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ARABIZATION OF THE
KIRKUK REGION



Drawings by Petros Khamis

***ARABIZATION OF THE
KIRKUK REGION***

*Foreword by
Lord Avebury*

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FOREWORD

I am very glad to have been invited to write this preface to Professor Nouri Talabany's important study of demographic engineering in the region of Kirkuk.

According to the latest report of the UN Special Reporter on Iraq, Max van der Stole, Iraq remains by far and away the state with the largest number of cases of disappearance. There are hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees in Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, and tens of thousands more are de facto refugees in Jordan. But in addition to those who vanished into thin air, or fled into exile, there are uncounted numbers of internally displaced. The Marsh Arabs of the south are not the only victims of Saddam's terror, as Dr. Talabany shows, and the systematic alteration of the population mix in the Kirkuk region has been going on for much longer. It began almost immediately after the Ba'thists assumed power by coup d'etat in 1968 and, in the process, tens of thousands of Kurdish families have been forcibly transported into exile. This atrocity, in the worst tradition of the late Joseph Stalin, has been unaccountably overlooked in the west, yet it has profound implications for any post-Saddam settlement in Iraq. Will the dispossessed be restored to their homes and lands, as we insist in the case of Bosnia? Or is ethnic cleansing permissible when it is done quietly enough?

Professor Talabany has done the world a valuable service in exposing Saddam's ethnocidal designs against the Kurdish people of Kirkuk. Let this be added to the list of crimes against humanity for which, one day, Inshallah, he will be made to pay!

**Lord Avebury
Chairman,
Parliamentary Human Rights Group
House of Lords.
London, April 10, 1995**

PREFACE

THE KIRKUK REGION, rich in petroleum deposits and vast agricultural lands, has been one of the principal obstacles to finding a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question in Iraq.¹

Geographically, the region straddles the strategic trade routes between Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey and beyond. However, it was the discovery of vast quantities of petroleum deposits in the region that led Great Britain, in 1926, to append Kirkuk and the former Ottoman Wilayet of Mosul (of which the Kirkuk region was a part) to the newly created state of Iraq. This new state, created in 1921, was under the Mandate of Great Britain. Ever since, and particularly after 1963, there have been continuous attempts by the central government of Iraq to arabize the strategic region of Kirkuk.

To better understand the reasons for this policy, let us, first, briefly consider the geopolitics, history and demography of the Kirkuk region, and then analyse the situation both before and after these attempts.

¹ This book was first published in Arabic in 1995, both in Sweden and Iraqi-Kurdistan. A second edition was published in 1999 in London. In 1998, it was translated into Kurdish and published in Sweden and later, in 2000, in Iraqi Kurdistan. It has now been translated into English and updated in this edition.

PREFACE

(Fourth edition)

The longstanding Kirkuk issue is a major unresolved problem for Iraq, despite the provisions of Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution, 2005, which set out the measures to be taken to achieve a resolution.

At the beginning of July, 2011, representatives of UNADMIN in Iraq visited the Kirkuk governorate and declared that UN troops would be sent to all areas covered by Article 140 to replace the American troops should they leave at the end of 2011. Acceptance of the necessity for this shows that, obviously, nothing of any real value has been done to implement Article 140. There are many reasons for this despite the precise date of 2007 being fixed for its implementation. If UN troops do replace the Americans, it will simply result in yet more time being spent seeking to determine the future of the Kirkuk region, the danger, then, is that it will become just like another Kashmir. At the same time, an official from the US embassy visited Erbil and his visit was followed, several months later, by another by a group of legal representatives with the same aim – that of resolving the Kirkuk problem. I proposed to them that the Kirkuk region should become autonomous with a local government holding all administrative powers save those relating to the central government. The region would be legally a part of the Kurdistan Region. This system was put into practise in the former Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union where some federal republics became autonomous regions, e.g. Kosovo, which was apart from Serbia but within Yugoslavia. In an article which I contributed to the Kurdish paper “Awena” of September, 2008, I explained this proposal mad to the UN representatives.

Article 140 is a provision of the Iraqi constitution and, therefore, it is the duty and responsibility of the Iraqi government to implement it as it was formulated. However, notwithstanding the categorical promises made in Dr. Maliki's manifestos during his two terms as prime minister, no action has been taken to do so. On the contrary, he has even, indirectly, obstructed its implementation. I have referred to this in many articles published during the past seven years.

As well as implementing Article 140, my proposal would give the Kirkuk region a special status which would reflect its diverse ethnic population. The autonomous system within the Kurdistan region would permit all ethnic groups to administer their own internal affairs without intervention from others. As

for the Kurds, this proposal will be readily accepted by them since the Kirkuk region is historically and geographically a part of the Kurdistan region. They will accept the region as a unique governorate, distinct from the other governorates of the KRG.

Erbil, March 2012

I

A Synopsis of the history and geography of the Kirkuk region

The diamond-shaped Kirkuk region lies between the Zagros Mountains in the north-east, the Lower Zab and the Tigris Rivers in the north-west and west, the Hamrin mountain range in the south-west, and the Diyala (Sirwan) river in the south-east. This is the region and city known as Ara'pha to the ancient cultures² and as Karkha d'beth Silokh to the classical world (hence the name "Kirkuk"). To Sassanians, this was their governorate of Garmakân.³ To the medieval authors the region was known as Garmiyân. This historic name still survives for the region in common folk language, while the classical Seleucid name of Kirkuk is reserved for the city alone.

Major trade routes pass through or touch on the borders of the Kirkuk Region. Many mountain passes such as the Bazyan, Ba'ssara and Sagerma also terminate in the Kirkuk region.⁴ As a consequence, the area has always been of strategic import to the powers that came to occupy it throughout the ages. To safeguard these commercial and strategic crossings, military garrisons were established in forts in the nearby cities of Kifri, Tuz-Khurmatu, Daquq, Perdé (A'ltun Copri) as well as within Kirkuk city itself. The forts doubled as military strongholds and customs houses to exact duties from the caravans and to protect them at the same time. Merchants and travellers arrived from the commercial cities of western Iran such as Senna (Sanandaj), Kermanshah and Hamadan, heading for western Anatolia, Iraq and the Levant. The city of Kirkuk has served the area as its major hub since the beginning of the 17th century.

²S.H. Gadd and Sidney Smith, *Revue. d'Assyr. et d'Archeol. Orient*, 1926. They add that the region was often attacked by mountain peoples who inhabited its north western territories during the Babylonian and Assyrian times.

³In Aramaic and Syriac chronicles the name appears as Beth Garamâye, subsequently shortened to Bâgarmi. Early in Islamic times, this name and the Sassanian administrative terms were Arabized to become, respectively, Bâjarmi and Jarmakân.

⁴Tawfiq Wahby, *A Journey from Darband-i Bâzyân to Mla'y-Tasluja* (Baghdad: Al-Ma'arif Press, 1965), p.6; Tawfiq Wahby, "The name of Kirkuk", *Al-Ka'teb Magazine*, June, 1958, Baghdad.

Speaking of the city's ethnic composition at the end of the 19th century, the Ottoman encyclopaedist Shamsadin Sami states, in his celebrated *Qamusl al A'ala'm*, that "Three quarters of the inhabitants are Kurds and the rest are Turkmans, Arabs and others. Seven hundred and sixty Jews and four hundred and sixty Chaldians also reside in the city."⁵ Some years previously, the Russian engineer, Joseph Chirinc, who was in Kurdistan studying the navigational possibilities of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and their tributaries, published a study in the Journal of the Royal Russian Geographical Society/Caucasian Department. After visiting the city of Kirkuk, he estimated the population to be between 12 and 15 thousand, all Kurds except for 40 Armenian families. He did not include the Ottoman army units as they were not from the region and most would return to their own countries on completing their military service.⁶

During the years of conflict between the Shi'ite Safawid Empire and the Sunni Ottoman Empire, the Kirkuk region, and Kurdistan in general, became a constant battleground.⁷ Destructive wars became most damaging during the reigns of the Safawid shahs, Tahmasp I, Abbas I, Safi I, and later, the Afsharid king, Nadir, against the Ottoman sultans, Selim the Grim, Sulayman the Magnificent, and Murat IV. Kirkuk's strategic location led to its changing hands many times during these wars and suffering much damage in the process.⁸

C.J. Edmonds describes the administration of the Kirkuk region during the last phase of the Ottoman rule thus: "In the 18th century Kirkuk was the chief town of the Wilayet of Sharazur which included the modern [Iraqi] *liwas* of Kirkuk, Arbil and, nominally, of Sulaymani under a mutassallim. With the reforms of Midhat Pasha, Wali of Baghdad from 1869 to 1872, the name of

⁵Shamsadin Sami, "Qamus Al-A'alam", Istanbul, Mihran Press, 1315/1896. Under the rubric Kirkuk, he adds: "It is located within the Wilayet of Mosul which is a part of Kurdistan; it is at a distance of 25 pharsings (100 miles) south-east of the city of Mosul. It is situated amidst a range of parallel hills next to an extended valley called the Vale of Adham. It is the administrative centre for the Sharazur Wilayet and has a population of 30,000. It has a citadel, 36 mosques, 7 schools, 15 Sufi lodges, 12 inns, 1,282 shops, and 8 public baths." See also, Halkawt Hakim, Kirkuk: "The City of Fire and Light," in *Chirika* Journal, No 3, London, August 1984, p.41.

⁶ Dr. Jabar Kadir, Kirkuk: "A century and a half of Turkisation and Arabization", Iraqi File Journal No.99, March 2000, p. 42, London.

⁷Muhammad Amin Zaki, "A *Brief History of Kurds and Kurdistan*", Arabic trn. Muhammad Ali Awni, Baghdad, 1961, 2nd ed., p164.

⁸ *Ibid.* 166.

Sharazur was given to the *sanjak* of Kirkuk, corresponding to the present-day *liwas* of Kirkuk and Arbil, whereas the historic Sharazur remained outside, in the new sanjak of Sulaymani. The *Wilayet* of Mosul was formed in 1879, and Kirkuk remained an important garrison town.”⁹

Under the renewed, direct Ottoman rule the Wilayet of Mosul was divided into three governorates (Turkish, *sanjak*; Arabic, *liwa'*) of Mosul, Kirkuk and Sulaymani. Following the collapse of the Ottoman jurisdiction in 1918, three districts (*qada'*) situated to the north of the Lower Zab River were detached from Kirkuk to form the governorate of Arbil. Under the Iraqi administration, in 1925, Kirkuk became a governorate comprised of the four districts of Kirkuk Central, Kifri, Chamchamal and Guil. (*Enc. Islam*, s.v. “Kirkuk”).

On the political history of the region, the 17th-century encyclopaedist, Haji Khalifa states that, despite suzerainty of the Kurdish districts around Kirkuk to the Ottoman court of Istanbul, the “true masters of these regions were the local Kurds, lords of the governorate of Ardalan.”¹⁰ Shortly afterwards, however, “the Ottoman power became established there by the activity of the pashas of the province of Sharazur”. This province was composed of 32 districts, of which one was Kirkuk.¹¹ Kirkuk became the residence of the pashas of Sharazur after the citadel in the eponymous provincial capital city was destroyed by the Safawid Shah Abbas I.¹²

In 1732, Nadir Shah of Persia made an unsuccessful attempt to besiege the city of Kirkuk. This was followed, the year after, by a major battle nearby in which the Turks met with a crushing defeat. In 1743 the Safawids recaptured Kirkuk, but the Turks regained it according to the Peace Treaty of 1746. Kirkuk remained, at least nominally, a part of the Ottoman Empire until the end of World War I when British forces captured it in May 1918.¹³

At the end of World War I, the remnants of the Ottoman administration on the border of the Mosul Wilayet tried to establish a relationship with Kurdish

⁹ C.J. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks and Arabs: Politics, Travel and Research in North Eastern Iraq, 1919-1925*, Oxford, 1957, 265-6.

¹⁰ Haji Khalifa, Mustafa ibn Abdallah Katib Chalabi, *Jahânumâ* (finished, 1058/1648, first published 1145/1732), ed. and trans. by Norberg as *Gihan Numa: Geographia Orientalis*, Speculum Mundi (Lund/London, 1818), 445.

¹¹ *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. “Kirkuk,” 147.

¹² Haji Khalifa, 445.

¹³ *Ibid.*

and Turkman leaders in the region in an effort to regain the Mosul Wilayet and to restore their influence in the area. They dispatched large numbers of former Ottoman military officers, particularly those of Kurdish origin, as emissaries to Sheikh Mahmud Hafid who ruled large areas of southern Kurdistan at that time, as well as to Turkman dignitaries in Kirkuk. This was to persuade them to opt for inclusion within the Ottoman Empire.

At the time, however, Kurds were trying to persuade the Western countries to implement the terms of the Treaty of Sevres, signed on August 10, 1920. The Treaty stipulated the establishment of a Kurdish state in Ottoman Kurdistan in two stages. The Kurds had dispatched General Sharif Pasha as an envoy to Paris to contact the participants of the Versailles Peace Conference that was held at the end of World War I.

British policy in the area underwent a change at this period. The British started to work actively for the annexation of the former Ottoman Wilayet of Mosul to the newly established British Mandate of Iraq which, until then, was comprised of the former Wilayets of Baghdad and Basra alone. The British Mandate authorities for Iraq and Kurdistan organised a referendum in 1921 on the accession of Emir Faisal bin Hussein as king of the new state of Iraq. The great majority of the people of the Kirkuk region, which was directly administered by British political officers and distinct from the rest of Iraq, rejected this proposal. Other Kurdish areas, such as the Sulaymani area, refused even to take part in the referendum. Kirkuk later became a part of the Iraqi kingdom when the League of Nations, at its 37th Assembly in Geneva, on December 16, 1924, decreed that all the land below the "Brussels Line" (the current Iraqi-Turkish border) should be incorporated into the Iraqi kingdom. This decision was based on the recommendations of a fact-finding commission sent to the area by the League of Nations.¹⁴

¹⁴ *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd. ed., s.v., "Kirkuk."

II

The Non-Kurdish ethnic population in the Kirkuk Region: The Turkmans

Soon after the Ottoman occupation of three-quarters of Kurdistan following the Treaty of Zahab with Persia in 1639, the Sultans realised the vital importance of Kirkuk to the trade routes that passed through the entire area, as had the Safawids before them.¹⁵

To better control the area, the Ottomans encouraged their more loyal subjects and military personnel to settle in the cities and towns which dotted the trade routes in the Mosul Wilayet. The route began at Tel Afar and Mosul in the north, passed through Arbil, Perde/ (A'ltun-Copri), Kirkuk, Daquq and Kifri before reaching Baghdad on the one hand, and the cities of Khanaqin and Mandali on the present Iraq-Iran border on the other. It was called the "Sultans' Route" by many historians.

The Iraqi historian Abdul-Razzaq Al-Hassani asserts that the Turkmans of this region are "a part of the forces of Sultan Murat IV who recaptured Iraq from the Safawid Persians in 1638 and remained in these parts to protect this route between the southern and northern Ottoman Wilayets".¹⁶

Traditionally, power in these areas was in the hands of the military who had little or no direct connection with the indigenous Kurds. This included the Turkmans. Many Turkman military personnel who settled permanently in the cities of the region subsequently came to engage in commerce and other professions. The military power they wielded facilitated this as did the acquisition by their generals of vast tracts of prime agricultural land as fiefs. Their settlement in these areas inevitably entailed cultural and social interaction with the local Kurdish inhabitants. As a result, many cultural and social traditions were exchanged and promoted by intermarriage.

¹⁵ *Turk Ansiklopedisi*, (Ankara, 1972), vol. xx, 495-499.

¹⁶ Abdul-Razzaq Al-Hassani, *Ancient and Modern Iraq* (Sidon: Irfan Press, 1956).

According to some historians, the earliest traces of Iraqi Turkmen are, perhaps, to be found in the Turkmen soldiers who served in the region under the flags of the Abbasid caliphs, later the Atabegs and, eventually, the Ottomans.¹⁷

The Turkmen themselves maintain that they migrated into Iraq during the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates to lend their military talent to those dynasties. However, they admit that this period was one of introduction rather than settlement. Therefore, the Turkmen of that era were assimilated into the existing population.¹⁸ The main settlement of the Turkmen, they contend, began during the Seljuq period and expanded later during the Ottoman era.

With regard to the Turkmen of the Kirkuk Region, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* states: "The Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen of the city are Sunni Muslims, but the Turkmen of some villages belong to an unorthodox and secret sect, the Qizilbash. The presence of a Turkmen minority in Kirkuk, within its Kurdish majority, must go back to before the conquest by the Ottoman Sultans; their origin could be found in a Turkish garrison that the caliphs may have installed there in the 9th century, or in immigration at the time of the Seljuqs, and the Begteginids or Atabegs of Arbil... Whatever the circumstances of their coming to the region, the Turkmen of Kirkuk always provided strong support for the Ottoman Empire and its culture and an abundant source of Ottoman officials."¹⁹

The Turkmen have been present in the region since their settlement in the area by the Safawids and Ottomans, each of whom wanted their own subjects to colonise the cities surrounding the strategic trade and military routes between Anatolia, Iraq and Iran. The fact that there are no Turkmen concentrations outside these cities corroborates this view. The proposal by the contemporary Turkmen authors that "the regions between Tel Afar and Mandali were inhabited by Turkmen many centuries earlier, and that the reason for their presence in these lands is that of choice"²⁰ has, therefore, little or no historical foundation. Further, it is illogical to assume that the indigenous Kurds had bequeathed these

¹⁷ Shaker Khesbak, "Northern Iraq", Baghdad, Shafiq, 1973, 211; Mohammed Majid Arif, "Ethnography and the Civilized Regions", Baghdad, n.p., 1985, p.119.

¹⁸ Shaker Sabir Al-Zabitt, "A Brief History of Turkmen in Iraq", Baghdad, 1962, p.38ff. Also, Zaki Validi Togan, "An Introduction to the General History of the Turks", Istanbul, 1946, vol. 1, 187; Arshad Al-Hurmizi, "Turkmen in Iraq", Ankara, Turkmen National Party of Iraq, 1994, 22ff. Text in Turkish and Arabic.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Arshad Al-Hurmizi, 34.

cities and strategic lands to the remnants of the Seljuqs; just because “it agrees with their choice” and “it is also known that the Turkmans prefer fertile plains that have an abundance of water...”²¹ An examination of their origins in the region makes this clear.

1- Origins:

The origin of the Turkmans who live in the cities around the strategic Sultans’ routes can be surmised by a cursory look at the nature and location of the Turkman population concentration. About half the Turkmans living in these towns belong to the Kizilbashi sect of Shi’ite Islam, reminiscent of the old Safawid Kizilbash military corps; the rest belong to the Hanafite Sunni denomination of Islam that was the official denomination of the Ottoman rulers (and still dominates in Turkey).

Most of the indigenous Kurds are Shafi’ite Sunnis. The Kizilbash Turkmans have their own culture, and have rituals of their own which differ from those of the Sunni Turkmans or even the mainstream Shi’ite Arabs of Iraq. The two religious groups among the Turkmans also speak two distinct dialects, with the dialect of Kizilbash Turkmans being akin to that of the Turkmans of Azerbaijan.

It should be noted at this point that the Turkish sources regularly use the misnomer “Turk” for the inhabitants of these parts rather than “Turkman” as used by the inhabitants themselves and throughout Iraq. By this, Ankara is deliberately confusing the separate and distinct ethnic identity of the Turkmans to gain a geopolitical windfall by spreading the erroneous impression that ethnic Turkmans are the same as the ethnic Turks of Turkey and, presumably, a ward of Ankara which exerts considerable influence on the Turkman political parties, especially the Sunnis.²²

2. Population Estimates:

On the whole, one can make the following observations about the Turkmans - both Sunni and Shi’ite - who live in the region:

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Turk Ansiklopedisi*, Ankara, 1972, vol. xx, 495-499.

Estimates of the number of Turkmen made public during the 1920s and 30s put them at 2.1% to 2.4% of the total population of Iraq.²³ In the official Iraqi census of 1957 which is, until now, considered to be the only valid census, this approximate proportion was basically reconfirmed and the results revealed that Turkmen made up 2.16% of the total population.²⁴ However, this percentage decreased in later censuses partly because the Iraqi regime deliberately muddled the ethnicity of the Turkmen and classed many of them as Arab. Being basically an urban population, the natural growth rates of the Turkmen were also lower than the general Iraqi population.

By the time of the 1977 census, the Turkmen share of the Iraqi population was recorded as a mere 1.15 % of the total state population.²⁵ The fall in percentages was recorded for Kirkuk as for the other governorates where

²³ Taha Al-Hashimi, "The Geography of Iraq for Secondary Schools", Baghdad, 1938. Mahmud Fahmi Darwesh, "The official Iraqi Encyclopaedia", Baghdad, 1936. Fazil Al Ansari, "The population of Iraq", Al-Adeeb press, Damascus, 1970, p.24, from a study by Dr. Khalil Ismail under the title of "The geographic distribution of the Turkmen in Iraq", The International Politics Journal, No. 8, Arbil, 1993, p. 22.

²⁴ Some Turkmen politicians claim that the Turkmen constitute no less than 10% of the overall Iraqi population, without basing such claims on any census or documentation. They further claim that their numbers are no less than two million. This figure is highly inflated. Their actual total is less than one-third of this number, (about 265,000) as can be verified by the reliable official 1957 census. To justify these claims, they state that the Turkmen populate a line stretching from Tel A'far district up to the Khanaqin and Mandali districts, without mentioning that their existence along this axis is limited to only certain towns and districts in which they constitute a small percentage of the population. For example, with the exception of a Turkmen minority within the city of Arbil, there is neither a Turkmen village, town, nor any area inhabited by Turkmen, between the cities of Mosul and Kirkuk, a distance of more than 160 kilometres that does not exceed 5% of the total population. Several thousand Turkmen also live inside the district of Perde (A'tun Copri) whose population, both Kurd and Turkmen, was 3,855 according to the general census of 1957. In the Kirkuk Province, the percentage of the Turkmen population was 21.4% of the total population according to the general census of 1957. Furthermore, it is less according to subsequent censuses. The Turkmen community currently living in Baghdad is estimated at tens of thousands, and the Kurdish community is estimated to be more than half a million. There is also a very small minority of Assyrians. Most of these Kurds, Turkmen and Assyrians have migrated to the capital since the end of the nineteen fifties because of the almost continuous fighting in Kurdistan since then and for reasons of employment and economics.

²⁵ "The Religious Distribution of the Iraqi Population", prepared by the Centre for Census and Cultural Development of the Security Service/ General Directorate (limited distribution) and based on the results of the population census of 1977. This top-secret document was among the numerous documents captured by the Kurds after the success of the March 1991 uprising in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Turkmans resided. This was especially marked for the governorate of Mosul (Niniveh). Thus, whereas the Turkmans' demographic weight in Kirkuk was put at 21.4% in the 1957 census, it had dropped to 16.75 % in the 1977 census.²⁶ In the governorate of Mosul the figures had fallen from 4.8% in 1957 to become a mere 0.99% in 1977.²⁷ This declining trend was partly the result of the Arabization programmes promoted by various Iraqi governments vis à vis Kurds and Turkmans.

Most of the Sunni Turkmans live in the city of Kirkuk, while the Shi'ite Turkmans live in the smaller towns that are centres of districts and counties, or in a few villages nearby.²⁸

In the city of Arbil, the administrative capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, the Sunni Turkmans also comprise a small percentage of the population. In the 1957 census they accounted for about 5% of the population in the city. This percentage remained basically the same in later censuses, increasing slightly to 6% in 1965 and 6.5 % in 1977. Sunni Turkmans can also be found in the towns of Perde/A'ltun-Copri and Kifri, both of which are in the Kirkuk governorate. There, the same statistical process recorded that, for the town of Kifri, the figures for Sunni Turkmans went from 7.7% in 1965 to 5.7% in 1977.²⁹ In the town of Perde/A'ltun-Copri (the centre of a county in the district of Kirkuk City), Sunni Turkmans are a minority. However, they make up a majority in the village of Blawa which is close to the city of Kirkuk. This village has been administratively joined with the Kirkuk municipality in recent years by the Iraqi administration.

Most of the Shi'ite Turkmans live in the administrative centres of the districts and counties that are part of the governorate of Kirkuk and in a few villages such as Tsin (Arabized to Al-Tiseen, in the vicinity of Kirkuk), in the small town of Laylan, 13 miles south-east of Kirkuk, and in the small town of

²⁶ Ibid. schedule no. 4, p. 25.

²⁷ Dr. Khalil Ismail, "The Geographic Distribution of the Turkmans in Iraq", *International Politics Journal*, No.8, Arbil, 1993, p.22, and "A Religious Distribution of the Iraqi Population", Ibid.

²⁸ See schedule No. 16 dealing with classifying the population according to gender and mother tongue in the Kirkuk Province, among the Census Registration Records of 1957, Iraqi Republic, Ministry of Interior, The General Population Directorate. Ibid. See Appendix No I. Compare that with their percentage according to the 1977 census, as they constituted 16.75% of the total population of the Kirkuk Province. See Dr. Khalil Ismail, Ibid. The Seventh Schedule, p. 29, and the confidential pamphlet, produced by the General Security Directorate according to the census results of 1977, Ibid.

²⁹ Dr. Khalil Ismail, Ibid.

Taza-Khurmatu (the administrative centre of an eponymous county, 7 miles south of Kirkuk on the main Kirkuk-Baghdad road). They are also found scattered in a few more villages in the same county. Only in the small town of Tawuq (Daquq) do the Shi'ite Turkmen form a majority. Daquq lies 18 miles south of Kirkuk and had a total population of 1,926 according to the 1957 census.

The Shi'ite Turkmen now also make up about one-third of the population of the town of Tuz-Khurmatu. This town later became the centre of a district and was annexed to the governorate of Salahaddin (Tikrit) in 1976, despite its geographic distance from it. This was yet another attempt at lowering the percentage of Kurds in the governorate of Kirkuk by relocating them in other governorates, particularly Arab-dominated ones, such as the newly established Salahaddin (Tikrit) governorate. Two new counties, Sulayman Beg and A'mirli, were also set up in the district of Tuz-Khurmatu. The Bayat tribe of Turkmen live in the villages in this area. Most of these people have lost their original language as a result of intermingling with the Arab tribes living south of the Hamrin Ridge. Some Shi'ite Turkmen are also to be found in the town of Qara Teppa, the centre of a county of the district of Kifri. Here, they are surrounded by a number of Kurdish and Arab villages.

A majority of the Shi'ite Turkmen are farmers. Those who are town and city dwellers engage in handicraft and other trades and commerce. The Ottomans paid little attention to this segment of the Turkmen community who were not actively recruited into the civil service and, therefore, their standard of living remained below that of the Sunni Turkmen. In that, they were treated much like the Kurds (despite the Kurds' Sunni persuasion) in contrast to the Sunni Turkmen who always enjoyed a better standard of living.

