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file 129

IRAQI SANCTIONS - SOME PROPOSALS

compiled 7/2000

These are some concrete suggestions to consider for alleviating the humanitarian crisis in Iraq.

1. **Re-open UN, and US/UK dialogue with Bagdad**, just as President Clinton has done with apparent success in respect of North Korea and to a lesser extent with Iran, thereby applying the principle that **isolation leads to alienation whereas dialogue can lead to influence and positive change.**
2. **Re-establish inspections and monitoring** with regard to weapons of mass destruction within Iraq, as well as on its borders, keeping in mind the provision of paragraph 14 of Resolution 687, including means for **period review** under existing disarmament and non-proliferation agreements;
3. **Impose "smart" sanctions** on the Government in Bagdad in respect to weapons purchasing, and in respect of **those profiteering from civilian suffering**, without in anyway separating the leadership from important overseas communications;
4. End the **counterproductive demonization** of Pres. Saddam Hussein so offensive to Arab and Islamic sensibilities, from which it is difficult to back off;
5. **Lift economic sanctions on Iraq essential for the including capital economy, investment in infrastructure.** By this means provide the "carrot," necessary for effectiveness in all cases of sanctions regimes, in response to considerable, if imperfect, Iraqi collaboration on several fronts as reported by the Secretary-General;
6. **Release the stranglehold by the Sanctions committee of the Security Council** on all oil production equipment to enable Iraq to put more oil on the world market and enhance its much needed earnings capacity.
7. Facilitate American, British and other **private/public sector capital investment in Iraq to begin the task of rebuilding the civilian infrastructure** and refurbishing the environment so severely damaged during the Gulf War, such as electric power, transport and communications, modern technology for education and management of a modern economy, needed to end unemployment, salvage the value of the *dinar* and restore to families and individual citizens their economic and social rights;
8. **Postpone payments for reparations**, thereby allowing Iraq access to 100% of its revenues, **until such time as the mortality crisis in terms of Iraqi children has ended;**

9. Encourage overseas visits of Iraqi professionals, and study by Iraqi graduate students to **begin to close the gap created by ten years of intellectual and technological isolation;**
10. **Invite Iraqi participation in the regional process for economic cooperation** and middle-east peace to enhance expectations of a middle-east community of nations;
11. **Encourage Bagdad to confirm arrangements for the semi-autonomy of the Iraqi Kurds of the Northern provinces** until such time as the Kurds work out with the central government a *modus vivandi* that is mutually acceptable;
12. Respect the restraints of Security Council resolutions, including **the termination of US/UK bombing of the so called "no-fly zones" plus regular incursions by the Turkish military into Kurdish Iraq**, for which there is **no legal provisions in any existing UN resolution.**

Speech by Denis Halliday (6/5/00)

Other proposals:

1. Take immediate steps to clean up the **environmental disaster caused by the use of depleted uranium bombs.**

Some facts:

 - DU is primarily an alpha particle emitter with a **radio half-life of 4.5 billion years**
 - The US Army Environmental Policy Institute (EPI) states, "DU is a low-level **radioactive waste**, and therefore must be disposed in a licensed repository." (June, 1995; p. 154)
 - **Soluble compounds of DU will readily dissolve and migrate with surface or ground water.** Drinking or washing or other contact with contaminated water will spread the contamination. The end result of air and water contamination is that DU is deposited in the soil. **Once there, it remains unless removed.** (US Army Chemical School; October, 1995, p. 28)
 - The **cost of cleaning up** the DU used in the Gulf War could easily be in the **tens of billions of US dollars.** (Estimate based on EPI, June 1995, p.47)
2. Use US/UK common sense influence in regards to the constrictions placed by the Sanctions Committee on what is allowed into the country. **When a clear humanitarian/civilian use is called for, the relevant materials should be allowed in rather than placed on hold because of possible "dual use."**

3. Take a renewed look at the **civilian population of Iraq, especially its children**, and what the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights says. (Adopted and accepted by US on December 10, 1948)
4. **Allow more UN General Assembly involvement.** When 15 representatives of governments in ten years have not managed to find a constructive and realistic approach for Iraq, then it appears they have lost their way in dealing with the situation. In the spirit of democracy, the General Assembly should be included in this whole discussion.
5. **NGOs which are present in Iraq should be given more participation in the planning and rebuilding of the country**, especially in areas related to children and the elderly. Iraqi diplomats should be included in all discussions.
6. **“Preventive diplomacy’** should have a greater role to play than resorting to sanctions of the kind which **in the history books later** will, for Iraq, become the example of how not to treat a nation.” (Hans Von Sponeck 6/5/00)
7. Ask the President to urge the UN Security Council and Sanctions Committee to **immediately implement the recommendations outlined in the Council’s humanitarian report**. This would improve the delivery of humanitarian relief as well as increase the inflow of revenue to Iraq’s economy.
8. Ask for improved, and if necessary **independent monitoring of the humanitarian impact** of sanctions.

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IRAQ NOTEBOOK

Second UN Relief Chief to Resign Says 'Economic Sanctions Must Be Lifted Now! Today, Not Tomorrow!'

by Hans von Sponeck

LONDON, UK, May 6, 2000 — Hans von Sponeck, Former UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq, spoke at a program titled "A Day and Night for the People of Iraq" held at Kensington Town Hall. His predecessor in Iraq, Denis Halliday, and journalist/film maker John Pilger were also on the program. Here are Von Sponeck's remarks, slightly edited for clarity.

