagreements stalled Iraq's transition to democracy. Without strict timelines, the Governing Council could never function effectively. There were constant disagreements and last minute requests made by all sides, which often resulted in nothing but a waste of time and effort due to their inability to compromise. Lack of trust plagued all levels of Iraqi society, and policy makers were no exception to the rule.

Article 53: 'Recognizes the current government of Kurdistan as the legitimate government of the Kurds, and allows it to continue to exist within the new federal state.'",

While Turks were arguing about 'Red Lines' in their foreign policy, and while the Turkish government was trying to portray an image to Turks as a tough and uncompromising government that would look after Turkey's interests, across the border in Iraq the Kurds were laying the foundations for a possible future secession from Iraq. The above article was a sign of things to come. The Kurdish peshmerga were now the official police force of the Kurdish Regional Government, no longer considered as a militia by the CPA or the Shiites. This meant that the forced removal of Arabs and Turkmen population from cities such as Kirkuk and Erbil were now conducted by the police force of the Kurdish Regional Government. As we will look at later during our analysis of the draft 'Petroleum Law' and the new permanent constitution of Iraq, Kurds would enjoy such a high level of autonomy and economic independence from Iraq that it was in a sense already an independent state. We will also look at what happened to those so called

‘Red Lines’ in Turkish Foreign policy which were not only being violated but rather shredded into pieces in northern Iraq.

Article 25: ‘The natural resources of Iraq declared to belong to all the people of all the regions and governorates of Iraq. Their management is required to involve consultation with the governments of the regions and the administration of the governments. Revenue resulting from their sale through the national budget is required to be distributed in an equitable manner proportional to the distribution of the population throughout the country, and with ‘due regard’ for areas that were unjustly deprived of these revenues by the previous regime.’⁹⁷

All seems normal in the above article until we get to the last part. That last sentence in the article meant that the Shiites and the Kurds would get well above the amount that was proportional to their population. The Sunni areas in Iraq already low in natural resources such as oil, the low percentage of Sunnis in the country, all meant that once again the Sunnis were getting the short end of the stick. We will look into in detail the proposed oil revenue sharing plan later in the paper.

Now that we have looked at important decisions made by the TAL document, let us get back to the process of the handing over of sovereignty to the Iraqi government and the eventual democratic elections that would take place in Iraq.

⁹⁷ “Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period (TAL)”, *The Coalition Provisional Authority*, <http://www.cpa-iraq.org/government/TAL.html>

3.7 Handover of Sovereignty

The 'November 15 Agreement' mentioned earlier on, besides setting up a fixed date on the hand over of sovereignty to the Iraqis, had also drawn up a plan to select an interim assembly based on nationwide caucuses that would write the new constitution.⁹⁸ However, in the end, the 'November 15 Agreement' was tossed aside because the CPA and Governing Council could not satisfy Grand Ayatollah Ali Hussein al-Sistani. Sistani did not like the idea of the body that would write the constitution being selected by the Governing Council. He made it abundantly clear that the new constitution had to be written once democratic elections were held enabling an elected instead of a selected body to draft the constitution. Lakhdar Brahimi, the United Nations envoy to Iraq brought in to help assess when healthy and fair elections could be conducted within Iraq, played an instrumental role in bringing all sides to a compromise on the issue.⁹⁹ Lakhdar Brahimi agreed with Bremer that early elections could not be conducted in Iraq due to the level of violence and unprepared status of the relevant ministries. However, Brahimi also helped bring all sides back on the negotiating table and reach an agreement. It was decided that the Governing Council and the CPA would select an 'Interim Government' to take charge of Iraq on the original hand over of sovereignty date decided upon in the 'November 15 Agreement'. This interim government would

⁹⁸ Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg.316

⁹⁹ "Profile: Lakhdar Brahimi", *BBC*, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1593430.stm, (accessed June 9th, 2007)

then pave the way for elections to be held by January 31st, 2005.¹⁰⁰ The interim government would operate under the TAL document, and the ‘Transitional Government’ to be elected by January 31st, 2005 would write a ‘draft’ constitution. This draft constitution would then be submitted to the Iraqi people through a referendum on 15th of October, 2005, if approved allowing for the election of a permanent government.¹⁰¹ As we have seen, the whole process is very complicated, but in Iraq almost everything is.

The hand over of sovereignty to the Iraqis took place two days earlier than scheduled, on June 28th, 2004, mainly as a move to prevent terrorist attacks on the by then well publicized date of the ‘hand-over’. The new interim government was a mosaic constructed to satisfy the Kurds and the Shiites. The Sunni Arabs were given the position of President, Gazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawar was given the largely ceremonial post.¹⁰² But the key positions were divided up between Shiites and Kurds. Messud Barzani and his Kurdistan Democratic Party were given the following positions: Vice President – Rowsh Shaways, Foreign Minister – Hoshyar Zebari. Jalal Talabani’s Patriotic Union of Kurdistan were given the Ministry of National Security, Barham Salih becoming the new minister. The Shiites were given the following: Eyad Allawi of the Iraqi National Accord – Prime Minister, Ibrahim al-Jaafari of the Islamic Dawa Party – Vice President, and Adel Abdul

¹⁰⁰ “Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period (TAL)”, *The Coalition Provisional Authority*, <http://www.cpa-iraq.org/government/TAL.html>

¹⁰¹ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.293

¹⁰² “Cabinet List”, *CNN*, <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/01/cabinet.list/index.html>, (accessed July 25th, 2007)

Mahdi of the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) – Finance Minister. The Turkmen were once again ignored, as the only Turkmen who held a post under the Governing Council, Rashid Mindan, continued his symbolic role as Minister of Science and Technology.¹⁰³ It was a ministerial position with relatively no importance in the grand scheme of things, and was given just to demonstrate that there was a ‘Turkmen’ representation.

The interim government remained in office until the first democratic elections in Iraq on January 30th, 2005.

3.8 January 30th, 2005 National Elections in Iraq

These first democratic elections in Iraq were aimed at electing an Iraqi ‘Transitional Government’ which would draft a permanent constitution and establish the necessary conditions for the election of a permanent government. The elections were conducted in a relatively peaceful manner even though almost all the Sunnis boycotted the elections. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (al-Qaeda terrorist who was killed during a U.S. air strike in June, 2006) had issued public statements before the elections that called the Iraqi elections a polytheist, Zionist plan to replace God with Shiite ‘politician pigs’.¹⁰⁴ Leaflets were distributed all over the streets. One of those leaflets read, “We will wash the streets of Baghdad with voters blood. Those of you who think you can vote and runaway, we will shadow you and catch you,

¹⁰³ “Cabinet List”, CNN, <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/meast/06/01/cabinet.list/index.html>, (accessed July 25th, 2007)

¹⁰⁴ Packer, *The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg. 414

we will cut off you and your children's heads.”¹⁰⁵ Other leaflets contained similar threats, mainly aimed at the Sunni community to boycott the elections. These threats combined with a loss of faith in any sort of victory in the elections, caused a wide scale Sunni boycott.

The Shiites, on the other hand, realized the importance of the elections right away. They mobilized mainly in southern Iraq, which is under British control. Their militias took control of the streets, and the local population felt relatively safe to go and cast their vote on election day. Iran provided aid and support to most of the Shiite political parties, but the main Iran backed party was the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC). The SIIC were extremely cooperative with the coalition forces at the time, and wanted to control all of Iraq by winning the elections through their power base in the south. SIIC entered the elections through an alliance of a number of Shiite parties called the ‘United Iraqi Alliance’. The main parties in the alliance were the Islamic Dawa Party and Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC).

The Islamic Dawa Party was a conservative Shiite party formed in 1957 in *Najaf*.¹⁰⁶ One of the parties senior members, Ibrahim Al-Jaafari became the first democratically elected Prime Minister of Iraq after the January 30th, 2005 elections. Nuri al-Maliki, current Prime Minister of Iraq, is the head of the Islamic Dawa Party.

The Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) on the other hand is the largest

¹⁰⁵ Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg. 414

¹⁰⁶ “Islamic Dawa Party Official Website”,
<http://www.islamicdawaparty.com/?module=home&fname=history.php&active=7>, (accessed August 12th, 2007)

Shiite party in Iraq, formerly known as the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI). The leader of the Party was Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al-Hakim until a car bomb resulted in his death on August 29th, 2003.¹⁰⁷ Current head of the SIIC is Ayatollah Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, brother of the late Mohammed Baqr al-Hakim. According to the report published by the 'Iraq Study Group', the SIIC is in favor of an autonomous Shiite region in southern Iraq. This therefore allowed them to turn a blind eye for Kurdish moves for autonomy as long as their intentions were also respected by the Kurds. The party controls the powerful 'Badr Militia', an armed wing of the SIIC.

When taking a look at the Shiite, Arab political actors in Iraq, the figure of Moqtada al-Sadr also needs to be analyzed. Al-Sadr has a lot of influence in Iraqi politics, and is known to be an Iraqi nationalist. His militia, the 'Mahdi-Army' is considered as one of the most dangerous armed groups in Iraq by the U.S. administration.

The history of the al-Sadr family in Iraq has always been one of leadership status among Iraqi Shiites, a factor that often made them the target of assassinations, arrests and persecution by the Baath regime. Moqtada al-Sadr's father in law, Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al-Sadr, was the undisputed leader of the Iraqi Shiite community until his death in 1980.¹⁰⁸ Following the demise of Baqr al-Sadr, Muqtada's father became the next Grand Ayatollah. He was able to put together a huge following, composed mainly of poor Shiites within Baghdad. In

¹⁰⁷ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.58

¹⁰⁸ Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg.264

February of 1999, as he was driving through the streets of *Najaf* with two of his sons, he was ambushed by gunmen and shot to death along with his sons.¹⁰⁹ His youngest son, Muqtada al-Sadr was not with them at the time, and assumed the leadership status of his father's following. Moqtada al-Sadr did not have the religious credentials his father had, but nevertheless he was able to rise to the top and control the 'Mahdi Army'. Moqtada opposed the U.S. occupation of Iraq and labeled the Iraqis cooperating with Coalition forces as "traitors".¹¹⁰ This quickly made him one of the most feared men by the Coalition forces, because not only was he a prominent Shiite that opposed the U.S. presence in Iraq, but he was also too popular in his home town of Sadr city for the Coalition forces to engage. Sadr city was the name given to a Shiite slum in the capital Baghdad, during the Saddam regime it was known as Saddam city. Almost all of the public services and healthcare in Sadr city were taken over by al-Sadr's militia, 'Mahdi Army'. By the time of the Second Gulf War, al-Sadr had a couple of thousand militiamen, who were well dug in within Sadr city and *Najaf*, one of the holiest cities for Shiites.

Here is what Paul Bremer, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) from May 11th, 2003 until June 28th, 2004, had to say about Moqtada al-Sadr; "We had to arrest Moqtada and dislodge his militia from the holy cities, but the risks were too great. There could be riots not only in Sadr city, but also in other

¹⁰⁹ Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq*, (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 2005), pg. 263

¹¹⁰ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.121

Shiite cities in the south.”¹¹¹ Although coalition troops did engage al-Sadr’s ‘Mahdi Army’, Moqtada was never arrested.

Moqtada al-Sadr is known to have a ruthless approach to any potential rivals that might damage his status as one of the leaders of Iraqi Shiites. Currently only Grand Ayatollah Ali Hussein al-Sistani holds a more prestigious position in the eyes of the Iraqi Shiites. Moqtada tends to leave Sistani alone because Sistani is reluctant to get directly involved in politics, and tends to run things behind the scenes. As stated before, the Shiite community in Iraq is far from being a homogenous entity. There is a constant struggle for power between the Iran backed *al-Hakim* camp, and the nationalist *al-Sadr* forces. Sistani has close links to Iran and is known to dislike al-Sadr. But neither al-Sadr or Sistani took the risk of directly becoming entangled in a conflict with each other. Leading up to the January 30th, elections of 2005 in Iraq, both Sistani and al-Sadr opted to refrain from running as candidates. Ayatollah Sistani was the architect behind the ‘United Iraqi Alliance’. His thoughts and decrees on who could run in the elections and who could not, within the Shiite alliance, were the final word. Al-Sadr, on the other hand, sat behind the scenes and waited for the outcome of the elections. He did not publicly oppose the ‘United Iraqi Alliance’. Al-Sadr had despised the Baath regime, but he was never sympathetic to those that had there allegiances to Iran. During the Iran-Iraq war, the Sadr camp was active in fighting Iranian forces. Therefore, Moqtada was stuck in a contradiction during the elections. He wanted

¹¹¹ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.192

Shiites to gain power; however he did not want the SIIC emerging as the only power. As a result, he tried to keep everyone guessing as to his true intentions until after the elections, when he could bandwagon with the victors of the election in order to bolster his political status. As expected, Moqtada al-Sadr emerged from the elections in 2005 with a stronger political status than he had before the elections.

In order to get a true understanding of the makeup and dynamics of the 'United Iraqi Alliance' we have looked at the Islamic Dawa Party, the SIIC and Moqtada al-Sadr. But the most important figure of the movement was Grand Ayatollah Ali Hussein al-Sistani. He is a man with the most influence in Iraqi politics today. He refuses to admit that he has anything to do with politics, instead he uses his religious credentials to portray an image of being the spiritual leader of the Shiite community. Without his approval and consent, not even the smallest political appointment can be made in Iraq.