3. Relations between Kurds and Turkmen:

In general, relations between the Sunni and Shi'ite Turkmen remained cool until the late 1950s. This was the result of many differences in cultural practice and custom as well as dialectal differences. However, religious differences have been the main reason for their distinction and divergence from one another - a factor that has led to a lack of intermarriage among them. For instance, like the Ahl-i Haqq Kurds, the Kizilbash Shi'ite Turkmen men (now mostly the elderly), do not shave or trim their moustaches and, like them, they consider Imam Ali ibn Abi-Talib to be divine. In fact, even relations between the Shi'ite Turkmen and the mainstream Shi'ite clergy in the shrine city of Najaf (containing Imam Ali's tomb), in central Iraq, remained lukewarm until

the early 1950s. At that time, the clerics from Najaf began to visit them and encourage mainstream Shi'ism among them.

The same situation arose among some of the Arab families who migrated to Kirkuk in search of work, particularly with the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC). Coming from the Arab cities of Tikrit and Mosul, many of these subsequently adopted the Turkmani language and later played a prominent role in the Iraqi government's efforts to arabize the city of Kirkuk. Their descendants readily joined the Ba'ath party and were rewarded with sensitive civil service jobs. Muz'hir Al-Tikriti was the first person of local Arab origin to assume such a position. He was appointed mayor of Kirkuk in 1969, an appointive office that has been monopolized by ethnic Arabs ever since.³⁰

Likewise, after the coming to power in Iraq of the Ba'ath Party, many Kurds and Turkmans, too, found it necessary to register themselves as Arab to avoid forced relocation or administrative transfer to other governorates, or else to protect their employment or commercial interests in Kirkuk.

As a way of promoting Turkman dominance in the last years of Ottoman rule, the right to extract petroleum in a primitive way from the Baba-Gurgur oil fields near the city and to sell it for local consumption was granted to the Turkman family of Nafitchizada³¹ Despite this, the Ottomans did not expel the Kurds from the city, nor did they deny the ethnic make-up of the city as being one in which a Kurdish majority co-existed with Turkmans and other ethnic groups. Therefore, they usually appointed a Kurd or a Turkman to the sensitive mayoral position, which was normally awarded to a member of the resident majority group. Monarchical Iraq followed the same general policy, but they awarded sensitive positions, such as that of Provincial Governor or General in Command of Iraq's Second Army Division stationed in Kirkuk, mostly, though not exclusively, to Arabs. Of the Kurds who were appointed Governor, one can mention Said Kazaz, Rashid Najib and Mustafa Karadaghi. Marshal Bakir Sidki [the leader of the 1936 coup d'etat in Iraq] and General Salih Zaki Tawfiq, two Kurds who commanded the Second Army Division during the monarchy.

³⁰ The mayor is not elected, but appointed by the Iraqi Minister of the Interior.

³¹ Dr. Jabar Kadir, (Ibid.), says that even this family is originally Kurdish but denied its ethnic origins to acquire this concession.

Some Turkmans, such as Majid Yaqubi, have also been appointed Governor, while General Mustafa Raghīb was appointed Commander of the Second Army Division. On the other hand, the post of mayor, when not given to an Arab, was mostly awarded to a Kurd, and in only a few instances to a Turkman.³² Meanwhile, throughout the monarchical period, two-thirds of the members representing the Kirkuk governorate in the Iraqi Parliament were Kurds and the other one-third was Turkmans and only sometimes, during forty years of monarchical rule, were there one or two Arab representatives. This representation in the Iraqi Parliament reflected, to a great extent, the ethnic composition of the governorate before the policy of extensive Arabization began in the early 1960s.

In general, however, most cabinets of monarchical Iraq encouraged Arabs to settle in Kirkuk. For instance, the cabinet of Yasin Al-Hashimi in 1935 (during King Ghazi's rule) embarked on settling groups of the Arab Ubaid tribe in the Hawija district of Kirkuk, as will be reviewed later.

4. Political orientation of the Turkmans

The Turkmans have a number of political organisations. The Sunni Turkmans usually sent their children to Turkey for college education, where they were accepted without regard to their level of education. The Turkish government's investment in these young Iraqi Turkmans paid off handsomely. These graduates of Turkish universities would return, often with Pan-Turk ideas planted deeply in their minds, and many would later try actively to propagate these ideas. Indeed, some of these same graduates became, and remain, the leading figures in some of the political parties belonging to the Iraqi ethnic Turkmans. For the most part, the Sunni Turkmans are conservative in their political views and advocate co-operation with central governments that come to power in Baghdad. Young Shi'ite Turkmans, on the other hand, have mostly inclined to the left in the past; a fact that gave

³² The position of the Mayor of Kirkuk, for example, was held by several members of the Talabany Kurdish family during the Ottoman and monarchic eras. Sheikh Rauf Talabany was in that post during the Ottoman era; his brother Sheikh Habib Talabany held the post for about fifteen years under the monarchy; and the lawyer Fazil Talabany held the post until his dismissal after the outbreak of the July 1958 revolution. Nouri Talabany, "Concerning Federalism," *Al Manar Newspaper* (in Arabic), London, No. 15, July 13, 1994. Among Turkman notables who became mayors of Kirkuk were Abdul Rahman Piryadi, (originally Kurd) in 1920, when the city came under the direct rule of the British Army, and Shamil Yaqubi at the beginning of the 1950's.

Communist Party organizers a free hand from the time of the monarchy, particularly in the small towns of Qara Teppa and Tuz-Khurmatu.

In summary, one can say that the Sunni Turkmen are more inclined towards Turkey and the old Ottoman legacy, while the Shi'ite Turkmen lean towards Iran, particularly since 1979 when the Shi'ite clergy deposed the Shah and assumed power.³³

The present-day Turkmen parties all possess nationalistic ideas. Their leaders reside in either liberated Iraqi Kurdistan or outside Iraq, especially in Turkey where they receive considerable support from the Turkish authorities. The Shi'ite Turkmen still incline towards Iran and have their own political organisations.

The Ottoman policy of favouring and sponsoring Sunni Turkmen over Shi'ite Turkmen and Kurds created feelings of animosity and bitterness among these communities. Despite this, there are no records of bloodshed among them except for the bloody riots which took place in Kirkuk in 1959 during the first anniversary celebrations of the July 1958 coup (*see Appendix III*). The incident became even more serious when some of the leaders on both sides actually provoked the rioters for their own political gain.

³³ During the 1980-1988 Iraq-Iran war, Iraqi anti-aircraft guns downed several Iranian military aircraft over the Kirkuk region, but the Iraqi security and military failed to capture the Iranian pilots who parachuted to safety. The Iraqi government accused the Shi'ite Turkmen in the area of harbouring the pilots and then driving them to safety in Iran. Young Turkmen men were subjected to persecution and prison as a result, leading many of them to seek political asylum in Iran. Occasionally, some of them would accompany Iranian forces during their attacks on Iraqi positions near the border. Some of them joined the Iraqi Islamic parties and later some formed a political party by the name of the Union of Islamic Turkmen, which has close relations with the Shi'ite "Al-D'awa al-Islamiyah" party.

III

Earliest Attempts at Arabization

On October 31, 1918, the British entered the city of Kirkuk, awarded to them by the articles of the Mudros Armistice. Under General Marshall's leadership, the British had previously occupied this city on May 17, 1918, and had left it on the 27th of the same month, only to re-occupy it following the signing of the Mudros Armistice. Whether or not the British had intended to keep Kirkuk, the discovery of large oil reserves in the area led to a fundamental change in British policy towards the Kurdish question in general and the Kirkuk region in particular.³⁴

At first, there was a tendency among some British officers in the region to favour the creation of a Kurdish state that would extend northward to Lake Van, or about one hundred miles north of the current Iraqi-Turkish border. This was first proposed by Captain Noel, a British political officer who had travelled throughout the Kurdish region. Then the policy changed to one of working actively to annex the Wilayet of Mosul (Iraqi Kurdistan) to the Kingdom of Iraq.³⁵

Successive Iraqi governments tried with varying degrees of intensity to change the ethnic character of the Kirkuk region. This began in earnest with the support of an oil company that began operating under a British administration in 1925. The company brought in a large number of skilled Arab, Assyrian and Armenian workers from other parts of Iraq.³⁶ Following

³⁴ Nouri Talabany, "The Kurdish Question and International Law", Perspectives of Southern Kurdistan in a Regional and Supraregional Context, edited by the Centre for Kurdish Studies in Germany, 1999, p.35.

³⁵ The British High Commissioner in Baghdad sent a telegram, numbered 543, dated October 10, 1923 and addressed to the Colonial Office in London stating that, in his view, the border negotiations would be a great deal easier if they could give Turkey an official guarantee, in principle, that because of the changed circumstances they had repudiated the idea of granting autonomy to the Kurds as provided by the Treaty of Sevres. They added that their aim was, to the best of their ability, to put under the Iraqi administration all the Kurdish territories located within the Mosul Wilayet, as a result of negotiations. Nouri Talabany, "Towards a frank Arab-Kurdish Dialogue leading to a Democratic Solution," *Al-Hayat*, No. 11150 (London, August 24, 1993).

³⁶ In his book, "*The Population Conditions in Iraq*" (Cairo: Arab Studies Institute, 1970, p. 109), Ahmed Najmadin refers to the phenomenon of high levels of migration to Kirkuk for the purpose of employment in the oil fields. The number of migrants to Kirkuk

this earliest example, the process of changing the ethnic character of Kirkuk and, in fact, the entire Kurdish region, became a permanent undertaking by all the subsequent governments that have ruled Iraq since the coup of February 8, 1963. This intensified and became a primary state policy following the second Ba'ath coup of July 1968.

In order better to understand the extent of this campaign and its various phases, the process of the Arabization of the Kirkuk region can be divided into three stages: a) the monarchy; b) the first republican period (1958-1968); c) the second republican period (1968 to the present).

A- The Monarchy:

The Ottoman Wilayet of Mosul, of which the Kirkuk region formed the central region, was annexed to the Iraqi Kingdom at the end of 1925. King Faisal I visited Kirkuk after visiting Mosul in December 1924, urging the population to demand to join the new Iraqi state. The visit was used as the occasion to raise the Iraqi flag on the government buildings in the city. At the time, the administration of the Wilayet was in the hands of British political officers, assisted by local officials, the majority of whom were Sunni Turkmans. These officials continued to hold their positions even after the annexation of the Wilayet to the Iraqi Kingdom.

Later however, successive governments invariably appointed Arabs to the key positions of Provincial Governor and Commander of the Iraqi army's Second Division, stationed in Kirkuk. From the outset, the government, in co-operation with the British oil company operating in Kirkuk, brought large numbers of workers from other parts of Iraq to work in the company and then to settle in the city.

The role of the oil company in changing the ethnic character of Kirkuk

The discovery of vast quantities of oil in Kirkuk was the reason for its annexation, as part of the Mosul Wilayet, to the newly created Iraqi state. That there was oil in the Baba-Gurgur area near Kirkuk was known from ancient times and, since 1639, the Ottoman army had used primitive methods to extract it for local consumption. However, the systematic and organized exploitation

during the period 1947-1957 is estimated at 39,000. Then he adds that the population of Kirkuk from 1919 to 1968 increased five fold.

of the Kirkuk oil fields only began in March 1925 when the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC), established in early 1914 in Istanbul in co-operation with Germany, was granted the concession to exploit the oil fields in the governorates of Mosul and Baghdad by the Ottoman state.

By the end of 1925, the company, in which Britain had a substantial share, was conducting geological surveys and constructing roads and essential buildings. Initially, it employed about 150 Britons and 2,500 Iraqis and work began in an area called Nawjol, south of Kirkuk. The inaugural excavations were marked by a visit by King Faisal the First on April 1, 1927. Oil began to flow from the Baba-Gurgur field on October 27, 1927.³⁷

From 1927 to 1931, the company concentrated on drilling, geological survey work and the construction of essential facilities such as warehouses, workshops and housing for its employees, especially for the foreigners³⁸ The name of the company was changed to the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) and its headquarters were moved from Duz Khurmatu to Kirkuk. By 1931 it was able to exploit most of the land in north eastern Iraq. It began exporting crude oil at the end of 1934 and, in 1935; the dual pipeline was opened to transport crude oil from Kirkuk to the Mediterranean ports of Haifa and Tripoli. Annual production for 1935 was approximately 4,000,000 tons, making Iraq the eighth largest oil producing country in the world and output increased steadily from then on. Most of Iraq's oil was extracted from Kirkuk and still is today.

The establishment of the petroleum industry in Kirkuk brought about a significant change in the city's social and ethnic character. A great many people, mostly from outside the area, moved into the city and, in a relatively short time, new neighbourhoods were developed within the old quarters. The new neighbourhoods, near the oil company's facilities, housed mostly Assyrians, Armenians and Arabs. The company employed far fewer Kurds than others. Beginning in the early 1950s, hundreds of units were built in an area called Ara'paha, or "New Kirkuk" which housed mostly Assyrians, Armenians, Turkmans and Arabs. So, from the beginning, the Kurds felt resentful that, in spite of their numerical majority in the city and governorate of Kirkuk, so few of them were employed by the oil company. This influx of workers from other areas into the city marked the beginning of the process of Arabization there.

³⁷ *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, "Kirkuk," p. 148.

³⁸ *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, "Kirkuk," p. 148.

The monarchical government employed similar tactics to settle thousands of Arab tribal families in the Kirkuk province with the construction of the Hawija Irrigation Project.

The building of The Hawija Irrigation Project to settle Arab tribes in the Kirkuk Region

During the reign of King Ghazi, the cabinet of Yassin Al-Hashimi had sought a way to settle the Arabs in the south of the Hawija plains, south-west of Kirkuk. The area relied entirely on winter rains and the only possible type of agriculture was the cultivation of cereal crops, such as wheat and barley. The lack of agricultural machinery was an insurmountable problem for the Kurdish farmers and landowners, who relied on animals for ploughing, and so the area was used mainly as grazing land by them and by some nomadic Arab tribes such as the Al-Ubaid and Al-Jubur who came each spring from the south of the area.

In the mid-thirties, the government embarked on a project that would facilitate settlement, and a great canal was constructed which brought water from the Lower Zab River. The construction work was carried out by the inmates of Kirkuk central prison and took almost ten years to complete

The land was then divided into “investment units” and given to members of the Al-Ubaid tribe who were mostly brought from the neighbouring Diyala governorate where they continually clashed with the Al-Azza tribe. They were nomadic Arabs with no previous experience of farming, so the government was obliged to assign advisers to them to teach them agricultural skills. Not a single metre of this now arable land was allotted to the Kurds who have farmed for generations. This was the first Arab settlement in Kirkuk province, expressly planned and carefully executed by the monarchical government. The Qaraj plains in the south of the Arbil governorate, and the Qara-Teppa plains in the south of Kifri district, were settled by Arab tribes in a similar manner. With help from the government, groups from the nomadic Arab tribes of Al-Qurwi and Al-Leheb became established on the southern Qara-Teppa plains. Others merged with the Bayat tribe which was settled on the plains between Kifri and Duz-Khurmatu as far as the Awa-Sipi (Aq-Su) river, and groups from the Tay and Al-Jubur tribes settled in the southern part of the Qaraj plains, south of the Makhmour district in Arbil governorate, between the Upper and Lower Zab.

The 1957 census figures show that, 10 years after it was settled in the southern part of the Hawija Project, in an area covering about 1000 square kilometres, the Al-Ubaid tribe numbered approximately 11,000. The population of the Al-Jubur tribe, according to the same census, was 12,595 settled in an area of some 900 square kilometres between the Lower Zab River and the western part of the Irrigation Project. 2,140 members of the Arab Albu-Hamdan tribe were settled in 14 villages in an area of approximately 100 square kilometres between the Lower Zab River and the road linking Hawija to Kirkuk. Arabs from the towns of Tikrit and Door settled in the district centre of Hawija in 5 villages situated on either side of Hafrul-Qubal, in an area of about 100 square kilometres. So, according to this census, (1957) 27,705 Arabs were settled in the district of Hawija. The government declared the area a county (Nahia) called Hawija /Malha within the jurisdiction of Kirkuk. In 1963, the Ba'athist regime elevated it to the status of a district by the name of Hawija, with one county, Al- Riyadh, within its jurisdiction. The county of Al-Abassia was added to it later.

Regrettably, with the exception of some Al-Ubaid leaders, like Sheikh Nazim Al-Assi and his brother Muzhir, many members of the Arab tribes settled on the Hawija plains were involved with the army in the armed attacks on Kurdish villages from 1963 onward. They were formed into irregular units under the name of "The Knights of Khaled bin Waleed". Together with Kurdish mercenaries known as "The Knights of Salahaddin", they were used to carry out these attacks on the pretext of there being Kurdish Peshmargas there, or that the villagers were assisting the Peshmargas.^{39:40}

B- The period from 1958 to 1968:

In 1958, following the July 14 coup and the fall of the monarchy in Iraq, the military, headed by a group of army officers, assumed power. The cabinet, headed by Brigadier Abdul-Karim Qasim, who was also the Defence Minister, along with the deputy Prime Minister and the Interior Minister, Colonel Abdul-Salam Arif, became the highest authority in Iraq with both executive and legislative powers.

³⁹ See the Special schedule concerning the tribes inhabiting the Kirkuk Liwa (province) in the *Iraqi Government Official Census 1957*.

⁴⁰ Among the popular chants shouted by the Ubaid and Jubur Arab tribesmen, who accompanied the Iraqi army units during their attack on Kurdish villages near Kirkuk in 1963 was: "Ihna al-Arab, ahli al-gheera; natrud al-Akrad, min haldira" (Arabs we are, and zealous folk; we shall expel the Kurds from these lands.)

Shortly after, Brigadier Nazim Tabaqchali was appointed Commander of the army's Second Division that had its headquarters in Kirkuk. All units in the north of Iraq, from Mosul to Sulaymani, came under his command and, although new Arab governors were appointed to the northern governorates, the real power remained in the hands of the military in the person of the Commander of the Second Division in Kirkuk.

Al-Tabaqchali was from an Arab family in Baghdad (originally from Syria) known for its nationalistic leanings. He was known, particularly, for his Islamist/nationalist views, as was Colonel Arif.⁴¹ His wife was a Turkman from Tel-Afar, north west of Mosul.

As previously stated, the Sunni Turkmans living in Kirkuk are known to be, for the most part, conservative and right-wing, and so were on good terms with the regime during the period of the monarchy. Because of this, those who had held government positions under Ottoman rule kept them under the monarchy. Since the new Second Division Commander was known to hold similar conservative views, there was an immediate rapport between him and prominent Turkmans and the Turkman community in Kirkuk in general. Al-Tabaqchali accepted their invitations, attended their dinner parties and banquets and met with them regularly, so that the situation in the city remained unchanged. He did request however, through the Ministry of the Interior, the removal of the city's Kurdish mayor, the lawyer Fazil Talabany, and his replacement by the Turkman lawyer, Nuraddin Wa'iz, who was a leading member of the "Muslim Brothers" even though he was of Kurdish descent.

A number of official memoranda bearing Brigadier Al- Tabaqchali's signature and addressed to the relevant authorities in the Ministry of Defence, which was the real power in the country during that period, are included in Appendix III to this study.⁴² They reveal the thought processes and ideas of Al-Tabaqchali and his attitude towards the Turkmans and the Kurds. They also contain inaccurate and misleading information designed to discredit the Kurds and to cast doubt on their intentions, including a distorted report of the Kurds alleged demand for a "Kurdish Republic" which would serve as a nucleus to be joined later by other areas of Kurdistan. This demand existed

⁴¹ Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movement in Iraq*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, p. 810, Table 42-1.

⁴² See Appendix No. II.

only in the imaginations of the Second Division Commander and the nationalistic officers who formed his Command Group. They were strongly opposed to even the simplest Kurdish aspirations, such as using Kurdish as a medium of instruction in schools, promoting Kurdish culture, creating a University in Kurdistan and establishing a special Education Department to supervise Kurdish education in the Region.

These proposals had all been put forward and discussed in the many memoranda officially submitted to the Iraqi prime minister and the Ministry of Education during that period and some were actually implemented. However, they were regarded by the Second Division Command as an attempt to “resurrect the idea of a Kurdistan Region” or to establish “The Republic of Kurdistan”, which would then “include most of the area located east of the Tigris River to the Gulf of Basra”. During his term of office, Al-Tabaqchali did nothing to promote change in either Kirkuk city or throughout the Kurdish Region. On the contrary, the security forces continued to hunt down the same people they had pursued before and on the same charges. This state of affairs continued until March 1959, when an attempted coup took place in Mosul led by Colonel Al-Shawaf, the Base Commander there, and supported by a number of army officers in Mosul, Kirkuk, and Baghdad. The coup attempt failed and Arab nationalistic and Islamist elements were charged with supporting it. Syrian government officials, (Syria was then part of the United Arab Republic), were accused of providing a radio station for the officers in Mosul. Details of the coup were broadcast by Damascus and Cairo radios before its broadcast by the local Mosul radio station.

Turkman leaders in Kirkuk had apparently been aware of the planned coup attempt and its failure destroyed their close relationship with the Iraqi regime and led to the dismissal of Brigadier Nazim Al-Tabaqchali and his staff officers in the Second Division. Later, they were arrested and a special Commission of Inquiry was set up to investigate.

Brigadier Dawud Al-Janabi was appointed as the new Commander of the Second Division. Immediately upon his arrival in Kirkuk he set up a second Commission of Inquiry headed by Colonel Kamal Majid. Its task was to investigate Al-Tabaqchali’s associates and those in close contact with them, among them a number of prominent Turkmans. The Commission ordered the arrest of a large number of people of various nationalities - Kurds, Turkmans, Arabs and others - as it broadened the scope of its inquiries and investigated anyone suspected of disloyalty to the new republican regime. It is certain that there were excesses committed by some members of this Commission during

its examination of the accused, especially by Lieutenant Fakhri Karim, who was the Division's chief of military police and a communist from Baghdad. Many Kurdish landowners from other governorates in Kurdistan were also arrested and accused of being supporters of the deposed monarchy and opponents of the new regime.

On the recommendation of the Commission of Inquiry, the Military Governor General at the Ministry of Defence ordered the transfer to Baghdad of some of those arrested. Others, including some Turkman officials, were exiled to cities in southern Iraq. It is true to say that the short period between March and June 1959 was a difficult time for the Turkman leaders as, for the first time, they were subjected to officially sanctioned persecution, including arrest and exile.

The Communist Party supporters, meanwhile, had gained control of the youth organisations, the trade unions and professional associations and the armed organisation known as the "Popular Resistance". With the help of Brigadier Dawud Al-Janabi, they were also able to infiltrate the ranks of the armed forces. These conditions were not unique to Kirkuk but were common throughout Iraq.⁴³

The increased influence of the Communist Party and its excesses and violations in many parts of Iraq at this time were the determining factors in Brigadier Qasim's change of policy. He had previously used left-wing groups to strike at any opposition to himself by Arab nationalists, Ba'thists and Islamists but, on June 11, 1959, he declared an amnesty for the majority of political prisoners and exiles, including the Turkmans. In the middle of that same month, in his office in the Ministry of Defence, he received the newly released Turkman leaders and pledged his support for them. He also ordered that those government officials who had been transferred be returned to their posts in Kirkuk. He had already dismissed Brigadier Dawud Al-Janabi at the beginning of June 1959 and had transferred most of his associates to units outside the Second Division. He appointed Colonel Mahmud Abdul-Razzaq, who was then the Commander of the Third Brigade of the same Division, as acting Commander. Colonel Mahmud Abdul Razzaq was known to be an Arab nationalist despite his feigned loyalty to Abdul-Karim Qasim.⁴⁴

⁴³ Hanna Batatu, *Ibid.* Uriel Damm, "Iraq Under Qasim, A Political History, 1958-1963", Rube Shiloah Research Centre, Jerusalem, 1969, p. 223.

⁴⁴ General Mahmud Abdul Razzak was the governor of Sulaymani during the government of Abdul Salam Arif. He played a major role in the agreement reached between

These changes in the military high command were in large part responsible for the deteriorating situation in Kirkuk prior to the first anniversary of the July 1958 revolution. They resulted in an escalation of the conflict between Kurds and leftists on one hand and Turkmen and conservative circles, including some Kurds who were supported by the new Division leadership, the security apparatus and some Ministry of Defence officials, on the other. The Turkmen leaders just released from gaol or returned from exile regarded the communists, whom they held responsible, with deep hatred. The communists and members of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, while still in control of many organisations and the streets, were equally unhappy with the new developments.⁴⁵ The two sides appeared each to be waiting for a chance to demonstrate its power and popularity and its degree of government support.

The celebrations for the first anniversary of the July 1958 revolution, an event that was to have lasting and far-reaching consequences, provided just such an opportunity. So serious were the events that followed these celebrations that they are discussed in appendix III.⁴⁶

After the violence and riotous behaviour that accompanied the celebrations, Kirkuk was restored to a state of relative calm. However, on the evening of July 15, 1959, several military units arrived from Baghdad. The subsequent actions of these units were to have serious consequences for the city and, indeed, the whole area, and the repercussions are felt to this day. The Ministry of Defence ordered the transfer to southern Iraq of some units of the Second Division, including the fourth brigade who were mostly Kurds, and from this point on, the Kurds were subjected to ever-increasing persecution and terror.

On the instructions of the Military Governor General of Iraq, a special Commission of Inquiry was set up to investigate. Among its members were several Arab nationalist officers headed by a Turkmen, Colonel Abdullah

Abdul Salam Arif and the late Mustafa Barzani in 1964, which was the main cause for the subsequent split within the Kurdistan Democratic Party.

⁴⁵ A letter from the Kirkuk Province Police Directorate, addressed to the Governorate of the province, mentioned by Hanna Batatu, *Ibid.* p. 913, states: "Most of the Kurds have joined trade unions and youth organisations, while the Turkmen have remained under the influence of Turkmen nationalist agitators."

⁴⁶ See Appendix No. III.

Abdul-Rahman.⁴⁷ From the moment the Commission arrived in the city, some of its members collaborated with several Turkman lawyers and other officials in the governorate to bring charges against certain individuals, especially leaders of youth and professional organisations and trade unions. A large number of people were arrested, many of whom appeared before military tribunals in Baghdad on charges of assault and incitement to murder. 27 Kurds and one Turkman were sentenced to death and were publicly executed in a square in Kirkuk following the coup of February 8, 1963. Many others, mostly those affiliated to either the Communist Party or the Kurdistan Democratic Party, received heavy prison sentences.

It is important to discuss these events and to examine their cause and the manner in which they occurred, since previous commentators have failed to do so. Indeed, these commentators published their books in Iraq only after the Ba'ath party seized power there. However, a number of scholars, notably Dr. Hanna Batatu, have examined them with complete objectivity. Professor Batatu is a Palestinian scholar and US citizen who visited Iraq during the mid-sixties when he was able to study many confidential documents from the security service and other sources in Baghdad and Kirkuk.⁴⁸ 49

The Arab nationalist newspapers which Qasim allowed to be published during this period attacked the Iraqi left and, in so doing, encouraged the media in most Arab states and in Turkey to conduct a campaign of deliberate distortion and exaggeration of the facts.