I want to start by quickly reminding ourselves that the world is not short of international instruments that are existing, that were created to protect us, to give people's lives a meaningful basis. The problem is, the big problem is, that the international community so easily forgets to apply these instruments when it counts; or ignores these deliberately.

Declaration of Human Rights

When I was in Boston a few days ago to meet with the Editor of the *Boston Globe*, I was told not to refer, even, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or to the UN Charter because [they have] no meaning in that newspaper. Well how terrible, how frightening when one is warned not to refer to something which is meant to protect us and to give us a better life.

The international community that is represented by the United Nations Security Council — one can almost come to the conclusion that they are not trigger-happy but they surely are sanction-happy, because what we have seen during the last decade of the century just passed has been six times the number of sanctions imposed on countries than in the past 40 to 45 years. So when this fateful mistake of August 1990 was made, through the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, the most comprehensive sanctions ever imposed on a country were imposed on Iraq. And in the following years until now, until very much now, Iraq has become a sanctions laboratory, testing — it's almost like an endurance test of humans, when you look and study the last ten years under sanctions.

Resolution after Resolution passed by the United Nations has led to incremental improvements, that we must admit, but fundamentally it has not changed what I have to describe to you in a moment. What to me is so deplorable, the sanction managers that sit in the Security Council — when they create these Resolutions like the most recent one that was passed in December of last year — they forget that behind every line and every word of these resolutions are real faces, are people with feelings, with fears and also with hopes.

So, what does it mean then, when we have a Universal Declaration of Human Rights that gives a right for education, a right for good health, a right for employment, for shelter, right to free movement? What is that reality now in Iraq in relation to these rights in March or in April 2000?

Meeting on Capitol Hill

Mr. Halliday and I were on Capitol Hill earlier this week and we met with a number of Congressmen and there are seeds of hope, I can report to you. But I want to say here, Congressman Conyers, one of the conveners of the Congressional Hearing that we attended, told us about a response by the President of the United States to a letter written by 70 Senators and Congressmen asking for a lifting of sanctions. The Clinton response was, and I say it not in a hostile way, I am not vindictive (I hope I don't come across in this way), Mr. Clinton said: the humanitarian program in Iraq has made a major difference to ordinary Iraqi citizens.

The US President is very ill advised in coming to this conclusion. Disinformation, distortion, misinterpretation, wherever you look you see it on all sides — but the finest example of distorted information is a State Department Report of 17 September last year, where every single figure is either not explained and therefore gives the wrong impression or it is the wrong information. The

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On Losing My Moral Heritage

by Kim Swift

This article appeared in *Indie Journal* as a letter to the editor on September 2, 1999.

"It saddens me in a way that I cannot express fully in words to read about arrogance and killing associated with my country. I have come to realize that what motivates me to work so diligently for a peaceful America is that I cannot stand idly by and see the warmongers, the criminals, the arrogant elites destroy the America I love.

"In my high school years I read the short stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne and loved his mastery of the English language and his

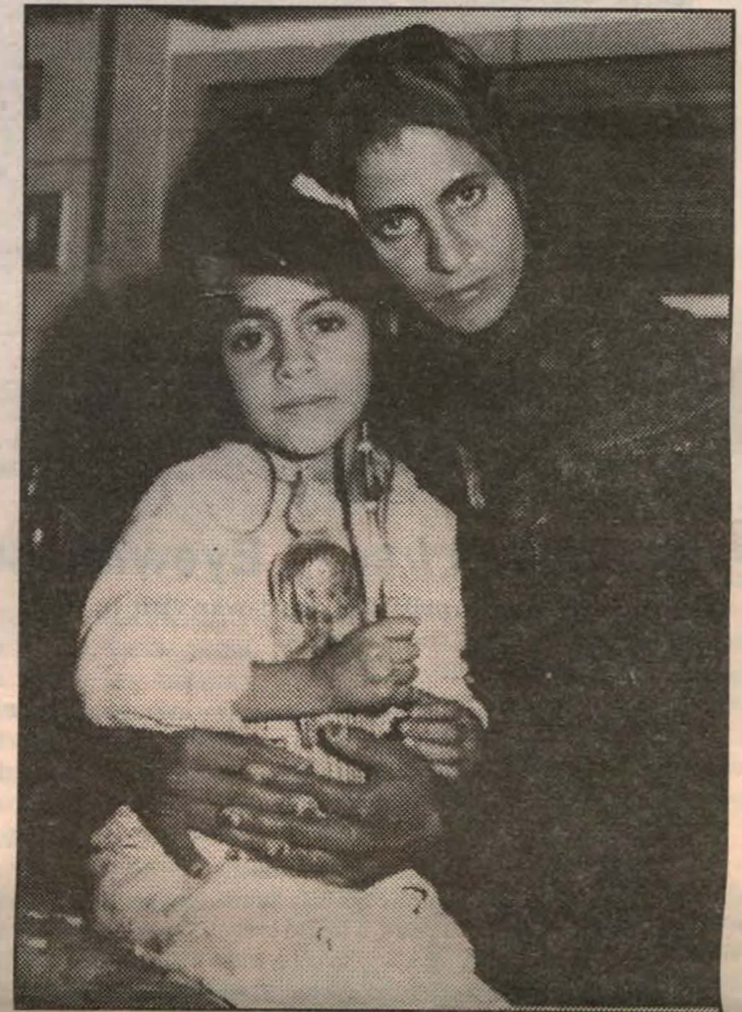
ingenious use of symbols to portray moral struggles. I was very fortunate to grow up in rural southern Colorado, a land of mystical, wild and enchanting beauty. I love my parents' families and my own family, each person having unique character and talents and a sense of humor as do all people.