The Kurds also enjoyed considerable success in the first democratic elections of Iraq. Like the Shiites, they entered the elections with an alliance of two main political parties: the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). The alliance was called the 'Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan'. The alliance included other smaller Kurdish parties such as; Chaldean Democratic Party, Kurdistan Communist Party, Kurdistan Islamic Group, Kurdistan Social Democratic Party, Kurdistan Toilers Party.¹¹² The main points in the alliance's political requests and positions were an insistence on a federal

¹¹² "Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan", *Patriotic Union of Kurdistan* (PUK), <http://www.puk.org/web/htm/news/nws/730.pdf>, (accessed July 5th, 2007)

democratic regime put in place in Iraq, the protection of the Kurdish Regional Government's autonomous status, providing for adequate Kurdish representation in the federal government, seeking a share of national revenues for Kurds which also aims to correct past imbalances during the Saddam regime, holding a referendum for the status of 'disputed' territories, and assuring a share of national oil revenues that satisfies the Kurds demands.¹¹³

There is an interesting point in this alliance that needs further clarification. This is because it also included a Turkmen party by the name of the Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood Party. At first glance, it might seem as if the need for Turkmen participation in the electoral process led the Kurds to accept Turkmen membership into their alliance. However, this was not the case. First of all, the main Turkmen political party in northern Iraq is not the above mentioned Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood Party. There are numerous other Turkmen political parties in Iraq, three of which have much more influence and political power than the Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood Party.

3.9 Turkmen Political Parties

The first of these is the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF). Led by Saadettin Ergeç, it is the most active and representative of the Turkmen political parties.¹¹⁴ It has always been against a federal Iraq due to fears of an increase in the Kurdish

¹¹³ "Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan", *Patriotic Union of Kurdistan* (PUK), <http://www.puk.org/web/htm/news/nws/730.pdf>, (accessed July 5th, 2007)

¹¹⁴ "Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF)", <http://www.kerkuk.net/>, (accessed May 4th, 2007)

nationalist secessionist movement. The ITF opposes the referendum in Kirkuk, and has claimed that voting irregularities occurred during the January 30th, 2005 elections. Below is a segment of an official protest made by the ITF to the ‘Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq’ shortly after the elections were conducted:

We are sorry and deeply concerned to inform you that too many irregularities have been committed during these elections which no doubt will affect its results. Despite your declarations to the press and to the television news networks that the elections have been ‘almost’ clean and fair, we have encountered numerous problems to vote, have observed multiple irregularities in voting centers and have been subjected to illegal behavior and unfair treatments in polling centers in our region, in the provinces of Kerkuk, Mosul, Salahaddin and Erbil.¹¹⁵

The ITF has close links to Turkey, to which it looks for support in its quest to put a stop to Kurdish moves of forcibly removing the Turkmen population from traditionally Turkmen cities, in order to gain an advantage in the upcoming referendum to decide that status of these territories. We will look into such allegations in our section on the analysis of the role of the Turkmen in Iraq.

Another of the Turkmen parties is the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen, led by Abbas al-Bayati. It is a party that garners the support of the Shiite segment of the Iraqi Turkmen. The Turkmen community is divided in half among sectarian lines of Sunni and Shiite. Abbas’s party was a part of the ‘United Iraqi Alliance’ during the elections along with a smaller affiliate that went by the name of

¹¹⁵ “Iraq Turkmen Culture Association”, <http://kerkuk.dk/ENG/0005.htm> , (accessed September 2nd, 2007)

Turkmen Loyalty Movement.¹¹⁶ While opposing the ‘Kurdification’ of Kirkuk and other disputed territories in the region, the Islamic Union of Iraqi Turkmen are in favor of a Shiite dominated federal democratic system, in which the Kurds power and secessionist ambitions are kept in check.

The Turkmen People’s Party, a smaller political party but nevertheless more influential than the Iraqi Turkmen Brotherhood Party that had taken part in the ‘Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan’, is also active in Iraqi politics. It has a position slightly different than the ITF in that it supports a federal Iraq, so long as Turkmen rights are respected.

So far our analysis of the developments in Iraq after the U.S. led offensive in March of 2003 has given us a perspective on the events that led up to the first democratic elections in Iraq and the parties which have or have not participated in the elections. Let us now look at the outcome of the January 30th, 2005 elections.

3.10 Outcome of the January Elections

Before we look at the statistical data conveying the election results, a poll conducted by the ‘International Republican Institute’ in Iraq, in the period leading up to the elections, gives us a critical insight of the psychology of the Iraqi population at the time. According to the poll; 64.5% of the Iraqis stated they would participate in the elections, that percentage fell to 19.1 within the Sunni community. In the Shiite community, 77.3% stated they would vote in the

¹¹⁶ “Guide to Iraqi Political Parties”, *BBC*, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4511450.stm, (accessed August 7th, 2007)

elections. The Kurds on the other hand were 70.9% in favor of voting.¹¹⁷

During the elections, the Shiites and Kurds went to cast their votes, and the results of the election gave all the power to their respective political parties. The Sunnis paid a heavy price for their boycott of the elections, as their already diminishing status as political players in Iraq was dealt another heavy blow.

The turnout of voters in the elections was 58% nationally, with 8.56 million votes cast. The ‘United Iraqi Alliance’ received 4.08 million votes, the ‘Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan’ got 2.17 million votes and the list of interim Prime Minister Eyad Allawi got 1.17 million votes.¹¹⁸ The following table illustrates how this translated to seats in the National Assembly after January 30th, 2005:

Party/Coalition	Seats in National Assembly
United Iraqi Alliance.....	140
The Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan.....	75
The Iraqi List – Eyad Allawi.....	40
Iraqiyyun Party.....	5
Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF).....	5
National Independent Elites and Cadres Party.....	3
Iraqi Communist Party.....	2
Islamic Kurdish Society.....	2
Islamic Labor Movement in Iraq.....	2
National Democratic Alliance.....	1
National Rafidayn List (Assyrian).....	1
Reconciliation and Liberation Bloc (Sunni).....	1

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¹¹⁷ Please refer to Appendix F for more details on the poll.

¹¹⁸ “Shiite Alliance Wins Plurality in Iraq”, *CNN*, (Feb.14th, 2005)
<http://www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/02/13/iraq.main/index.html>; (acc. July 2nd, 2007)

¹¹⁹ “Shiite Alliance Wins Plurality in Iraq”, *CNN*, (Feb.14th, 2005)
<http://www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/02/13/iraq.main/index.html>; (acc. July 2nd, 2007)

After the elections, the new President of Iraq was Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. As well will see later on, this was an ominous development for Turkey. The legitimacy of Talabani for formal diplomatic relations was always a subject of controversy in Turkey. The first government to hold official talks with Talabani was the Özal government. But that was when Talabani was met as the head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, not the President of Iraq. This development complicated Turkish foreign policy decisions.

The post of Prime Minister went to Ibrahim al-Jaafari of the Islamic Dawa Party. The Vice Presidents were Adel Abdul Mahdi of the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) and Gazi al-Yawar, former President and Sunni tribal chieftain. The Minister of Interior was the controversial figure of Bayan Jaberr, a radical Shiite who instigated the adoption of revenge attacks on Sunnis. The Foreign Ministry remained in the hands of Hoshiyar Zebari of the Kurdistan Democratic Party. Messud Barzani, on the other hand, was happy with his role as the head of the Kurdish Regional Government. The important post of the Oil Ministry was given to the Shiite theologian Ibrahim Mohammed Bahr al-Ulloum. This division of the most important positions in Iraq being split up among the Shiites and Kurds meant that the seclusion of the Sunnis would continue. This meant that the rise in Sunni attacks on government establishments would also rise. The Oil Ministry was a position the Shiite alliance was insistent on from the beginning. As they got their wish, it meant that the Shiites were now in control of the world's second largest oil reserves.

The Turkmen, on the other hand, were able to get twelve of their candidates into the National Assembly. As a part of the ‘United Iraqi Alliance’ five Turkmen were selected, from the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) there were three Turkmen and from the ‘Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan’ four Turkmen got into the National Assembly.¹²⁰ The Ministry of Science and Technology that had been given to Turkmen politician Rashid Mindan now went to the Assyrian Basimah Yusuf Butrus.

The Transitional Government immediately set out to work on the new constitution. As outlined in the TAL document, they submitted the new proposed constitution to a referendum on October 15, 2005. The new constitution to set up a ‘Democratic Federal Iraqi Republic’ got approved when 79% voted in favor in the referendum. The referendum results were striking in that it conveyed just how polarized and divided Iraq had become along ethnic and sectarian lines. In Kurdish and Shiite majority areas, the referendum for the draft constitution got approved with high margins, in some provinces as high as 97%. On the other hand within Sunni Arab areas, the results were against the draft Constitution.¹²¹

The results also show that the Turkmen voted mainly against the proposed constitution. The ‘United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq’ stated the following upon receiving the results of the referendum; “Results of the referendum have indicated the degree of political polarization in Iraq. This poses an ongoing

¹²⁰ Başyurt, “Interesting Outcomes in Iraqi Election”, *Zaman Newspaper*, (February 19, 2005), <http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=16703> ; (accessed Feb.3rd, 2007)

¹²¹ Please refer to Appendix G for full results of the Referendum.

challenge for all Iraqis and underscores the importance of an inclusive national dialogue.”¹²²

3.11 December 15th, 2005 Elections

Following the referendum, it was agreed that after the election of a permanent government, a ‘Constitution Amendment Committee’ would be set up in case any disagreements resulted which required compromise.¹²³ As a result the elections for a permanent government went ahead on December 15th, 2005, under the guidance of the new constitution of Iraq.¹²⁴

The main difference in these elections were the participation of a Sunni bloc of under the name of ‘Iraqi Accordance Front’. Following an Islamist agenda, it united formerly three separate political parties to form a coalition to enter elections. The Iraqi Islamic Party, Iraqi and the National Dialogue Council were the participants in the coalition.¹²⁵

The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in the United States made this accurate observation about the difference of the December 15th, 2005

¹²² Alexander, “Iraqi Constitution Approved by 79% of Voters – (Update 4)”, *Bloomberg*, (October 25, 2005)
http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000087&sid=amqz7dZlEx3w&refer=top_world_news, (accessed January 7th, 2007)

¹²³ Sowell, “Iraqis Reach Temporary Compromise on Federalism”, *Threats Watch .Org*,
<http://inbrief.threatswatch.org/2006/09/iraqis-reach-temporary-comprom/>; (accessed Feb 2nd, 2007)

¹²⁴ U.S. Department of State, (Dec. 15th, 2005), “Iraqi Voters Choose First Permanent Constitutional Government”, <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2005&m=December&x=20051215095713ndyblehs0.9486963&t=livefeeds/wf-latest.html>, (accessed Feb. 18th, 2007)

¹²⁵ “Guide to Iraqi Political Parties”, *BBC*, (20 January, 2006),
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/4511450.stm; (accessed Aug. 7th, 2007)

elections as opposed to the January 30th, 2005 elections. They stated, “The elections produced a parliament that more accurately represents the Iraqi population than the interim parliament did due to the Sunni Arab boycott of the January elections”.¹²⁶ This was an accurate observation: However, it did not mean that the Sunnis were all actively participating in the political process in Iraq. There were still large segments of the Sunni Arab population that were discontent at the developments taking place.¹²⁷ Unless the Shiites and the Kurds realized that their new found political power would not work without effective Sunni participation, the country would be entangled in further violence and risk falling apart. Perhaps the problem was that certain circles both within the Shiites and the Kurds had this ulterior motive on their agenda in the first place. The Kurds and the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC) were not afraid of the possibility of Iraq being divided into three parts, so giving up political power to prevent such an outcome was out of the question. As we will see, the cabinet which resulted from the elections kept almost all the important ministries either in Shiite or Kurdish hands.

The United Iraqi Alliance won 128 seats in the new Assembly. This allowed the Shiites to hold the post of Prime Minister through Nuri al-Maliki, the post of Interior Ministry through Jawad Bulani and the post of Oil Ministry through Hussein al-Shahrastani. The Kurds through their ‘Kurdistani Gathering’ alliance were also victors in the elections. They won 53 seats in the assembly. The Deputy

¹²⁶ Philips, “Issues 2006-Iraq”, *The Heritage Foundation*,
<http://www.heritage.org/Research/features/issues/issuearea/Iraq.cfm>;
(accessed July 19th, 2007)

¹²⁷ Please refer to Appendix H for detailed results of the December 15th elections.

Prime Minister Barham Salih, the Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari as well as the President of Iraq, Jalal Talabani were all Kurds. The Ministry of Youth and Sports went to a Shiite Turkmen by the name of Jasem Mohammed Jafaar. But it is important to point out that he was a part of the 'Kurdistani Gathering' in the run up to the elections. Therefore his credibility among the Turkmen population is very low.

CHAPTER IV

EMERGING IRAQ: THE TURKISH PERSPECTIVE

4.1 Introduction

In the run up to the first democratic elections in Iraq, the Turkish government followed a policy of portraying itself as a supporter of democracy in the region. Turkey wanted to demonstrate that despite there being no chance of a favorable outcome of the Iraqi elections that would suit Turkish interests, it would still support the implementation of the Iraqi elections. Turkey took a gamble in that it was counting on the elections to be viewed as a failure by the international community. Since it was obvious from the beginning that only the Shiites and Kurds would emerge victorious from the elections, from the Turkish viewpoint the Arab world and major international powers outside of the United States and United Kingdom, would approach the elections results with caution. Below is a statement of the Spokesman of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Mr. Namık Tan, 2 days before the first elections in Iraq went ahead on January 28th, 2005:

Iraqi Turkmen Society although conscious of the injustices imposed upon them throughout history, chose to act with a sense of responsibility to seek

its rights within a politically united and territorially integral Iraq and decided to participate in the January 30th elections. In the aftermath of the intervention, we have been observing that certain Iraqi groups have been upholding ethnic and sectarian discrimination by tabling excessive demands and claims which may cause new and graver injustices under the pretext of ratifying unlawful practices of the past. The future status of Kirkuk and preservation of its pluralist character are among the sensitivities.”¹²⁸

As Tan suggests, there were two points at issue. First of all Turkey was keen on being seen by the international community as a staunch supporter of democracy in the region. The second point that this press statement brings up is the status of Kirkuk. Turkey has from the beginning viewed Kirkuk as a microcosm of Iraq, an ethnically mixed city that should be allowed to exist without being dominated by any ethnic group. The government of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) was trying to convey a message of being less hard-line and more in favor of a compromise that would favor both Turkish and Iraqi interests. However, this was the wrong strategy to be following at this juncture, as I will argue.

