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Iraqi Perspectives Project
Saddam and Terrorism:
Emerging Insights from
Captured Iraqi Documents
Volume 1 (Redacted)

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EXSUM Extract Only

This report is a redacted version of the original *Iraqi Perspectives Report—Saddam and Terrorism: Emerging Insights from Captured Iraqi Documents, Volume 1*, dated January 2007.

This redacted version was prepared by the original authors following a classification review by the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) pursuant to a request by the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy.

All redactions from the original are in accordance with the 15 September 2007 DIA Memorandum, Subject: Classification Review of Iraqi Perspectives Project (IPP) Report Saddam and Terrorism. As stated in said memorandum, the DIA “made every effort to balance national security concerns, requirements of law, and the needs of an informed democracy and focused the redactions to the necessary minimum.” Moreover, all redactions have been made pursuant to Executive Orders 12958 (as amended) and 12333, and US Code provisions 5 USC 552, 5 USC 552a, and 10 USC 424.

The classification markings within are original to the Iraqi documents
and do not reflect current US classification.

Preface

IDA Paper P-4151 was prepared under the Iraqi Perspectives subtask of the Joint Advanced Warfighting Program (JAWP) task order for the Director, Joint Center for Operational Analyses and Lessons Learned, United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM). It helps address the subtask objective of “cueing beneficial paths of exploration for other parts of the national security community” by using interviews, oral histories, and captured Iraqi documents and media to place in temporal context the conversations and materials of senior Iraqi leaders (political and military).

IDA Paper P-4151 comprises five volumes published as part of the Iraqi Perspectives Project Phase II series. Volume 1 examines the relationships between the regime of Saddam Hussein and terrorism in its local, regional, and global context. Volumes 2 through 4 contain the English translations and detailed summaries of the original Iraqi documents cited in Volume 1. Volume 5 contains additional background and supporting documents.

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JAWP was established at the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) to serve as a catalyst for stimulating innovation and breakthrough change. It is co-sponsored by the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and the Commander, USJFCOM. JAWP includes military personnel on joint assignments from each Service and civilian specialists from IDA. JAWP is located in Alexandria, Virginia, and includes an office in Norfolk, Virginia, to facilitate coordination with USJFCOM.

This paper does not necessarily reflect the views of IDA or the sponsors of JAWP. Our intent is to stimulate ideas, discussion, and, ultimately, the discovery and innovation that must fuel successful transformation.

...when they say anything about Iraq—[like] Iraq supports terrorism—then they have to say that Iraq has documents on this issue and [we] don't ...

— Saddam Hussein, 1993 ³

It has never [been] proven that Iraq participated in a terrorist operation.

— Tariq Aziz, 1996 ⁴

Executive Summary

The Iraqi Perspectives Project (IPP) review of captured Iraqi documents uncovered strong evidence that links the regime of Saddam Hussein to regional and global terrorism. Despite their incompatible long-term goals, many terrorist movements and Saddam found a common enemy in the United States. At times these organizations worked together, trading access for capability. In the period after the 1991 Gulf War, the regime of Saddam Hussein supported a complex and increasingly disparate mix of pan-Arab revolutionary causes and emerging pan-Islamic radical movements. The relationship between Iraq and forces of pan-Arab socialism was well known and was in fact one of the defining qualities of the Ba'ath movement.

But the relationships between Iraq and the groups advocating radical pan-Islamic doctrines are much more complex. This study found no “smoking gun” (i.e., direct connection) between Saddam's Iraq and al Qaeda. Saddam's interest in, and support for, non-state actors was spread across a variety of revolutionary, liberation, nationalist, and Islamic terrorist organizations. Some in the regime recognized the potential high internal and external costs of maintaining relationships with radical Islamic groups, yet they concluded that in some cases, the benefits of association outweighed the risks. A review of available Iraqi documents indicated the following:

- The Iraqi regime was involved in regional and international terrorist operations prior to OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. The predominant tar-

gets of Iraqi state terror operations were Iraqi citizens, both inside and outside of Iraq.

- On occasion, the Iraqi intelligence services directly targeted the regime's perceived enemies, including non-Iraqis. Non-Iraqi casualties often resulted from Iraqi sponsorship of non-governmental terrorist groups.
- Saddam's regime often cooperated directly, albeit cautiously, with terrorist groups when they believed such groups could help advance Iraq's long-term goals. The regime carefully recorded its connections to Palestinian terror organizations in numerous government memos. One such example documents Iraqi financial support to families of suicide bombers in Gaza and the West Bank.
- State sponsorship of terrorism became such a routine tool of state power that Iraq developed elaborate bureaucratic processes to monitor progress and accountability in the recruiting, training, and resourcing of terrorists. Examples include the regime's development, construction, certification, and training for car bombs and suicide vests in 1999 and 2000.

From the beginning of his rise to power, one of Saddam's major objectives was to shift the regional balance of power favorably towards Iraq. After the 1991 Gulf War, pursuing this objective motivated Saddam and his regime to increase their cooperation with—and attempts to manipulate—Islamic fundamentalists and related terrorist organizations. Documents indicate that the regime's use of terrorism was standard practice, although not always successful. From 1991 through 2003, the Saddam regime regarded inspiring, sponsoring, directing, and executing acts of terrorism as an element of state power.

Methodology

This paper summarizes a detailed review of a unique source—the captured documents and media files from the Harmony database, which have been translated and analyzed.⁵ While Harmony holds most of the documents captured

in Iraq, it is not an exhaustive list. Other documents were not available for this phase of the IPP study, e.g., those under the control of other US government agencies or others still being processed.

In complying with one of the original purposes for the IPP study, four volumes of primary source materials accompany Volume 1 (this paper). Volumes 2 through 5 contain the “raw” Harmony files cited in Volume 1, allowing further review and study by other researchers.⁶ As new materials become available from captured documents and media and secondary (non-Iraqi) sources, alternative explanations may result from reviewing this material.

The Harmony database cannot address all questions relating to Iraq and terrorism: many potentially relevant documents were either inadvertently destroyed by Coalition forces during major combat actions or else were hidden or destroyed by members of the former regime. It should not be surprising, therefore, that some topics or events are lightly addressed or not covered at all. Despite these and other reasons, the number of relevant documents available to, and reviewed for, this project remains impressive.

This paper examined the relationships between the regime of Saddam Hussein and terrorism in its local, regional, and global contexts. It is not a study of terrorism in general or of any specific terrorist group. Our research approaches this question from a unique source—the regime’s own archives.

About Harmony Database

Each Harmony document folder has its own unique document number. It may contain more than one item, e.g., a collection of memoranda on a single topic or a series of related documents, but individual items within the folder do not have their own unique numbers. The reader will often see the same document number for citations with different titles or subjects. A Harmony media file (e.g., audio or video) does have its own number; rarely will there be additional material, e.g., a transcript with the video. Volumes 2 through 5, the primary sources materials, have a generic metadata reference sheet as part of their front matter. We have highlighted certain elements in the generic example to help explain certain high-level information about the structure and contents found in a Harmony document folder and a media file.

Illustration

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