"The criminal attacks on innocent civilians in Serbia and Iraq reverberate back on me as an American, robbing me of my moral heritage, of my decency, of my humanity. I am determined to resist this loss with every fiber of my being.

"When we stand together for peace and work towards helping heal other nations such as by donating food to Serbia, we are also working to heal America, to defend and protect the America we love. When we work to help others, we work to affirm our own dignity and decency." □

Al Mansur Hospital, Baghdad Duhah, whose name means "Sunrise," with her mother. Duhah suffers from leukemia. No treatment is available, due to the sanctions. There has been a "dramatic" increase in leukemia and other cancers since Desert Storm.

Photo: Chuck Quilty
Dec. 1996



The Death of One Iraqi Child Is One Death Too Many

by Erik Gustafson, Gulf War Veteran

"As a Gulf War veteran, I challenge the American people who welcomed me home to welcome the Iraqi people into their hearts." ~ Erik Gustafson

WASHINGTON, D.C., November, 1998 — Modestly dressed in a turquoise skirt and black traveling cloak, she looked eastern European. Her raven hair was wrapped in a black bandanna patterned with colorful flowers. She sat close to her child, Akram Majid, an angelic figure swaddled in white.

I met her and her child in the midst of a nightmare. Akram was too weak to move, his arms lying limp at his sides. Only two years old, his open mouth revealed lost teeth that would not be replaced. The chief resident doctor at Baghdad's Medical Teaching Hospital, Dr. Hassan Jabar, informed me that Akram was dying of a form of meningitis that is curable.

The United Nation blockade on Iraq and the failed "oil-for-food" program have created every parent's worst nightmare.

Akram's mother was helplessly watching her child die. Dr. Jabar was caught in the same nightmare, fighting an epidemic of long-vanquished diseases without adequate medicine.

In a country that once provided clean water to 93% of its urban and 70% of its rural population, a destroyed infrastructure and [the resultant] unsanitary conditions have caused an outbreak of diseases. Although Iraq once led the region in providing high-quality healthcare for 90% of its population, hospitals now run critical shortages and most patients go without even simple medicines.

Akram's mother's eyes pleaded for help we could not give. Later that day, the child died.

The Role of the Churches

In early April 1991, President Bush asked

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Europeans Find Fault With the U.S.

Continued From Page 1

books are only one sign of what experts say is a growing backlash of anti-Americanism. More and more often, Europeans talk about America as a menacing, even dangerous force intent on remaking the world in its image. And, like Mr. Mamère, many members of Europe's political, cultural and intellectual elite are using a kind of moral calculator to deplore the American model as severely wanting.

Poking fun at America has always been a European pastime, particularly among the French. In the past, Americans have been ridiculed as Bermuda-shorts-wearing louts who call strangers by their first names and know nothing about the good life. But today's criticism is far from being an amusing rejection of food rituals. Experts say that it has a virulence and an element of fear never seen before.

"With the fall of the Berlin Wall, America was left as the only superpower," said Stéphane Rozès, the director general of CSA Opinion, which conducts many surveys for news organizations. "And there is a great deal of fear out there that the strength of America's economy will impose not only economic changes but social changes as well. What they see is an America that has the ability to impose its values and they are not values that the Europeans believe in."

The Europeans read menace in a wide range of recent events. Far from seeing America's involvement in Kosovo as a hand of support from across the Atlantic, for instance, many Europeans saw it as an American manipulation of NATO. And the humiliating fact that the intervention would not have been possible without American air power only rammed home the perception of America's military superiority, and of European deficiency.

But suspicion runs high in other areas as well. The Clinton administration's cheerleading — for instance, its repeated description of the United States as being the "indispensable" nation — strikes a threatening chord here. And recent disputes such as America's decision last year to impose an import tax on goods like Roquefort cheese and foie gras because the Europeans would not accept hormone-enhanced beef from the United States only fuels the European sense that the United States is a bully.

In Europe, these days, the World



Agence France-Presse

Protesters in Paris declared the death penalty a "state crime."

Trade Organization — which sanctioned the American action — is routinely dismissed as a tool of American interests.

The idea that the United States is already using its vast satellite and spy networks for industrial espionage is readily accepted here, as recent debate in the European Union on the Echelon electronic surveillance system showed. The United States denied the charges, but the European bloc is still mulling an investigation. Again, the size and scope of the surveillance system make Europe feel dwarfed.

Even the recent debacle over picking a managing director for the International Monetary Fund fueled the sense among some Europeans that the United States can do whatever it wants. In Washington, government officials let it be known that they were opposing the first German candidate because, they said, no one in Europe wanted to do the dirty work of pointing out his inadequacies. That version of events did not get much press here. In Germany, the American veto power provoked snide remarks.

"We have discovered that the superpower sees its global role not only in the military area but also in setting the rules of globalization through the J.M.F.," pronounced Michael Steiner, chief diplomatic adviser to Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, in the middle of the controversy.