Shortly after the elections another statement was made by the Foreign Ministry of Turkey:

Today the preliminary results have been announced by the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq on the national and provincial elections of Iraq. Low level participation by certain segments of the Iraqi society, non-participation in several provinces, as well as imbalances and irregularities over the results in certain others, including Kirkuk, due to manipulations are issues that await earnest resolution. It has become obvious that certain elements of the Iraqi society attempted to manipulate the voting procedure and extracted illegal gains out of this practice. We expect that the UN will

¹²⁸ Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Statement of the Spokesman of the Turkish Foreign Ministry”, (January 28th, 2005), http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/PressInformation/PressReleasesAndStatements/pressReleases2005/January/NO3_28January2005.htm ; (accessed January 6th, 2007)

carry out its responsibilities in accordance with UNSC Resolution 1546. As a consequence, the Iraqi Transitional Assembly will not reflect the true proportionality of various segments of the Iraqi society.¹²⁹

As we see, this statement, the official position of the Turkish government after the election results were released, relied on two main points. The first point was that the elections were not conducted freely and fairly. The fact that many voting irregularities had occurred throughout the election meant that the results would not reflect Iraqi society as a whole. The second point was that non-participation in several provinces, referring to the absence of Arab Sunni and Turkmen voters, meant that the elections were flawed to begin with.

When we look at the before and after snapshot of Turkish Foreign Ministry views during the elections in Iraq, we see what Turkey aimed to achieve. Before the elections, Turkey wanted to give the impression that the elections in Iraq were a positive development and one that would be participated in by the Turkmen. And after the elections with the results overwhelmingly in favor of the Kurds and the Shiites, Turkey wanted to undermine the election results due to irregularities thus undermining the credibility of the new Iraqi government. This effort was a failure however because the international community viewed the first democratic elections in Iraq as a success. The relatively low degrees of violence and more than half of the country coming out the vote in despite of the risks involved were coined as a

¹²⁹ Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Statement of the Spokesman of the Turkish Foreign Ministry”, (Feb.13th, 2005), http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA/PressInformation/PressReleasesAndStatements/pressReleases2005/February/NO23_13February2005.htm; (accessed January 6th, 2007)

success story. The Turkish government had to accept the results and move on. So what went wrong? The answer to this question requires an analysis of Turkish foreign policy in the region that precedes the March-2003 invasion of Iraq.

4.2 Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990's

The mistakes made during the 1990's by Turkish Foreign policy decisions allowed the region of northern Iraq to solidify its autonomous status. When the allied 'Operation Provide Comfort' was initially created in July 24th, 1991, Turkey under President Özal and Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz thought that they could not stand by and watch Kurds get massacred at the country's borders, so they decided to participate in the operation. The Kurdish rebellion, which had begun on 5th of March 1991 against the Saddam regime, had been a catastrophic failure. The rebellion began in the town of *Ranya*, and then spread all over Kurdish inhabited areas such as *Sulaymaniyah*, *Erbil*, *Dohuk* and *Mosul*.¹³⁰ The Iraqi defensive took hold in *Mosul* and then proceeded on crushing the rebellion in one city after the other. The peshmerga could not put up much of a fight and instead fled to the Turkish border. On the 5th of April 1991, Turkey allowed 250,000 Kurds to cross into its borders to seek refuge.¹³¹ Simultaneously, the UN passed Resolutions 687 and 688, declaring a permanent ceasefire, condemning Baghdad and providing

¹³⁰ Öznur, *Cahşların Savaşı – Kuzey Irak Kürt Hareketi ve Musul- Kerkük Meselesi (War of the Cahş - Northern Iraq Kurdish Movement and Mosul, Kirkuk Problems)*, (Ankara: Altinküre Press, 2003), pg.317

¹³¹ Öznur, *Cahşların Savaşı – Kuzey Irak Kürt Hareketi ve Musul- Kerkük Meselesi (War of the Cahş - Northern Iraq Kurdish Movement and Mosul, Kirkuk Problems)*, (Ankara: Altinküre Press, 2003), pg.318

humanitarian aid to the refugees. Turkey had to spend around 1.6 Million US Dollars daily to give the necessary assistance to the Kurds.¹³² Around 5,000 troops were placed in Northern Iraq in the second phase of ‘Operation Provide Comfort’, under the name of ‘Poised Hammer’.¹³³ This force would remain there along with air support and the no fly zones to protect Kurds from Saddam. The initial decision to take part in the operation by the Turkish government was justified because there was a humanitarian crisis unfolding in Turkey’s backyard, and something had to be done to stop it. However, this move, in combination with ‘Operation Northern Watch’, which had begun on January 1st, 1997, had turned northern Iraq into a refuge for PKK terrorists. The Turkish government had proceeded on extending the right of U.S. planes to use Turkish bases for enforcing the ‘no fly zone’, for every 6 months for a period that amounted to almost 10 years.¹³⁴ This was a mistake by Turkish policy makers. Due to the lack of authority in the region, not only did the KDP and PUK govern it as their own, but they also welcomed with open arms the PKK terrorists. The foundations for a possible future Kurdish state were laid in this time period. And it was done thanks to Turkish support. After noticing that the PKK was using the area of northern Iraq as a base for attacks into Turkey, and that the Kurds were moving towards future independence, an option for the Turkish

¹³² Öznur, *Cahşların Savaşı – Kuzey Irak Kürt Hareketi ve Musul- Kerkük Meselesi (War of the Cahş - Northern Iraq Kurdish Movement and Mosul, Kirkuk Problems)*, (Ankara: Altinküre Press, 2003), pg.318

¹³³ Öznur, *Cahşların Savaşı – Kuzey Irak Kürt Hareketi ve Musul- Kerkük Meselesi (War of the Cahş - Northern Iraq Kurdish Movement and Mosul, Kirkuk Problems)*, (Ankara: Altinküre Press, 2003), pg.322

¹³⁴ James E. Kapsis, “From Desert Storm to Metal Storm: How Iraq has Spoiled US – Turkish Relations”, *Current History*, Vol. 104, No. 685, pg.382

government could have been to cancel the agreement granting the U.S. the rights to use Turkish bases. Such a move would have shown the United States that Turkey was serious on the issue of the PKK. Once this message had been delivered, the Kurds would have had to make concessions. They would have had to choose between taking care of Turkey's security concerns and cracking down on the PKK, or risking either Turkish or Iraqi troop deployment into their regions. Without Turkish support and air bases, it would have been very difficult for the United States to easily enforce the no-fly zone in northern Iraq. An indicator as to how important Turkish support is to the Americans, can be seen by looking at a segment of the statements made by Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs in his testimony before the 'House Foreign Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Europe' in March of 2007. Mr. Fried stated the following in Washington DC during his testimony:

Turkey provides extensive logistics support to our troops in Iraq. This critical lifeline includes: the cargo hub at Incirlik Air Base, through which we ship 74% of our air cargo to Iraq; the land border crossing between Turkey and Iraq at the Habur Gate accounts for delivery to Iraq of a substantial portion of the fuel used by coalition forces and the fuel, food and water consumed by Iraqis. Turkey is the source of many imports of electricity into Northern Iraq. Turkey has used technical and financial assistance to train Iraqi political parties, to rebuild infrastructure and spark commercial development.¹³⁵

All of the above statements emphasize the point that success in Iraq is not possible without Turkish assistance. In the realm of International Relations, this

¹³⁵ Fried, "U.S. – Turkish Relations and the Challenges Ahead", Testimony Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee Subcommittee on Europe, Washington, DC, (March 15th, 2007), <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/81790.htm>, (accessed August 12th, 2007)

means leverage for Turkey. It has many cards it could play in order to make sure the issue of PKK terrorism and the status of Kirkuk are resolved favorably. What has Turkey achieved in its favor even though it had all these advantages? Soft handed tactics have not gained Turkey anything in this region for well over a decade now. Turkey provided all the assistance necessary during the first Gulf War and ended up suffering an estimated 6 Billion Dollars worth of losses due to the sanctions on Iraq.¹³⁶ It is giving the same sort of assistance in the second war in Iraq, but now is on the verge of watching the creation of an independent Kurdish state right before its eyes. The ‘Red Lines’ it had drawn previously are being ripped to shreds. This time Turkey needs a more hard line policy, making it clear to all the major players in the region that Iraq’s territorial integrity, the status of Kirkuk, and PKK terrorism need to be resolved in manner that addresses Turkish security concerns and that does not disturb the balance of power and equilibrium in the region.

4.3 Failures and Mistakes of Turkish Foreign Policy that have led to the Current Impasse

Turkey’s number one foreign policy priority has been and still is, that Iraq remain a unitary state, and to prevent the Kurds from gaining control of the large oil fields in northern Iraq. Keeping this in mind, the question to be asked is, why and how has it contributed to the events leading up to the current status of the

¹³⁶ Güney, “An Anatomy of the Transformation of the US-Turkish Alliance From Cold War to War on Iraq”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.6, No.3, pg.346

region? And why are the number one foreign investors in the KRG region, Turkish companies? During an interview with a ‘Voice of America’ reporter, Nechirvan Barzani (PM of KRG) had this to say on the issue of Turkish investment in Northern Iraq, “Turkish companies hold more than 1 Billion US Dollars worth of investment in the Kurdistan region, and in the future they will continue to receive priority, including in the lucrative oil sector.”¹³⁷

The Kurdish administration is clearly trying to divide Turkish public opinion by economically linking the Turks to the development projects in their region, thus winning over Turkish businessman while simultaneously destroying Turkish foreign policy goals. By giving Turkish companies incentives and lucrative contracts to invest in the Kurdish region, they are tying the Turkish economy to their region.

A school of thought has emerged in Turkey which claims that good relations with the Kurdish Regional Government could benefit Turkish national interests. This argument claims that the KRG is already established and there to stay. Therefore, getting along with the KRG is the only viable alternative for Turkey. The AKP government is implementing policies that seems to go hand in hand with this school of thought. They claim that their effective foreign policy in the region is allowing Turkish companies to gain an important foothold on the development projects in Iraq, thus contributing to the Turkish economy and eroding

¹³⁷ Besheer, “Tensions High Between Turkey, Iraqi Kurds”, *Voice of America*, (April 19, 2007), <http://web.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?lngnr=12&smap=02010200&rnz73&nr=17373>; (accessed July 2nd, 2007)

Turkey's export/import deficit. The mainly Turkish construction companies that are investing in northern Iraq are experiencing a level of prosperity unrivaled in their previous history. It seems like a win-win situation at first glance, with all sides happy. But it is anything but lucrative for Turkey in the long term. What Turkish investors are doing at the moment is building the infrastructure of the Kurdish Regional Government. Once the federal Iraqi draft 'Oil Law' comes into effect, provided that the current government in Turkey is in power, and pursues the same policies, Turkish companies will also be given lucrative contracts in that sector. As a result Turkish economy will be further linked to northern Iraq. But at the same time the Turks will have to get along with the Iraqi Kurds, irregardless of the status of Kirkuk, the presence of the PKK in northern Iraq, the situation of the Turkmen or the status of the autonomous Kurds in Iraq. If current policies are followed, the Turks will effectively be trading these short term lucrative contracts for long term Kurdish claims on the oil fields. The Kurds, once in possession of the right to the oil fields, could continue to award contracts to Turkish firms, but in the end it would mean that Turkey, despite seemingly winning the battle for contracts would have lost the war. What could be done instead is placing stringent controls on Turkish companies investing in northern Iraq. If the companies are found to be building strategically important infrastructure in the region, their operations could be halted on the grounds that it is against the national interests of Turkey. If we could make a comparison, could we imagine American firms building infrastructure for the Taliban in Afghanistan? Could the U.S. government ever

allow this to happen? This is in fact what Turkish firms are doing at the moment. By building infrastructure in northern Iraq, they are strengthening the KRG, which in return is supporting the PKK and costing Turkish lives. The current lack of inspection and regulation of such contracts by the Turkish government comes as no surprise however as the overall Turkish foreign policy in the region has been plagued by short-sightedness and contradictions.

