

IRAQ – ITS INFRASTRUCTURE OF CONCEALMENT, DECEPTION AND INTIMIDATION

This report draws upon a number of sources, including intelligence material, and shows how the Iraqi regime is constructed to have, and to keep, WMD, and is now engaged in a campaign of obstruction of the United Nations Weapons Inspectors.

Part One focusses on how Iraq's security organisations operate to conceal Weapons of Mass Destruction from UN Inspectors. It reveals that the inspectors are outnumbered by Iraqi intelligence by a ratio of 200 to 1.

Part Two gives up to date details of Iraq's network of intelligence and security organisations whose job it is to keep Saddam and his regime in power, and to prevent the international community from disarming Iraq.

Part Three goes on to show the effects of the security apparatus on the ordinary people of Iraq.

While the reach of this network outside Iraq may be less apparent since the Gulf War of 1990/1991, inside Iraq, its grip is formidable over all levels of society. Saddam and his inner circle control the State infrastructure of fear.

January 2003

Part One: The Effect on UNMOVIC

The role of the Inspectors is to monitor and verify the disarmament of Iraq as demanded by the international community at the end of the Gulf War, 12 years ago. Inspectors are not a detective agency: They can only work effectively if the Iraqi Regime co-operates pro-actively with the Inspectors. We know this can be done successfully: South Africa did it.

But Iraq has singularly failed to do this.

Iraq has deliberately hampered the work of the Weapons Inspectors. There are presently around 108 UN Weapons Inspectors in Iraq – a country the size of France. They are vastly outnumbered by over 20,000 Iraqi Intelligence officers, who are engaged in disrupting their inspections and concealing Weapons of Mass Destruction. This is a ratio of 200: 1. Even with the obstruction, concealment and intimidation, the inspectors have made a number of significant and disturbing findings.

But as Hans Blix reported to the UN Security Council on 27 January,: “It is not enough to open doors. Inspection is not a game of “catch as catch can”.”

Documents

The Iraqi security organisations work together to conceal documents, equipment, and materials.

The Regime has intensified efforts to hide documents in places where they are unlikely to be found, such as private homes of low-level officials and universities. There are prohibited materials and documents being relocated to agricultural areas and private homes or hidden beneath hospitals and even mosques.

This material is being moved constantly, making it difficult to trace or find without absolutely fresh intelligence.

And those in whose homes this material is concealed have been warned of serious consequences to them and their families if it is discovered.

Surveillance

The Iraqis have installed surveillance equipment all over the hotels and offices that UN personnel are using. All their meetings are monitored, their relationships observed, their conversations listened to.

Telephone calls are monitored. Al-Mukhabarat, the main intelligence agency, listen round the clock. Al-Mukhabarat made telephone calls to inspectors at all hours of the night during the days of UNSCOM. Intelligence indicates they have plans to do so again to UNMOVIC.

Inspectors meet to co-ordinate activities - the meeting rooms are arranged for the inspectors by the Iraqis and contain eavesdropping devices. Hidden video cameras monitor the progress of meetings, to check the faces of the inspectors and to identify the key personalities.

Monitoring

From the moment the UNMOVIC personnel enter Iraq, their every movement is monitored.

They are escorted by seemingly helpful security guards and almost all of them are members of the Al-Mukhabarat. If the driver is an Iraqi, he is Al-Mukhabarat too.

Journeys are monitored by security officers stationed on the route if they have prior intelligence. Any changes of destination are notified ahead by telephone or radio so that arrival is anticipated. The welcoming party is a give away.

Escorts are trained, for example, to start long arguments with other Iraqi officials 'on behalf of UNMOVIC' while any incriminating evidence is hastily being hidden behind the scenes.

Al Mukhabarat have teams whose role is to organise car crashes to cause traffic jams if the Inspectors suddenly change course towards a target the Iraqi wish to conceal. Crashing into inspectors' cars was a ploy often used on UNSCOM.

Interviews

Venues for any possible interviews between inspectors and scientists or key workers are arranged by Iraqis. They are then monitored by listening devices and sometimes video. Most of the staff in the building where interviews take place are Al-Mukhabarat officers, there to observe any covert behaviour such as whispered conversations, the passing of notes or conversations away from microphones.

The interviewees will know that they are being overheard by Iraqi intelligence or security.

The inspectors want to interview some key people outside Iraq, without minders. All scientists and key workers have been made to draw up a list of their relatives by Al Mukhabarat. The interviewees know only too well what will happen to them, or their relatives still in Iraq, if it is even suspected that they have said too much or given anything away

None have agreed to be interviewed outside Iraq.