On July 19, 1959, before the Commission had even begun its investigation, Qasim made a speech in the Mar Yusif church in Baghdad in which he accused the leftists of being behind the disorder. This speech directly influenced the investigations of the Commission of Inquiry.⁵⁰ He withdrew

⁴⁷ Colonel Abdullah Abdul Rahman was hanged by the Iraqi regime, together with a number of Turkman, in the mid 1970s. They were accused of having connections with foreign states.

⁴⁸ Hanna Batatu, *Ibid*.

⁴⁹ A personal friend, resident in the United States, recalled meeting Dr. Batatu a few years ago and asking him if, during that visit, he had met any communists or Kurds to ascertain their views. He replied that he had not, as the Iraqi regime hadn't allowed him to do so.

⁵⁰ Among the unusual methods resorted to by the Qasim government was that of referring of the accused leftists and Kurds to "Emergency Courts" composed of Arab nationalist officers who were anti-left and anti-Kurdish, while at the same time referring the Arab nationalists and Islamists to the "Special Military Higher Court", headed by Colonel

his accusation later when the truth was established, which was the reason why the death sentences were not carried out until after his own execution by the Ba'thists.⁵¹

The whole episode had disastrous consequences that the Kurdish and Turkman leaders failed to recognise until later when the Iraqi regime began the Arabization, not just of Kirkuk, but the entire region. It targeted the stronger group - the Kurds - first, and then the Turkmans. For two decades, many Turkmans were used as tools to implement the regime's Arabization policy until this same policy was used against them also at the beginning of the 1980s.

A further dangerous consequence, unmentioned by anyone until now, was the formation of secret Turkman terrorist organisations which conspired with certain security service officials, for example, the Director, Noori Al-Khhayat, to assassinate prominent Kurds in Kirkuk. Their first victim was a man in his fifties, Mohammed Amin Sharbatchi, who was shot outside his shop. Mr Sharbatchi was not a member of any political party, trade union or other organisation. As the killings continued, many Kurdish families fled Kirkuk...

Other terrorist organisations already existed in Baghdad and elsewhere, mostly among members of the Ba'ath Party, which targeted families known for their left-wing views. By means of threats and intimidation, they compelled them to leave parts of the cities that were later turned into "closed neighbourhoods" where weapons destined for use against the Qasim regime were stockpiled. More such "closed neighbourhoods" were created in Kirkuk where secret Turkman terrorist organisations, in league with Arab nationalist

Fazil Mahdawi. The accused were invariably given long prison sentences or were hanged. If any of those accused had been tried by one court and subsequently appeared before the other, he would have been found innocent of the charges brought against him. Had they been referred to the other court (meaning the other one of the two courts before which they appeared), the reverse would have been the case.

⁵¹ Among other researchers who have discussed the Kirkuk events is Dr. Jamal Nebaz in "Kurdistan and its Revolution" published in German and later translated into Kurdish in 1985. On page 196 he states that, after his enemies had criticised Qasim for supporting the communists, they managed to influence him in co-operation with the extremist Turkmans (Pan-Turkism) and the agents of the Iraqi Oil Company (IPC) in Kirkuk. They created the incidents and then accused the communists of instigating them. They gave false information to Qasim who strongly condemned the communists in his speech at the inauguration of the Mar Yousef church on the evening of July 19, 1959. He described them as "anarchists." But Qasim later withdrew his accusations against the communists in his interview with the Al-Ayam newspaper (in Arabic), No. 59, July 1962. See also Uriel Dann, *Ibid.* pp. 223-ff.

and Islamic opposition groups in Baghdad and Mosul, used similar intimidating tactics against Kurds. They killed, burned homes, shops and businesses, and even sprayed their victims' faces with sulphuric acid. Unable any longer to endure these systematic attacks, many Kurds simply abandoned their homes in the affected neighbourhood as they were unable to sell them for no matter how low an asking price. Many left the city for good.

In the aftermath of the July 1959 events in Kirkuk, many more Kurds than Turkmans were attacked or assassinated. The violence caused large numbers of Kurdish civil servants to apply for transfer to other cities. The government transferred many others, including elementary and secondary schoolteachers, to cities in central and southern Iraq, though they had not requested this. The fact that no arrests were made is taken as confirmation of collaboration between the security service and leaders of the Turkman organisations who bore particular responsibility for the terror. According to the authorities, the perpetrators of the crimes remained "unknown" or "unidentified" and so were free to continue their attacks on Kurds.

The security police in the governorate stepped up the pressure on Communist Party supporters and sympathizers, Kurdistan Democratic Party members and supporters, and on Kurds who had no political affiliation whatever. The assaults on the civilian population continued until the February 1963 coup. Following that coup, the persecution of the Kurds became even more intense and, irrespective of political affiliation, they were subjected to an ever more violent campaign of terror, with the arbitrary arrest of thousands and the uprooting of a great many from their homes. They suffered wholesale abuse at the hands of the participants in the coup and members of the "National Guard" which was made up of, and controlled by, Turkman extremists. Some of these extremists are now leaders of the present Turkman political parties.

In collaboration with the city's security apparatus, the National Guard's first act was the demolition of the entire neighbourhood of "Koma'ri" (Republican), which was home to many impoverished Kurds. Under their supervision, the whole of the city's mechanised force was employed to carry out this destruction.

The resumption of the fighting in Kurdistan in June 1963 was the signal for the regime, with the aid of most Turkmans, to intensify its retaliatory attacks on the Kurds in Kirkuk city and other towns of the governorate. The army, the "National Guard" and the mercenaries, continued their campaign against all Kurds, except for a small minority who co-operated with the regime.

Measures towards Arabization taken by the February 1963 coup organizers in the Kirkuk governorate

Among the many measures taken by the organizers of the February 1963 coup were:

1. The destruction of the Kurdish villages near the city of Kirkuk, in particular those near the oil fields. This amounted to thirteen villages, viz: Sona Goli, Yarwali, Panja Ali, Wail Pasha, Qizilqaya, Chiman Gawra, Chiman Bechuk, Jawl Bor, Hanjira, Qutan, Qushqaya, Shoraw and Bajwan.
2. The expulsion of all the Kurds living in the villages which were under the jurisdiction of the county of Dubz, now the township of Al-Debiss, and the resettling of those villages with Arab tribes under the leadership of one 'Awas Sadid' from the Delem tribe. This operation involved the following villages: Qaradara, Amsha, and Mar'i, Qala 'Arbat, Kitka, Qutani Khalifa, Qutani Kurdakan, Sekaniyan, Gurga Chal, Shaykhan, Nadirawa, DirKay Kardakan, Qara-Haybat, Ala-Gher, Mama, Shirnass, Taqtaq, Kuna Rewi, Chakhmakha and Malha. The campaign to drive out the Kurds and then to Arabize their villages included the following villages also: Jastana, Darband, Sarbashakh, Parkana, 'Awla-Khan, Saralu, Shinagha, DirKay Gawra, DirKay Bechuk, Chawt, Kisma, Tal-Halala, Gazumishan, Garaw, and others.
3. The dismissal of large numbers of the oil company's Kurdish workers or their transfer to facilities outside the governorate. Many low-ranking civil servants, including elementary and secondary schoolteachers, were transferred to southern and central Iraq.
4. Hiring large numbers of Arabs as local police or workers in the oil company, despite their lack of any previous experience, as most of them were tribal people.
5. Establishing numerous military observation posts on the hills and high ground around the city and in areas near the oil facilities, and

designating these places as “security zones” barred from approach after being mined.

6. Arming Arab tribes brought in to be resettled in the Kurdish villages. Irregular units were formed from the Ubaid and Jubur and other Arab tribes to support the army in its attacks on the peshmarga and residents of the Kurdish villages in the area.
7. Changing names of schools and streets of Kirkuk and forcing owners of businesses to use Arabic names for their businesses in accordance with the Arabization policy that was being practised openly.
8. Conducting a military campaign against most of the villages of the governorate so as to terrorise their inhabitants and to force them to abandon their villages in order to settle Arabs in their place.

The deportation of Kurds, the destruction of their villages in the governorate, the demolition of their neighbourhoods in the city of Kirkuk with the consequent displacement of many, and the transfer of Kurdish civil servants and workers to southern and central Iraq became a well-established policy of all Iraqi regimes from 1963 to 1968. Furthermore, these same regimes divided the Kurds by encouraging some of them to become mercenaries. By forming irregular units from among the mercenaries and offering them bribes, they played one group off against another. Large sums of money were offered to those prepared to carry arms for the regime and threats made to demolish the villages of those who refused to do so.

C - The period from 1968 to the present:

The Arab Ba’ath Socialist Party was returned to power in a military coup on July 17, 1968. The leaders of the coup tried to reassure the public with promises that the violence and terror that followed the February 1963 coup would not be repeated. They were concerned to improve their image which had been badly tarnished, both at home and abroad, as a result of the gross violation of human rights following their seizure of power in 1963.

However, the policy of the Arabization of Kirkuk and of creating an Arab numerical majority remained unchanged. In fact, it became more widespread and continued to be deliberately and systematically carried out as a definite state policy. Leading members of the Ba’ath party were appointed as governors of Kirkuk and granted wide and extraordinary powers for the sole

purpose of implementing it. In the words of a former governor of Kirkuk, “it has become part of official policy at the highest levels of government.”⁵²

Shortly after seizing power, the regime used the following measures to change the ethnic character of the city and governorate:

Measures taken by the Iraqi regime inside the city of Kirkuk

1. The remainder of the low-ranking civil servants, including Kurdish elementary and secondary schoolteachers, as well as workers in various government departments and in the oil company facilities, were transferred to areas outside the Kirkuk governorate and replaced with Arab civil servants and workers. A Kurd who leaves Kirkuk for any reason whatsoever is barred from ever returning there. This happened to most of the civil servants and workers who were transferred to other governorates on government orders. Later, when they were retired or their jobs were terminated and they wanted to return to their city where they owned homes, with deeds in their names, they were barred from returning.⁵³
2. The names of Kurdish neighbourhoods were changed and Arabic names were given to schools, streets and markets in Kirkuk and the owners of commercial establishments were forced to adopt Arabic names for their businesses. For instance, the “Rahim Awa” neighbourhood was given the Arabic name “Al-Andalus,” and “Asso” elementary school for boys was renamed, in Arabic, “Al-Taliah”, whilst Kurdistan secondary school for boys was given the Arabic name “Abdul-Malik bin Marwan.”
3. Wide streets were constructed in the Kurdish neighbourhoods, (for instance, a sixty-metre-wide street in the Shorija quarters), and the owners of the houses seized and demolished to make way for them

⁵² A personal friend told me that an old friend of his, a former governor of Kirkuk, who later occupied a high diplomatic post abroad, related to him on several occasions how the policy of the Ba'ath Party towards the Kirkuk region was dictated to the Governor by the Party leaders, who demanded its thorough implementation, and considered it to be part of the state's top level policy.

⁵³ This was my experience in 1982 when I was compulsorily retired from the University of Baghdad for political reasons and was forbidden to return to my own home in Kirkuk.

received very inadequate compensation. They were then not allowed to buy houses or land in the city of Kirkuk in order to force them to leave.

4. New lists were added to those of the 1957 census and the names of the Arab newcomers were registered in them to give the impression that they had lived in Kirkuk since 1957 or earlier. Thus, the state has practised official fraud and continues to do so today.
5. The Kurds were forbidden to sell their properties in Kirkuk except to Arabs, and were prevented from buying homes and properties under any circumstances. The city administration refused to grant any “building permit” or “permit to renovate” to Kurds, even if their homes were badly in need of renovation, so as to force them to sell their homes, or to abandon them, and then move out of the city. Later, in the early eighties, these measures were also applied to the Turkmans.
6. Various charges were levelled by the security services against many Kurds to frighten them into leaving the city and then their homes and properties were confiscated. Many Kurdish youths were arrested and imprisoned by the security police with neither charge nor trial. People living in the area used to witness security police vehicles taking the corpses of men and women, wearing Kurdish costumes, for burial in a cemetery which the people called *Ghariban* -“the strangers”- located near the Kirkuk-Sulaymani road.
7. The governorate’s administrative offices were relocated in the Arabized section of the city which is sited on either side of the road between Kirkuk and Baghdad. The headquarters of the trade unions, professional and other organisations were also moved to the same area.
8. Factories and government facilities were built in the area near the Kirkuk-Hawija-Tikrit road and thousands of residential units were constructed for the Arab workers employed there.
9. The city and its surrounding area were transformed into a large military camp and military fortifications were built inside and around Kirkuk. The ancient citadel in the city, which contained many historic mosques and an ancient church, was turned into an army camp and used as a base for rockets and artillery aimed at the Kurdish and Turkman neighbourhoods of the city. Later, it was totally destroyed.

A major step in the process of the Arabization of Kirkuk was the settling of tens of thousands of Arab families, in successive waves, with guaranteed housing and jobs. At the same time, the government announced the grant of a monetary gift or bonus to any Kurd who would leave Kirkuk, in addition to securing housing for him in southern or central Iraq, or it offered him, free of charge, a plot of residential land on which to build a new home within the “Autonomous Region.” The so-called autonomous region is a portion of Iraqi Kurdistan that the Iraqi regime has recognized as Kurdish. It excludes Kirkuk and other Kurdish regions.

In the 1970s and 1980s, several complete residential sections were built in the city of Kirkuk in which to settle Arabs. Most of these new settlers were assigned to police and security departments, the intelligence agencies and the army or to government facilities. Many were employed in the military observation posts around Kirkuk and in Ba’ath party organisations.

The residential neighbourhoods that were built inside the city of Kirkuk to settle the Arab newcomers up until the end of 1989 are as follows:

1. Approximately six hundred housing units built in the area between the two Kurdish quarters of Azadi and Iskan, near the road between Kirkuk and Sulaymani and given the Arabic name of “Al-Karamah”. An army camp was built near the newly constructed quarter to protect its residents. This was all done in 1970, a short time after the signing of the March 11, 1970, Agreement between the government and the Kurdish movement.
2. Between 1972 and 1973 about five hundred residential units were built near the Al-Karamah quarter and given the Arabic name of “Al-Muthanna.” This quarter is located three kilometres from the Second Division’s ammunition depot on the Kirkuk - Yarwali road.
3. Between 1981 and 1982 two hundred residential plots were distributed to the relatives of “Saddam’s Qadissiyah Martyrs” near the Kirkuk - Sulaymani road and building grants and interest-free loans made available to them from the real-estate bank. The great majority of these people were Arabs.
4. A neighbourhood was built under the Arabic name of “Al-Andalus” near the Kurdish neighbourhood of “Rahim Awa” and close to the Kirkuk -Arbil road for those Arabs employed at the Coca Cola

plant located on the same road. The Arabic name “Al-Andalus” was given jointly to both the new neighbourhood and “Rahim Awa” in order to arabize the old name.

5. About two thousand housing units were built in New Kirkuk, ancient name Ara'paha, in 1979 by a state company for contracts. A further four thousand more units were built in the same area by a foreign construction company.
6. A large military airfield was built in the Ara'paha neighbourhood, south west of the Kirkuk-Dubz road, opposite the street which runs through the headquarters of the Second Division of the First Corps now stationed in Kirkuk.
7. Over one thousand more housing units were built on the Kirkuk - Dubz road for the sulphur extraction company workers and for the oil refinery employees, all of whom are Arabs. This group of homes is called “Public Work Housing.”
8. Approximately five hundred more homes were built in the “Officers’ Quarter” located throughout Kirkuk’s military fort and military airport. These homes are located alongside the entire length of the fort up to the Kirkuk railway station. Some of these homes were built in front of the main entrances of the military airport and the headquarters of the second division and were for high-ranking officers.

Several residential neighbourhoods were built in the area between the Kirkuk fort and the railway station up to the “Al-Tiseen” quarter and the Kirkuk-Hawija-Tikrit road. Construction also took place between the Kirkuk-Baghdad road and the television station, up to the Khasa River in the following formation:

1. More than eight hundred houses in a quarter named Al-Ba'ath.
2. Several hundred houses in the area between the Kirkuk -Tikrit road and the Kirkuk television station, given the Arabic name of Al-Wasiti.
3. About four hundred and fifty houses in the Al-Sekak quarter.
4. More than one hundred houses in the same area given the Arabic name of Al-Ishtirakiyah (“socialism”) quarter.

5. Several hundred houses on the left-hand side of the Kirkuk-Baghdad road up to the Khasa River, called the Al-Gharnata quarter.
6. About one thousand houses on the other side of the Khasa River opposite the Kirkuk television station, south of the city on the Kirkuk-Laylan road given the Arabic name “Al-Hajaj” quarter.
7. Several hundred houses between Kirkuk’s abattoir and the district of “Al-Hajaj,” under the Arabic name of Al-Uruba.
8. Several hundred housing units south of the new Arab “Qutaiba” quarter for the newly arrived police, under the name of Al-Shurtah (police).
9. Several thousand residential plots beyond the military checkpoint on the Kirkuk-Laylan road were distributed to the first wave of incoming Arabs to be settled in the area and each family was granted nineteen thousand dinars⁵⁴ to build on these plots. In the second phase, several thousand more residential plots were distributed, extending eighteen kilometres on both sides of the road between Kirkuk and Laylan as far as the Laylan district itself.
10. Four hundred apartments were built between the Musalla quarter and the old abattoir. Each Arab family was given ten thousand dinars provided they transferred their census registration records to Kirkuk.
11. Two hundred plots in the Kurdish neighbourhood of Imam-Qasim were given to a group of Arabs. Each of them received ten thousand dinars as a grant, in addition to a loan from a real estate bank, in order to build on those plots.
12. Over two hundred other houses were built in the same area that was given the Arabic name of Al-Wuhda (“unity”) quarter. Over one hundred and fifty others were built under the Arabic name of Al-Hurriyya (“liberty”) and over two hundred and twenty more between the Al-Hurriyah quarter and the Kurdish quarters of Shoriya were built and called “Dar Al-Amn.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ One dinar = 3 US dollars at that time.

⁵⁵ For details, see Chiya (Amin K. Amin), “The strategic security of Iraq and the tripartite Ba’athist policy: eviction, Arabization and Ba’athization” (in Kurdish), published by the Information Department of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (P.U.K.), 1987, p. 253-256.

During the March 1991 uprising, and before the city of Kirkuk was taken by the Kurdish forces on March 20, Ali Hassan Al-Majid, the first cousin of Saddam Hussein and then Iraqi Minister of Defence, directed and supervised the arrest of about thirty thousand Kurds, among them military men who were in Kirkuk on leave. They were taken to prison in Tikrit and Mosul where they were deprived of food and water for many days. As a result, many of them died and the survivors were not released until much later. Also in March 1991, Al-Majid supervised the destruction of about two hundred homes belonging to Kurds and Turkmen in the Almas quarter near the Gawur Baghi quarter.

Thousands of Kurdish families were prevented from returning to Kirkuk after they were forced to flee the city to escape aerial bombardment and shelling by the Republican Guard and Special Forces units that re-took the city from the Kurdish peshmarga at the end of the Gulf war. The Agreement signed at the end of April 1991, by the Kurdish leaders and the Iraqi regime, clearly stipulated that those Kurds forced to flee their homes due to the bombardment should be permitted to return. This was never honoured by the regime. The majority were not allowed to return and their homes, businesses, and possessions were confiscated. In Kirkuk and in other Kurdish cities, most Kurdish homes and businesses were looted by the Republican Guard or by the Special Forces or the new Arab settlers when they returned to the city in April 1991. In June of the same year, Al-Majid personally supervised the demolition of numerous homes in the Kurdish quarters of Shorija.

The regime still continues to deport Kurdish and Turkmen residents from Kirkuk. It gives the Kurdish citizen a choice of either going to southern Iraq, in which case he is allowed to take his possessions with him, or going to the liberated region of Kurdistan, in which case all his possessions, including real estate, are confiscated. This policy continued to this day and the Kurdish Organisation for Human Rights in Britain, the Kirkuk Trust for Research and Study (London) and other Kurdish organisations and political parties, have launched many appeals to the Secretary General of the UN, members of the Security Council and others about this matter. Copies of these appeals are made in the Appendices to this study.

In the latter part of 1996, the new governor of Kirkuk, Ali Hassan Al-Majid, tried to force all Kurds and Turkmen resident in the region to register as Arabs. Failure to do so meant deportation to southern Iraq. Prior to the 1997 Census, the security services distributed special forms called "Changing National Identity" to all non-Arabs with the instruction that they register

themselves as Arab and state that they had been previously incorrectly registered as Kurds. Failure to do this also meant expulsion from the region.

A report by Amnesty International of November 1999 mentions a decree issued by the office of the President of Iraq that ordered “the deportation of 1,468 families between 15 April and 15 June 1998”. It gives details of the procedure to be followed by the security forces and states;

1. “One member of each Kurdish family expelled to the northern provinces should be detained;
2. Confiscation of property belonging to the expelled;
3. Confiscation of ration cards;
4. Confiscation of membership cards to government agencies;
5. Notification of the decree to: the head of security of each district; the Ba’ath party official of each district; the chief of each village”.

The report adds, “Their empty properties in Kirkuk and in Khanaqin are given by the authorities to pro-government Arabs brought from other regions in Iraq. Thus far, thousands of Arabs from other regions in Iraq have been resettled in the Kirkuk governorate”.

A report by the US State Department published in September 1999 states, “In northern Iraq, the government is continuing its campaign of forcibly deporting Kurdish and Turkomen families to southern governorates. As a result of these enforced deportations, approximately 900,000 citizens are internally displaced throughout Iraq. Local officials in the south have ordered the arrest of any official or citizen who provides employment, food or shelter to newly arriving Kurds”. Most of these people were expelled after the Census of 1997 when the regime ordered the expulsion of all Kurds who refused to register themselves as Arab in this census

Today, tens of thousands of Kurdish families from Kirkuk live in tents and camps in the liberated area of Kurdistan in extremely harsh conditions that resulted in the death of many, especially among children and the elderly. They depend for their survival on assistance from relief organisations and international aid.

In 1992, the Kurdish regional government asked the United Nations agencies operating in liberated Kurdistan to intervene with the Iraqi government to permit Kirkuk residents to return to their homes under the supervision of international observers, in accordance with the 1991 UN

Security Council Resolution No 688, but the Iraqi regime has totally rejected the idea. Till now the regime not only continues to refuse to do this, it also insists on expelling thousands more families from Kirkuk city and other regions still under its control.

According to a report published in “Tariq-A'shab”⁵⁶, (organ of the Iraqi Communist Party), from the collapse of the uprising in April 1991 until October 1999, 15,615 Kurdish families (92,712 people) were expelled from Kirkuk to the Sulaimani governorate, and 913 Kurdish families (5,811 people) to the Arbil governorate. This is a total of 108,327 people. During the first five weeks of the year 2000, 28 other Kurdish families from Kirkuk (161 people) were expelled to the Sulaimani governorate.⁵⁷ In the Kurdish neighbourhoods of Azadi, Iskan and Imam Qasim, the security services and Ba’ath Party organisations collected all the deeds to the homes of the inhabitants.⁵⁸

This is a summary of the arbitrary measures taken by past Iraqi governments to arabize the city of Kirkuk. What follows is a review of the measures taken by the Ba’athist regime to arabize the entire governorate of Kirkuk.

Measures taken by the Regime to arabize the entire Kirkuk Government

The principal measures taken at this time by the government to change the ethnic composition of the entire Kirkuk governorate include:

Changing the name of the Kirkuk governorate to Al-Ta’ mim (Arabic for “nationalization”) presumably to mark the nationalization of the foreign oil companies operating in Iraq on June 1st, 1972. Although this change was said to be because the foreign oil companies were located in Kirkuk, its real purpose was the Arabizing of the governorate since nationalization applied to all foreign oil companies operating throughout Iraq and not to Kirkuk alone.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Tariq-A'shab, No 5, January 2000.

⁵⁷ Iraqi File Journal, No.99, March 2000, p.39.

⁵⁸ Kurdish bi-weekly “Rojnamentus”, No.21, 15 February, 2000.

⁵⁹ The Kirkuk field contains the most productive oil well in the world, which exceeds an average daily production of one hundred thousand barrels. It is considered to be the fifth

Thousands of Arab families continued to be brought in and settled in Kirkuk and its environs. Despite the fact that much rigging of the figures by the registrars took place in some of the Kurdish neighbourhoods in Kirkuk in the 1957 census, we regard that census as a basis for determining the ethnic composition of the Kirkuk governorate.⁶⁰ The following table gives details:

Table No.6

Kirkuk population according to mother tongue based on the 1957 census.

Mother tongue	Kirkuk City	Kirkuk Governorate	Total population
Arabic	27,127	82,493	109,620
Kurdish	40,047	147,540	187,593
Turkish	45,306	38,065	83,371
Chaldean and Syrian	1,509	96	1,605

A comparison of the contents of this table with the other censuses held in Iraq following the Arabization programme in the Kurdish region, especially in the Kirkuk governorate, shows clearly the extent of the regime's Arabization programme. As a result, the percentage of Arabs in the Kirkuk governorate has increased from 28.2% of the total population according to the 1957 census, to 44.41% according to the 1977 census. At the same time, the percentage of the Turkman population has decreased from 21.4% according to the 1957

among the oil fields of the world in terms of oil reserves. It has been in continuous production since 1927 without any sign of decreasing vitality. See Dr. Mohammed Azhar Saad, "The Economic Geography of Iraqi Petroleum", a Ph.D. dissertation at the Geography Department, College of Humanities, Cairo University, 1975, pp. 394 and 397.

⁶⁰ This was made clear after the announcement of the results of the census of 1957. When a number of Kurdish citizens enquired at the Census & Registration Department in Kirkuk, they discovered that, in the column for "mother tongue", the census officials had, falsely, registered them as Turkman. This applied especially to the popular Kurdish districts, as most of their inhabitants could not speak or read Arabic, and the officials arbitrarily filled in the forms on their behalf. Some of the citizens lodged complaints with the appropriate authorities; others went to court to change their registration by legal means.

census, to 16.31% according to the 1977 census.⁶¹ The population of the Kurds decreased during the same period from 48.3% to 37.53%. The following table makes this clear:

Table No. 7

Ethnic composition of the Kirkuk Governorate: a comparison between the 1957 and 1977 censuses

Nationality	1957 Census	1977 Census
Kurd	48.3%	37.53%
Arab	28.2%	44.41%
Turkman	21.4%	16.31%

No official statistics are available to us concerning the ethnic composition in either Kirkuk city or governorate after 1977. However, the Iraqi regime continues to settle Arabs in the city and its environs and to drive out Kurds and Turkmans en masse.

The regime, meanwhile, used bribery and intimidation to acquire Kurdish land. For instance, in Daquq County, it offered, through its agents, to buy land from some landowners for fantastic prices, while at the same time threatening others with the destruction of their villages if they refused to sell. It then distributed the land to Arab tribes along with government land and other land that was requisitioned for distribution according to the Agrarian Reform Law. Several new villages were built for these Arab tribes and police stations and military observation posts were set up to protect them from Kurdish Peshmarga attacks. The regime also armed them while forbidding Kurdish farmers of the neighbouring villages to own any kind of weapon.