4.4 Using Economic Leverage

It was analyzed in the above section that the KDP were effectively trying to economically blackmail Turkey through the awarding of contracts to Turkish firms. However, if the KDP has a good hand when it comes to economic blackmail, Turkey has the ‘Royal Flush’ of hands, and has the potential to do major damage to KRG’s economy. The *Habur* border gate that is currently the only one linking Iraq and Turkey, passes through KDP territory. As a result, the annual income that goes to KDP through the regulation of this gate is estimated to be around 300 Million USD.¹³⁸ There have been recent talks of closing this gate down and opening another border gate that passes through Turkmen territory at *Ovaköy*.¹³⁹ Through this process, ‘two birds could be hit with one stone’ so to speak. The income of KDP will be dealt a drastic blow, while on the other hand the Turkmen will be

¹³⁸ “ABD’ye inat Irak’a 2.inci kapı (Despite the U.S., a second gate in Iraq)”, *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (10 October, 2000), <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=-188193>; (accessed 3rd February, 2007)

¹³⁹ Ergon, “Habur’a ikinci kapıya Genelkurmay’dan ret (Turkish General Staff refuses a second gate at Habur)”, *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (9 August, 2007), <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=7056165>; (accessed Sept. 1st, 2007)

given a valuable source of income. Given the track record of the KDP using force against the PUK to secure the border gate revenue in the former years, this would mean that they might resort to the same methods against the Turkmen. This is because this revenue at the moment is very important for the KRG. If force were to be used against the Turkmen, this could give the Turks the reason they need to enter northern Iraq and set up a buffer zone while simultaneously conducting a humanitarian aid mission to help the Turkmen. An offer similar to this was made by the former ‘Coordinator for the Fight Against Terrorism’, General Edip Başer. He stated:

On the Turkish side, besides a military intervention to northern Iraq, there are other alternatives we can look at. For example if we were to close the Habur border gate for a few days this would mean a serious warning for them. If we stop giving them electricity and cut the flow of oil, they will understand the seriousness of the situation. Of course such actions will hurt us economically as well. But everyone has to be understanding if such a decision were to be made. If need be, the state should bear the burden of these actions.¹⁴⁰

Talk of such action sparked an instant response from the KRG. They knew that such an action would have hurt them economically and left them literally in the ‘Dark Ages’, with no electricity or flow of basic goods and oil. This is what KRG Minister of Trade, Mohammed Rauf, had to say on the issue:

All goods coming from Turkey and other countries pass through the Habur border gate. As a result both sides make huge profits from the flow of goods. According to the 2005 statistics, Turkey made a profit in excess of 8 Billion US Dollars in that year alone. In the coming months the KRG has made a decision to import 35 Million US Dollars worth of consumer goods and electricity equipment from Turkey. If the Habur border gate is closed, the Turkish economy will experience a huge battering. If on the other hand

¹⁴⁰ “Edip Başer’den ilginç öneri (Interesting offer from Edip Başer)”, *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (13 June, 2007), <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=6703929>; (accessed August 4th, 2007)

Turkey decides on a military operation on the Kurdistan region, all contracts of Turkish firms will be cancelled, Billions of dollars worth of damage will be suffered by Turks. Of course Kurds will suffer as well economically if the gate is closed, but we can resume our trade through alternative methods, for example through Iran or Jordan.¹⁴¹

Two things need to be said on the statements of the Kurdish minister. The first is the fact that the KRG felt a need to make this threatening statement on the same day as General Başer's comments, which is an indicator as to how seriously they take the issue. And the second point is that Turkey can cope with the damages done by the closing of the gate for a brief period of time. Once the gate passing through Turkmen territory opens, it will be business as usual. But the Kurds would be left on their own to solve major financial problems.

An MP of the opposition party in Turkey, Republican People's Party (CHP), Erdal Karademir gave some striking information on how the electricity to the Kurds were provided. He stated:

The electricity needs of PKK camps in northern Iraq are provided by Turkey. And if this were not enough, the electricity that is sold to the Turkish people for 9.5 cents is sold to the Kurds for 6.7 cents. The money lost in the process is being subsidized by the Turkish Treasury. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) government and the Turkish Energy Sector Arrangement Committee gave special permission to a company by the name of Black Sea Whole Sale Electricity Ltd. (KARTET) to export electricity to Iraq. KARTET is the only private company in Turkey which has permission to export electricity.¹⁴²

Implying that there were close ties between KARTET and the AKP

¹⁴¹ "Kürt bakan: Habur kapanırsa iki taraf ta zarar görür (Kurdish Minister: If Habur is closed, both sides will incur losses)", *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (13 June, 2007)

<http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=6701389> , (accessed August 4th, 2007)

¹⁴² "Elektrik Barzani'ye 9, halka 12.4 kuruş (Electricity to Barzani is 6.7 cents, for the people, 9.5 cents)" *ANKA News Agency*, (16 July, 2007),

<http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=6899843> , (accessed August 11th, 2007)

government, Mr. Karademir also went on to say:

In order to export electricity cheaper to the Kurds than the price given to our own people, the AKP had to create a special law. The Official Newspaper Issue No. 25754 formally declared this law which enabled KARTET to begin its export operations. The electricity being used in northern Iraq is now paid for through the pockets of the Turkish people.¹⁴³

The economic prosperity the KRG enjoys today has a lot to do with Turkish assistance. As stated previously, the Turkish government has the potential to use northern Iraq's reliance on its assistance to apply pressure on sensitive subjects, such as putting a stop to the presence of the PKK in the region of northern Iraq. Such options include temporarily or permanently closing the Habur border gate and using an alternate border gate passing through Turkmen territory. Also on the issue of the electricity provided to the KRG, the Turkish government needs to make clear to the Kurdish authorities in northern Iraq that this assistance could come to a stop if the PKK camps in northern Iraq are not shut down.

As this chapter demonstrates, Turkish foreign policy in Iraq needs to shift to a more hard-line policy. The next section of the thesis will focus on the region of northern Iraq. It will elaborate on the make up of the Kurdish Regional Government, the economic situation of the region, Turkmen minority and its goals as well as the status of Kirkuk.

¹⁴³ "Elektrik Barzani'ye 9, halka 12.4 kuruş (Electricity to Barzani is 6.7 cents, for the people, 9.5 cents)" *ANKA News Agency*, (16 July, 2007), <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=6899843> , (accessed August 11th, 2007)

CHAPTER V

NORTHERN IRAQ

5.1 Introduction

Ever since 1991, the northern Iraq region has been under the effective control of the Kurds. The results of the elections in Iraq in 2005 and the status of Kirkuk are all issues that have developed due to the countless errors of Turkish foreign policy since the 1990's. We could compare Turkish foreign policy in the region to a raft traveling along a river, making all the wrong turns at critical junctures and then finding itself a couple of meters from a huge waterfall wondering what went wrong. Let us now look at the what constitutes the Kurdish Regional Government and the autonomous areas under its control in order to get a better understanding of the Kurdish policies and goals in the region.

5.2 Kurdish Regional Government

The areas that fall under the control of the Kurdish Regional Government are the governorates of Sulaymaniyah, Dohuk and Erbil. The capital of the KRG is

Erbil and the contested area of Kirkuk falls outside its area of control. The current Prime Minister of the KRG is Nechirvan Barzani, nephew of the President of the KRG, Messud Barzani. The region has been prospering ever since its creation in 1992 following the ‘Kurdish Uprising’ and international intervention.¹⁴⁴ It is home to five universities, two airports, a regulated financial sector, and a developing energy sector based on the natural resources which fall under KRG territory.¹⁴⁵ The KRG has created the ‘Kurdistan Development Corporation’ which seeks to attract foreign investment into the region, especially into the newly emerging oil sector.

The brief description given above of the Kurdish Regional Government and the areas that fall under its control demonstrate two very important points. The first of these is that, as of now it has almost all the government institutions, infrastructure and necessary security force to secede from Iraq if it wishes to do so. All it is missing is the final federal ‘Oil Law’ to pass; it is still under the negotiating process. As soon as the Kurds secure a guarantee on the amount of oil revenues they will be receiving and determine the status of contested oil rich areas such as Kirkuk, they will have achieved complete economic independence from the central government of Iraq. Under such circumstances there will be no need to declare formal independence from Iraq, as their high level of autonomy both in the political and economic sense will have already granted them this status in an informal manner. The second important point is that none of this would have been possible

¹⁴⁴ Please Refer to Appendix I for a Map of the Kurdish controlled Regions

¹⁴⁵ Official Investment Site of the Kurdistan Development Corporation,
<http://www.kurdistancorporation.com>

without the assistance of Turkey as analyzed previously.

Although the Kurds represent the only homogenous group in northern Iraq after the March 2003 invasion, this should not give the reader the impression that the Kurds have always gotten along with each other in northern Iraq. The truth is the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, which have come to make up the Kurdish Regional Government, were sworn enemies in the decades leading up to their final ‘Unification Agreement of January, 2006’. Below is a segment of the unification agreement signed between the two on January 21st, 2006:

The supreme interests of the people of Kurdistan, today more than at any other time, requires its citizens to further unite their energies and capabilities. We face serious and delicate issues in the period ahead when the future of Kurdistan region will be decided as we move through the development of a democratic and federal Iraq. We must secure and guarantee the historic achievements of our people and the realization of our full and just rights by putting in place and implementing the permanent constitution, establishing a genuine federal and democratic Iraq, restoring Kirkuk, Khanaqin, Sinjar, Makhmour and other Arabized cities to the embrace of the Kurdistan Region.¹⁴⁶

The question to be asked here is how did these sworn enemies put their differences aside and manage to sign such an agreement? The answer to this is multifaceted; however, the role that Turkey played throughout the process was a vital part of the equation.

The time period when most of the intense fighting broke out between the KDP and PUK was after the first Gulf War. This was due to their increasingly

¹⁴⁶ “Unification Agreement between the KDP and PUK”, *KRG.org*, <http://www.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?rnr=24&lngnr=12&anr=8891&smap=>; (acc. July 1st, 2007)

autonomous status after the Gulf War. There was a lot of money to be made in the region. The UN sanctions placed on Iraq had made possible the flourishing of a prosperous black market. All sorts of commodities, from oil to basic consumer goods, were smuggled both ways across the Turkish-Iraqi border each day. Those who controlled the border gates could also tax the goods flowing across the border. Millions of Dollars were being made each day just by running the black market flow of goods. Naturally both Talabani and Barzani had their eyes set on the money, and they could not agree on a plan to share the money. This resulted in heavy fighting between the two and often times both Turkey and Iran got involved by supporting one group against the other. After the toppling of the Saddam regime, both Talabani and Barzani realized that their conflict was hurting the wider Kurdish cause. As we see in the above unification agreement that this played a major factor in them putting their differences aside for the time being so that Kurdish regions could be represented as a stable and peaceful area to the Americans.

Northern Iraq is a region that also encompasses a large Turkmen minority. We had taken a look at their political parties in the previous sections, but let us now look at their historical origins and areas of settlement. This information is necessary in order for us to correctly analyze the status of Kirkuk and other disputed territories in Iraq.

5.3 The Turkmen in Iraq

Another mistake made by Turkish foreign policy in Iraq is related to the status of the Turkmen in the region. The Turkmen today are divided and without a credible leadership that could push for Turkmen rights within Iraq. Very little effort has been made by Turkey to unite the fractured and divided Turkmen community so that they could be represented in the autonomous region as a partner of the Kurds instead of their current status as a minority living in a minority. This, as a result, further weakened the Turkmen community's hands in their struggle to explain to the international community their rightful claims on Kirkuk

In order to understand Turkmen sensitivities on Kirkuk, we must first answer some important questions. Who are the Turkmen? What is their population within Iraq? When did they arrive in the region? What are their political goals?

According to Ershad al-Hirmizi, a leading expert on the Turkmen history and politics, the Turkmen are descendants of the Turkic *Oğuz* tribes who originally came from Central Asia in consecutive waves and settled in Modern day Iraq.¹⁴⁷ Al-Hirmizi states:

The settlement of the Turkmen into Iraq took place in successive stages. As their numbers increased, so too did their stature. The Umayyad and Abbasid rulers recruited Turkmen for their armies, in which they became the rulers of Iraq, dividing their territory into numerous, independent emirates and states.¹⁴⁸

When we look at the rise of the Umayyad dynasty and the Abbasid caliphate, we are brought to the time period of 660 AD, which was the period of

¹⁴⁷ Al-Hirmizi, *The Turkmen and Iraqi Homeland*, (Istanbul: Kerkük Fund, 2003), pg.10

¹⁴⁸ Al-Hirmizi, *The Turkmen and Iraqi Homeland*, (Istanbul: Kerkük Fund, 2003), pg.13

Umayyad rise to power.¹⁴⁹ One of the leading Arab historians, Albert Hourani states, “Turks descended from the nomadic pastoral peoples of inner Asia. They had begun to move across the north-eastern frontier of the domain of Islam during the ‘Abbasid’ period.”¹⁵⁰

An Iraqi historian, Abdul Razzak al-Hassani’s views on the origins of Turkmen were:

The term ‘Turkmen’ applied to those peoples who had settled on lands separating Kurdish territories from those of the Arabs. The limits of their settlement reached from a line running from the north-west at Telafer in Mosul to an area in south-east encompassing ‘Altoon-Kupri’ (Altınköprü in Turkish) and ‘Tuz-Khunato’ in Kirkuk, Kizlerbat and Mandali in the Diyala province.¹⁵¹

As we have seen from the research and statements of some of the leading historians and experts on Arab and Turkmen history, the entrance of Turkmen into the region goes back more than a millennium. This can help explain the sensitivities of the Turkmen people when Kurds allege that Kirkuk and its surrounding areas are and have always been Kurdish. This is simply a distortion of the facts, one that ignores the Turkmen reality in Iraq, and one that could have potentially disastrous consequences for the region.