Inspection Technology

The inspectors use sophisticated technology to detect hidden Iraqi programmes. Many of these are safety systems from the nuclear and chemical industries which are also available to the Iraqis.

When a detectable chemical or substance is hidden, the Iraqis do not just hide it and hope the Inspectors will not find it. They check that the technologies which they know the Inspectors have and use will not detect what they have hidden.

For example when an illicit piece of equipment (say a missile warhead) or substance is buried by the Iraqis, they make sure it stays hidden by using Ground Penetrating Radar to determine whether the inspectors will be able to detect the cache.

Psychological Pressure

Before UNMOVIC personnel arrive in Iraq, their names are sought by at least one and probably several of the Iraqi intelligence and security services. They will find out as much as possible. Do they have family, do they have any weaknesses that can be exploited? Are they young, nervous, vulnerable in some way?

The inspectors' personal security and peace of mind is a concern both to the individual inspectors and to UN management. So the Iraqis disrupt their work and daily lives by staging demonstrations wherever they go and having stooges make threatening approaches to Inspectors - such as the Iraqis who recently tried to enter the Inspectors' compound armed with knives or climbed into UN vehicles which were going out on an inspection. The whole effect is one of intimidation and psychological pressure.

The Presidential Secretariat

The Presidential Secretariat has around 100 staff, who are drawn from the security agencies. The Secretariat is responsible for Saddam's personal security, as well as defence, security and intelligence issues.

It is overseen by Saddam's personal secretary, Lieutenant General Abid Hamid Mahmud. Mahmud is Saddam's distant cousin and is the sheikh of both the Al-Bu-Nasir and Al-Khattab tribes.

Mahmud is regarded by some as the real number two figure in the Iraqi leadership. He controls all access to Saddam - possibly with the exception of Qusay and Uday Hussein - and has the ability to override government decisions.

Al-Majlis Al-Amn Al-Qawni.

The National Security Council.

Headed by Saddam Hussein but usually chaired by his son Qusay Hussein, it oversees the work of all other security agencies.

Membership in Majlis Al-Amn Al-Qawni includes chosen people from;

- Iraqi Army
- Special Security Service
- General Intelligence Directorate
- Military Intelligence
- General Security Service
- Office of the Presidential Palace

Majlis Al-Amn Al-Qawni, headquartered at the Presidential Palace in Baghdad, meets on a weekly basis.

Special Security Committee

Qusay Hussein is the deputy chairman of the Special Security Committee of the Iraqi National Security Council that was created in 1996 as part of the President's office.

The Committee membership includes:

- Tahir Jalil Habbush al-Tikriti, the director of the Public Security Directorate
- Dahham al-Tikriti, Director of the Iraqi Intelligence Service –Al Mukhabarat
- Abid Hamid Mahmud, the president's personal secretary.
- Faris 'Abd-al-Hamid al-'Ani, the director general of the Presidential office

This special body also includes representatives of the Republican Guard.

The Committee is supported by over 2,000 staff. The staff is drawn from the Republican Guard, or the Special Guard, and the intelligence services.

Their main task is preventing the United Nations inspectors from uncovering information, documents, and equipment connected with weapons of mass destruction.

They are recruited for this specific mission and chosen from the most efficient and loyal units.

The work is divided between two sections, each of which has a staff of about 1,000:

- The first section focuses on the daily work of the UN monitoring commission, including sites to be visit and inspected, escorting UN inspectors, preventing them from carrying out their mission effectively.
- The second section conceals documents, equipment, and materials and moves them about from one location to another. Several facilities have been especially built for collecting and hiding such selected material. This section is responsible for material that is imported through "special channels" as part of the programme of rebuilding the strategic military arsenal, including chemical and biological weapons as well as missiles and associated technology.

Al-Mukhabarat.

The Directorate of General Intelligence

4,000 people.

Created out of the Ba'ath party.

Al-Mukhabarat is roughly divided into a department responsible for internal operations, co-ordinated through provincial offices, and another responsible for international operations, conducted from various Iraqi embassies.

Its internal activities include:

- Spying within the Ba'th Party, as well as other political parties;
- suppressing Shi'a, Kurdish and other opposition;
- counter-espionage;
- targeting threatening individuals and groups inside Iraq;
- spying on foreign embassies in Iraq and foreigners in Iraq;
- maintaining an internal network of informants.