All the area around Kirkuk and the oil fields and installations in the governorate was declared a military and security zone. It was then mined to prevent any possible approach. Before doing this, they moved the inhabitants of the nearby villages and set up military posts and fortifications alongside it, and the roads leading to it, and even along those connecting Kirkuk to the nearby towns.

⁶¹ It is stated in Section 2 of The Secret Pamphlet, produced by the Centre for Census and Administrative Development at the General Security Directorate, (Ibid.) that Arabs constitute 44.41% of the total population of the Province, Kurds 37.53%, Faily Kurds 0.08%, Turkmans 16.31%, Armenians 0.11%, Syriacs 3.82%, and unidentified 0.73%. See p. 60 of the pamphlet.

The regime also detached four out of the seven districts that had once belonged to the Kirkuk governorate and attached them to the neighbouring governorates in order to make the Kurds a minority there. (See Appendix IV-A for an administrative map of Iraq before it was altered by the regime in 1976). Thus, the two exclusively Kurdish districts of Chamchamal and Kala'r were attached to the neighbouring Sulaymani governorate, while the Kifri district, where the Kurds constitute a great majority, was attached to the Diyala governorate, and the Tuz-Khurmatu district with a Kurdish majority was attached to the distant Salahaddin (Tikrit) governorate. (The administrative boundaries of the Kirkuk governorate after the Iraqi regime detached four districts from it in 1976; see Appendix IV-B).

The object of this reshuffle was not administrative reform. For instance, the Hawija district, which is close to the Salahaddin governorate and which has an Arab majority, was not attached to that governorate, whereas the more distant Tuz-Khurmatu district was, because there is oil in some parts of it. Moreover, the Chamchamal, Tuz-Khurmatu (formerly Guil) and Kifri districts had belonged administratively to the Kirkuk governorate from the time of the Ottomans till 1976. The main aim, obviously, was to strip the Kirkuk governorate of these Kurdish districts, thereby ensuring that the Kurds were in a minority there. In addition, it destroyed most of the villages that were administratively part of the city of Kirkuk, or settled Arabs in those from which the Kurdish inhabitants had been expelled. This also applied to the Dubz district where villages have been arabized since 1963. As for the Hawija district, Arabs have been brought in and settled there since the mid-forties. Thus, the three districts that are still administratively part of the Kirkuk governorate have been largely arabized, while the other four have been stripped from it.

For the same purpose, some Kurdish villages were detached from the A'ltun-Copri / Perde County, which adjoins the Arbil governorate, and attached to the Qush-Tapa County which belongs to the city of Arbil. At the same time, the regime attached to the district of Dubz several Kurdish villages that belonged to the Kandinawa County in the Arbil governorate after the Kurds were driven from them following the discovery of oil. It also tried to attach the Taqtaq County in Koy-Sinjak district to the city of Kirkuk following the discovery of oil there. This paved the way for the destruction of all the villages of this county and reduced Taqtaq to no more than a small town. No villages remained as part of it. Nine villages in the Palani area, which belong to the Qara Teppa County in Kifri district were detached and then attached to the

Jalawla County in the Diyala governorate. Their Kurdish inhabitants were moved to the Anbar governorate and members of the Al-Qurwi Arab tribe were settled there.

The Iraqi regime not only brought Arab tribes from southern and central governorates to settle in the Kirkuk governorate, but it gave them agricultural land, granted them numerous privileges and armed them. It simultaneously destroyed hundreds of Kurdish villages and some counties where, for security reasons, it was not possible to settle Arab tribes. Entire populations of these villages were placed in concentration camps in other counties, districts and governorates where they barely had the means to survive and are kept under constant surveillance by the security services. No one is allowed to enter or leave without official approval. These camps are a grim reminder of those run by the Nazis and fascists during the Second World War. They have all been given Arab names such as "Al-Sumud," "Al-Quds," and "Al-Qadissiyah," etc.

The following is a list of the villages and counties destroyed in the Kirkuk governorate from 1963 to the end of 1989.

1 - City District of Kirkuk:

The following counties are administratively part of the City District of Kirkuk: Perdê (A'ltun-Copri), Shuwan (Redar), Qara-Hanjir, Laylan (Qara-Hassan), Taza-Khurmatu, and Yaychi.

1. *Perdê(A'ltun-Copri) County:*

The town of Perdê(A'ltun-Copri), situated on the Lower Zab River on the main road between Kirkuk and Arbil, is the hub of this county. According to the 1957 census - the only official census we rely on - the population of the town was 3,855. The majority were Kurds and the minority Turkmans. The total population of all the villages that belong to this county was around 148,639, all of whom were Kurds.

In 1969, 1986, and 1988, all the villages that belonged to this county, including the villages on both sides of the main Kirkuk-Arbil road, were destroyed and their inhabitants moved to concentration camps in the Arbil governorate. Several large military forts were built between Kirkuk and A'ltun Copri and hundreds of homes constructed inside each of them to house their staff. These military forts include those established at Da'rama'n (near the

sizeable Da'rama'n village, which was destroyed in 1987), Saqezli, and Perdê /A'ltun-Kopri.

In 1974, using volunteer civilian labour, the regime built a housing development of about one thousand housing units near the Da'rama'n area to house members of the police force. This camp is now uninhabited. An army camp with a citadel and one hundred modern homes were built near it for members of the Air Force. Another army camp and another citadel were likewise built near the destroyed village of Galwazha. Two settlements were built, the first consisting of one hundred homes for non-commissioned officers and the second of fifty homes for officers. In 1976 alone, army camps were built at Kitka and Gurzayi, each including forty homes for their staff.

It should be noted that these large army camps were built on fertile agricultural land owned by Kurdish farmers, thus causing the destruction of 31 Kurdish villages where 2,092 farming families had lived, some of whom were killed during the notorious Anfal operation.^{62,63} Since then, the high-ranking military officers and officials of the governorate have had the agricultural land around the army camps cultivated for their private use.

⁶² Shorish M.Rasool, "Destruction of a Nation, Statistics of Atrocities in Iraqi Kurdistan", July 1990, pp. 34 & 36. Published by H. Zahawi and L. Rashid, USA.

⁶³ The Anfal campaign was the Iraqi regime's "solution" to the Kurdish problem in Iraq. It began in February 1988 and its aim was the extermination of the Kurds in the rural areas of Kurdistan, especially in the Kirkuk region. "Anfal" is the eighth sura (verse) of the Qur'an and means "the spoils".

In March 1987, Saddam Hussein gave Ali Hassan Al Majid total control of Northern Iraq, including Kurdistan. He very quickly began to take full advantage of the power this bestowed on him and, within a year, tens of thousands of innocent civilians had died in what amounted to organised mass murder. In raids on villages, families were seized and taken to forts where they were separated. Men, and boys over twelve, were beaten, before being taken away, never to be seen again. The women and children were driven for hours to the desert near the Iraqi-Saudi border where they were forced into ready-prepared pits, shot and buried. (For details, see Kanan Makiya, "Cruelty and Silence", London, 1993 and Jonathan C. Randal, "After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness", USA, 1999)

When a Kurdish delegation was in Baghdad in May 1991 to discuss a peaceful solution with the Iraqi regime, they enquired as to the fate of the 182,000 victims of the campaign. Ali Al Majid angrily replied, "What is this exaggerated figure of 182,000? It couldn't have been more than 100,000". Surviving relatives, till now, have no information as to the fate of their families, but it is generally accepted that they were all killed.

2 -*Shuwan (Redar) County:*

This county is located on the main road between Kirkuk and Koy-Sinjak. The regime began the destruction of some of the villages that belong administratively to this county, such as Qizil Qaya and Wail Pasha and others in 1963. Later, all the villages belonging to this county were destroyed, including the county seat, Redar (Shuwan). In all, about 70 villages were destroyed and the 2,650 members of the farming families living there were moved during 1987 and 1988 to the concentration camps in the Arbil governorate.⁶⁴

Army camps were built in the county seat and in the area around it, thus making the entire area a restricted, military zone with prohibited entry and cultivation forbidden except by military personnel or officials of the governorate.

3 -*Qara-Hanjir County (Arabized to “Al-Rabigh”):*

The large village of Qara-Hanjir lies on the main road between Kirkuk and Sulaymani, a few kilometres from the city of Kirkuk. It once served as a resort for Kirkuk residents due to its many orchards and its temperate summer weather. It was made the county seat and given the Arabic name of “Al-Rabigh”. Hundreds of small homes were built there to house the Kurds whose villages had been destroyed and to accommodate hundreds of other Kurdish families expelled from the city of Kirkuk. A large number of Arabs were assigned there to control the county and the concentration camp.

During 1969, 1977, 1987 and 1988, 41 villages were destroyed in this county, involving a total population of about 2,230 farming families.⁶⁵

4 -*Laylan (Qara-Hassan) County:*

Laylan, the seat of this county, is located twenty kilometres south east of the city of Kirkuk. According to the 1957 census it had a population of 1,301, approximately half of them Kurds, and the others Shi'ite Turkmans. The population of the county's villages, according to the same census, was 12,509, all of whom were Kurds. Some of the villages, such as Lower Terkashkan and Tarjil, were targeted for Arabization in 1970 and 1971. In

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 39-41

⁶⁵ Ibid. pp. 42-43.

that same year, the regime built a settlement for Arab buffalo farmers near Tarjil, which was abandoned in 1983 after being attacked by the Peshmargas. In 1987, it built homes for about 300 Arab families in the town of Laylan itself. This area is now totally arabized.

The 45 Kurdish villages belonging to this county were all destroyed in 1986, 1987, and 1988. The number of farming families expelled from them and forced to settle in concentration camps in the Chamchamal district was around 2,429.⁶⁶

Shi'ite Turkmans made up about half the population of the county seat and the neighbouring village of Yahyawa. Like the Kurds, they were engaged in farming and the two communities were on good terms.

5- Taza-Khurmatu (Taza) County:

This is one of the newly created counties near the city of Kirkuk. Taza-Khurmatu (Taza) is its hub and it is located a few kilometres south of the city, on the main Kirkuk-Baghdad road. Before Arabization, the majority of its population was Turkman. Its Arabization was accomplished according to the established pattern, that is, Arab tribes were settled in the county seat and the two villages of Cherdaghlu and Bashir and soon outnumbered the Turkmans. The county is now totally arabized.

6- Yaychi county:

This, too, is a newly created county situated near the Kirkuk - Hawija road. It once included the main Turkman village of Terkalan, as well as the two Kurdish villages of Topzawa and Yaychi. Then, several settlements of over 100 homes for Arabs brought from southern Iraq were built and given the name "Al-Jumhuriyah". A military airfield was built in the area and the indigenous people were expelled. The entire county is now arabized.

In this way, the majority of counties and villages were completely destroyed, including some county seats such as Shuwan. Their inhabitants were moved to concentration camps. In their place, Arab tribes were settled where the government was able to guarantee their protection.

Under the direct supervision of the Ba'ath party, and with the active participation of Arab settlers, the policy of Arabization continued according to

⁶⁶ Ibid. pp. 37-38.

the regime's plan. Up until 1991, a total of 61,394 people, mostly farmers and their families, were forcibly expelled from 218 villages in the Kirkuk Central District. This figure does not include those Kurds forced to leave the city of Kirkuk since 1959 because of officially sanctioned repression and terror. Whole families were expelled because one member had been imprisoned for political reasons, had evaded military service or deserted from the army, had avoided serving in the Ba'athist "Popular Army" or because a distant relative had fled abroad, etc. It should be noted that Kurds who had lived in the city of Kirkuk since 1958 were compelled to go to the districts and counties of the Kirkuk governorate and were not permitted to transfer their 1957 census registration record to the City Registry. The registration of tens of thousands of new Arab settlers in Kirkuk, on the other hand, was transferred to the Registry to make it appear as though they had been resident there since 1957 or before. In order to carry out this fraud, a number of specialist Ba'athist officials from other governorates were transferred to the Kirkuk Census Office (now the Civil Status Office) of the Kirkuk governorate and all Kurdish and Turkman staff from this office were moved elsewhere.

2 - Dubz District, Arabized to "Al-Debiss":

The inhabitants of all the Kurdish villages of this district - roughly 4,215 farming families in 1963 - were expelled in the middle of that year and Arab tribes, especially the Jubur and Delem, were brought in and settled there.

The regime also settled groups from the Jubur tribe in other Kurdish villages such as Jastan, Darband, Sarbashakh, Barkana, Saralu, Kisma, Chart, Tal Halala, and Garwashan. The village of Sarkaran was made the county seat and named "Al-Quds" (Jerusalem) and 150 housing units were built for the county officials and members of the security service and the Ba'ath party. The area was transformed into a large military base with many camps and settlements to house the troops and members of the security and intelligence services, employees of the sulphur plant and oil refinery. What follows is a detailed account of the building programme:

- A large number of homes for the officials and workers of the sulphur plant, all of whom were "incoming Arabs";
- Several homes a few kilometres from the sulphur factory for the factory guards;
- One hundred homes, built in 1977, under the Arabic name of "Maissalun," near the village of Chiragh;

- Another settlement north of the village of Qaradara under the Arabic name of “Al-Rafidain;
- Homes for the employees of the radio and television stations;
- Homes for the members of the security services;
- A special neighbourhood to house the Arabs in the district seat, given the Arabic name of “Al-Muthanna;”
- A neighbourhood for the same purpose by the Arabic name of “Al-Ta’ mim;”
- A neighbourhood called “July 30th Neighbourhood”;
- A large settlement of more than five hundred homes under the Arabic name of “Huttein” to house officers, non-commissioned officers, and other personnel working at the military base.

3 - Hawija district:

This is a new district created for the purpose of settling members of the two Arab tribes of Ubaid and Jubur and others on the Hawija plains. Since 1963, large sums of money have been spent on numerous agricultural projects and large poultry farms in addition to service facilities in this district. Many Kurdish families had settled in this district in search of a livelihood but were expelled at the beginning of 1995.

4 - Chamchamal district:

This is one of the old districts that had been a part of the Kirkuk governorate since Ottoman times. It is located between Kirkuk and Sulaymani and has the two counties of Aghjalar and Sangaw within it. According to the 1957 census, the district’s population was 34,299, all of whom were Kurds. All the villages belonging to this district were destroyed. They numbered 164 and included 102 schools, 157 mosques and 4 small clinics. There were 9,866 farming families expelled from these villages, comprising 51,797 people.⁶⁷

1- *Sangaw county:*

The 70 villages that originally made up this county were all destroyed in 1987 and 1988, including the county seat. There were 2,648 farming

⁶⁷ Ibid. pp. 92-94.

families in these villages with 28 elementary schools and 2 small clinics.⁶⁸

2- *Aghjalar* county:

This is an old county of 75 villages with 66 schools, 73 mosques, and 2 small clinics. A number of these villages were destroyed more than once by the Iraqi army. After being rebuilt, they were burned down or bulldozed yet again. The 6,731 farming families living there were forced out and were put into concentration camps built especially for them near the main road linking Kirkuk and Sulaymani. Some of these families were victim to the Anfal operations⁶⁹ and several of the villages were the target of gas attacks in May 1988, which caused the deaths of hundreds of children and old people, especially in the villages of Askar, Gawrad, and Mutlija.⁷⁰

Since the Chamchamal district falls within the liberated part of Iraqi Kurdistan, the inhabitants of these destroyed villages have gradually begun to return to rebuild their homes and resume farming.

5 - Tuz-Khurmatu District Arabized to “Al-Tuz”:

At the beginning of monarchical Iraq, the seat of this district was the village of Koshk, in the Guil region. The Iraqi government first made Daquq the district seat but later changed it to Duz-Khurmatu, which also lies on the main Kirkuk-Baghdad road. According to the 1957 census, the population of the district seat was 8,978, made up of Kurds and Shi'ite Turkmans. The total population of this district was 68,552. The majority were Kurds, with Turkman and Arab minorities.

The regime began arabizing some of the villages of this district in the mid-seventies but then destroyed the great majority of them because of the difficulty of protecting the new settlers. From 1986 to 1988, 9 more villages belonging to the district seat were destroyed, involving a population of 1,058 farming families.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Kanan Makiya (a k a, Samir Al-Khalil) refers in his book (in Arabic): “Silence and Cruelty”, 1993, Norton, to scenes of bombardment and poison gas attack inflicted on the villages of this district, Ibid.

⁶⁹“Destruction of a Nation”, Ibid. pp. 95-97.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 24

⁷¹ See the General Census of 1957.

In 1976 this district was annexed to the Salahaddin (Tikrit) governorate, which is at some distance from it, after detaching the Daquq County from it and annexing it to the Kirkuk district. Several Arab settlements were built there, among them the Yafa settlement near the village of Albusabah, to which about 300 Arab families were brought in 1977. The Al-Muslawi settlement, near the town of Tuz-Khurmatu, was built to accommodate 500 Arab families but it is now uninhabited. This district previously included the following counties within its administrative boundaries: Daquq, Qadir Qarma, Nawjol, Sulayman Beg and A'mirli.

1. *Daquq (Ta'uq) County:*

The old town of Daquq lies south of Kirkuk on the main Kirkuk-Tuz-Khurmatu-Baghdad road. According to the 1957 census, in addition to Kurds, a population of 2,760 Shi'ite Turkmans lived there. The Kurds live mainly in the villages of this county. Their population, according to the same census, was 10,567, while the population of Arabs was some 1,370 living in the village of Shubecha and other neighbouring villages.

The area is renowned for its fertile land and Arabization began in the mid-seventies with the purchase of agricultural land from Kurdish landowners in the 15 villages belonging to the Quaky and Dawooda tribes. The regime distributed this, and other Kurdish owned land that it had acquired according to the Agrarian Reform Law, among the Bedouin and Arab tribes.

The construction of the Kirkuk Irrigation Project, now known as the Saddam Irrigation Project, made it possible to build the following settlements:

1. The Mahawish settlement, which houses 30 farming families from the 'Algawi tribe. They were settled there in 1979 in thirty housing units;
2. The Al-Asriyya settlement, near the village of Haftaghar, where numerous Arab tribes have been settled in 480 homes since 1976;
3. The Hussein Agha settlement, where about 400 homes were built in which to settle Arabs;
4. A settlement between the villages of Albusaraj and Haftaghar;
5. The Daquq settlement, near the main Kirkuk - Baghdad road, with over 500 homes for Bedouin Arabs in 1982;

6. The Klisa settlement, which is next to Daquq, with 25 homes for Bedouin Arabs;
7. Two other settlements near the Al-Asriyya settlement, each with one hundred homes built in 1980 for Bedouin Arabs;
8. All the Kurdish farmers in the village of Leheb were expelled and Arabs were settled in their place.

Following its usual practice, the regime built numerous police stations and military observation posts near these settlements to guard against attacks by the Kurdish Peshmargas. The Arab settlers were armed while the Kurds in the few villages not earmarked for Arabization were stripped of their weapons. Between 1973 and 1987, 6 villages belonging to this county were destroyed and their 860 farming families expelled.⁷² The members of the Quakay Kurdish tribe were registered as Arabs in the 1977 census and they remain in their own villages that, with a few others, were spared destruction. In the same 1977 census, members of the Barzinji Kurdish family living in some areas of the governorate, especially in Qadir-Qarma and Keripchena, were also registered as Arabs. At the end of 1996, Izzat Ibrahim, the Iraqi vice-president, gathered together the dignitaries of the leading Kurdish families in this district, and later in the whole of the governorate, and asked them to register themselves as Arab. This was in preparation for the Census of 1997 when they registered most of the Kurds as Arab. The names of those who refused to do so were noted for expulsion to other regions. These expulsions were carried out later and are continuing.

2. *Qadir Qarma County:*

This very large county lies in the north east of the district. Before its destruction, it possessed 281 prosperous villages with 160 schools, 190 mosques and 21 small clinics. According to the 1957 census, the population of the county was 13,426, all of them Kurds. During 1987 and 1988, 11,694 farming families, with 61,394 members, were expelled from its villages and sent to concentration camps, while others were victim to the notorious Anfal operations. The regime burnt many of the villages during the years of fighting with the Kurds. It later destroyed the remainder during the “Anfal” operation in 1988.⁷³

⁷² Destruction of a Nation, Ibid. p. 25.

⁷³ Ibid. pp. 28-31.

3. *Nawjol* County:

This is one of the new counties created after drilling for oil began in the area of Zanbur. When the government began destroying the villages of Kurdistan, it also destroyed those belonging to this county that were 39 in total, with 28 schools, 32 mosques, and 2 small clinics. A total of 1,969 farming families were expelled and sent to concentration camps at the district centre between 1985 and 1988.⁷⁴

4. *Sulayman Beg* and *A'mirli* counties:

The Sulayman Beg County lies south of the Tuz-Khurmatu district on the main Kirkuk -Tuz Hamrin-Baghdad road. The A'mirli County was created later and is close to the same road between Sulayman Beg and the Hamrin mountains. Members of the Turko-Mongolian tribe of Bayat (originally called Piawut) live in its several villages and were mostly arabized through mixing with the incoming Arab tribes from southern Iraq. The Hamrin mountain range, which forms the natural border of Kurdistan in the south, runs south of A'mirli County.⁷⁵

6 - Kifri District:

This is an old district that was known during the Ottoman rule as “Salahiyya”. It is situated in the south east of the governorate. According to the 1957 census, its population was 64,135 made up mostly of Kurds, followed by Turkmans and Arabs.

In 1976, Kifri was attached to the Diyala governorate as a part of the plan to strip important parts from the Kurdish governorate of Kirkuk and attach them to the neighbouring, Arab-dominated governorates in order to dilute the Kurdish character of a given district.

⁷⁴ Ibid. pp. 26-27.

⁷⁵ The Iraqi historian, Abdul Razzak Al Hassani, in his book, “The Political History of Iraq” (in Arabic) Volume III, p. 298; and Dr. Shakir Khesbak, (Ibid.) consider the Hamrin mountain range to be the natural border of Kurdistan. Many foreign researchers share this view, including J. C. Edmonds in his book, *Kurds, Turks and Arabs (translated into Arabic by Jerjis Fatullah, 1971, Al-Times Press, Baghdad, p. 7).*

The district of Kifri includes several counties, some of which were attached to the Kala'r district, which was newly created and attached to the Sulaymani governorate. The counties that make up this district are:

1. ***Sarqala (Sherwana) County:***

This county is located north east of the town of Kifri on the main road between Kifri and Kala'r, with Sarqala as its hub. The 1957 census showed the population to be 23,371, all of them Kurds. When the process of destruction began, there were 25 villages with 17 schools, 18 mosques and 1 small clinic in the county seat. A total of 982 farming families were expelled in 1987 and 1988 and moved to the Al-Sumud settlement, now renamed by the Kurds "Rezgary", which was built in the newly created district of Kala'r to house all the Kurds driven from the villages.⁷⁶

2. ***Kokez County:***

This is a newly created county. It was once a part of Qara Teppa and contained 26 villages, including those of the Zangabad area. All were destroyed in 1976, 1987 and 1988, along with 20 schools, 20 mosques, and one small clinic located in the county seat. 1,726 farming families were expelled and sent to the concentration camp at "Al-Sumud" in New Kala'r.⁷⁷ Members of the Qurwi Arab tribe were settled in a number of the villages after the Kurdish farmers were expelled from them, as in the case of the following villages: Qala, Binabagh, Silawni, Sheikh Baba, Darwesh Muhammad, Abbas Mahmud, Safar, Awrahman-Kam, and Rashid Bijan. The inhabitants of all these villages are from the Kurdish Zand tribe and they were all moved to the Arab governorate of Anbar, to the west of Baghdad. Later, oil was discovered in the village of Chalaw Khalid which is now known as the Gumar Field.

3. ***Jabara County:***

This is another newly created county, lying south of Kifri, near the railway connecting Aski-Kifri with Jalawla and Baghdad. The inhabitants of some of the villages here were forced to abandon them in order to settle Arabs in their place. The remaining villages were destroyed, with the exception of Galabad, Ayn Shukr and Sari-Koy, which are inhabited by members of the

⁷⁶ Ibid. Destruction of a Nation, p. 9.

⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 10.

Kurdish Gej tribe who were compelled to register themselves as Arabs belonging to the Arab tribe of Qaissi!

Some of the recently settled Arabs would occasionally rent out their newly acquired agricultural lands to their former Kurdish owners, who then worked on the land as labourers for their new masters! This phenomenon was common in many districts and counties where villages were destroyed and their inhabitants expelled in order to settle Arab tribes there, most of whom had never before worked in agriculture as they were Bedouins. The destruction in this county included 30 Kurdish villages with 23 schools, 21 mosques and 4 small clinics. 1,627 farming families were expelled in 1987 and 1988 and forced to live in the Al-Sumud concentration camp in New Kala'r and in the Qara Teppa camp.⁷⁸

4. *Qara Teppa County:*

This is one of the old counties situated in the south of Kifri district. Members of the Jubur, Leheb and Bani-Zaid Arab tribes live in the southern and western villages, while Kurdish farmers live in those of the north and east. In 1988, all the villages of this county, including Gakhur, Qaraytagh, Gsj, Ayn-Faris were destroyed. Turkmans and Kurds lived together without problems in the county seat and its suburbs. According to the 1957 census, the population was 27,942. They all - Kurds, Turkmans and Arabs - lived peacefully together until the regime began to Arabize the county according to their, by now, well-established methods, causing racial and ethnic hatred among them all.

7 - Kala'r District:

This district was created after attaching the Kifri district to the Diyala governorate in 1976. All the villages were subsequently depopulated and destroyed in 1987 and 1988. Sixteen villages were destroyed in this district's seat and 1,174 farming families were expelled and sent to the Al-Sumud concentration camp. The following counties belong to this district.

1. *Pebaz (Bawanur) County:*

This is one of the old counties which was part of the Kifri district but which was then attached to the newly created Kala'r district. The county seat is the town of Pebaz, on the Sirwan River on the main road between Darbandi-

⁷⁸ Ibid. pp. 11 & 12.

Khan and Kala'r. According to the 1957 census, the population was 6,886, all of whom were Kurds. All the 52 villages, with their 29 schools and 23 mosques, and 1 small clinic in the county seat, were destroyed. 1,045 families were expelled and forced into the Al-Sumud concentration camp in the district seat.⁷⁹

2. Tilako County:

This is a newly created county. All the 113 villages that belonged to it were destroyed, with 47 schools, 42 mosques and 1 small clinic. In 1987 and 1988, 1,659 families were expelled and moved to the Al-Sumud concentration camp.⁸⁰

Since 1991, most of Kala'r district's counties and large parts of the Kifri district have come within liberated Kurdistan. Consequently, many Kurdish farmers have begun gradually to return to their ruined villages to rebuild them and to resume farming, despite being targets for the Iraqi artillery units stationed in the area. (The Arabized and destroyed areas of Iraqi Kurdistan, including the Kirkuk governorate, see Appendix No. IV-C).

⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 133.

⁸⁰ Ibid. pp. 134-135.