The bulk of the arguments in contemporary northern Iraq are based on demographics and the exact numbers of the ethnic groups in the region.¹⁵² This is a tricky subject because reliable figures on the numbers of each ethnic community

¹⁴⁹ Hourani, *A History of Arab Peoples*, (New York: Warner Books, 1991), pg.25 & pg.32

¹⁵⁰ Hourani, *A History of Arab Peoples*, (New York: Warner Books, 1991), pg.88

¹⁵¹ Al-Hirmizi, *The Turkmen and Iraqi Homeland*, (Istanbul: Kerkük Fund, 2003), pg.13

¹⁵² Please Refer to Appendix J for a map of the original Turkmen settlement in Iraq.

are not present in Iraq. Dr. Tarık Oğuzlu, an academic whose area of expertise is on the status of the Turkmen in Iraq, has stated that the only reliable source for weighing the population figures in the region is the 1957 Iraqi census.¹⁵³ The reason this census stands out among the rest is that while it was conducted, the Turkmen population were permitted to register themselves as Turkmen.¹⁵⁴ This opportunity was denied to them previously and later on due to the ‘Arabization’ policies in effect under the former regimes. According to the census, there were 567,000 (9%) Turkmen in Iraq, out of a population of 6,300,000. The Kurds on the other hand numbered at 819,000 (13%).¹⁵⁵

A study by Ershad al-Hirmizli based on the above given numbers delivers very striking results; he states that by taking the population growth figures of Iraq in the 1950’s, 1960’s and 1970’s into account which was around 3.2% (Arab Social and Economic Development Fund & Arab Monetary Fund statistics), adding to this the growth rate of 2.6% (Arab Social and Economic Development Fund & Arab Monetary Fund statistics) in the 1980’s, and 2.3% (Arab Social and Economic Development Fund & Arab Monetary Fund statistics) in the 1990’s, based on those statistics, the population of the Turkmen in Iraq should be about 2,038,662.¹⁵⁶

While it is impossible to arrive at the exact figures of Turkmen in Iraq until

¹⁵³ Oğuzlu, “Endangered Community: The Turkoman Identity in Iraq”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.24, No.2, pg.309

¹⁵⁴ Oğuzlu, “Endangered Community: The Turkoman Identity in Iraq”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.24, No.2, pg.313

¹⁵⁵ Çağaptay, “Turkmens the Soft Underbelly of the War in Iraq”, *The Washington Institute*, (March 27, 2003) <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=1613>, (accessed January 2nd, 2007)

¹⁵⁶ Al-Hirmizli, *Türkmenler ve Irak (The Turkmen & Iraq)*, (Istanbul: Kerkük Fund, 2003), pg.84

another credible census is conducted, the above given variables should give us some idea of the importance of the Turkmen community in Iraq. If Turkish foreign policy can effectively gather this community under a single roof of political representation, not only will they be able to play a much bigger role in Iraqi politics, they will also be crucial in determining the final status of Kirkuk.

5.4 Kirkuk

We have continuously referred to the importance of Kirkuk throughout the paper. Now let us examine why the city is so important for all Iraqis.

In March of 2007, the Iraqi government endorsed a relocation plan for Arabs who are currently located in Kirkuk.¹⁵⁷ According to the plan, those Arabs who were supposedly brought into Kirkuk during the Saddam regime would now be located in southern Iraq. Although the program was dubbed ‘voluntary’, it was anything but. Both Arabs and Turkmen in Kirkuk are now experiencing a forced ‘Kurdification’ of the city. Every Arab that agrees to relocate their family according to this new plan will be eligible for 15,000 U.S. Dollars compensation and a plot of land in their new location.¹⁵⁸ Such policies have resulted in over 150,000 Arabs leaving Kirkuk, and about 350,000 Kurds coming in to the city.¹⁵⁹ All of this is in preparation for a referendum that is supposed to take place by

¹⁵⁷ Beehner, “The Iraqi Kurdish Question”, *Council on Foreign Relations*, (April 23, 2007), http://www.cfr.org/publication/13136/iraqi_kurdish_question.html; (accessed August 3rd, 2007)

¹⁵⁸ Beehner, “The Iraqi Kurdish Question”, *Council on Foreign Relations*, (April 23, 2007), http://www.cfr.org/publication/13136/iraqi_kurdish_question.html; (accessed August 3rd, 2007)

¹⁵⁹ Beehner, “The Iraqi Kurdish Question”, *Council on Foreign Relations*, (April 23, 2007), http://www.cfr.org/publication/13136/iraqi_kurdish_question.html; (accessed August 3rd, 2007)

December of 2007. Article 140 of the new constitution of Iraq states the following on the issue of Kirkuk's status;¹⁶⁰

Article 140:

First: The Executive Authority shall undertake the necessary steps to complete the implementation of the requirements of all subparagraphs of Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law.

Second: The responsibility placed upon the executive branch of the Iraqi Transitional Government stipulated in Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law shall extend and continue to the executive authority elected in accordance with this constitution, provided that it completes (normalization and census and concludes with a Referendum in Kirkuk and other disputed territories to determine the will of their citizens), in a period not to exceed (the thirty first of December two thousand and seven).¹⁶¹

Several major think tanks and independent panels set up to review the situation in Iraq, such as the 'Iraq Study Group', have all recommended that this referendum be postponed to a later date. When Messud Barzani attended the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament in May of 2007, he was asked a question on the status of the proposed Kirkuk referendum. Mr. Jon

¹⁶⁰ At the time this thesis was written the referendum was supposed to go ahead by end of 2007 as stipulated by the Iraqi Constitution. However in September of 2007 the Iraqi Parliament took a decision to postpone the proposed referendum to May 2008. Reason given was the lack of technical preparation needed to conduct the referendum.

¹⁶¹ "Constitution of Iraq",
<http://www.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?smap=&lngnr=12&rn=107&anr=12329>

Wiersma, a Socialist MP from the Netherlands asked, “What guarantees can the Kurdish government give for a free and fair atmosphere for a referendum?”

Messud Barzani’s reply was:

All groups in Kurdistan will get to vote freely and according to their own conscience in the referendum. About 80% of Iraqis have agreed on the Constitution, and that Article 140 is the legal basis for dealing with the Kirkuk question. We need to go ahead with a referendum, as further delays can only destabilize the situation. Foreign intervention on this issue is unacceptable.¹⁶²

The Kurds in Iraq view the referendum in Kirkuk as their ticket to glory. They are mounting pressure on the United States so that the referendum could take place in the stated timeframe. The Turkish Foreign Ministry, on the other hand is confident that such a referendum will not be able to take place in 2007. Abdullah Gül, the current President of Turkey stated the following on the issue while he was Foreign Minister in May of 2007;

It’s only a matter of time until the Kirkuk referendum gets postponed. Iraqi Constitution’s Article 140 will determine Kirkuk’s status. It should not be rushed into. It should take into account the welfare and future of all Iraqi people according to the will of all members of Iraqi parliament groups, with compromise in areas that will contribute to the final solution.¹⁶³

The position of Abdullah Gül and Turkey’s foreign policy objectives in Kirkuk are based on postponing the referendum to an undisclosed date. However it seems like they do not have a second phase to that plan. What will happen once the referendum is postponed? It will simply be delaying the inevitable. Once again, the

¹⁶² “Kirkuk Referendum Needed Soon, says Iraqi Kurdish Leader”, *Committee on Foreign Affairs European Parliament*, *KRG.org*, (08 May, 2007),

<http://web.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?lngnr=12&smap=02010200&rnz73&anz17784>

¹⁶³ “Dışişleri’nden Kerkük uyarısı (Foreign Ministry’s Kirkuk warning)”, *ANKA*, (May 2, 2007), <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=6445723>, (accessed July 5th, 2007)

wrong strategy is being followed by Turkey in regards to the referendum. A strategy closer to the one proposed by Turhan Çömez, a former MP of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) needs to be adopted. During his term as an MP in AKP, Mr. Çömez was sent on a fact finding mission to northern Iraq. Upon his return from Kirkuk, he stated the following on his findings:

PKK terrorists are settling in Kirkuk with heavy weaponry. Their Identification Cards are supplied by the KDP and PUK. The Turkmen community which I am in touch with state that a lot of PKK militants are coming into Kirkuk. The outcome of the referendum which will be conducted in Kirkuk by the end of this year is predetermined and the intention behind it is obvious. Turkey should declare now that it will not recognize the referendum. There are 50 Kurds coming into Kirkuk for every Arab that leaves. The demographic structure of the region was seriously changed in favor of the Kurds.¹⁶⁴

The seriousness of the situation is very clear. The Turkish government cannot get what it wants in Kirkuk by postponing the referendum. And rejecting the results after the referendum has taken place will not help either. This strategy was followed after the 2005 elections, and it was a failure. The credibility of the referendum needs to be challenged well in advance of its implementation. Earlier this year the International Crisis Group, an NGO which has analyzed the issue of Kirkuk, said the situation was ‘deteriorating sharply’.¹⁶⁵ The findings of the report suggest that a referendum being held this year is highly unlikely. They claim that the Federal government in Iraq has so far done very little to plan out such a

¹⁶⁴ Babacan, Coskuner, “PKK Kerkük’te (PKK is in Kirkuk)”, (February 6th, 2007), *Hürriyet Newspaper*, <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=5899838>, (accessed July 5th, 2007)

¹⁶⁵ “Iraq and the Kurds:Resolving the Kirkuk Crisis”, *International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No.64*, (April 19, 2007), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4782&CFID=26477642&CFTOKEN=56076937>; (accessed July 5th, 2007)

referendum. The Kurdish Regional Government on the other hand is unprepared as well. A segment from the report lists the lack of preparation by the KRG;

The government appears to have taken no steps to sort out the complex questions involved in staging a referendum. Those include. What is the vote supposed to determine? And what question or questions will be posed to voters? Should it be held only in Kirkuk and other disputed areas or in all Iraq? Which are the disputed ones? What are the boundaries of each of these territories? Who will be eligible to vote? Who will oversee the creation of the referendum itself? ¹⁶⁶

These are all very important questions and it appears that Barzani's inexperience in such matters has led to a situation in which holding a referendum this year would need a miracle. The Kurds have been too busy changing the demographic structure of the city, they simply had no time left to focus on more technical matters. Here is what a local Kurd had to say regarding the forced migration into Kirkuk conducted by the KRG:

Kurdish party leaders talk a lot about Kirkuk but they are not living there. Let them move there. And let them provide services to us. What I am looking for is security, business and good schools. But in Kirkuk there is nothing. They cannot persuade me to go back. So they are forcing people to move back by administrative means. If your family is originally from Kirkuk and you want to register your child, obtain a permit or get a civil service job, they tell you to move to Kirkuk. ¹⁶⁷

Kirkuk has one of the largest oil fields in the world. The region around Kirkuk makes up for around 40% of Iraq's total oil production and 70% of its

¹⁶⁶ Beehner, "The Iraqi Kurdish Question", *Council on Foreign Relations*, pg.12, (April 23, 2007), http://www.cfr.org/publication/13136/iraqi_kurdish_question.html; (accessed August 3rd, 2007)

¹⁶⁷ "Iraq and the Kurds:Resolving the Kirkuk Crisis", *International Crisis Group, Middle East Report No.64*, pg.8, (April 19, 2007), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4782&CFID=26477642&CFTOKEN=56076937>; (accessed July 5th, 2007)

natural gas production.¹⁶⁸ So the stakes are high. Whoever controls these oil fields is set to become not only a major regional player in power politics but also a global player in the energy sector. Although the current constitution of Iraq claims that all of the natural resources of the country belong to the Iraqi people, there is a disagreement on the status of oil fields that have not yet been discovered. The Kurdish Regional Government claims that all energy resources discovered through the incentives of their government will be a property of the KRG. On the other hand both the Shiites and the Sunnis oppose such a move. The KRG has already begun awarding contracts to foreign firms for searching and developing the energy resources in the region. The Norwegian firm 'DNO', Turkish/Canadian partnership of 'Genel/Addax', Canadian firm of 'Western Zagros', Turkish/American partnership of 'PetPrime' and Turkish American partnership of 'A&T Energy' and 'Hunt Oil' of Texas, have already signed contracts with the KRG regarding exploration of the oil fields in the region.¹⁶⁹ So let us now look at the complicated draft 'Oil Law' of the federal government and the 'Kurdistan Petroleum Law' of the KRG.

¹⁶⁸ Beehner, "The Iraqi Kurdish Question", *Council on Foreign Relations*, (April 23, 2007), http://www.cfr.org/publication/13136/iraqi_kurdish_question.html; (accessed August 3rd, 2007)

¹⁶⁹ *Kurdistan Development Corporation*, <http://www.kurdistancorporation.com>

CHAPTER VI

CONTROL OF OIL IN IRAQ

6.1 Introduction

Iraq has the world's second largest proven oil reserves, estimated at 115 Billion barrels of proven crude oil.¹⁷⁰ Therefore this makes the new draft 'Oil Law' a very important milestone in Iraq. The United States and the KRG were hoping to have the federal government's draft oil law approved within this year. However, this looks highly unlikely, as neither the Shiites nor the Sunnis have signed on to the law. Even though the KRG has already passed its version of the oil law, for the Kurdish Regional Government, in August of 2007, it seems that without the federal law, what they are doing by awarding contracts to foreign companies is currently illegal.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Hafidh, "Iraq Parliament May Take Months to OK Oil Law", *DowJones Newswires*, (July 16, 2007), <http://www.rigzone.com/news/article.asp?a=id=47673>, (accessed August 3rd, 2007)

¹⁷¹ "KRG Signs Oil and Gas Contract With US Based Hunt Oil", *KRG.org*, (Sept. 2nd, 2007), <http://www.kurdmedia.com/article.aspx?id=14365>, (accessed Sept. 2nd, 2007)

6.2 Federal Draft Oil Law

What the draft ‘Oil Law’ for Iraq was designed to do was establish a ‘Federal Oil and Gas Council’. This Council would include representatives from the ministries of Oil, Treasury, Planning, and Cooperative Development. A representative of each province of Iraq, managers from Petroleum companies, the Iraqi National Oil Company (INOC) representative, and other experts on the subject would meet under the Council regularly.¹⁷² All decisions regarding federal Oil laws, the awarding of contracts, the day to day operations of INOC, and the management of Iraq’s proven oil reserves would fall under the responsibility of the Council.