Its external activities include

- spying on Iraqi diplomats abroad;
- collecting overseas intelligence;
- supporting terrorist organisations in hostile regimes;
- conducting sabotage, subversion, and terrorist operations against neighbouring countries such as Syria and Iran;
- murder of opposition elements outside of Iraq;
- infiltrating Iraqi opposition groups abroad;
- providing dis-information and exploitation of Arab and other media;
- maintaining an international network of informants, using popular organisations as well such as the Union of Iraqi Students.

It has long been known that Al-Mukhabarat uses intelligence to target Iraqis .It forces Iraqis living abroad to work for Saddam by threatening dire consequences for relatives still inside Iraq.

It is reported that an Iraqi cannot work for a foreign firm inside Iraq without also working for Al-Mukhabarat directly or as an informant. This includes those allowed to work with foreign media organisations.

All Iraqis working with foreigners have to have a special permit which is not granted unless they work for Al-Mukhabarat.

They carry out tests which include approaches to Iraqi officials with false information to see whether they report it to Baghdad or foreigners.

Al-Amn al-Aam.

The Directorate of General Security

8,000 people.

The oldest security agency in the country.

The Al-Amn Al-Aam supports the domestic counter-intelligence work of other agencies.

As a policy, Saddam staffs key positions in Al-Amn Al-Aam with his relatives or other close members of his regime.

In 1980, Saddam appointed 'Ali Hassan al-Majid, who would later be the architect of the regime's anti-Kurdish campaign, as its director to instil the ideology of the Ba'ath Party into the agency.

Al-Amn al-Aam was given more political intelligence responsibilities during the Iran-Iraq War. When Majid was put in charge of repressing the Kurdish insurrection in 1987, General 'Abdul Rahman al-Duri replaced him until 1991 when Saddam Hussein's half-brother, Sabawi Ibrahim al-Tikriti, (who had served as its deputy director prior to 1991) then became head of this agency.

In 1991, Saddam Hussein provided it with a paramilitary wing, ***Quwat al-Tawari***, to reinforce law and order, although these units are ultimately under Al Amn al-Khas control.

After the 1991 Gulf War, *Quwat al-Tawari* units were believed to be responsible for hiding Iraqi ballistic missile components. It also operates the notorious Abu Ghuraib prison outside of Baghdad, where many of Iraq's political prisoners are held.

Each neighbourhood, every office and school every hotel and coffee shop has an officer assigned to cover it and one or more agents in it who report what is said and what is seen.

Al-Amn Al-Aam runs a programme of provocation where their agent in a coffee house or work place will voice dissident views and report on anyone who agrees with those views.

An Al-Amn Al-Aam agent or officer will sometimes approach an Iraqi official pretending to recruit him for some opposition or espionage purpose and then arrest him if he does not report it.

They also look for foreigners who might be breaking Iraqi law or seeking to stir up anti-regime feelings among native Iraqis.

Technically, it is illegal for an Iraqi official or military officer to talk to a foreigner without permission from a security officer.

Al Amn al-Khas.

The Special Security Organisation

2,000 people.

The most powerful and most feared agency, headed by Qusay Hussein.

It is responsible for

- the security of the President and of presidential facilities;
- supervising and checking the loyalty of other security services;
- monitoring government ministries;
- supervising operations against Iraqi Kurds and Shias; and
- securing Iraq's most important military industries, including WMD.

The Al-Amn al-Khas is nebulous and highly secretive and operates on a functional, rather than a geographical basis.

Qusay Hussein supervises the Special Bureau, the Political Bureau and the Administration Bureau, the agency's own military brigade, and the Special Republican Guard.

Its own military brigade serves as a rapid response unit independent of the military establishment or Special Republican Guard. In the event of a coup attempt from within the regular military or Republican Guard, Special Security can easily call up the Special Republican Guard for reinforcements as this unit is also under its control.

- The Security Bureau: The Security Bureau is divided into a Special Office, which monitors the Special Security agency itself to assure

loyalty among its members. If necessary, it conducts operations against suspect members. The Office of Presidential Facilities, another unit of the Security Bureau, guards these places through Jihaz al-Hamaya al-Khas (The Special Protection Apparatus). It is charged with protecting the Presidential Offices, Council of Ministers, National Council, and the Regional and National Command of the Ba'th Party, and is the only unit responsible for providing bodyguards to leaders.

- The Political Bureau: The Political Bureau collects and analyses intelligence and prepares operations against "enemies of the state." This unit keeps an extensive file on all Iraqi dissidents or subversives. Under the Political Bureau, the Operations Office implements operations against these "enemies," including arrests, interrogations and executions. Another division is the Public Opinion Office, responsible for collecting and disseminating rumours on behalf of the state.