To be sure, the average European is embracing much that comes from the United States. Its films, its music, its fashion and, even if no-one in

France particularly cares to admit it, its fast food. The weekly best-seller list shows more than half the top selling novels in France are translations of American books. There are frequent complaints of a brain drain as young people flock to Silicon Valley and elsewhere in America to get their start in life.

But at the same time the view of a belligerent United States is growing too. Polls conducted by CSA in the last few years suggest that Europeans have some extremely negative views of the United States. In April last year, 68 percent of the French said they were worried about America's status as a superpower. Only 30 percent said there was anything to admire across the Atlantic. Sixty-three percent said they did not feel close to the American people.

Another CSA poll in September 1998, which compared the attitudes of the Germans, Spanish, French, Italian and British toward the United States, found they had deep reservations too. The Italians seemed to appreciate America the most. But they still showed profound concern about the American model. Between 57 and 60 percent said America's democracy and economy were worth admiring. But 56 to 62 percent said Italians should not look to America for inspiration on their way of life or their culture.

"We have the impression that America has no more enemy," says Michel Winock, a professor at the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris who often writes on the subject of anti-Americanism. "It does what it likes now when it wants. Through NATO it directs European affairs. Before we could say we were on America's side. Not now. There is no counterbalance."

On some social issues, the United States and Europe do seem to be going in opposite directions. One that gets a lot of attention is the death penalty, which has either been abolished or suspended by all members of the European Union but is now legal in 38 states. Coming executions are often carefully followed here as examples of barbarism, and American diplomats say they are bombarded with questions about them. The fact that many recent executions have taken place in Texas also colors — negatively — European commentators' views of Gov. George W. Bush.

But other aspects of America are deplored too. Essayists have a field day with descriptions of the homelessness on the streets, women in jail forced to give birth in handcuffs,



Associated Press

Riot policemen confronted protesters in Athens demonstrating against President Clinton's visit in November. There is talk in Europe these days of America as a menacing force intent on remaking the world in its image.

Criticism of the U.S. is not new, experts say, but the vituperation is.

drugs, police violence, racism, and what they see as a puritanism that invades people's private lives, the prime example being the Monica Lewinsky affair.

"Never has America been so loved and so hated," says the novelist Pascal Bruckner, who has also written on anti-Americanism. "But in some ways America should be glad. We are not condemning the Russians for a lack of morality. We don't care. They don't count."

Felix Rohatyn says he has felt the change of attitude take place since 1997, when he arrived in Paris as the American ambassador.

"The anti-Americanism today encompasses not a specific policy like Iranian sanctions but a feeling that globalization has an American face on it and is a danger to the European and French view of society," Mr. Rohatyn said in an interview. "There

is the sense that America is such an extraordinary power that it can crush everything in its way. It is more frustration and anxiety now than plain anti-Americanism."

Mr. Rohatyn, like many others, says it is hard to measure the consequences of this attitude, though there are no doubt many. "It impacts most things," he said. "Not that it makes transactions impossible, but it certainly puts a different slant on them. It totally negates the notion that our interest is also in their interest. It creates the totally opposite point of view — that only the weakening of America can be good for them."

Such an attitude, for instance, fed a recent frenzy of concern in France that American pension fund investments in French companies might be promoting layoffs of French workers to benefit American retirees.

"Well, that's just not the case," Mr. Rohatyn said. "That is not the way things work, but it is a perfect example of that anti-American view at work."

Some Americans believe that part of the problem is that globalization has meant an increase in Americans doing business abroad with methods that do not sit well with Europeans. These Americans say they tend to try to cut short discussion and value quick decisions. Europeans tend to

take longer and look for consensus.

But the French, and other Europeans, often mention Americans' lack of knowledge about anything European and their unwillingness to learn as a major aggravating factor.

Mr. Bruckner described how when he was living in San Diego his landlady asked him how was his queen, when France has not had one since the 19th century. Mr. Mamère begins his book with a story about how Steve Forbes, at a recent Davos meeting, invoked the image of a Charlemagne who unified Europe two centuries ago. Charlemagne died more than 1,000 years ago and is usually billed as a conqueror, not a unifier.

"Omnipotence and ignorance," Mr. Mamère concludes about America in his first chapter. "It is a questionable cocktail."

Mr. Mamère's book, written with Olivier Warin, has not been published in America, nor does he expect it to be. "It would be great if they read some of what we write, but they do not," he said. "It would be great if they saw what they looked like from over here. But they are not interested. The Americans are so sure of themselves. They think they are the best in the world, that they are way ahead of everyone and everyone needs to learn from them."

More Vehemently Than Ever, Europe Is Scorning the U.S.

By SUZANNE DALEY 2000

PARIS, April 8 — Just read the title of his new book and you'll get an idea of Noël Mamère's perspective: "No Thanks, Uncle Sam."

Mr. Mamère, an outspoken though hardly extreme member of the French Parliament, has devoted an entire book to his argument that America is a worrisome society these days. It has a record number of armed citizens. It embraces the death penalty, turns the poor away when they need medical care, and its legislators have failed to approve a nuclear test ban. Yet, argues Mr. Mamère, the United States throws its weight around and would have the entire world follow in its steps.

At this moment, he says in his closing chapter, "it is appropriate to be downright anti-American."