The draft law would give each of the 18 provinces a percentage of the national revenue from oil based on their population. This method based on population of the provinces was constructed to get the Sunni Arabs on board.¹⁷³ Because the provinces that Sunni Arabs live in tend to have high populations, even though the number of Sunni Arabs compared to Shiite Arabs and Kurds are lower, it would not affect them to that extent, because the provinces that they live in also have segments of Shiite Arabs and Kurds.

The draft ‘Oil Law’ starts off by declaring in the Preamble that ‘Article 111 of the Iraqi Constitution declares Oil and Gas as the property of the whole nation in

¹⁷² “Iraq:Summary of Draft Oil Law”, *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty*, (March 2nd, 2007), <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/03/9d033277-ae99> , (accessed June 3rd, 2007)

¹⁷³ “Iraqi Cabinet Approves Draft Oil Law”, *USA Today Newspaper*, (February,2 2006), http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2007-02-26-cabinet-oil_x.htm , (accessed July 3rd, 2007)

all Its Provinces and Governorates'.¹⁷⁴ By stating this in the preamble, it was hoped to achieve a consensus that all provinces would turn in their revenue from 'existing' oil fields into a pool regulated by the Federal government. It would then be distributed to all the provinces based on population figures as mentioned above. However Article 112 of the new Constitution of Iraq also has clear guidelines as to how this revenue will be distributed, it states;

Article 112:

First: The federal government, with the producing governorates and regional governments, shall undertake the management of oil and gas extracted from present fields, provided that it distributes its revenues in a fair manner in proportion to the population distribution in all parts of the country, specifying an allotment for a specified period for the damaged regions which were unjustly deprived of them by the former regime, and the regions that were damaged afterwards in a way that ensures balanced development in different areas of the country, and this shall be regulated by a law.

Second: The federal government, with the producing regional and governorate governments, shall together formulate the necessary strategic policies to develop the oil and gas wealth in a way that achieves the highest benefit to the Iraqi people using the most advanced techniques of the market

¹⁷⁴ "Iraqi Federal Government's 'Draft Oil Law'", *Iraq Enterprise*, www.iraq-enterprise.com/oillaw/OLdraftE.pdf, (accessed July 11th, 2007)

principles and encouraging investment.¹⁷⁵

Dr. Ashti A. Hawrami, Minister of Natural Resources of the KRG explained

Article 112 of the Constitution by stating the following:

The role of the federal authorities is only an administrative role confined to the handling; i.e.: exporting and marketing, of the extracted oil and gas from existing producing fields. This does not entitle the federal authorities to a broader role on operations. Article 112 does not mention anything about discovered undeveloped fields, or new fields, or unexplored areas.¹⁷⁶

What the Minister of Natural Resources states in an indirect manner is that any new oil fields explored, discovered and operated by the KRG will not be a part of the revenue pool dictated by the federal government. In other words, KRG will be the sole beneficiary of new oil fields that are found in its region. Such statements have attracted the attention of major oil firms around the world. The KRG has already awarded several ‘exploration’ contracts to certain companies. This is the main disagreement behind the federal government’s draft ‘Oil Law’. The Sunni Arabs and certain segments of the Shiite Arabs declared that the Kurds had no right to award any contracts without the federal ‘Oil Law’ being passed. The strategy of the United States also backfired, because they thought the oil law would unite the country due to the provinces’ dependence on a federal pool of revenue distribution. The Kurds have tried to take advantage of the situation by making clear their claims on yet undiscovered energy sources in the region of northern Iraq,

¹⁷⁵ “Constitution of Iraq”, *KRG.org*, <http://www.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?smap=&lngnr=12&rnrr=107&anr=12329>; (accessed February 28th, 2007)

¹⁷⁶ “Oil and Gas”, *Kurdistan Development Corporation*, <http://www.kurdistancorporation.com>; (accessed September 3rd, 2007)

and as a result the draft oil law seems like it will remain as a draft for a long time to come.

Another important point about the draft 'Oil Law' is that the KRG will be receiving not only the 17% of national oil revenues that are given to it as a result of its population, it will also receive additional revenues in order to make up for the 'injustices and mismanagement of investment' during the Baath regime.¹⁷⁷ This means that both the Shiites and the Kurds would be receiving well above their population ratios for an undisclosed period of time. This move naturally angered the Sunni Arabs.

The draft 'Oil Law' when introduced to the Iraqi public was met by protests all over Iraq. An experienced Oil Industry worker and head of the Iraqi Oil Workers Union, Hassan Jumaa Awad al-Assad had this to say on the new law, during a protest in Basra:

This law in fact destroys the achievements of the Iraqi masses and especially the Law Number 80 of 1961 and the nationalization of 1973. The new law will give unprecedented rights to the country's vast reserves. We will lose control over Iraqi oil. Therefore, the social progress in Iraq will be curtailed, because the oil companies want huge profits; they are not concerned about the environment, wages or living conditions. Under the new Iraqi Law, contracts for up to 30 years could be awarded, giving the foreign investors a share of the new fields discovered.¹⁷⁸

The wide scale protests were not only coming from Sunni Arabs but Shiite Arabs as well. One of the reasons for the draft 'Oil Law' being stuck in

¹⁷⁷ Hafidh, "Iraq Parliament May Take Months to OK Oil Law", *DowJones Newswires*, (July 16, 2007), <http://www.rigzone.com/news/article.asp?a=id=47673>, (accessed August 3rd, 2007)

¹⁷⁸ Stewart, "Fight for Control: Iraq Oil Under Pressure", *The Guardian Newspaper*, (July 15th, 2007), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,,2126511,00.html>, (accessed Aug. 4th, 2007)

disagreements is the above mentioned lucrative long term contracts that could be offered to foreign investors. With no regard for the Iraqi people, many giant oil companies are awaiting anxiously for the law to pass. This is the moment the oil sector has been waiting for, when major oil firms can finally get their hands on the riches that so many lives were lost for.

6.3 Petroleum Law of the Kurdish Regional Government

As stated before, while the federal oil law was under debate, the Kurds passed their own version called the ‘Petroleum Law of the Kurdistan Region’. The Kurds wanted to get this law into effect as soon as possible so that they could start handing out contracts to foreign firms. And with the promise of long term contracts, many firms lined up to get a piece. While presenting the draft ‘Kurdistan Petroleum Law’ to the ‘Kurdish Parliament’, Mr. Adnan Mufti said, “It is vital to the future of the Kurdistan Region that we have a modern, transparent, investor friendly petroleum law that maximizes returns to all peoples of Iraq.”¹⁷⁹ He was clearly emphasizing the importance of this law being adopted quickly so that foreign investment in their region could go ahead.

Under the KRG Petroleum Law, Messud Barzani oversaw the creation of Kurdistan Exploration and Production Company (KEPCO), Kurdistan National Oil Company (KNOC), Kurdistan Oil Marketing Organization (KOMO), and

¹⁷⁹ “Kurdistan’s Petroleum Law Gets Frist Reading in Kurdistan’s Parliament”, *KRG.org*, (9 July, 2007), <http://web.krg.org/articles/detail.asp?smap=02010100&lngnr=12&rn=223&anr=18943> , (accessed Aug. 4th, 2007)

Kurdistan Organization for Downstream Operations (KODO).¹⁸⁰

It is obvious that the KRG aims to secure the northern Iraq energy resources for themselves. The Kurdish Regional Government even claims that in the event of a disagreement between the federal authorities and the KRG, the KRG's decisions take precedence over those of the federal government. This means that if the draft federal Iraqi oil law does not materialize, the KRG will continue its contract awarding process to foreign firms. This is a development that concerns not only the people of Iraq, but also regional countries, most importantly Turkey. The Turkish Foreign Ministry has so far opted the strategy of 'wait and see' regarding the draft oil law of Iraq. What it needs to do instead is enter into close dialogue with segments of the Iraqi society who oppose the KRG's strong arm tactics, and organize a credible and diverse opposition to the Kurdish petroleum legislation. These are historic times that the region is going through, and passive diplomacy will result in long term losses, with disastrous consequences for the Turks. Taking into account the opposition of Iran, Syria, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member Arab countries, the Sunni Arabs in Iraq, and segments of the Shiite Arab population in Iraq to the KRG's moves, the Turks have a lot of options and room to maneuver in putting a halt to KRG intentions.

We have taken a look at the differences between the federal government and the KRG in their approach to handling the energy sources. If resolved in favor of the Kurds, the oil distribution laws of the Iraqi state has the potential to change the

¹⁸⁰ "Petroleum Act of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq - Final Draft", *KRG.org*, www.krg.org/pdf/Kurdistan_Petroleum_Act_Final_Draft.pdf; (accessed August 27th, 2007)

balance of power in the region in the long term. Now let us shift our attention to what foreign policy options Turkey has for the future, and the steps that it needs to take in order protect its national interests in the region.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Despite the series of mistakes in foreign policy initiatives in the region, Turkey still has a lot of weapons at its disposal. First of all, it has managed to preserve its credibility in the eyes of the regional states, by the Turkish Parliament's refusal of the deployment of U.S. troops through Turkey into northern Iraq, on March 1st, 2003. Although this has often been referred to as the low point in U.S-Turkish relations, the risks involved for Turkey were far too great to accept. Colin Powell's words during a National Security Council meeting before the March-2003 invasion are an indicator of the mood in Washington at the time:

I think Turks can handle the over flights, I think they can handle the through-put, I think they can handle the air space. Its when you talk about moving an armored division or mechanized division overland through the length of Anatolia with a long huge train behind it, huge numbers of vehicles, going to invade another Muslim country. I will go for that, but that may be one too many bricks on the scale for the Turks. I don't think we can get it and we're risking losing it all by going for that.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ James E. Kapsis, "From Desert Storm to Metal Storm: How Iraq has Spoiled US – Turkish Relations", *Current History*, Vol. 104, No. 685, pg. 383

When we look at the negotiations that went on before the refusal of the Turkish Parliament on the government motion for granting right of passage to U.S. troops, we can rely on the statements made by Deniz Bölükbaşı, a senior bureaucrat who was personally involved in the negotiating process with the Americans. This is what he had to say regarding what the Americans were asking for and offered in return at the time,

The Americans from the beginning did not want Turkish troops to enter Iraq. If we did enter, they wanted relatively few numbers that would be under American command. Turkey would enter 20 km. into Iraq. This was accepted by both sides. Turkish forces would not engage the Iraqi forces. They would instead guard against a possible wave of refugees. If the Turkmen were under attack in Kirkuk during the invasion, Turkish troops could join the Americans for tactical operations in the city. The Americans insisted that the Turkish Armed Forces could only resort to arms in a situation of self defense. This was an unacceptable and hard to understand demand on their part, how could we be expected to only resort to arms in self defense against the terrorist organization, PKK? ¹⁸²

Several points stand out from Mr. Bölükbaşı's explanation of the negotiation process. First of all, even if the Turkish troops did enter 20 kilometers into northern Iraq, an area where most of the PKK camps are located, it would have been fruitless. This is because the KDP would have most likely warned the PKK militants before the operations began, and they would have left the camps long before the Turkish troops arrived. And under no circumstances would Turkish troops be allowed into Kirkuk, because the Americans would claim that the security situation in the city were under their control. Despite all of these obvious pitfalls,

¹⁸² "Deniz Bölükbaşı Anlatıyor", *HaberTürk*, (May 27, 2007), <http://www.haberturk.com/haber.asp?id=24518&cat=110&dt=2007/05/27>, (accessed August 2nd, 2007)

the AKP government presented the motion to the Parliament on the 1st of March 2003. The voting was close, with 533 MP's who cast their vote, 264 voted in favor, 250 voted against and there were 19 abstentions.¹⁸³ However the motion failed because it needed 267 votes to obtain majority, and it failed to do that.

Due to the decision of the Turkish Parliament, the Americans seemed to be caught by surprise. Steven A. Cook of the 'Council on Foreign Relations' think tank makes an accurate observation on this matter, he states:

Before the vote, what we thought might happen was a fundamental misreading of what was going on in Turkey at the time. You had a population that is nationalist by nature. The people who we generally thought we could count on in Turkey, which is the Turkish military, thought that Operation Iraqi Freedom was a bad idea. The AKP in Turkey was a very young government. It was unclear whether it would be able to deliver enough votes.¹⁸⁴

The government of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) could not successfully manage the negotiation process with the Americans. Instead of giving the false sense of security to the U.S. administration about the motion presented to the Turkish Parliament, the AKP government could have been more cautious. This could have been done by asking for very specific and non-negotiable guarantees from the Americans prior to presenting the motion to the Parliament. Such requests could have been asking for unrestricted access of Turkish troops into northern Iraq without any limitations on the rules of engagement or the amount of distance they

¹⁸³ "Tartışmalı tezkere reddedildi (Debated motion rejected)", *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (1st March, 2003), <http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/2003/03/01/255362.asp>; (accessed February 5th, 2007)

¹⁸⁴ Cook, "Turkish-US Tensions 'Great Underreported Story of Iraq War'", *Council on Foreign Relations*, (May 29th, 2007), <http://www.cfr.org/publication/12963/cook.html>; (accessed July 6th, 2007)

could travel into Iraq, Turkish troop presence in sensitive cities like Kirkuk for protection of the Turkmen, and total engagement of the PKK by the Turkish Armed Forces. Once these requests would have been delivered to the U.S., Washington would have most likely refused and cancelled its strategy of opening up a northern front. What was done instead by the AKP government was to try and bargain for an aid package with the United States, giving the impression that Turkish cooperation was for sale. The Turkish government also gave the impression that the motion would pass in the Parliament, which in return resulted in the American mobilization of naval ships and troops to the Mediterranean. All this, once the motion failed, angered the United States, which felt betrayed by an old and trusted ally. And a blow was dealt to the Turkish- American relations that is still felt today.