IV

The Result of the Arabization and Destruction of the Kirkuk Region

It can be seen from this rapid review of the administrative break up, physical destruction, forced relocation and Arabization directed at the villages of the Kirkuk governorate's districts and counties, including some district and county seats, that the number of villages destroyed, especially during 1987 and 1988, totalled 779. Some district and county seats were converted into relocation centres or concentration camps, and farmers who were expelled from their villages were forced to live there with no means of livelihood except for a residential plot of land and a small sum of money to build a house. In most cases their cattle and pack-animals were looted by those responsible for the relocation operations, i.e. senior military officers, Ba'ath party officials, security service officials, high-ranking officials of the governorate and some Kurdish mercenary chiefs. The following table shows the destruction that took place in the districts and villages of the Kirkuk Region:

Name of the District	Villages destroyed	Schools destroyed	Mosques destroyed	Clinics destroyed	Families expelled	Individuals expelled
Kirkuk and Dubz Districts.	218	160	190	21	11,694	61,394
Kifri (except Qara-Teppa County).	81	60	59	6	4,346	22,817
Tuz-Khurmatu.	135	79	111	6	7,942	—
Chamchamal.	164	102	157	4	9,866	51,797
Kala'r.	181	92	81	3	3,878	—
Total	779	493	598	40	37,726	—

Given that the total number of villages destroyed in Iraqi Kurdistan by the end of 1989 was estimated at 3,839, including 1,957 schools, 2,457 mosques and 271 small clinics, and that the total number of families expelled

from their villages and towns was 219,828, mostly farming families, it becomes clear that one fourth of all the villages destroyed in Kurdistan were in the Kirkuk governorate.

A map of the villages and towns of Kurdistan that were destroyed or Arabized, which is appended to this study, shows the degree of destruction that the Kurdish region has suffered during the last quarter of the 20th century, especially during 1988, the year of the Anfal operations.

The various Iraqi regimes have made persistent efforts to arabize the Kirkuk region because of its oil reserves and its vast, fertile farmlands. The practices followed by these regimes are no different from those pursued by other racist governments in many parts of the world, especially in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor.

The present Iraqi regime deliberately embarked on this systematic orgy of destruction, in which Kurdish towns and villages were relentlessly razed to the ground. Homes, places of worship, schools and the few small medical facilities there were, were obliterated; orchards were burned and wells were cemented over. Even the cemeteries were destroyed. The aim was to wipe out any trace of life there and to deny the very existence of the villages should there ever be an international inquiry into their fate. It began a process to reorganise the governorate for the purpose of making the Kurds a minority in it.

By the end of 1976, as a result of all the demographic changes, only the district of Hawija, which had been Arabized in the mid-forties, and the district of Dubz, which was arabized in 1963, remained as part of the Kirkuk governorate whose name was changed to the Arabic, Al-T'amin.

As for the city of Kirkuk itself, the process of its Arabization was begun by Qasim's regime at the end of 1959. Successive Iraqi regimes have continued to expel thousands of Kurdish families and to settle Arabs in their place, and are still doing so today.

An enormous project, similar to that of Hawija, has been completed to irrigate the plains of Dubz, Daquq and Tuz-Khurmatu, south of the main Kirkuk-Baghdad road to the Hamrin Mountains. Water brought from the Lower Zab River irrigates and renders arable an area covering tens of thousands of Donem (a Donem is 2,500 square metres). First called "The Kirkuk Irrigation Project", its name was later changed to "The Saddam

Irrigation Project”. The only people who benefit from this huge undertaking are the Arab farmers who were recently settled there. This project is separate from the Hawija irrigation project. The Arabization of the Kirkuk governorate was carried out in two stages:

The first stage entailed forcing Kurds from the city and governorate of Kirkuk, either through administrative transfer of those who were civil servants and oil company employees, or through the coercion of others. We must remember that the Kurd, who leaves Kirkuk either voluntarily or involuntarily, is not allowed to return even though he is registered in the governorate’s “Civil Status” Census Registry. This is precisely what happened to those civil servants and workers who were transferred and who later wanted to return to Kirkuk after they were pensioned off or their services were terminated. So they joined the vast numbers of those expelled from their villages and towns between 1962 and 1990, and the thousands of others forced to flee the city during its bombardment by units of the Republican Guard when it recaptured the city following the collapse of the uprising in April 1991. These expulsions are continuing even now.

The second stage was accomplished by settling tens of thousands of Arab families from central and southern Iraq in the city of Kirkuk and nearby areas and providing them with housing and employment in the police department, the military, the intelligence and security services, the Ba’ath Party organisation and the “Popular Army” which assisted the regular army by manning the observation posts and defensive positions that surround the city and dominate the surrounding area.

To the regime they were “incoming Arabs”. To local people they were “the ten-thousand-dinar people”, or “the twenty-thousand-dinar people” depending on the size of their government grants and other privileges.

The regime was unable to settle Arabs in the northern and eastern areas of the Kirkuk governorate because of the difficulty of protecting them, so it destroyed more than 700 villages there. Since 1994 however, it has began to settle Arab tribes even in those areas and it continues to do so.

The destruction of Kurdish neighbourhoods in the city of Kirkuk continues. For instance, hundreds of homes in the large Kurdish neighbourhoods of Shorija, Almas, Blagh, Piryadi, Mussalla, and Bar-Takia have been demolished to make way for road improvement schemes. However, the real reason was to force the homeowners to leave the city. They were first

forbidden to buy other houses or building plots in the city of Kirkuk and then banned from the city completely.

* * *

Any proposed solution to the Kurdish problem in Iraq will be completely unworkable if it does not include a clear mandate for the return of all displaced Kurds and Turkmans to their rightful homes and land. Furthermore, Arabs settled in the city and governorate of Kirkuk since the beginning of 1963 must be returned to their original areas.

During the March 1991 uprising that engulfed all of Kurdistan and large areas of Iraq, the majority of the “in-coming Arabs,” or “settlers,” fled the city. They were only able to return to Kirkuk when the Republican Guard and the armed Iranian Mujahidin-Khalq mercenary group (working for the Iraqi regime) regained control of the city and its environs following random missile and artillery attacks. This clearly demonstrates that they can only remain there whilst the Iraqi regime protects them. These Arab settlements, within and without Kirkuk city, make for a volatile situation and endanger the future of Iraq and of relations between Arabs and Kurds. A similar situation can be seen in other troubled parts of the Middle East.

The administrative boundaries of the governorate, which were changed in 1976 with the aim of making the Kurds a minority there, must be restored to their former status and all districts and counties stripped from it must be reinstated. In addition, the Kurdish and Turkman villages and towns that were destroyed must be rebuilt and their residents compensated for the loss of their homes, property and loved ones.

The Kirkuk region was, and is, an integral part of Kurdistan. The city of Kirkuk, which was the capital of the Wilayet of Sharazur until 1879, and an important centre during the Ottoman rule, must be restored to its former status. All traces of the policy of ethnic cleansing there must be removed.

The Arabization policy must cease to be practised against the Turkmans also. The Kurdish authority in the liberated area of Kurdistan must recognise

their national and cultural rights. These rights should be written into law and institutions should be set up to ensure their democratic practice⁸¹

Although Turkmenians are a small minority in the liberated part of Kurdistan, they enjoy the freedom to form political parties and organisations and to educate their children in their mother tongue. In return, their political leaders must stop accusing the Kurds of “trying to establish a Kurdish state with the backing of the West”. Their close co-operation with the Turkish government and the use of the Turkish flag and anthem in their schools does nothing to help promote good relations with the Kurds. The claim by some of their political leaders that the Kurds “don’t have a good feeling about the Turkmenians” is without foundation.⁸²

Kurds, Turkmenians and Assyrians must all learn from the tragic events of the fifties and later years that proved that the ultimate aim of the regimes in Iraq is to remove them all from the region. This explains why, when it began expelling the Kurds from the Kirkuk region, it used certain elements of the Turkmenian nationalists against them and then, in the early eighties, turned against the Turkmenians and made them the new victims of its racist policies.

The Iraqi regime’s objective to rid the area of all non-Arabs is made clearer by reports now circulating in the media which suggest that the regime is planning to settle Palestinians in the region. This would have very dangerous consequences for relations between Kurds and Arabs. Conflict has been, until now, between Kurds and the Iraqi regime, but such an action would result in increasing antagonism and animosity between Kurds and Arabs.

The policy of oppression and discrimination extended even to the long-time Arab inhabitants of the region, that is, those who had been living there before the migration of the Arab “newcomers.” When these newcomers had seized control of power in the army, administration, security and intelligence

⁸¹ Nouri Talabany, “The Kurdish View on the Constitutional Future of Iraq” London 1999. This study discusses a proposed Constitution for Iraqi Kurdistan that proposed the recognition of Turkmenian rights.

⁸² *The Iraqi File Journal*, (London), No. 30, 1994, p. 24, published the full text of the letter that the Chairman of the National Turkmenian Party sent to the Turkish Foreign Ministry - reproduced from the Turkish newspaper, ‘Zaman’, dated March 11, 1994. In it he states “the Kurdish state which it is planned to establish in Northern Iraq supported by the western powers does not look favourably on the Turkmenians inhabiting northern Iraq”. The letter, which was also addressed to the heads of the American and Turkish delegations to the negotiations concerning extending the period for stationing the western military force at the Incherlik Turkish base, in June 1994, claimed that this force “has provided for the establishment of a Kurdish state in all but name”.

services and the Ba'ath Party, as well as most agricultural land and economic establishments, professional and trade union organisations and institutions, they began to treat the indigenous population of Kurds, Turkmans, Assyrians and long-established Arabs, with contempt. A quick look at all those establishments and institutions reveals clearly that a group of people with no ties whatsoever to the area had taken it over completely and had become absolute masters, while the legitimate inhabitants became as foreigners in their own land.

For decades, the Kurds have been faced with the charge of "separatism" because they demand their national rights as Kurds. They have no wish to see their homeland, Kurdistan, handed to people who have no historic ties with it, as they have seen happening elsewhere. If the present situation remains unchanged after Saddam Hussein's regime ends, the region will be in danger of erupting at any time.

World events, particularly in the Middle East, show that two or more peoples cannot peacefully co-exist without mutual understanding and co-operation. Attempts at forced assimilation and the control of the minority by the majority, as practised by the Iraqi regime, are doomed to failure. The repressive actions of successive Iraqi regimes, especially since the beginning of the sixties, are illegal and violate the most basic principles of international law. They are based on coercion and subjugation and stem from racial hatred.

In the absence of a clear condemnation of this blatantly racial policy, Arab-Kurdish relations are severely strained. It is vital that all Iraqis who wish to preserve the Iraqi entity make such condemnation and work to halt and reverse the Arabization programme operating in the Kirkuk region and elsewhere since 1963 and demand a return to the status quo.

APPENDIX I:

The 16th Special Schedule for the classification of population according to gender and mother tongue, for the Kirkuk governorate, in the Official General Census of 1957 in Iraq.

APPENDIX NO.1

The 16th Special Schedule for the classification of population according to gender and mother tongue for the *Kirkuk* Province, in the Official General Census for 1957 in Iraq.

الجدول السادس عشر -

تصنيف السكان من حيث الجنس ولغة الام لواء كركوك

لغة الام	مدينة كركوك			بقية لواء كركوك			المجموع السكاني للواء كركوك		
	ذكور	اناث	المجموع	ذكور	اناث	المجموع	ذكور	اناث	المجموع
عربي	١٥٠٠٨	١٢١١٩	٢٧١٢٧	٤١٧١٦	٤٠٧٧٧	٨٢٤٩٣	٥٦٧٢٤	٥٢٨٩٦	١٠٩٦٢٠
كردى	٢١٢٨١	١٨٧٦٦	٤٠٠٤٧	٧٤١١٠	٧٣٤٣٦	١٤٧٥٤٦	٩٥٣٦١	٩٢٢٠٢	١٨٧٥٩٣
ايراني	٦٠	٤٦	١٠٦	١٧	٥	٢٢	٧٧	٤٦	١٢٣
تركي	٢٢٥٦٤	٢٢٧٤٢	٤٥٣٠٦	١٨٩٩٢	١٩٠٧٣	٣٨٠٦٥	٤١٥٥٦	٤١٨١٥	٨٣٢٧١
انكليزي	٣٦١	٢٤٣	٦٠٤	٤٢	٢١	٦٣	٤٢٣	٣٦٤	٧٨٧
فرنسي	٢٢	١٣	٣٥	٦	-	٦	٢٨	١٣	٤١
هندي	٥٣	٢٦	٧٩	٥	٣	٨	٥٨	٢٩	٨٧
كلداني وسرياني	٧٧٤	٧٣٥	١٥٠٩	٤٨	٤٨	٩٦	٨٢٢	٧٨٣	١٦٠٥
لغات اخرى	٢٢٦	١٩٢	٤١٨	-	-	-	-	١٩٢	٤١٨
غير معين	٢٦٨٤	٢٤٦٢	٥١٤٦	١١٣	٢٥	١٣٨	٢٢٩٧	٢٤٨٧	٥٢٨٤
المجموع	٦٣٠٦٣	٥٧٣٣٦	١٢٠٤٠٢	١٣٥٠٤٩	١٣٣٣٨٨	٢٦٨٤٣٧	١٩١١١٢	١٩٠٧٧٧	٣٨١٨٩٦

APPENDIX II:

The following is the exact text of the secret correspondence from the Second Division Command of the Iraqi army, based in Kirkuk, to the Ministry of Defence, Baghdad, at the end of 1958 and the beginning of 1959.

Document A:

The Second Division Command
Intelligence
No. H. SH. 3. 914
Date: 9/9/1958

Highly confidential and personal

To: The Directorate of Military Intelligence at the Ministry of Defence.

Subject: The Memorandum from Kurdish teachers to the Ministry of Education concerning raising the standard of education, particularly in Kurdistan. Enclosed is a copy of the above memorandum for your perusal.

On page 15, under the title: B - Implementation, Article 1, it states the following: "The designation of the Kurdish educational area so as to include the governorates of Sulaymani, Arbil, Kirkuk, Khanaqin and the Kurdish districts of Mosul". We would like to draw your attention to the dangers of the above designation and we offer the following observations:

To agree to a boundary for the Kurdistan educational area means, in effect, recognising the aim of the Kurdish teachers, that is, the declaration of Kurdistan as a political entity.

The inclusion of the Kirkuk governorate (which is not Kurdish according to interpretation of the memorandum, as there is a majority of Arabs, Turks and Christians) in the Kurdish Educational area, reveals the desire to take over the oil, which is the national wealth for the Iraqi Republic which liberated this vital source for the life and the future of Iraq. Also, the claim in the memorandum to the Kurdishness of Kirkuk means the assimilation of other nationalities in the governorate and this is contrary to the spirit of the Iraqi Republic's constitution.

It is not in the public interest to establish the Kurdistan Educational Directorate and it is not appropriate that its headquarters be in the city of Kirkuk.

The post of Director of Education in Kirkuk must always be assigned to an Arab, on condition that he is neutral and works for the public interest and that he serves education without bias towards any nationality or ethnic group.

As to the remainder of the memorandum, we leave it to the Ministry of Education, because it is imposing conditions, not suggesting reforms.

I hope the relevant authorities are aware of the dangers posed by the telegraphed memorandum in the name of reform. We do not deny our Kurdish brothers their right to make demands so long as they are in the public interest, which is the guiding principle of all those faithful to this country.

Signed,

Lt. General Nazim Al-Tabaqchali
Commander of the Second Division

Document B:

The Second Division Command
Intelligence
No. H/ SH/ 3/17
Date: 6/1/1959

Personal and Confidential

To: His Excellency the Military Governor General

Subject: The Teachers Union in Kirkuk raises the issue of making Kirkuk the centre for the Kurdistan Education Directorate.

I held a meeting with members of the Teachers Union Committee in Kirkuk (**all of whom were Turkmans who won in the Teachers Union elections within the "Nationalist List" which comprised the Arab nationalists, Ba'thists and Turkmans: the Author**). They reported that the Kurdish students in the city schools have begun to organise a petition to send to the Ministry of Education calling for the establishment of the Kurdistan Education Directorate, with headquarters in Kirkuk. After questioning, some of those students (they belong to the Musalla secondary school) reported that the request originated from persons in Baghdad (whose names they did not disclose) and that they were carrying out their wishes.

The members of the Teachers Union in Kirkuk made it clear that this request worries them for several reasons, the most important of which is that the Kirkuk governorate has a Turkman majority with Arab, Christian, Assyrian and Armenian minorities. The establishment of, or the attempt to establish, the Kurdistan Education Directorate in the centre of the Kirkuk governorate, will create uneasiness as well as increasing concern among the various nationalities here toward the project. It will stir up a spirit of competitiveness and animosity among the nationalities because they will be subject to the authority of the proposed new organisation, whose purpose is to impose education in Kurdish. This will lead to measures being taken concerning the type of education that should prevail in the area. They further reported that they were doing this in the public interest, for the unity of education and for the future of the country threatened by the existence of a Directorate whose principles do not apply to a governorate with a non-Kurdish majority. The Union requested a clarification of the suggestion circulated by the Kurdish side to site the headquarters of the Kurdistan Education Directorate in Kirkuk. I promised

them that I would refer the matter to your Excellency in order to avoid the possible consequences of deciding on such a project, such as confusion and complex setbacks. I urge you to put aside the project and to appoint a neutral Arab Director to be in charge of the Kirkuk Education Directorate, in order to bring together all the nationalities of the governorate and the city, so that they may quietly attend to their cultural and political future as they do at present. Teaching in Arabic is the acceptable solution in the Kirkuk governorate.

Signed

Lt. General Nazim Al-Tabaqchali
Commander of the Second Division

cc: The Military Intelligence Directorate.

(The Memorandum referred to in the two letters from the Second Division Command was presented by the Kurdish and Arab teachers' delegations from the governorates of Arbil, Sulaymani, Mosul, and Diyala, from "The Unified Professional List" - which included democrats, left-wing Arabs and Kurds - to the first conference of the Teachers Union, which was held at the beginning of 1959 in Baghdad. This same memorandum was presented previously to officials of the Ministry of Education. It contained the demand for the inclusion of the Kirkuk governorate under the supervision of the Iraqi-Kurdistan Education Directorate in view of the fact that the majority of the governorate's population, according to the Official Census of 1957, is Kurdish. They also mentioned in the memorandum that the Turkmans, as well as others, have the right to open special schools within the governorate, as do the Kurds, contrary to the claims of the Turkman Teachers Union's memorandum to the Second Division Command. This actually happened in 1960 as many schools were opened where teaching was in Kurdish or Turkmani, in addition to Arabic: the Author).

Document C:

Second Division Command Intelligence

No. 1/5/142

Date: 1/1/1959

To: His Excellency the Army Chief of Staff

Subject: The political situation in the Second Division's area of responsibility.

1 - Regarding the declaration of the formation of the Front for the Union of Kurdistan parties: The Democratic Party of Al-Party, the Communist Party and National Union Front. **(The Second Division's political information about the then-existing political parties seems rather superficial. It names the Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP, as The Democratic Party of 'Al Party' and considers "The National Union Front" as a political party, when the latter was, in fact, a grouping of the political parties active on the Iraqi political scene at that time: the Author).**

These groups have been working actively, helped by their supporters and representatives who were sent to the districts and villages in order to restore the Iraqi-Kurdistan region within the Iraqi Republic. Certain groups in Baghdad joined in urging this Front to abide by the charter they had drawn up and in which they called for the publications of these secret parties in their periodic meetings. They plan to achieve their aim by taking advantage of Article Four of the Iraqi Republic's Provisional Constitution that specified that Arabs and Kurds are partners in this country. Their intentions are as follows:

To work actively to persuade the government to recognize their national demands within the Kurdistan region which they have mapped out within the Republic. This comprises most of the territories located east of the Tigris to the Gulf of Basra, although they agree to remain within the Iraqi entity.

To declare the Iraqi Kurdistan Region as such, according to the text of the Constitution so that this Region becomes a basis to include Kurds from Turkey and Iran within the map they have drawn up.

Both groups, extremists and moderates, believe their plan for their Republic and its future will come to fruition sooner or later in the following way:

The official recognition by the Iraqi Republic of the said Region to be within the Iraqi entity as a first step.

The establishment of the Kurdistan Education Directorate, with headquarters in the city of Kirkuk, provided that education in this area be purely Kurdish and that a University be founded in Kurdistan to promote Kurdish culture.

The recognition of the Kurdistan Student Union while co-operating with the General Student Union of the Iraqi Republic.

The formation of the Kurdistan Teachers Union although an elected Teachers Union already exists in each governorate; and in the same manner a Lawyers Union and a Doctors Union of Kurdistan.

To work towards the industrialization of Kurdistan and the raising of cultural and social standards within the Region.

The formation of Kurdistan Trade Unions in all their variety, so long as they cooperate with the Trade Unions of the Iraqi Republic, and so long as they leave the issues of defence, finance and foreign representation to the jurisdiction of the Republic's Government in Baghdad.

These are the basic principles and plans adopted by the Kurdish Intelligentsia, and they are propagating them everywhere. The Kurdish officers are assisting by supporting it. 'The United Front for the Kurdistan Parties' is in agreement concerning the renaissance of Kurdistan, although they might differ as to the methods. Therefore, all these groups in the Region are working according to directions from Baghdad, where the representatives of this Front and the officers rally around their favourite personality of the moment that is Mulla Mustafa Barzani, together with the Kurdistan intellectuals close to him. Instructions are issued, overtly and covertly, for the implementation of their political plans. (1)

(Nos 3 and 4 are omitted as they do not relate to Kirkuk).

Signed,

Lt. General Nazim Al-Tabaqchali
Commander of the Second Division

Enclosure: One List
cc: The Military Intelligence Directorate.

(This 'Front' was never in existence. There was a Committee for National Co-operation between the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Communist Party during the period prior to the July 1958 revolution. It continued for a short period afterwards due to the refusal of the two Arab nationalist parties - Istiqlal and Ba'ath - to allow the entry of the KDP as a member of the National United Front which included all the Iraqi parties opposed to the monarchy: the Author).

APPENDIX -III-

Concerning the Kirkuk events of July 1959:

I. THE MARCH:

As the first anniversary of the 1959 revolution approached, an executive committee was formed in the Kirkuk governorate (as in other governorates) to organise the celebrations. It was composed of representatives from the military command and all official and popular establishments, headed by the Deputy Governor. A decision was taken to organise a public procession through the principal streets of the city (Hanna Batatu, Ibid. p.915), on the afternoon of July 14, 1959, in which everyone would participate. On the appointed afternoon, the march proceeded along the route specified by the organising committee. Most of the participants were Kurds, including Communists and supporters of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). Most of them were members of the professional organisations and trade unions. As the head of the march reached the entrance to Atlas (Al-Jumhuriyah) Street, the location of shops and cafes belonging to the Turkmans, the tail end was just leaving its starting point that was at a considerable distance from Atlas Street.

II. EXTREMISTS' PROVOCATION:

According to an official report from the Police Directorate of the governorate (Hanna Batatu, Ibid.), a large number of Turkmans in military vehicles confronted the head of the march at the beginning of Atlas Street. Police intervened and prevented a serious incident by separating the two sides, and the march continued along its agreed route. Dr. Hanna Batatu questions the significance of the presence of Turkmans in military vehicles in some of the city streets on that particular day (Hanna Batatu, Ibid. p 95). When the march reached the July 14th cafe - a gathering place for extremist Turkman youths located almost at the end of Atlas Street - several shots were suddenly fired from the direction of the cafe at the marchers as they passed, causing panic and confusion among them. A fight quickly broke out between the marchers and a group of Turkmans standing in front of the cafe. Sticks and stones were used; then there was firing by some of the soldiers and members of the "Muqawama Al Shabiyah" (Popular Resistance) who had accompanied the march from the outset.

III. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE VIOLENCE:

The official report from the governorate's Police Directorate put the number of Turkmans killed at 20 and the injured at 130. An estimated 70 shops and commercial establishments were looted (Hanna Batatu, Ibid. p. 915.).

In contrast, another report (No.6694, dated July 20, 1959) from the Kirkuk Amn (Security) Directorate to the Security Directorate General, estimated the casualties as 32 killed and 130 injured, even though the 12 extra bodies were not found (see Hanna Batatu, p.919 Ibid.). Some Arab and Turkish media put the number killed in the hundreds and the injured in the thousands.

It appears that undisciplined and provocateur elements contributed to the spread of the agitation, especially after rumours circulated in the Kurdish sections of the city that the Turkmans had opened fire on the marchers and had killed a number of them. This news quickly spread and some people raided the Imam Qasim police station, located in the Kurdish section, and captured the weapons inside (see Hanna Batatu, p. 917 Ibid.). It is worth noting that many of those committing murder, dragging corpses into the streets and looting, were connected to the Ba'athist organised Party which served, and is still serving, the Iraqi government.

IV. OFFICIAL COMPLICITY:

It must be stressed, in this connection, that the high-ranking officials of the Intelligence and Security machinery, the Second Division's Command and the Governor, played differing roles during the events, each according to their own political views. While the Director of Police, an Arab who had no specific political leanings, was concerned for peoples' lives and properties and did his utmost to control the widespread chaos in the city, the Security Service Director, who was an Arab nationalist, deliberately fanned the flames of the agitation. The Kurdish officers played a prominent role in controlling the worsening security conditions and in preventing lawbreaking and disobedience. They also prevented Kurdish farmers from the villages near Kirkuk from entering the city in the early morning of July 15, 1959 - thereby preventing yet more extremely serious law breaking.

If those responsible for professional and popular organisations in the city can be accused of not controlling their members and of failing to prevent attacks on lives and property, then the Turkman leaders should be held

responsible for encouraging groups of the more extreme elements of their youth to parade through the streets of the city, carrying provocative banners, on the night of July 13 and in the morning of July 14. Probably the Turkman leaders had not anticipated such a violent reaction from the Kurdish side or they might have behaved differently. It seems that, as a result of expressions of approval and support which they had constantly heard from the officials of the governorate and the Command of the Second Division of the army during meetings in the days prior to the sad events, they were confident that the authorities would side with them should any dispute arise. It was noticeable that during the military ceremonies led by the Acting Commander of the Second Division on the morning of July 14, 1959, several Turkman and Kurdish notables who had recently been released from prison, stood side by side with him and other officials and guests on the reviewing platform. Moreover, the Acting Divisional Commander, the Acting Governor and the heads of Security Departments were Arab nationalists known for their antagonism towards the Communist Party and the Kurdistan Democratic Party and their control of the city streets.

V. THE ROLE OF THE BA'ATHISTS:

Apparently, the Turkman leaders who had been arrested in Baghdad had been in contact with certain nationalist elements, such as Ba'athists and others, and they had plotted together to overthrow Qasim's regime. Also, the regime's habitual policy of divide and rule became very clear. First it gave the supporters of the Communist Party the opportunity to dominate all organisations, including the "Popular Resistance" para-military organisation. Then suddenly it began to squeeze them, and opened the door to the Turkmans, encouraging their return to the scene during the era of Nazim Al Tabaqchali. Opposing this trend was the prevailing wave of extremism within the ranks of the Communist Party that created the atmosphere of enmity and led to the brutal and tragic events.