In France, indeed in Europe, Mr. Mamère is by no means alone in his criticism of the United States. Wander a French bookstore these days and you will find any number of catchy titles ("The World Is Not Merchandise," "Who Is Killing France? The American Strategy," "American Totalitarianism" to name a few) deploring the American way — from its creation of a society ruled by profit to depictions of the United States as an unchecked force on its way to ruling the world. The

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Fatter in Lean Times

Iraqi elite gets richer from illegal smuggling ignored by U.S.

By Matthew McAllester
MIDDLE EAST CORRESPONDENT

Baghdad, Iraq — Back in 1990, before the sanctions started, Youssef Ahmed was the only game in town. Now he has seven competitors, all angling for the business of building private luxury pools in Baghdad.

In the first three months of this year, the Baghdad stock exchange index rose more than 75 percent.

Behind three-meter-high walls in a part of central Baghdad, work finished last year on a presidential palace the size of a small town.

Houses sell for the equivalent of a million dollars in the wealthy neighborhoods.

Refrigerators, air conditioners, microwaves and all sorts of cheap electronic goods from Korea fill dozens of shops all over the city. This is the other side of the United Nations sanctions in Iraq.

As innocent babies die at unprecedented levels in part because of an infrastructure crumbling under the weight of sanctions imposed in 1990, the embargo on Iraq has also enriched a small cadre of Iraqi businessmen-smugglers including, Newsday has learned, the immediate family of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, trading through a company called Asia. The massive smuggling — some estimates reach \$1 billion a year — is taking place almost unhindered, with the acquiescence of the embargo's biggest proponent, the United States, which has been loath to object because several neighboring countries involved in the smuggling are U.S. allies.

"In the 1990s a new class of people was created," said Ahmed, explaining the surge in demand for private pools. "Those people started building modern houses... After the embargo started, the merchants and smugglers and traders, their activities flourished more than before. Before, the government provided our goods. Now smugglers and merchants do that."



Yesterday: Iraq's Dying Babies

Today: Smuggler's Paradise

Tomorrow: A Generation Lost

Wednesday: Nearly Independent Kurdistan

that."

"The president and his men are getting stronger and stronger," one diplomat said. "Look at the wealthy neighborhoods of Ararat and Mansour. Look at the cars. Most people are driving clunkers but every week I go down there and there are more Mercedes and not just your baby Mercs but big S classes. These people are getting richer and richer."

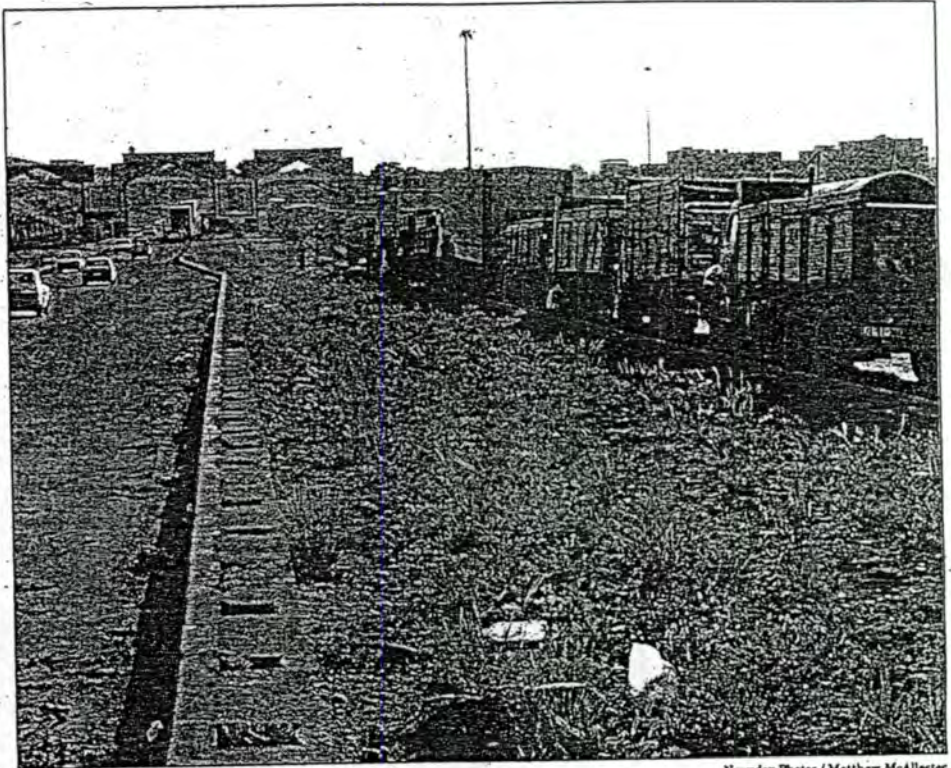
In order to appease allies in the region, the United States and its allies elsewhere make little effort to stem much of this illegal trade, many diplomats and politicians in Iraq and analysts in the United States say. American naval vessels patrol the Persian Gulf looking for smugglers of oil and other goods. But on none of Iraq's borders does any country strictly enforce the embargo.

Several diplomats and UN officials say the United States and its key allies turn a "blind eye" to Hussein's illegal trade, as shown by the long line of trucks that cross at the Turkish border in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq 24 hours a day.