While attending a Sunday morning talk show in the United States on the second anniversary of the US invasion of Iraq, the former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had this to say on the actions of Turkey at that crucial time period of March 2003:

Given the level of insurgency today, two years later, clearly, if we had been able to get the 4th Infantry Division in from the north through Turkey, more of the Iraqi Saddam Hussein Baathist regime would have been captured or killed. The insurgency today would have been less.¹⁸⁵

Clearly there is now some bad blood between the Bush administration and Turkey. One thing that needs to be understood is that Turkish troop presence in Iraq is unwanted not only by the Kurds but also by the Shiites and Sunni Arabs. A

¹⁸⁵ James E. Kapsis, "From Desert Storm to Metal Storm: How Iraq has Spoiled US – Turkish Relations", *Current History*, Vol. 104, No. 685, pg.384

Turkish military incursion in Iraq would have historical implications, and this would not be welcomed by Iraqis. Grand Ayatollah Ali Hussein al-Sistani has even issued a *fatwa*, declaring the presence of Turkish troops in Iraq as unwanted. Ambassador Paul Bremer's memoirs on his time in Iraq as the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority gives us a clear view of the thought process of the Shiites against possible Turkish involvement in Iraq:

Sistani opposed foreign troops from Iraq's neighbors joining the Coalition. Although the Pentagon and the State Department continued to push to get Turks into Iraq, the option was effectively dead on arrival because of Sistani's position. Shia in the Governing Council would make a common cause with Kurds, who vehemently opposed the introduction of Turkish troops into Iraq through their territory.¹⁸⁶

Even the nationalist Shiite, Moqtada al-Sadr would have opposed a Turkish presence in Iraq. Turkish troops would have been targets of a united Iraqi resistance, and perhaps al-Qaeda terrorist attacks would have been focused specifically in Turkey, causing devastating losses for a sustained period of time.

Before we proceed any longer, let us recap the realities existent on the ground in Iraq at the moment. The Turkish – American relations in regards to the developments in Iraq are very tense. This is tied in part to the refusal of the March 1st, 2003 motion in the Turkish Parliament. Another factor when looked at from the Turkish perspective is the negative effects on the Turkish population of the arrests in a humiliating fashion of Turkish Special Forces in *Sulaymaniyah* by American troops on July 4th, 2003. This caused a big rise in anti-American sentiments among

¹⁸⁶ Bremer, *My Year in Iraq*, Malcolm McConnell, ed., (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), pg.165

the Turkish population, and was widely interpreted as an act of revenge by the Americans for the refusal of the March 2003 motion. Another huge factor for the tense relations and the one that tops the list of Turkish concerns is the ineffectiveness of the United States in engaging the PKK. An effort was made to better coordinate the battle against the PKK by the appointment of General Joseph Ralston as the ‘Special Envoy Countering the PKK’. However, it did not deliver any concrete results. His Turkish counterpart, General Edip Başer, was replaced by the AKP government on 21st of May, 2007 after General Başer criticized the process as being ineffective.¹⁸⁷ His replacement, Ambassador Rafet Akgünay was unable to improve the situation.

The PKK terrorists that are being arrested by Turkish Security Forces are increasingly being caught with American issued weapons. According to a July 31st, 2007 United States Government Accountability Office investigation, the American military could not account for 190,000 weapons issued to Iraqi Security Forces in 2004-2005. Including 110,000 AK 47 Assault Rifles, 80,000 Pistols, 135,000 pieces of body armor and 115,000 helmets.¹⁸⁸ This not to say that all of these went to the PKK, but it is hard to prove that a substantial amount did not fall into the hands of the terrorist organization. After the U.S. occupation of Iraq, the Coalition troops were subject to attack by ‘Improvised Explosive Devices’ (IED’s), and

¹⁸⁷ “Edip Başer’le ilgili görev değişikliği kararı (Decision for removal of Edip Başer)”, *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (May 21, 2007), <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=6553933>, (accessed June 3rd, 2007)

¹⁸⁸ Krauss, “Iraqi deaths spike five months into US troop surge”, *Middle East Times*, (August 1st, 2007), <http://www.metimes.com/storyview.php?StoryID=20070801-070035-3436r>, (accessed August 10th, 2007)

remote controlled land mines, this trend is now seen by attacks on Turkish Security Forces by the PKK. It is a foregone conclusion that the PKK was able to obtain these explosives and technology from Iraqi sources.

Another reality on the ground is the aggressive stance taken by KRG President Messud Barzani towards Turkey. The high point of his careless comments came when he stated, “If Turkey intervenes in the Kirkuk problem, we will have the right to intervene in Diyarbakır”¹⁸⁹ during an interview on the United Arab Emirates television network, *Al-Arabiyya*. There is also the problem of Barzani’s ties to certain political groups within Turkey which are being used to create unrest within the country. The Democratic Society Party (DTP), the political arm of the terrorist organization PKK is known to have close ties to Barzani.

In light of this behavior by Messud Barzani and the fact that PKK is roaming around freely in northern Iraq, the Chief of General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces General Yaşar Büyükanıt has given the green light to conduct a military operation into northern Iraq. He has provided ample evidence of PKK activity in the region.

On the other hand the draft ‘Oil Law’ has failed to bring all sides together in Iraq, no agreement has been reached on the issue and none is likely to be reached in the near future. Despite this, the Kurdish Regional Government has drawn up its own petroleum law and started handing out contracts to foreign companies.

¹⁸⁹ “Barzani: Türkiye’nin Kerkük’te hakkı varsa bizim de Diyarbakır’da var (Barzani: If Turkey claims rights on Kirkuk, then we have the same right for Diyarbakır)”, *Hürriyet Newspaper*, (07 April, 2007), <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=6289432> ; (accessed June 8th, 2007)

The above mentioned points underline the most important developments in the region and the challenges that face Turkish foreign policy in the near future. What the Turkish government needs to do is broaden its perspective of the region. While the Turkmen are very important for Turkey, they are not the only political actors that the Turks can establish relations with.

What Turkey needs to do at the moment is look at all the groups in Iraq which are in favor of keeping the country intact. These include the Sunni Arabs, and the nationalist Shiite led by Muqtada al-Sadr. The activities of these groups could be supported by the Turkish government as long as their aims serve Turkish national interests. Simultaneously the strengthening of Turkmen unity needs to be a priority. Bringing together all Turkmen groups under a roof larger than that of the Turkmen Iraqi Front, could be an option. Irregardless of the religious differences between the Sunni and Shiite Turkmen, through careful planning and coordination, such a goal could be achievable.

Turkey could also cooperate with Iran when it comes to battling the PKK and PJAK (Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan) an affiliate terrorist organization of the PKK which is active in Iran. In mid August of 2007, Iranian security forces conducted extensive shelling of regions in northern Iraq believed to be housing PJAK terrorists.¹⁹⁰ Future operations in the area could be coordinated with Iranian Security Forces to more effectively corner PKK terrorists.

On the other hand, economic pressure on the Kurdish Regional Government

¹⁹⁰ "Iranian Forces, Kurdish Guerillas Clash on Iraq-Iran Border", *Associated Press*, (July 7th, 2007) <http://www.kurdmedia.com/article.aspx?id=14218>; (accessed August 20th, 2007)

should be exerted. One way to achieve this could be to close down the Habur Border Gate temporarily until a compromise could be reached between Turkey and the KRG. A second alternative border crossing through the Turkmen regions could be created which would make the Habur Border crossing unnecessary. Contracts awarded to Turkish firms on strategically important projects and infrastructure of the KRG could also be halted until the KRG has taken action on the PKK issue. The supplying of electricity to northern Iraq could be made conditional on the KRG authorities taking action the issue of PKK terrorism.

The process of the Kirkuk referendum is also a very tricky subject. As looked at in the section on Kirkuk, Turkish foreign policy needs to be geared towards opposing the proposed referendum until a healthy atmosphere on the ground exists for a fair and free referendum. This opposition could be achieved by demonstrating to the international community that the Kurds have changed the demographics of the region by force.

If the above proposed actions are taken simultaneously, the PKK will be dealt a heavy blow, the KRG will not be able to use strong arm tactics on the issue of Kirkuk, and oil fields, Turkish partners in Iraq will be more diverse, Turkmen, Sunni Arab, and nationalist Shiites will work to achieve the same goal: a united, democratic Iraq. Turkey's relations with regional countries will improve, and a partnership based on mutual respect for each others national security interests will be established with Iran. Other Arab countries in the region will share the same view when it comes to the territorial integrity of Iraq, and putting an end to Kurdish

moves for secession from Iraq.

Many analysts might look at the recommendations made on this paper and classify them as hard line tactics. Yes, this is precisely what these recommendations aim to achieve. A Turkey which has adopted soft approaches in the region in the decades before has found itself in the impasse this paper has outlined. There is too much at stake: An independent Kurdish state in control of close to 20% of the world's second largest oil reserves is about to be established. Whether or not it declares formal independence is not the issue. It most likely will not. But then it does not need to, either. If the KRG gains control of Kirkuk through a referendum, and gets 17% plus added reimbursements for 'past injustices' of the national oil income of Iraq, through its highly autonomous status in a federal Iraq, it will have achieved an indirect independence anyway. American support for their cause will most likely continue. As previous sections of this paper has demonstrated, Iraq is one of the most politically complicated states in the world. And at the moment, the Kurdish region presents an oasis of calm for the U.S. administration. They will not want to disturb this trend.

This paper has demonstrated that a lack of authority in northern Iraq has always led to increased PKK activity in Turkey. Today Turkey faces the opposite problem. There is an authority in northern Iraq, but it is the kind of authority that has hostile intentions for Turkish interests. It supports terrorism, tries to stir up Kurdish nationalism in Turkey, and is in the process of gaining control of energy resources that could make it a regional power. As analyzed, Turkish foreign policy

needs to diversify its approach and find partners in the region, both within and outside Iraq, that share the same concerns Turkey does on the territorial integrity of Iraq.

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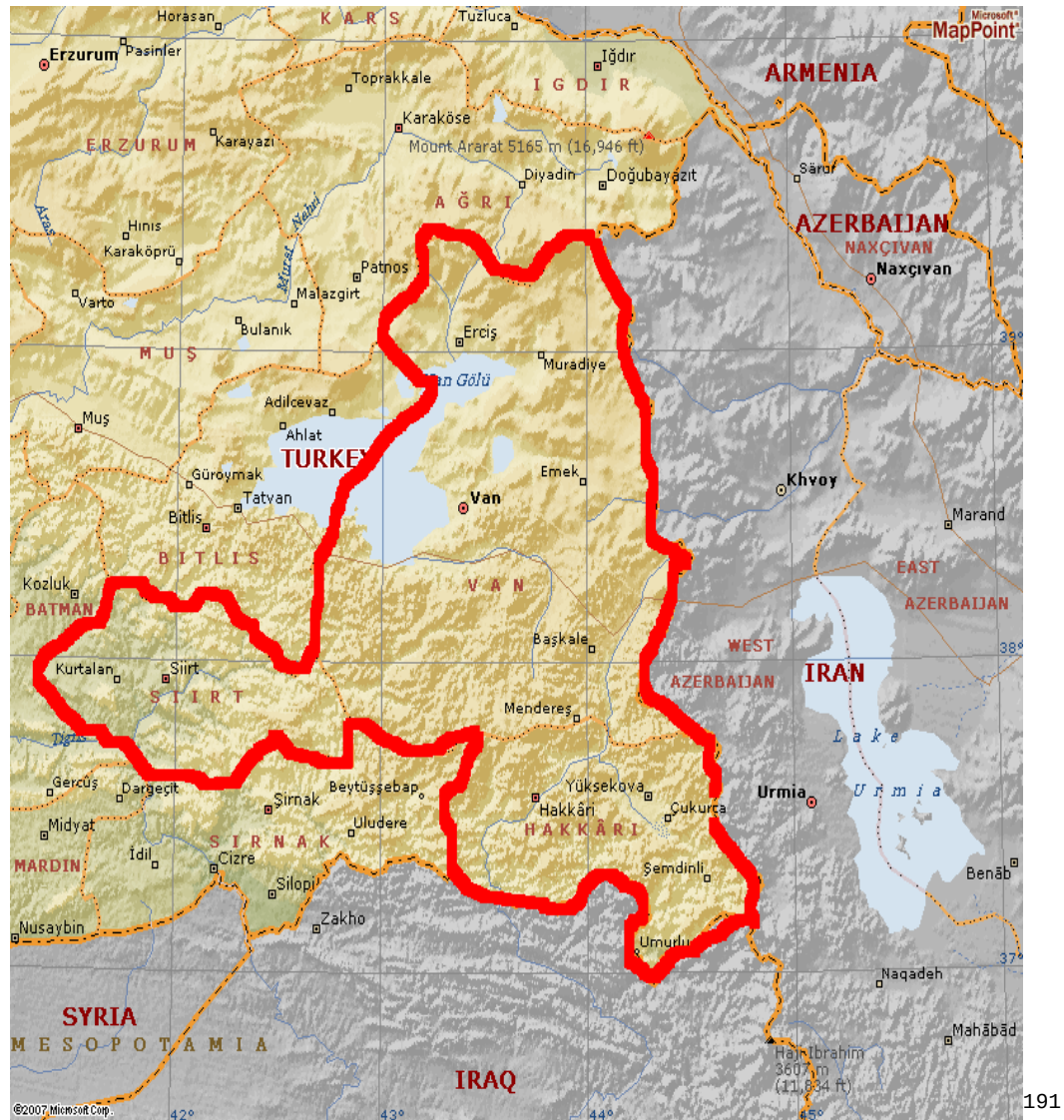
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APPENDIX A