VI. THE IPC SUPPORTED THE AGITATION:

All these factors contributed to the events of July 1959. It is difficult to pinpoint the main factor in the process because they were all inter-connected and complemented each other, from the extremism of the two sides, to the incitement by the government and the Arab nationalist and Ba'athist groups in alliance with the Turkmans, to the external factor of Keokuk's being the administrative centre of the British Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) whose

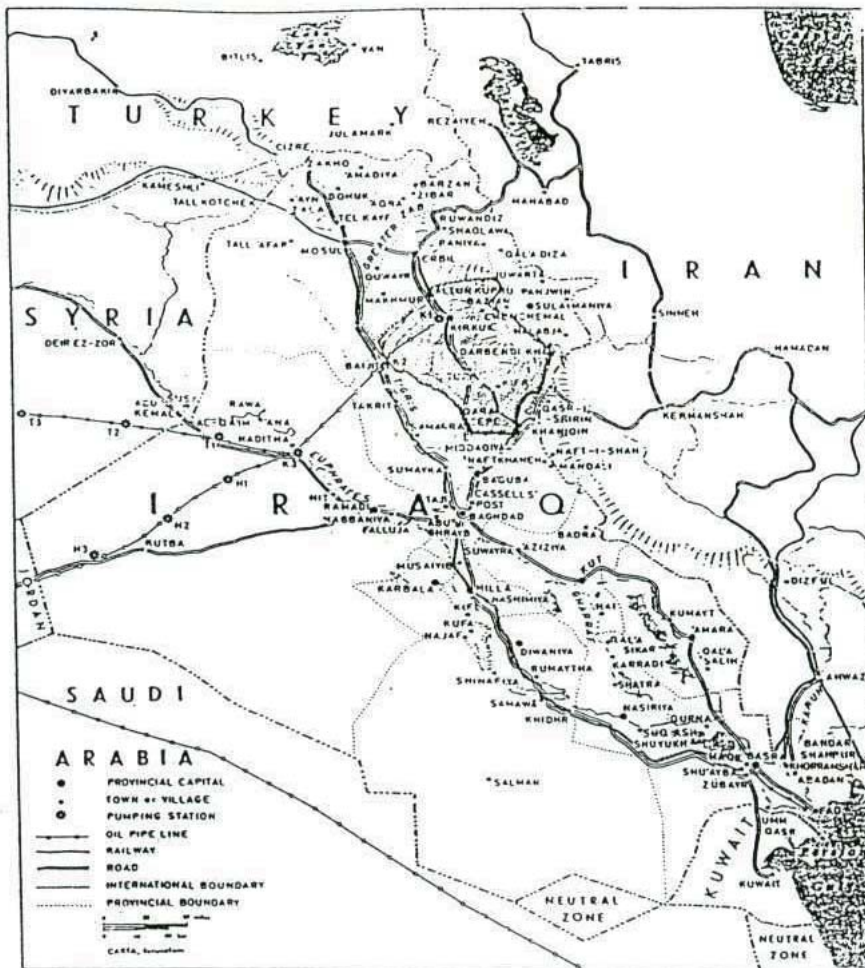
Public Relations Department was involved. The close connection of some Turkman dignitaries, such as the lawyer Siddiq Naqqash, the retired Colonel Younis Omar, the merchant Mohammed Salihi, and others in the IPO's Public Relations Department was later disclosed, in 1962, by Salah Terzi, a Turkman activist who later admitted responsibility for the killing of many Kurds in 1960 and 1961.

The tragic events caused division between Kurds and Turkmans in the city of Kirkuk whose repercussions are still felt. It is truly regrettable that the officials of the Second Division and the Security Service played an obvious role in the agitation that widened the rift between the various factions. This was clearly revealed after the overthrow of the government of General Qasim, since most of them were connected with the leaders of the 1963 coup d'etat and played an active part in it, assuming prominent positions following its success.

Appendix IV - (A):

The administrative map of Iraq before it was altered by the Regime.

Iraq Under Qassem, A Political History, 1958-1963, by Uriel Dann, 1969.

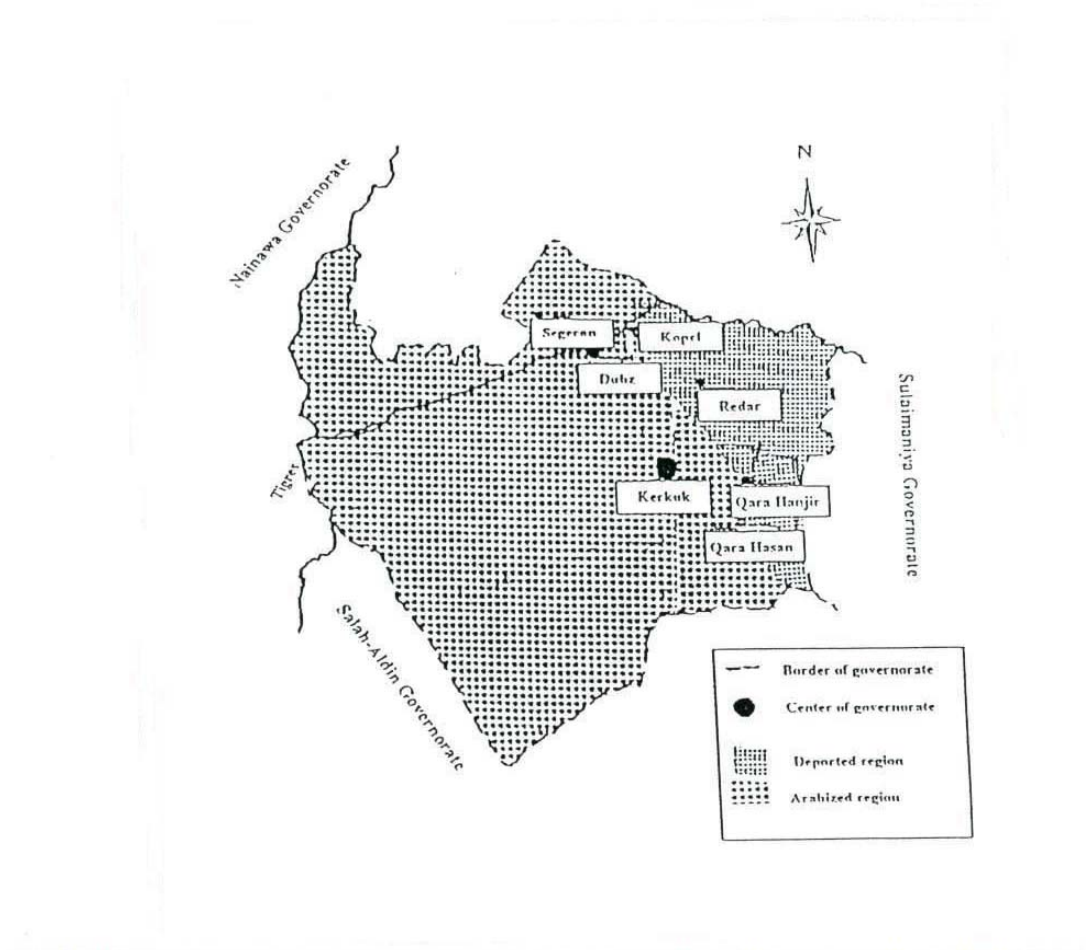


APPENDIX -IV- (B):

The administrative boundaries of the Kirkuk governorate after the Iraqi government detached four districts from it in 1976.

Appendix No. 4 (B)

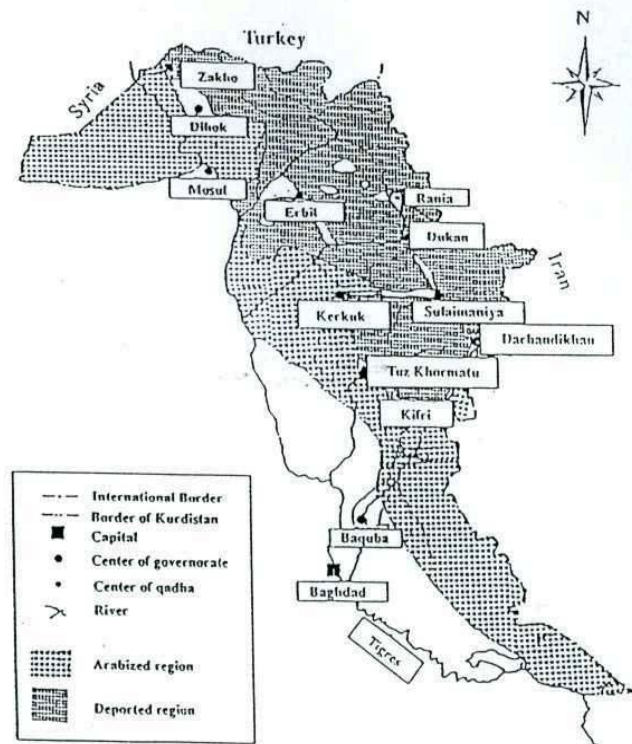
The administrative boundaries of the *Kirkuk* Governorate after the Iraqi regime detached four districts from it in 1976. Source: Statistics of Atrocities in Iraqi Kurdistan.



Source: Statistics of Atrocities in Iraqi Kurdistan.

APPENDIX -IV- (C):

The Arabized and destroyed areas of Iraqi Kurdistan, including the Kirkuk governorate.



The deported and Arabized regions in Iraqi Kurdistan

APPENDIX - VII - (A)

Kurdish Organisation for Human Rights - UK

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. KOFI ANNAN, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

THE MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL, NEW YORK

ALL ORGANISATIONS AND PERSONALITIES CONCERNED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS

The Iraqi government continues its campaign of expelling Kurdish families from the Kurdish cities of Kirkuk, Khanaqin, Jalawla and Tuz-Khurmatu, which are all under the control of the government. We have detailed lists of 1468 Kurdish families expelled from their homes in Kirkuk. Since November 1997, hundred of these families have been forcibly moved to the Kurdish controlled regions. The International Aid Organisations have been assisting them there.

The process of expulsion is implemented by arresting the head of the family, so as to prevent family members from escaping. The Iraqi Intelligence Service then confiscates all of their assets, including property and all forms of identification.

In addition, the Iraqi government practices a policy of discrimination against those who live in Kirkuk by cutting water supplies and a range of services including waste collection and road cleaning. This results in increased disease. Even inside the hospitals, a policy is followed which is biased against the Kurds. A Kurd is the last patient to receive treatment, even if he is seriously ill.

Furthermore, the government settles Arab families, brought from central and southern Iraq, in the homes of expelled Kurdish families. This policy of ethnic cleansing began in earnest in 1963, when the Ba'athist government expelled the Kurds from 33 villages around Kirkuk, and thousands more from the city itself. When the Ba'athists regained power by another coup d'etat in 1968, they rigorously renewed this policy. This resulted in the destruction of 732 villages during the following twenty years. All the Kurds

employed in the Civil Service and public sector jobs were sent to the south of Iraq and their positions were given to Arabs.

We appeal to the Members of the Security Council and all Organisations and personalities concerned with human rights to condemn this policy that violates the most basic human rights and is in contradiction of Security Council Resolution No 688 of 1991. We also request that all the expelled Kurdish families from Kirkuk city and other Kurdish areas be returned to their homes under the safety of UN control.

25 March 1998.

APPENDIX - VII - (B)

KIRKUK TRUST FOR RESEARCH AND STUDY (KTRS)

Patrons: Lord Avebury, Vice-Chairman, Parliamentary Human Rights Group,
Professor Kevin Boyle, University of Essex, Director, Human Rights Centre.

Ethnic Cleansing in Iraqi-Kurdistan

The issue of the Kirkuk region in Iraqi Kurdistan, which is rich in oil fields and farmland, has been one of the principal obstacles to finding a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question in Iraq. The discovery of vast quantities of oil there after the First World War provided the impetus for the annexation of the former Ottoman Wilayet of Mosul (of which the Kirkuk region is a part) to the Iraqi kingdom established by the British in 1921. Successive Iraqi governments, especially after the coup d'état of July 1968, led by the Ba'ath Party, have openly followed a policy designed to change the ethnic character of this region. Among the measures taken were the expulsion of Kurdish civil servants, teachers, and employees of the oil company to the south of Iraq, and their replacement by Arabs. Kurds were forbidden to sell their homes and properties except to Arabs and were prevented from buying homes and properties under any circumstances. The city administration refused to grant the Kurds any "building permit" or "permit to renovate", even if their homes were badly in need of renovation, in order to force them to sell their homes or to abandon them and then move out of the city. A major step in the process of the Arabization of the region was the settling of tens of thousands of Arab families, in successive waves, with guaranteed housing and jobs. At the same time, several complete residential sectors, with Arab names, were built in the city of Kirkuk for those new settlers. The name of the Kirkuk Governorate itself was changed to the Arabic "Al-Ta'mim" (which means "nationalization") and all sectors, streets, schools and businesses were renamed in Arabic; teaching in Kurdish was forbidden. In order to make the Kurds a minority there, four of the seven districts of the Kirkuk Governorate were detached from it and attached to the neighbouring Governorates. From 1968 to 1989, seven hundred and seventy nine Kurdish villages and several Turkman villages in the Governorate of Kirkuk were destroyed and others were requisitioned for the Arab tribal settlers. Their Kurdish inhabitants were forced to leave. In total, 37,726 families were sent to concentration camps controlled by the Security services. These villages had contained 493 schools, 598 mosques and 40 small clinics, all of which were destroyed. The "Anfal" operation, which began in 1988, was carried on mainly in this region. On a

tape found among 17 tons of Iraqi Secret Police files captured by the Kurds during the uprising of March 1991, Ali Hassan Al Majid, cousin of Saddam Hussein and the powerful Secretary General of the Ba'ath Party's Northern Bureau from 1988 to 1989, is heard to say, "As soon as we complete the deportations, we will start attacking them everywhere according to a systematic military plan. I will not attack them with chemicals for just one day, but I will continue to attack them with chemicals for 15 days." These files reveal the details of the Iraqi regime's campaigns against the Kurds and the full extent of the atrocities committed against them up to the time of the uprising. They are now lodged at the University of Colorado for safekeeping.

During the uprising of March 1991, Ali Hassan Al Majid, the then Iraqi Minister of Defence, was directly responsible for the arrest of more than thirty thousand Kurds in the city of Kirkuk. They were kept without food and water for several days and many among them, particularly the elderly, died as a result. He also ordered the destruction of more than two hundred homes in the city. Most of the Kurds who left the city as a result of the bombardment by helicopter gunships and artillery were later forbidden to return and repossess their homes.

Following the collapse of the uprising, the Kirkuk region, together with other parts of Kurdistan, remained under the control of the Iraqi regime and increasing pressure was exerted to force the Kurds to leave. Among the measures taken was the confiscation of the homes of Kurdish families who had relatives living either outside Iraq or in the area controlled by the Kurds. Before the census of 1997, the Secret Service informed all the Kurds that they would be expelled from the area unless they registered themselves as Arabs. They distributed a special form called "Changing National Identity" to them with instructions to complete and sign it and to state that they had previously been incorrectly registered as Kurds. The names of all who refused to do so, and even some of those who complied with the instructions, were listed, and they were ordered to leave the region. The heads of the expelled families were given the choice of either being deported to the south of Iraq, in which case they would be permitted to take their belongings with them, or to the areas controlled by the Kurds, in which case all their property, including their identity papers, would be confiscated. According to a report by a group from the Iraqi opposition, published in December 1999, the number of Kurds expelled from May 1991 until October 1999 to the Sulaymani Governorate, was 15,615 families that is 92,712 people, and 913 families, some 5,811 people, to the Arbil Governorate, both controlled by the Kurds. Probably the same number was expelled to the south of Iraq. The same report gives the

names of the residential sectors constructed for the Arabs to be settled in Kirkuk.

A Report prepared by the US Department of State in September 1999 states: "In northern Iraq, the government is continuing its campaign of forcibly deporting Kurdish and Turkomen families to southern governorates. As a result of these forced deportations, approximately 900,000 citizens are internally displaced throughout Iraq. Local officials in the south have ordered the arrest of any official or citizen who provides employment, food or shelter to newly arriving Kurds".

The Amnesty International Report on Iraq of November 1999 mentions a decree issued by the office of the President of Iraq that ordered "the deportation of 1,468 families between 15 April and 15 June 1998". It gives details of the procedure to be followed by the security forces, and states:

- “1. One member of each Kurdish family expelled to the northern governorates should be detained;
2. Confiscation of property belonging to the expelled;
3. Confiscation of Ration Cards;
4. Confiscation of membership cards to government agencies;
5. Notification of the decree to: the head of security of each district; the Ba'ath party official of each district; the chief of each village”.

The Report adds, "Their empty properties in Kirkuk and Khanaqin are given by the authorities to pro-government Arabs brought from other regions in Iraq. Thus far thousands of Arabs from other regions in Iraq have been resettled in the Kirkuk governorate." The US State Department's Report cites details and gives illustrations of the almost total destruction of the old citadel of the city of Kirkuk which contained many very valuable, historic mosques and an ancient church.

All these measures taken by the Iraqi government against the population of this region are in direct contravention of Security Council Resolution No. 688 of 1991 that condemns the Iraqi government's repression of the civilian population that threatens international peace and security. The same resolution demands that Iraq should end repression and allow access by international humanitarian organisations to all those in need of assistance in all parts of Iraq.

To this day, the Iraqi government has failed to comply. It has neither ended the repression of its civilian population nor allowed outside organisations access to help those in need. It continues, daily, to deport Kurds and Turkmans from the Kirkuk region and to settle Arab tribes in their homes and on their land. This is, clearly, systematic ethnic cleansing of the area, similar to that seen in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor where the international community intervened to bring it to an end. It is this policy, above all else, which has led thousands of displaced people to seek asylum in Europe.

Recently the Kirkuk Trust for Research and Study was founded by a group of academics and others concerned with human rights. It aims to conduct research into the social conditions and the resulting psychological state of those expelled from the Kirkuk region. It also intends to collect more information concerning the number of the displaced persons now living in camps and will endeavour to assist them to return to their homes and former way of life. For this reason we earnestly request you to appeal to your government to urge the Security Council to intervene to stop the deportation of the population of the Kirkuk region and other areas of Kurdistan still under the control of the Iraqi regime, and to allow those already deported to return to their homes and land under the supervision of the UN. This will accord with Resolution No.688 of the Security Council.

14 February 2000.

APPENDIX - VII - (C)

Re: The Arabization of the Kurdish regions remaining under the control of the Iraqi regime and the violation of the human rights of their inhabitants.

His Excellency Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations
Her Excellency Mary Robinson, High Commissioner for Human Rights
His Excellency, the President of the Security Council
Members of the Security Council
His Excellency, the President of the United Nations General Assembly

We present the following concerns of the Kurdish people for your consideration and respectfully request prompt action by you in accordance with Security Council Resolution 688 of 1991.

The issue is one of violation of the human, political and civic rights of the Kurds who inhabit the part of Iraqi Kurdistan still under the control of the Iraqi regime, especially Kirkuk city and its environs. On the surface, the actions of the Iraqi government may appear to be a matter of the “internal affairs of Iraq”, but it is nothing less than the ethnic cleansing of the Kurds.

In 1997, the Saddam regime fraudulently doctored the Census figures to portray Kirkuk as an Arab city. To date, the implementation of the Arabization programme of the region continues in accordance with decisions made by the Government of Iraq which were reaffirmed in September by Izzat Ibrahim, the Vice-President of Iraq who, speaking in Kirkuk, openly stated, “We will not allow any non-Arab to remain in Kirkuk”.

Since 1992, the Iraqi regime has forcefully uprooted and deported more than 108,000 Kurds from their ancestral homes in Kirkuk and the surrounding area and replaced them with Arabs who serve the Saddam regime. They have been forced to go to the “Safe Haven” and even their personal belongings and identity cards have been confiscated. Probably the same number has been scattered in the flatlands of the south - a totally alien environment for them - and forced to change their identity. The vacated Kurdish villages around Kirkuk are being bulldozed and Kurdish cemeteries desecrated in an attempt to erase all evidence of the Kurdishness of that region.

Similar situations in the former Yugoslavia and East Timor have led to

positive steps being taken to remedy the situation. The status of Kurdistan falls within the UN legal definitions of “human rights violations”, “genocide” and “ethnic cleansing”. Therefore it is our right to request that the UN exercise its authority to stop and reverse the illegal actions of the Iraqi Government in compliance with Security Council Resolution 688 of 1991.

The continuing policy of ethnic cleansing by the Iraqi regime which intensified at the end of the Gulf War following the brutal suppression of the Kurdish uprising, led to the creation of the “Safe Haven” and later the “No- Fly Zone”. Commendable as this was, the truth is that it has failed to provide the Kurdish population with security. The proximity of Iraqi troops is a constant menace, with their continually reiterated threats to return. As recently as early November the Iraqi army occupied a further three Kurdish villages just south of Arbil, the capital of the Region. The regime’s stated view is that the prevailing situation is abnormal and that it will one day return to “normalize” it. In their eyes, “normalizing” would mean a return to total control and a repetition of such atrocities as were seen during the Anfal operations in 1988, when about 180,000 Kurdish civilians were killed, their villages destroyed and chemical weapons used. At the same time, the Iraqi Secret Service is very active in the Kurdish controlled Region and is responsible for many acts of terrorism, such as the placing of bombs in crowded civilian areas. Just how unsafe this so-called Safe Haven is became evident on 31 August 1996 when the Iraqi army occupied the capital of the Region. Many Kurds and members of the Iraqi opposition were cold-bloodedly slaughtered, but no effort was made to intervene to stop the atrocities committed by the Iraqi army. Recent moves by various countries to re-establish links with the Saddam regime demonstrate that the future of the Safe Haven itself is now called into question.

The “No-Fly Zone”, established in 1991 above the 36th parallel, was intended to protect the Kurdish population. Unfortunately, the area delineated by this parallel took no account of the geographical homeland of the Kurds.

The Safe Haven has also become the arena for the power struggles between Iraq, Iran and Turkey. Between 1992 and 1995, 101 Iranian Kurdish refugees in that area were killed by the Iranian Secret Service and, at the end of 1995, an Iranian army unit penetrated, unchallenged, more than 80 kilometres into the Region in pursuit of Iranian political refugees in their camps there.

The Turkish government, for its part, openly intervenes in the affairs of the Region and states, categorically, that they approve the regaining of it by the Iraqi army. On several occasions Turkey has poured as many as ten thousand

troops, including tank regiments, into the Region and their air force has been in action also. This has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of civilians and the destruction of scores of Kurdish villages. On 15th August 2000, at least 41 civilians, mostly shepherds and their families were killed in the bombardment by Turkish aircraft, and on 17 December, a Turkish army unit penetrated about 300 kilometres into the No-Fly Zone near to the Iranian border, without any condemnation.

The human rights of the people living within the Safe Haven have also been violated. Individuals have disappeared without explanation while many more have been arrested and their homes and possessions confiscated after they were denounced without any evidence. The population endures a state of neither war nor peace and faces the constant threat of invasion and re-occupation by the Iraqi army. Desperate young people, expelled from their homes in Iraqi controlled areas of Kurdistan, deprived of the opportunity for a decent education, unemployed and with no prospects of safety, do increasingly try to make their way to the West, often losing their lives on the way.

Confronted by this mounting evidence of the Iraqi regime's racist policies towards the Kurds, Turkmans and Assyrians of Iraqi Kurdistan, the international community must intervene to enable those expelled people to return to their homes and to ensure their security. The situation could be resolved by putting the present No-Fly Zone under UN protection and extending it to include all other parts of Kurdistan that are still controlled by the Iraqi regime. Failure to do so will allow the situation to deteriorate further in this important part of the Middle East and will ensure that any future attempts to resolve it will be more difficult. The proliferation of Arab settlements in the Kurdish Region could create the kind of volatile situation that is seen in other unstable parts of the world.

In the light of all the foregoing, we ask the international community to:

1. Urgently send a Fact Finding Mission to Iraqi Kurdistan. Its main objective must be to gather first hand evidence of the appalling condition of the tens of thousands of Kurdish families expelled from Kirkuk and other parts of Kurdistan still under the control of the regime. Resolution 688 gives the international community this right.

2. Put all Iraqi Kurdistan, including the regions under the control of the regime, under the protection of the UN, as happened in Kosovo and East Timor. This would provide the only guarantee of protection for the civilian

population there and only then would there be a secure environment in which the people of Iraqi Kurdistan can determine their own future. This would contribute to the establishing of peace and security in the otherwise turbulent Middle East.

Respectfully submitted

29th December 2000

1. Kirkuk Trust for Research and Study (KTRS), London, (UK).
2. Madame Mitterrand, President, France Libertes, Paris, (France).
3. Lord Avebury, Vice-President, Parliamentary Human Rights Group, House of Lords, London (UK).
4. Lord Rea, Vice-President, Parliamentary Human Rights Group, House of Lords, London, (UK).
5. Lord Dholakia, House of Lords, London, (UK).
6. Bruce Kent, Vice-President, Pax Christian, Chair of the Committee for Culture and Peace, (UK).
7. Dr. E. Murphy, Dr. Rashidian, Professor A. Ehteshami, Dr. Husni, Dr. I. Ghasari, Centre for Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies, Durham University, (UK).
8. Gareth Pierce, Lawyer, (UK).
9. Kurdish Cultural Centre, London, (UK).
10. The Defence Group of Kirkuk City, Copenhagen, (Denmark).
11. Awadani, Kurdistanhilfe, Information, Beratung, und Dokumentation, Berlin, (Germany).
12. Kirkuk Identity Protection Centre, Beneluxe, (Holland).
13. Kurdistan - Frizland Foundation, (Holland).
14. Kurdish House in Arnhem, (Holland).
15. The Kurdish Journal "Referendum", London, (UK).
16. Kurdish Cultural Centre - Den Haag, (Holland).
17. Kurdish Cultural Society Midiya - Rotterdam, (Holland).
18. Kurdish Society in Enschede, (Holland).
19. Iraqi Kurdistan Communist Party (IKCP), (Kurdistan).
20. Yezidis' Centre Abroad, Hanover, (Germany).
21. Kurdistan Independent Labour Party (KILP), (Kurdistan).
22. Kurdistan Toilers' Party (KTP), (Kurdistan).
23. Kurdistan Studies Journal, Cultural Centre for Kurdistan Studies, Uppsala (Sweden).