The operations of Special Security are numerous, particularly in suppressing domestic opposition to the regime. After its creation in 1984, Special Security thwarted a plot of disgruntled army officers, who objected to Saddam's management of the Iran-Iraq War. It pre-empted other coups such as the January 1990 attempt by members of the Jubur tribe to assassinate him.

It played an active role in crushing the March 1991 Shi'a rebellion in the south of Iraq. Along with General Intelligence, Special Security agents infiltrated the Kurdish enclave in the north of Iraq in August 1996, to hunt down operatives of the Iraqi opposition.

It serves as the central co-ordinating body between Military-Industrial Commission, Military Intelligence, General Intelligence, and the military in the covert procurement of the necessary components for Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

During the 1991 Gulf War, it was put in charge of concealing SCUD missiles and afterwards in moving and hiding documents from UNSCOM inspections, relating to Iraq's weapons programmes.

It is also thought that Special Security is responsible for commercial trade conducted covertly in violation of UN sanctions.

The members of Al-Amn al-Khas are primarily drawn from Saddam's own tribe, the Abu Nasr, or from his home district of Tikrit.

Jihaz al-Hamaya al-Khas.

The Special Protection Apparatus

Charged with protecting Presidential Offices, Council of Ministers and the Regional and National Commands of the Ba'ath Party.

It is the only organisation responsible for providing bodyguards to the very top of the regime.

Approximately 40 personal bodyguards are responsible for Saddam's immediate security.

Al-Istikhbarat al-Askariyya.

The Directorate of Military Intelligence

6,000 people.

Its main functions are ensuring the loyalty of the army's officer corps and gathering military intelligence from abroad. But it is also involved in foreign operations, including assassinations.

Unusually the heads of Al-Istikhbarat al-Askariyya have not been immediate relatives of Saddam.

Saddam appointed, Sabir 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Duri as head during the 1991 Gulf War. After the Gulf War he was replaced by Wafiq Jasim al-Samarrai.

After Samarrai, Muhammad Nimah al-Tikriti headed Al-Istikhbarat al-Askariyya in early 1992 then in late 1992 Fanar Zibin Hassan al-Tikriti was appointed to this post.

These shifting appointments are part of Saddam's policy of balancing security positions. By constantly shifting the directors of these agencies, no one can establish a base in a security organisation for a substantial period of time. No one becomes powerful enough to challenge the President.

Al-Amn al-Askari.
Military Security Service

6,000 people.

Established as an independent entity in 1992, its function is to detect disturbances in the military.

The *Amn* was initially headquartered in the Bataween district of Baghdad. In 1990 *Amn* moved to a new headquarters in the Al Baladiat area of the city, with the Bataween building becoming the agency's main prison.

The Secret Police also has a number of additional facilities and office buildings. *Amn* maintains a presence in every town and village, with personnel stationed in civilian police stations across Iraq -- normally the "ordinary" police are on the ground floor and the Secret Police on the second floor.

The Security branch is responsible for monitoring and countering dissent within *Amn*, and the Military Brigade provides rapid intervention para-military capabilities - the Brigade commander was executed in August 1996 for alleged involvement in a coup attempt.

Amn is currently headed by Staff Major General Taha al Ahbabi, who previously headed the Military Security Service and served as the head of the secret service section of the *Mukhabarat*. As with many other senior Iraqi leaders, he is a native of Saddam's home town of Tikrit.

Al-Haris al-Jamhuri al-Khas.
The Special Republican Guard

15,000 people

Headed by Qusay Hussein, it serves as a praetorian guard, protecting Presidential sites and escorting Saddam Hussein on travels within Iraq.

The Al-Haris al-Jamhuri al-Khas are the only troops normally stationed in Baghdad.

It consists of four brigades, three infantry and one armoured.

Al-Haris al-Jamhuri al-Khas also has its own artillery battalions, air defence and aviation assets. Units consist mainly of individuals from tribes loyal to Saddam Hussein.

Al-Haris al-Jamhuri al-Khas has played a role in securing WMD warheads and maintains control of a few launchers.

Al Hadi project.

Project 858

Al Hadi is estimated to have a staff of about 800.

The *Al Hadi* Project is the organisation responsible for collecting, processing, exploiting and disseminating signals, communications and electronic intelligence.

Though it reports directly to the Office of the Presidential Palace, *Al Hadi* is not represented on the National Security Council, and the intelligence it collects is passed on to other agencies for their use.

Fedayeen Saddam.

Saddam's Martyrs

30,000 to 40,000 young people.