MAP OF SOUTHEASTERN TURKEY, REFERRED TO AS “BOTAN” BY THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION PKK



¹⁹¹ Microsoft Encarta World Atlas, (1996 Edition)

APPENDIX B

TURKISH GOVERNMENTS FROM 1983 TO 1999

<u>Government</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Until</u>
<i>Özal Government</i>	13 December, 1983	21 December, 1987
<i>Özal Government</i>	21 December, 1987	9 November, 1989
<i>Akbulut Government</i>	9 November, 1989	23 June, 1991
<i>Yılmaz Government</i>	23 June, 1991	20 November, 1991
<i>Demirel Government</i>	20 November, 1991	25 June, 1993
<i>Çiller Government</i>	25 June, 1993	15 October, 1995
<i>Çiller Government</i>	15 October, 1995	5 November, 1995
<i>Çiller Government</i>	5 November, 1995	12 March, 1996
<i>Yılmaz Government</i>	12 March, 1996	08 July, 1996
<i>Erbakan Government</i>	08 July, 1996	30 June, 1997
<i>Yılmaz Government</i>	30 June, 1997	11 January, 1999
<i>Ecevit Government</i>	11 January, 1999	28 May, 1999 ¹⁹²

¹⁹² Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “Türk Hükümetleri Kronolojisi (Chronology of Turkish Governments)”, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/MFA_tr/Kutuphane/TurkHukumetleriKronolojisi/

APPENDIX C

Ministry Of Interior – Republic of Turkey – Effects of PKK terrorism in South Eastern Turkey from 15.08.1984 to 20.02.2000

Number of Armed Attacks by the PKK.....	6,751
Number of Clashes with Security Forces.....	8,581
Bomb attacks and use of Land Mines by PKK.....	3,519
Road Blocks and Kidnappings by the PKK.....	1,071
Illegal Propaganda Distribution by the PKK.....	676
Illegal Gatherings and Demonstrations by the PKK.....	852
Total of Registered Incident Reports.....	21,866
Security Personnel Killed by PKK.....	5,546
Security Personnel Wounded by the PKK.....	11,387
Number of Terrorists Killed.....	18,958
Number of Terrorists Captured Wounded.....	706
Number of Terrorists Who Surrendered.....	2,192
Journalists Killed by PKK.....	21
Number of Mayors Killed by PKK.....	23
Number of Lower Level Gov't Employees Killed by PKK.....	60
Number of Teachers Killed by PKK.....	164
Number of Imam's Killed by PKK.....	27

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¹⁹³ Günay, *Şemdin Sakık Anlatıyor: Kobralar Üzerimize Gelince Aklımızı Kaçırıyorduk (Şemdin Sakık Describes: When the Cobra's Came at us, We Used to Lose Our Mind)*, (İstanbul: Doğan Press, 2007), pg. 128

APPENDIX D

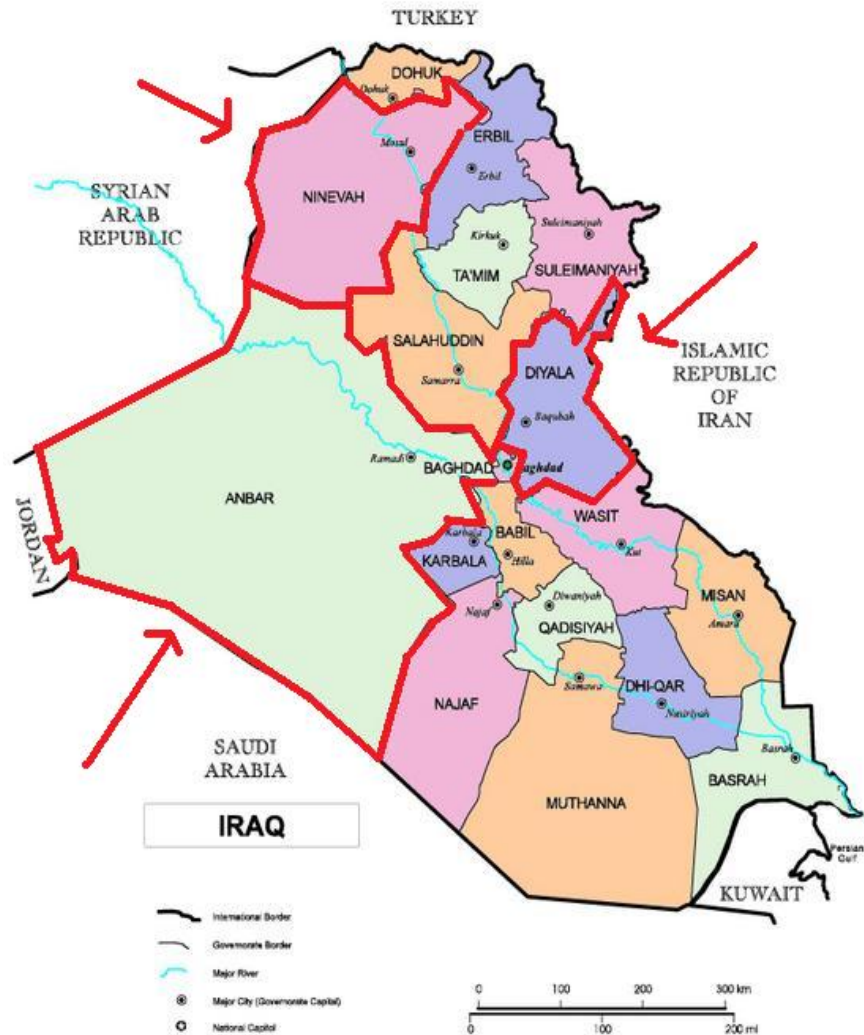
Number of Coalition soldiers killed since beginning of hostilities in Iraq

Number of U.S. Soldiers killed:	3,738
Number of British Soldiers killed:	168
Number of Italian Soldiers killed:	33
Number of Polish Soldiers killed:	21
Number of Ukrainian Soldiers killed:	18
Number of Bulgarian Soldiers killed:	13
Number of Spanish Soldiers killed:	11
Number of Danish Soldiers killed:	7
Number of Salvadorian Soldiers killed:	5
Number of Slovakian Soldiers killed:	4
Number of Latvian Soldiers killed:	3
Number of Estonian, Thai, Australian Soldiers killed:	2 (each)
Number of Hungarian, Kazakh, Romanian, South Korean Soldiers killed:	1 (each) ¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁴ Associated Press, “US Military deaths in Iraq at 3,738” – September 3, 2007, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20070902/ap_on_re_mi_ea/iraq_us_deaths_3; (accessed September 3rd, 2007)

APPENDIX E

Map of Iraq – Governorates of Anbar, Nineva and Diyala



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APPENDIX F

International Republican Institute Poll

January 30 Election: December 26 – January 7, 2005 –

Q 1: *“How likely is it that you will vote in the election?”*

A 1: <u>Iraqi Population:</u>	Very Likely:	64.5%
	Somewhat Likely:	17.2%
	Somewhat Unlikely:	5.5%
	Very Unlikely:	7.4%
	Don't Know:	4.5%

A 2: <u>Shia Arab Population:</u>	Very Likely:	77.3%
	Somewhat Likely:	14.10%

A 3: <u>Sunni Arab Population:</u>	Very Likely:	19.1%
	Somewhat Likely:	28.8%
	Somewhat Unlikely:	17.8%
	Very Unlikely:	28.8%

A 4: <u>Kurds:</u>	Very Likely:	70.9%
	Somewhat Likely:	19.10% ¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Microsoft Encarta World Atlas, (1996 Edition)

¹⁹⁶ *The Brookings Institution*, “Iraq Index – Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security in Post-Saddam”, pg.30, <http://www3.brookings.edu/fp/saban/iraq/index200550218.pdf>, (accessed August 22nd, 2007)

APPENDIX G

Referendum Results of October 15th, 2005

Provinces	Capital	Yes	No	Votes Cast	Ethnicity
Al-Anbar	Ramadi	3.04	96.96	259,91	Sunni Arab
Erbil	Erbil	99.13	0.64	830,570	Kurdish
Babil	Hilla	94.56	5.44	543,779	Shiite Arab
Baghdad	Baghdad	77.70	22.30	2,120,615	Mixed
Basra	Basra	96.02	3.98	691,024	Shiite Arab
Dhi Qar	Nasiriyah	97.15	2.85	462,710	Shiite Arab
Diyala	Baquba	51.27	48.73	476,980	Mixed
Dohuk	Dohuk	99.13	0.87	389,198	Kurdish
Karbala	Karbala	96.58	3.42	264,674	Shiite Arab
Tamin	Kirkuk	62.91	37.09	542,688	Turkmen/Kurd
Maysan	Amara	97.79	2.21	254,067	Shiite Arab
Muthanna	Samawa	98.65	1.35	185,710	Shiite Arab
Najaf	Najaf	95.82	4.18	299,420	Shiite Arab
Ninevah	Mosul	44.92	55.08	718,758	Mixed
Qadisyah	Diwaniyah	96.74	3.26	297,176	Shiite Arab
Salahaddin	Tikrit	18.25	81.75	510,152	Sunni Arab
Suleymaniyah	Suleymaniyah	98.96	1.04	723,723	Kurdish
Wasit	Kut	95.70	4.30	280,128	Shiite Arab
	TOTAL	78.59	21.41	9,852,291	¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁷ Iraq's Independent Electoral Commission Official Results, Alexander, "Iraqi Constitution Approved by 79% of Voters- (Update 4)", October 25th, 2005 - http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000087&sid=amqz7dZIE3w&refer=top_world_news; (accessed January 9th, 2007)

APPENDIX H

December 15th, 2005 – Permanent Government Election Results

Party/Coalition	Seats in National Assembly
United Iraqi Alliance	128
Kurdistani Gathering was known as The Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan in Jan.30th, 2005 elections	53
Iraqi Accordance Front / Sunni Arab	44
National Iraqi List / Eyad Allawi	25
Islamic Union of Kurdistan was part of The Democratic Patriotic Alliance of Kurdistan in Jan.30th, 2005 elections	5
Reconciliation and Liberation Bloc / Sunni Arab	3
Iraqi Turkmen Front	2

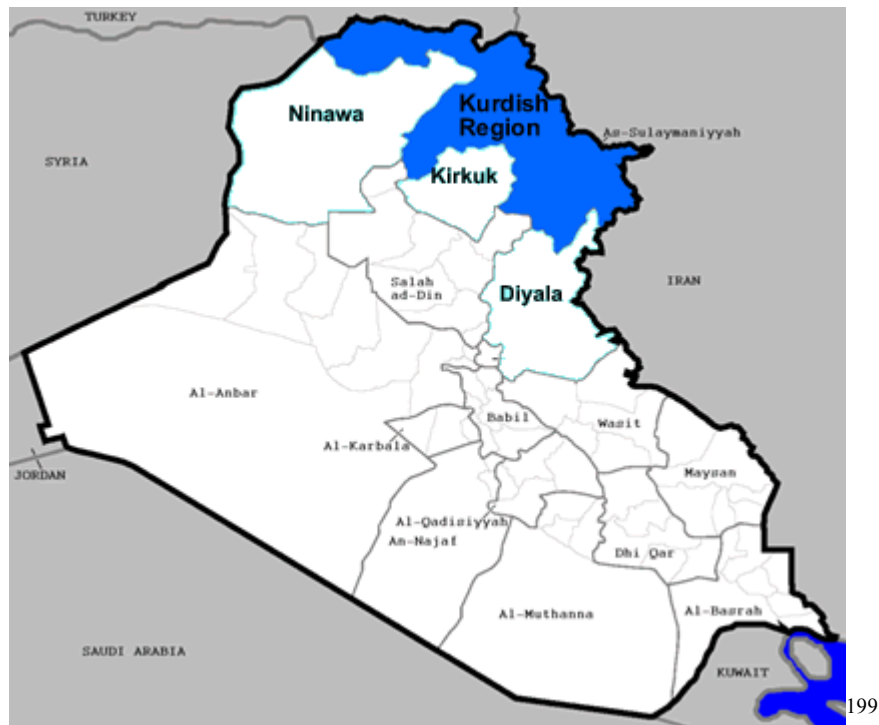
Progressives / Shiite Arab	2
Mithal al-Aloosi List for Iraqi Nation	1
Al-Rafidian List / Christian	1
Al-Ezediah Movement for Progressing and Reform / Yazidi Minority	1

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¹⁹⁸ The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, "February 10th, 2006. Certification of the Council of Representatives Final Result", Baghdad.
http://www.ieciraq.org/final%20cand/IECI_Decision_Certified_Results_of_CoR_Elections_En.pdf.
 (accessed December 8th, 2006)

APPENDIX I

Map of Kurdish Controlled Regions of Northern Iraq



¹⁹⁹ *Map of KRG*, <http://www.snappingturtle.net/jmc/images/kurdishregion.gif>, (accessed February 14th, 2007)

APPENDIX J

Map of Turkmen Settlement in Iraq



(Area of Turkmen settlement – In between the Black lines)²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Microsoft Encarta World Atlas, (1996 Edition)