- 24.Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), (Kurdistan).
- 25.Kurdistan Democrats' Movement (KDM), (Kurdistan).
- 26.Kurdistan Social Democratic Party (KSDP), (Kurdistan).
- 27.Kurdistan Conservative Party (KCP), (Kurdistan).
- 28.High Committee for Iraqi Displaced People, Sulaimani, (Kurdistan).
- 29.Iraqi Turkman Union Party (ITUP), (Kurdistan).
- 30.Deportation and Arabization Challenge Centre, (Kurdistan).
- 31.Provincial Assembly of the Sulaimani Governorate, (Kurdistan).
- 32.Professor Carole A. O'Leary, American University, Center for Global Peace, Washington, (USA).
- 33.Hiwai Kurdistan Association, Stockholm, (Sweden).
- 34.Kurdistan Human Rights Organization, (Kurdistan).
- 35.Human Rights Bureau, (Kurdistan).
- 36.Committee for Homeless Faileys in Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 37.Kurdistan Children's' Refuge, (Kurdistan).
- 38.Women's Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 39.Iraqi Kurdistan Women's League, (Kurdistan).
- 40.United Women of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 41.The Chamber of Commerce, Sulaimani city, (Kurdistan).
- 42.Faileys' Cultural Centre, (Kurdistan).
- 43.Engineering Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 44.Medical Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 45.Union of Jurists in Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 46.Shahid Rebaz Education Centre, (Kurdistan).
- 47.Kirkuk Social and Cultural Association, (Kurdistan).
- 48.Hiwa Cultural Centre, (Kurdistan).
- 49.Garmaser Centre, (Kurdistan).
- 50.The Union of Islamic Clergy, (Kurdistan).
- 51.Baba-Gurgur Cultural and Social Association, (Kurdistan).
- 52.Teachers' Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 53.Students' Association of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 54.Kurdistan Workers' Union, (Kurdistan).
- 55.Farmers Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 56.Kurdistan Union of United Artists, (Kurdistan).
- 57.Geology Society of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 58.Deaf and Mute Association of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 59.The Association for the Support of Victims of Anfal, (Kurdistan).
- 60.Vanguard Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
- 61.The Free Journalists Group, (Kurdistan).
- 62.Kurdistan Folklore Society, (Kurdistan).
- 63.Civil Service Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).

64. Kurdistan Retirement Association, (Kurdistan).
65. Children's' Arts Society, (Kurdistan).
66. Children's' Rights Association, (Kurdistan).
67. Photographers' Union, (Kurdistan).
68. Youth Freedom Organization. (Kurdistan).
69. Kurdistan Sociology Association, (Kurdistan).
70. Association of the Handicapped, (Kurdistan).
71. Kurdistan Green Society, (Kurdistan).
72. Blood Donors' Society, (Kurdistan).
73. Kurdistan Tolassemia Society, (Kurdistan).
74. Rozh Society for the Aid of Handicapped People, (Kurdistan).
75. Accountants and Economists Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
76. Kurdistan Health Staff Union, (Kurdistan).
77. Kurdistan Society of Chemists and Physicists, (Kurdistan).
78. Agricultural Engineers' Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
79. Engineering Technicians' Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
80. Union for the Blind, Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
81. Civilian Culture Training Centre in Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
82. Kurdistan Agricultural Technicians' Union, (Kurdistan)
83. Biologists' Union of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
84. Kurdish Organisation for Human Rights in Britain, London, (UK).
85. Identity Defence Centre for Kirkuk and other Deported Regions in Kurdistan, Hanover, (Germany).
86. Kurdistan Children Friend Society, Hanover, (Germany).
87. Establishment to Help Mine Victims in Kurdistan, Hanover, (Germany).
88. Kurdish Committee in Hanover, (Germany).
89. Hiwa Radio (The Kurdish Programme of RADIO-FLORA), Hanover, (Germany).
90. Kurdish Culture Centre (Kurdische Bibliothek), Hanover, (Germany).
91. Kurdish Aid Wales, Cardiff, (UK).
92. Tampereen Kurdikulttuuri Yhdistys, Tampere, (Finland).
93. Ahmed Foundation for Kurdish Studies, Washington, (USA).
94. Mamosta-y Kurd, a Cultural Kurdish Journal, Sollentuna, (Sweden).
95. Peoples' Democratic Movement of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
96. Popular Movement of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
97. Workers' Organisation of Kurdistan, (Kurdistan).
98. Kurdistan Democratic Association of Youth and Students, (Kurdistan).
99. Hazhir Teimourian, Writer and broadcaster, London, (UK).
100. Verein zum Schutz Menschenrechte der Kurden, Nurnberg, (Germany).
101. Kurdish Cultural Centre, Nurnberg, (Germany).

Ethnic Cleansing by the Iraqi regime In the Kirkuk Region

Nouri Talabany
Professor of Law

The Treaty of Kasr Shireen - Zehab, signed in 1639 between the representatives of the Ottoman and Safawid Empires determined the official division of Kurdistan between these two powers. From then on, those Kurdish Emirates, which were either wholly or partially independent, were obliged to seek protection from one or either of these two powers if threatened by external aggression or in the face of internal unrest caused by conflict between the ruling families. The Sultans and the Shahs and their representatives actively encouraged such conflicts with the express intention of weakening the Kurdish Emirates. Consequently, the power of these emirates was systematically undermined and, by the mid - nineteenth century, they had ceased to exist. The last Kurdish emirates were the Ardalan (617 - 1284 Hi) whose capital was the city of Senna, and the Baban (1106 - 1267 Hi) whose capital was Sulaymani.⁸³ These two Kurdish emirates deserve special mention because the Kirkuk region, or a part of it, was once a part of either one or the other of them for various periods.

The celebrated Kurdish poet from Kirkuk, Sheikh Rezza Talabany (1835 - 1910), who wrote his verse in Kurdish, Persian, Turkish and Arabic, mentioned this in a narrative poem, written in Kurdish, in which he recalled his childhood in the Kurdish emirate of Baban before it was ruled by either the Persians or the Ottomans.⁸⁴ As a young man of twenty-five or so, our poet went to the Ottoman capital, Constantinople, and in the course of his journey, he visited

1 Mohammed Amin Zaki, "The History of Kurdish States and Emirates in the Islamic Era", translated from Kurdish to Arabic by Mohammed Ali Awni, 2nd edition, London, 1986, pp 276 - 291 and from pp 416 - 422.

2 Sheikh Rezza Talabany is one of the foremost Kurdish poets. To date, six editions of his poetry have been published: in Baghdad in 1935 and 1946, in Iran, in Sweden in 1996, in Sulaymani in 1999 and, most recently, in Arbil in 2000. Many studies have been written about his poems - one of them in English by G.D.Edmonds. On 2nd May 2001, the M.Sc. thesis of Mr. Hawkar Raouf Mohammed was presented for discussion at the College of Art at the University of Sulaymani. ("Al Itihad", a weekly Kurdish paper, No.419, of May 4, 2001).

the grave of the Kurdish Sufi, Sheikh Nouradin Brifkani. At the graveside he recited a long poem in Farsi, telling of how he had journeyed from Sharazur, of which Kirkuk was a part, to visit the “The Roman country” as the Kurds referred to Turkey at that time. In 1879, when the Ottoman Empire annexed the Wilayet of Sharazur to the Wilayet of Mosul, Sheikh Rezza expressed his sadness and disappointment in a poem, in Turkish, in which he told the people that Mosul had now become the centre of their Wilayet and Nafi’i Effendi its Wali. “Mosul has become the centre of the Wilayet and Nafi’i Effendi its Wali. Poor people. What has befallen you? In grief, cover your heads with earth”.⁸⁵

As well as Sheikh Rezza’s poetic testimony to the history of the city of Kirkuk, we have the words of the Ottoman explorer Shamsadin Sami, author of the celebrated Encyclopaedia “Qamusl Al A’ala’m”, who wrote of Kirkuk: “It is located within the Wilayet of Mosul which is a part of Kurdistan. It is at a distance of 25 pharsings (100 miles) south east of the city of Mosul. It is situated amidst a range of parallel hills next to an extended valley called the Vale of Adham. It is the administrative centre for the Sharazur Wilayet and has a population of 30,000”.⁸⁶ As regards the ethnic composition of the city, Shamsadin Sami asserts that “three quarters of the inhabitants are Kurds and the rest are Turkmans, Arabs and others. Seven hundred and sixty Jews and four hundred and sixty Chaldeans also reside in the city”.⁸⁷

Under Ottoman rule, Turkman families were encouraged to settle in the city and were given preferential treatment by the Ottoman rulers. The post of “mutassallim”, or governor, and many other prestigious positions and titles were accorded them,⁸⁸ and the majority of Kirkuk’s civil servants came from among the Turkman community with the result that the Ottoman rulers enjoyed continued support. The Encyclopaedia of Islam states: “Whatever the circumstances of their coming to the region, the Turkmans of Kirkuk always provided strong support for the Ottoman empire and its culture and an abundant source of Ottoman officials.”⁸⁹ But despite all this, the city of Kirkuk retained its distinctive Kurdish character.

³ Ata Terzibashi, “The Kirkuk Poets” vol.2, in Turkish, printed by Al - Jamhuriyah Press, Kirkuk 1968, and p.144.

⁸⁶ Shamsadin Sami, “Qamus Al - A’alam” Istanbul, Mihran Press, 1315 Hi/1896.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Abdul-Majid Fahmi Hassan, “A Guide to the History of Iraqi Liwas - Kirkuk Liwa”, vol.2, Dijla Press, Baghdad, 1947, pp 284 and 301.

⁸⁹ Enc. Islam, s.v. “Kirkuk”.

The Wilayet of Mosul remained a part of the Ottoman Empire until the end of the 1st World War when it was occupied by British troops under the command of General Marshall on 17th May 1918. He withdrew his troops on 27th May, only to re-occupy it at the end of October that same year, after the signing of the Modrus Agreement between Britain and the Ottomans. Secret British documents revealed that the Foreign Office had warned General Marshall not to advance on the Wilayet of Mosul.⁹⁰ With the exception of the Sulaymani region, the greater part of the Mosul Wilayet was occupied by the British army and governed by British political officers. The decision to remain in the Wilayet was taken by the British when they discovered oil in the region of Kirkuk, which is an important part of the Wilayet of Mosul. Under the terms of the secret Sykes Picot Agreement, signed in 1916 between France and Britain, this Wilayet was given to France. According to the later San Remo Agreement between France and Britain, France gave it to Britain in return for a share in the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC), which was established by the Ottomans and the Germans to exploit the oil in the two Wilayets of Baghdad and Mosul.⁹¹ This discovery eventually led to the annexation of the Wilayet of Mosul to the newly created Iraqi state after a decision taken by the League of Nations in 1925. To encourage support for this annexation, King Faisal I visited most of the Wilayet, including Kirkuk, in December 1924, and urged the people to demand to join to new Iraqi state created in 1921.⁹²

Most Iraqi researchers are agreed that the Wilayet of Mosul became a part of Iraq with the help of the British. It was in their economic and strategic interest to annexe it so as to be able to send oil from Kirkuk through Iraqi territory to the Mediterranean ports and from there to Europe. Because of the bad relations between Britain and Turkey caused by Turkey's claim that the Wilayet of Mosul was part of its territory, it was difficult at that time to send it through Turkish territory.⁹³ The annexation of the Wilayet was sanctioned by

⁹⁰ Brian Cooper Bush. "Britain, India and Arabs" p.40, and Marian Kent, "Oil and Empire" p.120. Nouri Talabany, "Southern Kurdistan and International Law" in "An Analysis of the Legal Rights of the Kurdish People" pub. By The Ahmed Foundation for Kurdish Studies, Virginia, USA, 2000, p.96.

⁹¹ Nouri Talabany, Ibid.

⁹² Nouri Talabany, "Arabization of the Kirkuk Region", pub. In Sweden by Kurdistan Studies Press, 2001, p.34.

⁹³ Nouri Talabany, "La Politique de l'Arabisation de la Region de Kirkuk", Speech given at Green Party of France Conference on Economic Sanctions and Human Rights in Iraq, Assemble National, Paris, 5 February 2001

international decision, but this decision was conditional on both Britain and Iraq honouring the wishes of the Kurds that Civil Servants in the Kurdish area be Kurds and that Kurdish was to be the official language.⁹⁴ In reality, successive Iraqi governments ignored this international agreement and proceeded to implement a policy that was completely opposed to it, especially in the Kirkuk region. This became abundantly clear during the direct British rule of Kirkuk when Turkish remained the official language in administration and education as it had been under the Ottomans, and important positions in the city continued to be given to the Turkmans.⁹⁵ Later, when the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC), which was run by the British and which had its headquarters in Kirkuk, began operating, it brought the majority of its employees in from other parts of Iraq. Many thousands of technicians and other professionals, as well as small trades people, came to live in the city, bringing their families with them.⁹⁶ To accommodate them, hundreds of housing units were constructed and new districts developed, mostly for Arabs, Assyrians and Armenians. Research suggests that the population of Kirkuk increased by 39,000 between 1947 and 1957 and that, between 1919 and 1968, there was a fivefold increase in the population.⁹⁷ But, although the Kurds remained the majority in both the city and the governorate, far fewer were employed by the company than were members of other ethnic groups.⁹⁸

During the years of the monarchy, all Iraqi governments encouraged non-Kurds to settle in Kirkuk and prohibited the use of the Kurdish language in education there. In passing, I would like to mention my own bitter experience of this. At both primary and secondary school we were obliged to learn everything by heart as all the text books were in Arabic and we could not understand them. Even so, these governments did not expel Kurds from Kirkuk, nor did they bar the people from nearby villages from coming to reside in the city. But in the mid 1930s, all this began to change when the

⁹⁴ Walid Hamdi, "Kurds and Kurdistan in British Documents", a documentary study published in Arabic in London, 1992, p.186.

⁹⁵ Jabar Kader, "Kirkuk: A Century and a half of The Policy of Turkisization and Arabization (in Arabic), Iraqi File Magazine No.99, March 2000, p.42.

⁹⁶ Abdul Majid Fahmi Hassan, *Ibid.* p.54.

⁹⁷ Ahmed Najmadin, "Population Conditions in Iraq", Cairo, Arab Studies Institute, 1970, p. 109. In 1921, when Britain occupied Iraq, they estimated the ethnic composition of Kirkuk as 75,000 Kurds, 35,000 Turks, 10,000 Arabs, 1000 Jews and 600 Childo/Assyrians. The 1957 census gave the figures as 48.3% Kurds, 28.2% Arabs, and 21.2% Turkmans.

⁹⁸ Nouri Talabany, "Arabization of the Kirkuk Region", p. 35.

government of Yassin Al Hashimi brought Arabs from the Al-Ubaid and other nomadic tribes to settle in the Hawija district in the south west of Kirkuk.⁹⁹

The July 1958 revolution encouraged the Kurds to hope that these discriminatory policies would be reversed, and they asked that Kurdish be used as the language of instruction in the primary schools, at least in those districts which remained wholly Kurdish. But their hopes were dashed when extreme Arab nationalists were appointed to prominent positions in Kirkuk and they felt convinced that the situation would never change. This conviction was strengthened when General Tabakchali, the new Commander of the 2nd Division stationed in Kirkuk, took several decisions that were to the obvious advantage of the Turkmans. He began by ousting the Kurdish mayor and appointing a Turkman in his place. He then sent a number of secret memoranda to the Ministry of Defence in Baghdad - the real power in Iraq at that time - accusing the Kurds of causing unrest and of trying to found a so-called "Kurdish Republic" which would be joined later by other areas of Kurdistan.¹⁰⁰ His "evidence" for this was the request by Kurdish intellectuals to establish an Education Department to supervise Kurdish education in the region. During General Tabakchali's command, from July 1958 to March 1959, he concentrated all his efforts on creating tensions and divisions between Kurds and Turkmans.¹⁰¹

The appointment of a new commander, General Al- Janabi, in mid-March 1959, brought yet another change in the situation. During his short command the Kurds felt relaxed and celebrated Nawroz openly for the first time in the city's history. However, three months later, General Al- Janabi was dismissed and the situation steadily deteriorated until Kurds and Turkmans clashed in July 1959. From then on, the Kurds were once more subjected to ever increasing discrimination. This time is considered as a time of fear and forced expulsion of Kurds from Kirkuk. It marked the beginning of a period of terror for the Kurds when they were forced to leave the city. Special terrorist groups were formed from Turkmans, collaborating with the security forces, whose task it was to assassinate prominent Kurdish figures in the city.¹⁰² This situation continued until the coup d'etat by the Ba'ath party on 8th February

⁹⁹ Ibid. pp. 36-38.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. The text of these memoranda is published in Appendix II, p 104 - 113.

¹⁰¹ Nouri Talabany, "Kurdo/Turkman Relations", "Ra'yat-ul Islam" Magazine, Vol.1, Year 15, No.1, March 2001, p.2.

¹⁰² Nouri Talabany, "Arabization of the Kirkuk Region", p.43.

1963. From then on, the campaign of terror against the Kurds, led by the “National Guard” of Turkmans and Ba’athists, intensified. Several densely populated districts were demolished and 13 Kurdish villages located near Kirkuk and the IPC oil installations were destroyed. The inhabitants of 33 villages in the Dubs district, close to Kirkuk, were forced to leave and Arab tribes were brought in and settled there.¹⁰³ Other measures taken by the regime against the Kurds in Kirkuk were:

1. Dismissing many Kurdish employees of the Oil Company or transferring them to facilities outside the governorate, and even transferring low-ranking civil servants to southern and central Iraq.
2. Hiring large numbers of inexperienced Arabs as local police and oil workers.
3. Surrounding the city with military observation posts and creating “security zones” near the oil plant and mining the area.
4. Settling armed Arab tribes in evacuated Kurdish villages and forming “irregular units” from them to help attack Peshmarga and Kurds in the area around Kirkuk.
5. Re-naming city streets and schools in Arabic and forcing businesses to adopt Arab names.
6. Conducting a terror campaign and forcing people to abandon their villages so as to settle Arabs there.

The Ba’ath party returned to power in a second coup d’etat in 1968. Shortly after seizing power, the regime instigated a policy deliberately designed to change the ethnic character of Kirkuk and of the governorate. Civil servants, schoolteachers and oil company employees who had escaped the previous expulsions, were transferred and replaced by Arabs. Any Kurd, having once left Kirkuk, is never allowed to return, and this is what happened to most of those transferred.¹⁰⁴ The regime also took the

¹⁰³ Ibid. P.51.

¹⁰⁴ This was my experience when I was made redundant for political reasons from my post as Professor of Law at Baghdad University in December 1982. I was not allowed to return to my city of Kirkuk where my family has lived for six generations and was obliged to settle in the city of Arbil. The lorry driver who took our belongings from Baghdad to Arbil,

following measures:

1. Kurdish districts, schools, streets, markets and businesses were given Arabic names.
2. Houses were demolished in Kurdish neighbourhoods to allow for the unnecessary construction of wide roads and the owners were neither compensated nor allowed to buy other property.
3. The names of “Arab new-comers” were added to the 1957 census so that it appeared that they had lived in Kirkuk since before 1957.
4. Kurds were only allowed to sell their properties to Arabs and were not permitted to buy other property. Permits to build or renovate were refused. In the early eighties, these measures were extended to the Turkmans also.
5. False charges were laid against Kurds so that they left the city and their homes and belongings were confiscated. Kurdish youths were arrested and imprisoned without trial by the security police. Police vehicles were seen taking corpses clad in Kurdish costumes to a cemetery called “Ghariban” near the Kirkuk-Sulaymani road.
6. The governorate’s administrative offices and the headquarters of the trade unions and other organisations were moved to the arabized section of the city.
7. Thousands of residential units were built for Arab workers near the Kirkuk-Hawija-Tikrit, Kirkuk - Baghdad and Kirkuk - Laylan roads.
8. The ancient citadel of Kirkuk, which contained several mosques and a very old church, was demolished.
9. The city and surrounding area was transformed into a military camp, and military fortifications were built inside and around Kirkuk.
10. Tens of thousands of Arab families were brought in, with guaranteed jobs and housing. The government offered money and housing to Kurds who would leave Kirkuk for central or southern Iraq, or a free

via Kirkuk, later told me that a Security Service agent from the entry checkpoint of Kirkuk accompanied him until the exit checkpoint to be certain that he had left Kirkuk!

plot of land if they went to the “Autonomous Region”.

The Iraqi regime’s policy of the ethnic cleansing of the Kurds began in 1963 and became much harsher in 1968. In the mid-eighties it directed this policy against the Turkmans. The Childo/Assyrians and Armenians were simply considered as Arabs!

After the nationalisation of the IPC in June 1972, the regime changed the historic name of Kirkuk to Al Tamim, meaning “nationalisation”. In 1976 it also reduced the area of the governorate by annexing four Kurdish areas to the neighbouring governorates, thus making the Kurds a minority in the Kirkuk governorate.¹⁰⁵ Where the regime was unable to settle Arabs, it destroyed all the Kurdish villages and forced their inhabitants into concentration camps. The Anfal operations of 1987 and 1988 claimed the lives of about 180,000 Kurdish civilians, most of whom were from the Kirkuk region. Since the villagers in that region lived far from international borders they were unable to reach them and so surrendered to the army and secret services. They were later sent to the south of Iraq where they were massacred.

The Iraqi regime’s policy of ethnic cleansing continued without comment or challenge from either the Iraqi opposition groups or from the international community, even though its measures were far more severe than those used in other countries such as Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor, which have been condemned by the international community.

By the end of the eighties, Kirkuk city had lost its historic character as the Arab settlers had become dominant and were ruling the city and its administration, and security and the army were all under their control. Most of the best agricultural land was given to them. It was plain to everyone that people from outside the area were in charge and that the original inhabitants had become strangers in their own city.

This state of affairs continued until the Gulf War in 1991. After the Iraqi regime’s defeat in Kuwait, Ali Hassan Al Majid, then Minister of Defence, took many measures in the city to preserve the status quo. For example, he arrested more than 30,000 Kurds and held them for several days in confined spaces, without water or food, as a result of which many of the elderly and sick died. He also ordered the destruction of a number of Kurdish sectors of the city. After fierce fighting, the city was taken by the Kurds on 21st March

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. P.66.

1991. During three days of street battles, many Kurdish civilians, among them women and children were killed in the bombardment by Iraqi artillery and helicopter gunship.

Because of Keokuk's strategic importance to the regime, determined efforts were made to re-occupy it with the collaboration of the "Mujahidin Khalk", a group from the Iranian opposition supported by Saddam Hussein, whose members act as mercenaries for him. Some of these mercenaries succeeded in entering the city by disguising themselves as Peshmarga. From the 27th to the 29th March, Kirkuk was subjected to such an intense bombardment that its inhabitants were forced to evacuate the city, leaving behind their possessions, which were looted by the Iraqi army and the Arab settlers who returned with military help.

Most of the Kurds and Turkmans forced to leave Kirkuk were unable to return for fear of arrest. It can be said that the collapse of the uprising of March 1991 was a further reason for many Kurds and Turkmans leaving their city. Of those who did return, the young people especially faced intimidation and arrest.

During negotiations between the Iraqi regime and representatives of the "Kurdistan Front", the regime agreed to allow the citizens of Kirkuk to return to their homes, but this promise was only partially honoured. After the collapse of the negotiations, and especially after the withdrawal of the Iraqi administration from three governorates of Kurdistan in September 1991, the Kurds became the target of a renewed reign of terror which intensified during the years from 1994 to 1996 and was particularly severe at the beginning of 1997 during the preparations for a new census. The methods used by the Iraqi regime exceeded even those used during the apartheid era in South Africa. Kurds were issued with official forms on which they were required to declare that they had been wrongly registered as Kurds in previous censuses. They were told that anyone refusing to sign these forms would be expelled from the city and, in this way; the regime ensured that thousands of Kurds were expelled from Kirkuk. Even after this census, the regime continued its policy of expulsion. In declarations made by Izzat Ibrahim, vice-president and responsible for arabization in Kirkuk, it was publicly declared that no non-Arab would be permitted to remain in Kirkuk.¹⁰⁶

To date, more than 108,000 people have been expelled from the areas under

¹⁰⁶ Al Hayat newspaper of 29th September 2000.

the control of the regime, especially from Kirkuk. Most of these people are now living in camps in appalling conditions and are dependent on aid from international relief organisations. As a result of their continuing misery, some of them, especially the young people, try to make their way to Europe illegally and many lose their money, and sometimes their lives, before arriving there.

Sadly, the international community still ignores the plight of these people. It puts no pressure on the Iraqi regime to halt this racist policy, which is completely contrary to Security Council Resolution No. 688 of 1991 and against all those international documents to which, as a member of the UN and its organisations, Iraq is a signatory. Meanwhile, the majority of the Iraqi opposition still refuses to condemn the regime's policy which endangers co-existence between Kurds and Arabs in Iraq and which will probably lead to the disintegration of the Iraqi state.

From the Iraqi regime's ability to continue expelling the people of Kirkuk from their homes, in flagrant violation of international law and Resolution No.688, which condemns this policy, it is obvious that it will not stop unless forced to do so by the resolve of the international community. Only in this way will those expelled be able to return to their homes and the Arab settlers be sent back to the parts of Iraq from which they came originally. This will only happen when the entire Kurdish region which remains under the control of the regime, especially Kirkuk, comes under the control of the international community until Saddam Hussein's regime ends and democracy is established in Iraq. This would provide the only guarantee of protection for the civilian population there. The request for this was made by 122 Kurdish civil organisations and political parties, both inside and outside Kurdistan, supported by several organisations and public figures in Europe, in a memorandum presented to the Security Council, other international organisations and western states on 29th December 2000. The memorandum also stressed that such a measure would contribute "to the establishing of peace and security in the otherwise turbulent Middle East".

* For any further information, please contact: *Kirkuk Trust for Research & Study*.

Kirkuk, Past and Present *

Nouri Talabany **

Much has been said about the ethnic identity of Kirkuk but, to understand its present situation, we need to study the ethnic composition of the city of the past and to compare it with that of the present. The changes that have taken place there are the result of the policies of the Iraqi regime – policies that are against international law and which are responsible for the serious situation in which the citizens of Kirkuk now find themselves. If we appear to be concentrating on Kirkuk and using it as a model for the comparison of past with present it is because it was, and remains, the main focus of the Iraqi regime's racist policy.