"I brought in one ton of potatoes and I'm taking out 5,000 liters of diesel," said Suleiman Mohammed Ali, 41, a Turkish Kurd who was waiting with his truck at the Iraqi-Turkish border crossing on a recent evening. In front and behind his truck were hundreds of others, all illegally carrying Iraqi diesel, which the Kurdish authorities tax before allowing it to leave the country.

"The diesel goes to the Turkish government at a station across the valley there," said Ali, who had slept in his cab for four days on this trip. "It takes the oil and distributes it around Turkey."

And where did the oil come from?



Newsday Photos / Matthew McAllester

These Turkey-bound trucks lined up at border with Iraq are illegally carrying Iraqi diesel oil in defiance of the UN embargo. Diplomats say the U.S. is aware of the smuggling, but allows it to go on because it generates revenue for the Kurds.

"This is Saddam Hussein's oil," Ali said.

According to diplomats and officials in Iraq, the United States has applied no pressure on Turkey to curtail the trade, which boosts the economy of southeastern Turkey and so provides stability to a region whose Kurdish population has often rebelled against the government. On the Iraqi side, most of the revenue goes to Hussein and to the Kurdish authorities who currently control northern Iraq.

"Why do the Americans tolerate the trade?" said one Middle Eastern diplomat here. "Because it creates revenue for the Kurds, not because they like the Turks. It's one of the pillars of their foreign policy, to keep Saddam limping, to keep him on his toes."

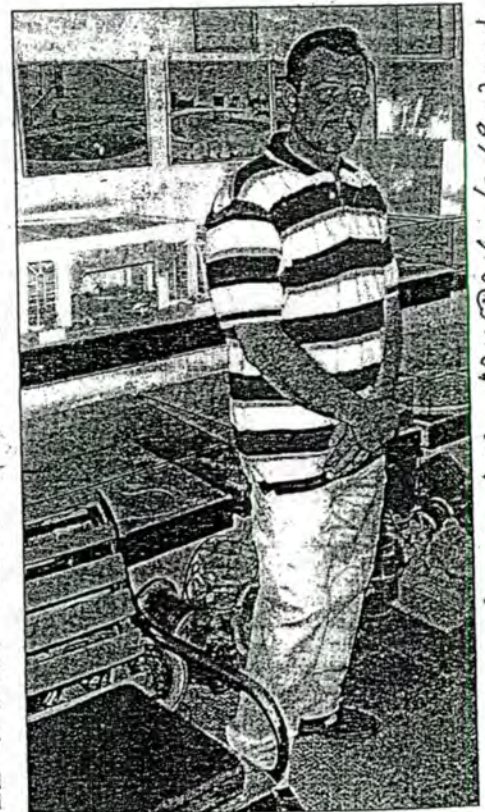
A State Department official acknowledged this was one reason why the trade continues: "The Kurds are getting a lot of money through the oil trade and we like the Kurds."

The United States also tolerates the trade because it needs to use Incirlik, a Turkish base, to operate its flights to maintain two no-fly zones over Iraq, said a Turkish official. "If they say we must shut this door and have no contact with Iraq, we would say OK, and now we'll discuss our entire relationship with the U.S. Our cooperation is a package deal," he said.

The State Department official said the United States is trying to address the illegal oil sales. "This trade is an issue of concern," the official said. "To suggest that we tolerate it is not accurate. It's something we're working on with the Turks to address. It's not an easy problem to solve."

Iraqi politicians are unabashed about the government's policy of conducting illegal trade. "I am not going to allow myself to be choked to death simply for a resolution that has no legitimacy," said Riyadh Al Qaysi, Iraq's deputy minister of foreign affairs. "Every opportunity I get to survive I will certainly take. In fact, I am duty-bound to take it."

A large percentage of Iraq's illegal trade in oil and other goods is controlled by Asia, Newsday learned from diplomatic and political sources in Iraq. The



Pool builder Youssef Ahmed says that despite the sanctions, he has seven competitors vying for work from Iraq's rich.

See SMUGGLERS on A24

Hussein Also Richer

SMUGGLERS from A8

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company, owned by the Hussein family, manages the bulk of illegal trade with neighboring nations.

Two sources separately said that the Kurdish party that controls the border with Turkey is a partner with the Baghdad-based Asia, even though that party, the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, claims to be an enemy of the Iraqi government. Asia has an office in the DPK-controlled town of Zakho, one Western diplomat said, and may have offices in neighboring countries like Turkey and Jordan.

"Asia, it's the biggest racket here," the diplomat said. "It's a brokerage company that trades between Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria."

Other Iraqi business owners are not shy to say how they get their goods. As he talked about his work, Ahmed the pool contractor glanced down at the tiles, pumps and other materials he needs to build pools lying on the floor. They were from Germany, Lebanon, Italy, Spain, Britain and elsewhere.

"I started to go through Dubai and Jordan as transshipment points because of the embargo," he said.

Across town, Faris Al-Hadi was also happy to explain how his Samsung dealership manages to skirt the sanctions. From a well-known Baghdad family, Al-Hadi is as respectable a businessman as they come. In the years before the sanctions, Al-Hadi and his father had many business interests and were agents for well-known Western watches, radios, typewriters, pens. Al-Hadi owned a successful flower shop and a big nursery and factories for retreading tires and processing nuts. He also owned a photo-developing lab and a computer consulting group.