It is composed of young militia press ganged from regions known to be loyal to Saddam.

The unit reports directly to the Presidential Palace, rather than through the army command, and is responsible for patrol of borders and controlling or facilitating smuggling.

The paramilitary *Fedayeen Saddam* (Saddam's 'Men of Sacrifice') was founded by Saddam's son Uday in 1995. In September 1996 Uday was removed from command of the *Fedayeen*. Uday's removal may have stemmed from an incident in March 1996 when Uday transferred sophisticated weapons from Republican Guards to the *Saddam Fedayeen* without Saddam's knowledge.

Control passed to Qusay, further consolidating his responsibility for the Iraqi security apparatus. The deputy commander is Staff Lieutenant General Mezahem Saab Al Hassan Al-Tikriti. According to reports, control of Saddam Hussein's personal militia was later passed back to his eldest son, Uday.

It started out as a rag-tag force of some 10,000-15,000 bullies. They are supposed to help protect the President and Uday, and carry out much of the police's dirty work.

The *Fedayeen Saddam* include a special unit known as the death squadron, whose masked members perform certain executions, including in victims' homes. The *Fedayeen* operate completely outside the law, above and outside political and legal structures.

Maktab al-Shuyukh.

The Tribal Chief's Bureau

This was created after the Gulf war as a vehicle for paying tribal leaders to control their people, spy on possible dissidents and provide arms to loyal tribesmen to suppress opposition.

Part Three: The effect on the people of Iraq

The Iraqi on the Street

Close monitoring is a feature of everyday life in Iraq. Saddam's organisations all run elaborate surveillance systems including mobile teams that follow a target, fixed observation points overlooking key intersections and choke points on routes through Baghdad and other major cities, networks of agents in most streets - the watchmen on buildings, the guards on checkpoints, the staff in newspaper kiosks - all linked by modern real time communications.

The effect is to make it extremely difficult and dangerous to try to hide activity from the State.

Saddam's Favourites

Iraqis who are members of Saddam's favourite tribe find it easier to join the Ba'ath Party. Some have even been members since childhood.

If they aspire to be part of the inner circles of the regime, they can work their way up the party ladder – and work towards the Presidential palace.

But they must not show dissent from the Party line or appear too influential.

They must always remember that anyone who is a threat to Saddam or his sons will not be tolerated. And if they become a threat, someone will know - they will be reported. Imprisonment or execution may follow.

Others Iraqis

Iraqis who are not members of the favourite tribe must join the Ba'ath Party to progress in Iraq.

They then could join one of the security or intelligence services – but they must avoid being seen as a threat.

If an Iraqi wants to work for a foreign firm, Al-Mukhabarat would soon know of their application. Whether they get the job depends on their willingness to spy on the firm from inside.

If they have an opportunity to travel, Al-Mukhabarat will know and give them instructions about reporting in.

If Iraq's do not want to participate, Al-Mukhabarat will know where their family lives inside Iraq. And if they think that living abroad will protect them – they must remember that Al-Mukhabarat has a long arm.

In September 2001, a report on human rights in Iraq by the UN Special Rapporteur noted that membership of certain political parties is punishable by death, that there is a pervasive fear of death for any act or expression of dissent, and that there are current reports of the use of the death penalty for such offences as "insulting" the President or the Ba'ath Party.

The mere suggestion that someone is not a supporter of the President carries the prospect of the death penalty.

Iraq Ba'ath Party

The Ba'ath Party is central to the Iraqi infrastructure of fear.

Everyone's name and address is known to district Ba'ath Party representatives. It is they who will know if there are signs of people deviating from unswerving support from Saddam.

When the Royal Marines occupied the Ba'ath Party offices in Sirsank in Northern Iraq in 1991, they found records detailing every inhabitant of the town, their political views, habits and associates. This included a map showing every household, colour-coded to show those who had lost sons in the war against Iran and those who had had family members detained or killed by the security apparatus or Ba'ath Party.

The Media

The Iraqi Regime exerts total control over the media. When the domestic or foreign media interview a seemingly ordinary person on the street in Iraq, they will often be members of one of the security agencies, mouthing platitudes about

Saddam and his regime. If the media do manage to find “an ordinary voice” those people are well aware they are being watched by the Regime. They know they have to say they love Saddam, and that the West is evil. They know if they don't keep to the script, they risk serious consequences including death.

Even off-camera, only a few are prepared to run the enormous risk of revealing their true feelings.

The overall effect of the systems of control and intimidation is that every Iraqi is suspicious of all except closest family.