The principal source of livelihood on the vast, fertile plains of the Kirkuk region was agriculture, so most of the city's inhabitants were craftsmen practising related skills though there were also commercial enterprises. Others worked in administration or were freelance professionals. The people grew their crops and engaged in animal husbandry according to the seasons but often used out-dated methods. It was natural for there to be a higher concentration of people in the villages close to the rivers and other water sources in the northern and eastern parts of the Kirkuk region, and fewer inhabitants in the part where water was scarcer. Simply by studying their customs an observer would very easily have understood the social structure of the society. However, the discovery of oil brought a great many people from elsewhere in Iraq into the city and changed the way of life completely. This is why we can say with confidence that the development of the oil industry provided the impetus for thousands of Arab families and others, such as Assyrians and Armenians, to settle in Kirkuk.¹⁰⁷

The majority of the population of the city of Kirkuk was Kurdish and Turkman. The Turkmans could trace their families back to the Ottoman era. Later, Arabs settled there. Writing of the ethnic composition of the city, Shamsadin Sami, author of the celebrated Encyclopaedia "Qamusl Al-A'alam" stated that, "Three quarters of the inhabitants of Kirkuk are Kurds and the rest

¹⁰⁷. Abdul Majid Fahmi Hassan, "Daleel Taarihk Mashaheer Al Alwiat Al Iraqiah / A Guide to the History of Famous People of the Iraqi Liwas", Vol. II, Liwa Kirkuk, Dijla Press, Baghdad 1947, p. 55.

are Turkmans, Arabs and others. 760 Jews and 460 Chaldeans also reside in the city”.¹⁰⁸

The Kurds lived, and still live, mainly in the eastern and northern districts of the city but they also reside in other districts alongside Turkmans and other ethnic groups. They are the oldest population of the city and region. After then came the Turkmans. The author of the famous “Guide to the History of Famous People in the Iraqi Liwas (Governorates),” Vol.2 compiled by Arab researchers and published in 1947 in Baghdad, dealt mainly with Kirkuk. It states that the Turkmans were the more recent members of the population of Kirkuk and that their ancestors arrived there in the mid seventeenth century with the invasion forces of the Ottoman Sultan Murad the Fourth who conquered Iraq and expelled the Saffawids from the land. The Guide also states that, before returning to Constantinople after his conquest of Baghdad, Sultan Murad left army units in position to control the strategic route linking Baghdad and Anatolia and that the present day Turkmans are descended from those troops.¹⁰⁹

The heads of Turkman families in Kirkuk, such as the families Nafetchi and Auchi, have confirmed that their ancestors came with Sultan Murad. Mr. Nazem Nafetchi stated, in 1947, that their ancestor, Kahraman Agha, came from Anatolia with Sultan Murad and that he appropriated land called Baba Gurgur, near Kirkuk city, from which he extracted oil by primitive methods.¹¹⁰ Abdullah Beg Auchi also confirmed that his family has its roots in Konya and that his grandfather, Emir Khan, accompanied Sultan Murad and settled in Kirkuk.¹¹¹

The Guide gives the religion of the inhabitants of Kirkuk as Islam and stresses their strong adherence to their faith; it points out that the region boasted many mosques and takias. There were also Christian, Subbi and Jewish citizens. The Jews (who were forced to leave Iraq for Israel at the beginning of the 1950s) engaged in commerce, finance and jewellery, while the Christians were involved in all the professions. Each ethnic group lived in harmony with the others. Mostly Kurdish tribal people who also had an important presence inside the city populated the districts, sub-districts and villages.

¹⁰⁸ Shamsadin Sami, Qamus Al-A’alam, Istanbul, Mihran Press, 1315 Hi/1896.

³ Abdulmajid F. Hassan, *ibid.* P.58.

⁴ *Ibid.* 284.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* P.301

The mayors of Kirkuk were almost always Kurds, notably from the Talabany family. During the Ottoman era and the monarchical period some Turkmans became mayor, but there was never an Arab mayor until 1969 when an Arab from the Tikriti family was nominated by the Baathist regime.

The city of Kirkuk was the centre of the Wilayet of Sharazur until 1879 when it became a “sanjak” and was annexed to the Wilayet of Mosul. In 1918, when the British army occupied the Wilayet of Mosul, the British administration created a new Governorate under the name of Arbil, which was made up of the districts of Arbil, Rawanduz and Koysinjaq. In 1921, the British estimated the population of Kirkuk to be 75,000 Kurds, 35,000 Turks, 10,000 Arabs, 1,400 Jews and 600 Chaldeans. A Committee of the League of Nations, which visited the Wilayet of Mosul in 1925 to determine its future, estimated that the Kurds in Kirkuk made up 63% of the population, the Turkmans 19% and the Arabs 18%. As no census was taken in Iraq until 1947, most population figures were estimates. An official estimate, published in 1936, gave the population figure as 180,000. The author of the aforementioned Guide estimated the population of Kirkuk to be half a million but that did not include nomadic tribes. It says that the Arabs lived mainly in the southwest of the region of Kirkuk whilst the Kurds were mainly in the northeast. Kurds, Turkmans and Arabs inhabited the centre of the region.

Most of the members representing Kirkuk in the Iraqi parliament during the monarchical period were Kurds and some Turkmans. There was seldom an Arab representative until after the Arab tribes had been settled on the plain of Hawija from 1935 onwards.

The 1947 Census gave no precise details of the ethnic composition of the population. However, the 1957 Census, in column 6, gave details of the ethnic composition of Iraq according to mother tongue. According to this Census the ethnic composition of Kirkuk was as follows: 48.3% Kurd, 28.2% Arab, 21.4% Turkman, the remainder being Chaldo-Assyrian and others. The 1957 Census is the only one accepted as valid since later ones were organized after the Iraqi regime had begun its policy of ethnic cleansing by which thousands of Arab families from central and southern Iraq were settled in the city and region of Kirkuk. Thousands of Kurdish families were expelled.

There were only two Arab families resident in the city of Kirkuk, the Tikriti and the Hadidi. In addition, there were some Arabs working as civil servants or serving as officers and soldiers in the 2nd Division of the Iraq army, most of

which was stationed in Kirkuk. Until 1955, there was just one high school in the region of Kirkuk, where I was a student. The majority of the students were Kurds and Turkmans with a number of Arabs, Assyrians, Chaldeans and Armenians. Most of the Arab students were the children of the civil servants and military personnel or those working for the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC).

By long-standing tradition, the Kurds, Turkmans, Chaldeans and Jews have had their own cemeteries. The Arabs, being a minority, buried their dead in the Turkman cemeteries. Since 1991, however, the Iraqi regime has created special cemeteries for Arab settlers and has banned Arab Shi'ite settlers from taking their dead back to Al-Najaf for burial. Al-Najaf is a very holy place for the Shia. Later, the regime even began to change the inscriptions on Kurdish tombstones to Arabic in an attempt to prove that there have been Arabs in Kirkuk for many, many years!

According to the Guide, the Tikriti family is the main Arab family of Kirkuk. The head of the family, Mr. Mazher Al-Tikriti, tells how their great grandfather, Shebib, came from Syria in 1048 Hejrit with the Ottoman Sultan Murad the Fourth, as did the ancestors of the Turkmans. As a reward for their help, the Sultan gave the Al-Tikriti family villages and lands in the south west of Kirkuk and in the small city of Tikrit.¹¹²

Other Arab tribes who settled in Kirkuk during the monarchical period are the Al-Ubaid and the Al-Jiburi. The Al-Ubaid came from the north west of Mosul when they were forced out of that area by the Arab Al-Shamar tribe. They settled on the plain of Dialah where they were in continuous conflict with the Arabs of the Al-Aza tribe.¹¹³ To resolve the disputes between them, the cabinet of Yasin Al-Hashimi decided, in 1935, to settle them in the Hawija district after water from the Lower Zab River was used to irrigate the land. The settlement of the Al-Ubaid and Al-Jiburi tribes was the first Arab settlement in the Kirkuk region. Previously, the area was semi-desert and was used by the Kurds only in springtime as grazing ground for their sheep. Generally, relations between Kurds, Turkmans and even the new Arabs of Hawija and other ethnic minority groups were good until the Ba'ath party seized power in 1963. The new regime used the militia of the "National Guard", who were mainly Arab Ba'athists and Turkmans, to attack the Kurds, concentrating their efforts on the poor areas where they destroyed all the

¹¹² Ibid. p. 289.

¹¹³ Ibid. 339.

homes. In June 1963, the Ba'athist regime was responsible for the destruction of 13 Kurdish villages around Kirkuk. The populations of a further 34 Kurdish villages in the Dubz district near Kirkuk were forced to leave and Arabs from central and southern Iraq were brought in and settled in their place. Between 1963 and 1988, the Iraqi regime destroyed a total of 779 Kurdish villages in the Kirkuk region and obliterated their cemeteries. There had been 493 primary schools, 598 mosques and 40 small medical centres in these villages.¹¹⁴ Orchards and farms were burnt, cattle confiscated and wells blown up, with the obvious intent of the eradication of all evidence of any habitation. In all, 37,726 Kurdish families were forced out of their villages and, at a conservative estimate, there are at least 5 to 7 people in the average Kurdish rural family.

During the Iraq/Iran war, the Iraqi regime also destroyed about ten Shi'ite Turkman villages in the south of Kirkuk.

Inside the city of Kirkuk, the Iraqi regime has taken many measures to force the Kurds to leave. Oil company employees, civil servants and even teachers have been transferred to southern and central Iraq. City streets and schools have been renamed in Arabic and businesses forced to adopt Arab names. Kurds are not allowed to sell their properties to anyone other than Arabs and are forbidden to buy other property. Thousands of residential units have been built for new Arabs and given Arabic names. The historic citadel, with its mosques and ancient church has been demolished. Tens of thousands of Arab families have been brought in to the city and given housing and employment.

These measures were intensified after the Gulf War of 1991. The regime has prevented most of the Kurds who fled their homes during the uprising of that year from returning. In 1996, before the preparation of the 1997 Census, a so-called "Identity Law" was passed, by which Kurds and other non-Arabs were required to register themselves as Arab. Anyone refusing to do so was expelled to the liberated part of Iraqi Kurdistan or to southern Iraq. In its 2003 Report, Human Rights Watch estimated that, since 1991, between 120 thousand and 200 thousand non-Arabs have been forcibly expelled from the Kirkuk region.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Nouri Talabany, Arabization of the Kirkuk Region, edit. Kurdistan Studies Press, Uppsala, Sweden 2001, p. 94.

¹¹⁵ Appeal from the Federation of the Kurdish Organizations against Ethnic Cleansing based in London addressed to Mr. Kofi Annan and others, dated 3rd February 2003.

The Turkish regime, which has failed to condemn the Iraqi regime's treatment of the Turkmen of Kirkuk during the last two decades, is now claiming their protection as the reason for invading Iraqi Kurdistan. It seems that, in the event of an attack on Iraq by the US army and its allies, the Turkish army will try to occupy Iraqi Kurdistan, thereby further exacerbating the already grave situation there. It could lead to clashes between them and the Kurdish population. Turkish leaders are now opening insisting that the Kurds expelled from Kirkuk must not be allowed to return to their homes. It gives itself the right (to intervene military in Kirkuk in the event of any clashes between and Kurds and Turkmen). It would be easy for Turkey's secret services to create such clashes so as to provide the excuse for occupying Kirkuk and gaining control of its oil, which it has claimed since the end of the First World War.

*** Paper presented to a Conference organized by the Kurdish Scientific and Medical Association in London on 9th March 2003.**

**** Professor of Law.**

APPENDIX - VIII - (Added for the third edition):

Who Owns Kirkuk? The Kurdish Case

By Nouri Talabany

Middle East Quarterly

Winter 2007, pp. 75-78

<http://www.meforum.org/1075/who-owns-kirkuk-the-kurdish-case>

Kirkuk is an essential part of Iraqi Kurdistan. While Kirkuk's demography has been in flux in recent decades, largely as a result of ethnic cleansing campaigns implemented by Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime. Free from Ba'athist restrictions, many Kurdish refugees have returned to their homes in the city and its immediate environs. While many diplomats and analysts may be tempted to delay decisions about the final status of Kirkuk—whether it should remain as it is or join Iraq's Kurdistan Region—any delay could be counterproductive to the goals of peace and stability.

A Mixed City

Historically, the majority of the city's population was Kurdish and Turkoman. The Turkomans traced their families back to the Ottoman era. Later, Arabs began to settle in the region. Writing of the ethnic composition of the city, the Ottoman encyclopaedist Shamsadin Sami, author of the *Qamus al-A'lam*, found that, "Three quarters of the inhabitants of Kirkuk are Kurds and the rest are Turkomans, Arabs, and others. Seven hundred and sixty Jews and 460 Chaldeans also reside in the city."^[1]

The Kurds predate other resident groups; the northern and eastern districts of the cities have been traditionally Kurdish. Turkomans later migrated to the region. According to the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, the local Kurdish population in Kirkuk was joined by a Turkoman minority as far back as the ninth century c.e. when caliphs installed Turkoman garrisons in the region.^[2] In his history of the various Iraqi provinces, Iraqi historian Abdul Majid Fahmi Hassan placed the Turkoman migration in the mid-seventeenth century when Ottoman Sultan Murad IV wrested the region from Iranian control. As Murad returned to Istanbul, he left army units in position to control the strategic route linking Baghdad and Anatolia; the Iraqi Turkomans descended from these troops.^[3] Prominent Turkoman families in Kirkuk, such as the Neftçiler and Awçi, trace their ancestry to Murad's troops;^[4] moreover, the prominent ethnic Arab Tikriti family also traces their presence in the region to Murad's soldiers and

the sultan's gift of land in and around Kirkuk as a reward for their military service against the Iranians.[\[5\]](#)

In the late Ottoman period, Kirkuk was the administrative center of the *vilayet* (province) of Sharazur. In 1879, it became a *sanjak* (district) within the vilayet of Mosul. Further changes occurred in the region in 1918 when the British army occupied the Mosul vilayet and created a new Erbil governorate. In 1921, the British estimated the population of the Kirkuk region to be 75,000 Kurds, 35,000 Turkomans, 10,000 Arabs, 1,400 Jews, and 600 Chaldeans. A League of Nations Committee that visited the Mosul vilayet in 1925 estimated that the Kurds comprised 63 percent of Kirkuk's population, the Turkomans 19 percent and the Arabs 18 percent.[\[6\]](#)

Many Kurds grew crops and raised livestock near the streams and wells in the northern and eastern parts of the Kirkuk region, but after the 1927 discovery of oil, Arab, Assyrian, and Armenian migration into the city of Kirkuk itself accelerated.[\[7\]](#) From 1935, Arab families migrated to the nearby Hawija plain, southwest of Kirkuk, after the Iraqi government launched a large-scale irrigation project to open the drier south-western portion of the region to agriculture. Other Arabs settled in Kirkuk as civil servants or serving officers and soldiers in the Second Division of the Iraqi army, most of which was stationed in Kirkuk.

Because there was no census taken in Iraq until 1947, however, such figures are estimates, and the 1947 census itself is of little help because it gives no precise details of the ethnic composition of the population. However, the 1957 census—widely acknowledged as the most valid because it was the least politicized—broke down population by mother tongue, finding Kirkuk to be 48.3 percent Kurd, 28.2 percent Arab, 21.4 percent Turkoman, and the rest Chaldean, Assyrian, or other.[\[8\]](#)

While demography might shift with time, Kirkuk's various communities have a long history of coexistence. Politically, Kurds have a long tradition of leadership in Kirkuk. On a national level, most Kirkuk representatives in the Iraqi parliament were Kurds and a smaller number of Turkomans. Local Arab representatives entered the parliament after settlement of the Hawija region. In the late Ottoman era, the sultan's governors mostly nominated Turkomans as mayors although, on certain occasions, Kurds also held the position. Later, during the monarchy, Kirkuk's mayors were mostly Kurds from the Talabany family.[\[9\]](#) It was only during the late Ottoman era and the Iraqi monarchy that

many Turkomans became mayors. The first Arab mayor took office in 1969 when the Ba'athist regime appointed Muzhir al-Tikriti.

Until 1955, Kirkuk had just one high school, and the majority of the students had Kurdish and Turkoman backgrounds with smaller numbers of Arabs, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Armenians. Most Arab students were the children of civil servants, military personnel, or employees of the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC).

By long-standing tradition, the Kurds, Turkomans, Chaldeans, and Jews have had their own cemeteries. The Arabs, being a minority, buried their dead in the Turkoman cemeteries. However, in 1991, Saddam Hussein's government created special cemeteries for Arab settlers and banned Arab Shiites from taking their dead back to Najaf for burial in order to bolster the Arab claim to the city. The Ba'athist regime subsequently began to rewrite Kurdish tombstone inscriptions with Arabic in order to retroactively alter the demography.

Ethnic Cleansing

The Ba'athists sought to implement their Arab nationalism by force. In June 1963, the short-lived Ba'athist regime of Ali Saleh al-Sa'adi destroyed thirteen Kurdish villages around Kirkuk and expelled the population of another thirty-four Kurdish villages in the Dubz district near Kirkuk, replacing them with Arabs from central and southern Iraq.

After the Ba'ath party consolidated power in 1963, the National Guard (*al-Haras al-Qawmi*), recruited Arab Ba'athists and Turkomans who systematically attacked ethnic Kurds. Between 1963 and 1988, the Ba'athist regime destroyed 779 Kurdish villages in the Kirkuk region—razing 493 primary schools, 598 mosques, and 40 medical clinics.^[10] In order to prevent the return of the Kurds, they burned farms and orchards, confiscated cattle, blew up wells, and obliterated cemeteries. In all, this ethnic cleansing campaign forced 37,726 Kurdish families out of their villages. Given the average rural Kurdish family size of between five and seven people, this policy forced over 200,000 Kurds to flee the region. The Kurds were not the regime's only victims. During the Iran-Iraq war, the central government destroyed about ten Shiite Turkoman villages south of Kirkuk.

The Iraqi government also compelled urban Kurds to leave Kirkuk. It transferred oil company employees, civil servants and teachers to southern and

central Iraq. The Ba'athist government renamed streets and schools in Arabic and forced businesses to adopt Arab names. Kurds could only sell real estate to Arabs; non-Arabs could not purchase property in the city. The government allocated thousands of new residential units for Arabs only. Ethnic cleansing intensified after the 1991 Kuwait war when the Republican Guards crushed a short-lived uprising. In 1996, the regime passed an "identity law" to force Kurds and other non-Arabs to register as Arab. The government expelled from the region anyone who refused. In 1997, the Iraqi government demolished Kirkuk's historic citadel with its mosques and ancient church. Human Rights Watch estimated that between 1991 and 2003, the Iraqi government expelled between 120,000 and 200,000 non-Arabs from Kirkuk and its environs.[\[11\]](#)

In September 1999, the U.S. State Department reported that the Iraqi government had displaced approximately 900,000 citizens throughout Iraq. The report continued to describe how "[1]local officials in the south have ordered the arrest of any official or citizen who provides employment, food, or shelter to newly arriving Kurds."[\[12\]](#)

A New Beginning for Kirkuk?

In April 2003, coalition forces and the Iraqi Kurdish *peshmerga* liberated Kirkuk from Ba'athist control. Many victims of Saddam's ethnic cleansing campaign sought to return to the region, only to be prevented by U.S. authorities. Many remain in tent-city limbo. Article 58 of the March 8, 2004 Transitional Administrative Law [\[13\]](#) sought to settle disputes in Kirkuk by means of an Iraqi Property Claims Commission and "other relevant bodies." In practice, however, successive Iraqi governments have done little, creating suspicion among many Iraqi Kurds as to the central government's intentions. The uncertainty over Kirkuk's status has impeded local development and sidelined the issue of refugee resettlement.

Article 140 of the new Iraqi constitution has adopted Article 58 of the Transitional Administrative Law, which necessitates the normalization of the situation in Kirkuk by which the legislature meant the assistance of the return of internally displaced people and their reclamation of seized property. Arabs installed in the region should be helped to return to southern and central Iraq, should they so desire. The four sub districts of Kifri, Chemchemical, Kalar, and Tuz-Khurmatu annexed to neighbouring governorates by the regime in 1976 should be returned to the governorate of Kirkuk. Article 140 also states that a local census must be organized and a referendum held to decide the future of the province. The deadline set for the implementation of this article is

December 2007. However, if Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki does not implement the article within the allocated time, ethnic and sectarian unrest could explode in Kirkuk, the effects rippling throughout Iraq.

A report by the International Crisis Group proposes that the Iraqi government invite the U.N. Security Council "to appoint an envoy to start negotiations to designate the Kirkuk governorate as a stand-alone, federal region for an interim period" and recommends postponing the constitutionally-mandated referendum because of the threat that it could further exacerbate an already uncertain security situation.[\[14\]](#)

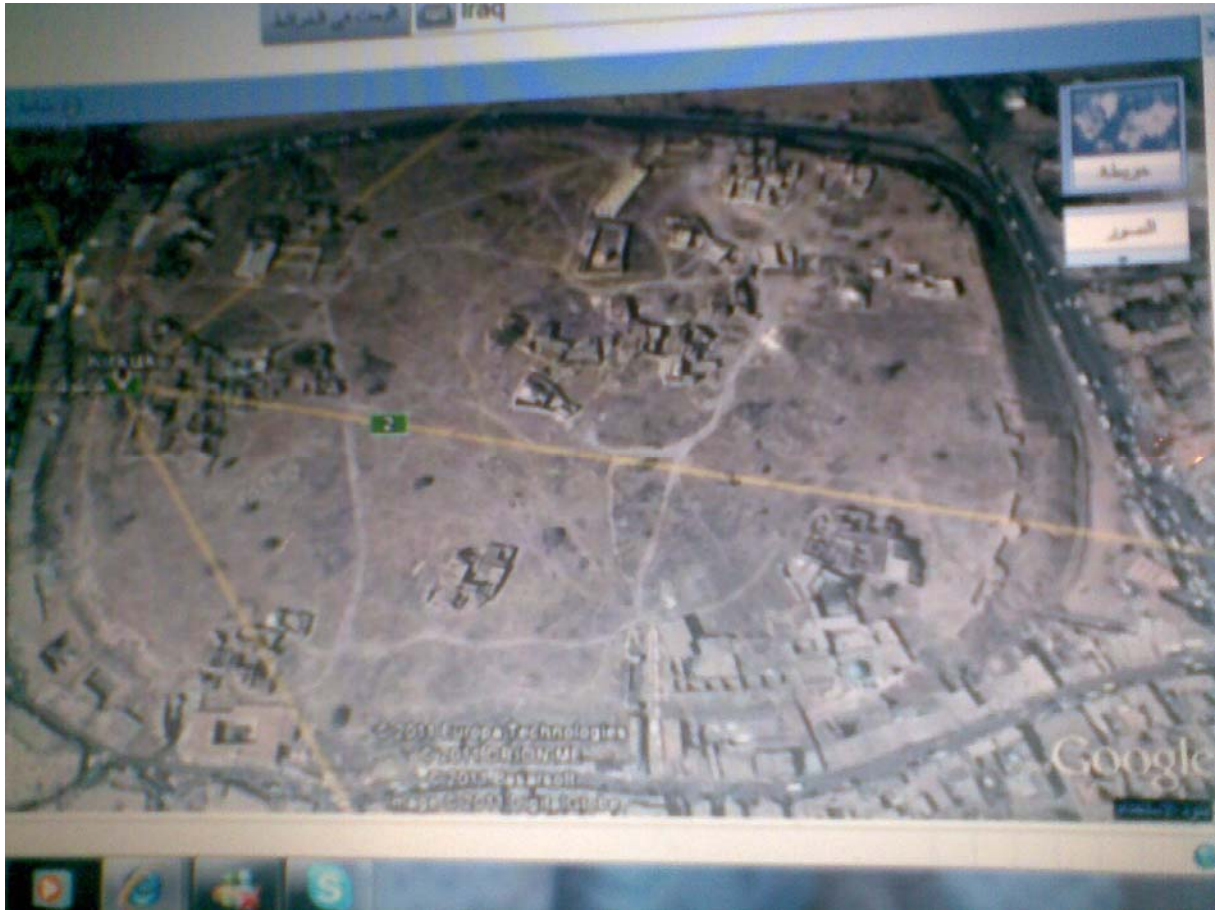
There is no need for another envoy. With many Arab League nations and Turkey opposed to the expansion of Kurdish self-rule, a U.N. envoy would not have the confidence of most of Kirkuk's residents. Nor should outside organizations, however well-meaning, delay implementation of Article 140. A wide swath of Iraqi society accepted the constitution after extensive consultation and, on August 9, the Iraqi government nominated a high committee chaired by the Minister of Justice to implement Article 140 of the Iraqi constitution without delay.

Until the December 2007 referendum, which the U.N. has the expertise to organize, it will be impossible to know whether local residents wish Kirkuk to be absorbed into the Kurdistan Regional Government. Many Kurds do, but others are afraid of being pushed aside by established patronage networks and political machines imposed from outside the city.

Rather than destabilize the region, formal resolution of the dispute over Kirkuk's status should calm the city. Various ethnic and sectarian communities coexisted peacefully in Kirkuk until Abdul-Karim Qasim's 1958 coup d'état. The central government in Baghdad rather than local politics fuelled most subsequent conflicts. Any census is sure to confirm the majority status of Kurds inside Kirkuk. They will demand the right to have their voice heard through the ballot box. But Kurdish empowerment through the democratic process need not mean disenfranchisement for the local Arabs and Turkoman communities. There is no reason why the various communities within Kirkuk cannot coexist peacefully again.

Nouri Talabany is the author of several books and articles about Iraqi Kurdish history. He is currently an independent member of parliament in the Iraqi Kurdistan region.

- [1] Shamsadin Sami, *Qamus al-A'lam* (Istanbul: Mihran Press, 1896), see "Kirkuk."
- [2] *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), s.v. "Kirkuk."
- [3] Abdul Majid Fahmi Hasan, *Dalil Tarikh Mashahir al-Alwiya al-Iraqiya* [A Guide to the History of Iraqi Liwas-Kirkuk Liwa], vol. II, (Baghdad: Dijla Press, 1947), p. 58.]
- [4] *Ibid.*, pp. 284, 301.
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The citadel of Kirkuk after the destruction



The northern part of the citadel of Kirkuk



The eastern part of the wall of the citadel of Kirkuk



A ruined house in the citadel of Kirkuk



A ruined house in the citadel of Kirkuk

The Author:

- **Born in the city of Kirkuk and completed elementary, intermediate and secondary education there.**
- **Received BSc in Law from the University of Baghdad.**
- **Received PhD in Law from Paris University, France.**
- **Taught at Basra, Baghdad, Sulaimani and Salahadin Universities from 1968 until December 1982, when he was compulsorily retired for political reasons.**
- **Published a book on the arabization of the Kirkuk Region, in Arabic in Sweden and Kurdistan in 1995, the 2nd edition in London in 1999 and the third edition in Arbil in 2004. It was translated into Kurdish and English in 1999 and published in Sweden and, later, republished in Kurdistan in 2004.**
- **Proposed a federal system for Kurdistan Region in a study written in Arabic in London, in 1974. This appeared in the Iraqi Academic magazine, Kurdish Section, Vols. 16 & 17, 1987, and in Kurdistan, in a pamphlet, in 1992 and 2005.**
- **Author of the first dictionary of legal terms in Kurdish, Arabic, French and English, published in 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2010.**
- **Published more than 170 studies and articles in Kurdish, and 64 in Arabic and more than 30 in English and French, published in both Kurdistan and elsewhere, some of them have been presented at international conferences in the USA and Europe.**
- **A Draft Constitution for the Iraqi Kurdistan Region was prepared by him in 1992.**
- **Member of the High Legal Committee in the Kurdistan Region in 1992 whose main objective was to prepare the projects of law for the Parliament of Kurdistan.**
- **Chairman of the Kurdish Organisation for Human Rights in Britain from 1993 till 2000, and Director of the Kirkuk Trust for Research and Studies in London from 2000.**
- **President of the High Electoral Commission of the Kurdistan Region in July 2004.**
- **An independent MP in the Parliament of the Kurdistan Region (2005 – 2009).**
- **Elected as a Member of the Kurdish Academy in November 2007.**
- **Elected as a President of the Kurdish Academy in September 2011**