When the sanctions started, he said, "everything was messed up totally."

After the Gulf War, Al-Hadi began to nurture a relationship with the Korean electronic goods manufacturer, Samsung, and together with a partner he formed his current company, Qareeb Trading Agency. Two years ago he and Samsung struck a deal. Al-Hadi would import some Samsung goods to Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates south of Iraq on the Persian Gulf. Others would go through a transfer company in Jordan and then across the Iraqi desert in trucks to Baghdad.

Samsung's "concern was, 'we are afraid of the UN and the U.S.' — that they might consider any direct dealing with Iraq as breaching the sanctions," Al-Hadi said.

James Chung, a spokesman for Samsung Electronics in Seoul, acknowledged that Samsung goods are sold in Iraq. "We have sales offices in Amman and Saudi Arabia but we don't have an official office in Iraq," he said. "Many local distributors can get Samsung Electronics goods around the countries near Iraq and they import these products through various channels and sell our products in Baghdad."

Chung said the company complies with the sanctions. "Samsung Electronics wants to negotiate with the local distributors directly but it is not possible because Iraq is under UN sanctions," he said. "So we cannot make official relations with any distributor in Iraq. We are not making any gains through sale of our products there." As an experienced and upfront businessman, Al-Hadi finds it demeaning to have to import his goods in this roundabout way. "It's almost like smuggling, you know?" he said. According to international law, it is smuggling.

It's a perilous way to run a busi-

ness. Once, one of the small boats his company hires to bring the goods from Dubai caught fire and \$60,000 worth of music tapes were destroyed. Another time, a boat was caught by one of the U.S. warships that sail the Gulf and act as the only physical deterrent to smuggling on Iraq's perimeter. The boat was held for six weeks and fined.

But usually, the boats face no problems in the Gulf. "These boats are not in international waters," Al-Hadi said. Those ships pass through the waters of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait with those governments' apparent knowledge. "They are very close to the shore. They know when they can sail and when to stop. They know what they're doing. They're smugglers."



Newsday Photo / Matthew McAllester

Businessman-smuggler Faris Al-Hadi

Business under these conditions is difficult but Al-Hadi is doing well. Last year he had sales worth \$2 million. This year he expects that to double. But it's nothing compared to the success of his businesses pre-embargo.

Samsung, which has heavy competition in Iraq, likes to be sure its products are marketed properly, Al-Hadi said. "We receive a lot of Samsung staff," he said. "They visit Iraq and check the market share and do a lot of work and see their products here."

Chung acknowledged that Samsung employees visit Baghdad. "We hope to make some good relationship with Iraq after the sanctions," he said. "It's possible that an employee met Mr. Al-Hadi some day but that does not directly mean there is an official connection with Samsung Electronics."

Unashamed of the way he does business, Al-Hadi nevertheless has harsh words for some Iraqi businessmen who he says have taken advantage of the basic needs of the Iraqi people to make a fast buck. This is the new, pool-building class that are Ahmed's clients.

"They are mainly engaged in the food business, the smuggling business in general," he said. "They bring in low quality goods and the purchasing power of people is very low so people buy this food. They cheat. Some food items imported are expired or branded with a brand that's not true. You can see Pepsi Cola in the marketplace from five different sources."

In fact, Pepsi is one of the 98 companies traded on the Baghdad stock exchange. "Not the real Pepsi," noted Sabih Al-Dulaimi, director general of the exchange.

Al-Dulaimi echoed Al-Hadi in his explanation of the new wealthy class in Iraq. "It's a kind of exploitation of the situation," he said, noting that all of the 98 companies on the exchange import goods illegally and are encouraged to do so by the government. "We're still in a war. In a war, many people go up and a lot go down."

END

NewDay 6-19-2008

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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MONDAY, MAY 1, 2000

Oil, Smuggling Grease Iraq's Economy Sanctions Help Nouveau Riche To Gain Foothold

By STEPHEN J. GLAIN

Staff Reporter of The Wall Street Journal

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Mahmood al-Zaka leads a tour of the high end of Iraq's nouveau riche economy, weaned on the world's largest and most widely tolerated smuggling racket.

Today, the luxury real-estate broker is showing a nearly completed, 1,440-square-yard villa in Baghdad's elite Mansour district, the fashionable lair of what Iraqis call the *Intiha'ah al-Hasar*, or "embargo cats." The entrance is framed by stone pillars chiseled to look like giant papyrus reeds. Inside, French tiles line the bathrooms. The floors are Italian marble, and the doors and baseboards are made of solid Burmese teakwood.

It's all yours for \$1.5 million. But hurry—it is a seller's market. Business has been booming for the past year, ever since oil prices began their steady ascent and revenue from smuggled Iraqi crude began to seep deeper into the economy. "We expect prices to double within the year," says Mr. al-Zaka, who estimates he sells one villa a week. He gets a 2% cut.

Across town, in the not-so-tony commercial district of Karada, Zuher al-Kadri inhabits the less glamorous, but no less profitable, side of Iraq's smuggling-led boomlet. He has just sold his sixth Panasonic fax machine of the day. His store is packed with electronic goods and appliances, all contraband shipped in from Dubai and Bahrain. Iraq is still short of hard currency, but that isn't a problem for shop owners like Mr. al-Kadri; traders from the Gulf sell him goods for 30 cents on the dollar. He pays them the balance over time from his cash flow.

"We're selling a lot to foreigners who are setting up operations here," he says. "The world is coming back to Iraq."

Just a few years ago, Iraq's economy was sick and deteriorating. Today, the rhythm of commerce is closer to that of



a southern Chinese boomtown in the go-go mid-'80s. While smugglers have profited from the embargo since it was first imposed in 1990, they had confined themselves to luxury items like cars and chandeliers. Now, the range of products that clutter shops is aimed as much at the middle class—or what is left of it—as the elite.

While the U.S. and Britain argue against removal of sanctions, most of the developed world is busy flogging goods here. Germany and South Korea were the latest to reactivate their embassies and staff them with commercial officers. South Korean electronics giants Samsung Electronics Co. and Daewoo Electronics Co. have opened dozens of stores all over town and have hired an army of sales agents.

"The sanctions," a refreshingly candid ambassador says, "have become a joke."

Not completely. Despite the oil-for-food program, which allows Baghdad to import humanitarian items, the shortage of pharmaceuticals is critical. Just about every Iraqi knows someone who took ill and died on the harsh, 10-hour journey from Baghdad to neighboring Jordan because treatment was not available locally. "My mother died of a stroke en route to a hospital in Amman," says a pilot with Iraqi Airways, the local flag carrier that has been grounded under sanctions. "And I could have flown her there."

But with each new villa built and
Please Turn to Page A26, Column 1

Smuggling Aids Iraq's Economy

Continued From Page A21

electronics shop opened, it becomes clear that the embargo has enriched, rather than subverted, Saddam Hussein. Indeed, it is unclear which side is more isolated: the dictator who has successfully defied sanctions, or the Anglo-U.S. alliance that insists they remain in place. "The sanctions can be attacked from many sides," says a European diplomat, "and there is great pressure from the world's big companies to get a piece of this market."

A lot of those companies have representatives staying at al-Rasheed Hotel, Baghdad's most comfortable lodge despite its bugged rooms and instant coffee. A lot of them are negotiating deals associated with the oil-for-food program. But they are also angling for contracts to be activated the moment sanctions are lifted. "I'm here for the same reason everyone else is here," bellows a German petroleum agent in an elevator. "Money."

Though Saddam and his tribe have certainly made a fortune off the smuggling

trade, it appears he is also letting some of those riches percolate into the economy. Baghdad is enjoying a construction boom, including the redevelopment of the Tigris River embankment with elegant white stones from the northern city of Haditha.

The government is also liberalizing what was once a model welfare state. Banks have announced they will sell U.S. dollars at the black-market rate of about 1,900 dinars to one dollar—instead of the official rate of 1,500—to traders who wish to import construction materials and machinery. The regime has eased restrictions on computers, and government offices and universities now have Internet access. Hospital care, once entirely subsidized by the state, has been in effect privatized.

"All of this is coming from the top," says a senior diplomat, seated at a new restaurant wedged between a Samsung dealership and a boutique selling expensive perfumes. "The regime has gotten so fat on sanctions that it feels it can let others get in on the action."

San Francisco Examiner



Tuesday evening

MAY 30, 2000

Iraq sanctions cripple people, not the regime

U.N. agencies see crisis in filth, lack of infant medical care

By David Aquila Lawrence
SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

BASRA, Iraq — Desert Storm ended almost a decade ago with a quick victory. Here in the dusty city of Basra, near the Kuwaiti border, the war's still on.

U.S. and British jets still bomb this country about once a week, but that's not where the casualties are coming from.

Basra Pediatric Hospital now treats an alarming number of patients for disease caused by malnutrition and poor sanitation —

treats them and loses them.

Routine complications, such as postpartum bleeding, are often fatal because hospitals can't get the supplies they need.

"I lost a woman 16 days back," said Dr. Abdul Karim Husayn, an obstetrician. "She's bleeding continuously, I have no blood bag for her. I am looking to the mother. I have nothing in my hand. Only to pray, 'God, please help me and help her.'"

The United States continues to defend the embargo on Iraq, now 10 years old. The blockade is meant to contain — if not unseat — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, who remains firmly in place and less cooperative than ever with U.N. weapons inspectors.

[See IRAQ, A-14]

♦ IRAQ from A-1

Iraqi people bear brunt of sanctions

The Iraqi people, not the government, bear the brunt of the sanctions.

U.N. relief agencies say the infant mortality rate in Iraq has more than doubled, meaning that more than half a million babies have died.

The Clinton administration says it has no quarrel with the Iraqi people. Most Iraqis don't see it that way.

"In the future there will be small babies, handicapped from low birth weight," said Abdul Karim. "They will be crippled, they will be short-statured — that's what your government wants. They want us to be crippled so we cannot face their attacks in the future."

The sanctions have frozen Iraq out of the last decade and, for the most part, prevented reconstruction.

Bridges bombed out during the war remain twisted ruins of con-

crete and steel.

The electricity grid has never recovered, leaving much of the country with only a few hours of power each day.

Clean water is scarce, and sewage sometimes forms open ponds in residential areas. The health care system, once among the best in the region, is failing as the crisis mounts.

'Oil for Food' aid

Since 1997, the U.N. Security Council's Resolution 986, establishing the "Oil for Food" program, has tried to help regular Iraqis while keeping up the pressure on Hussein.

Resolution 986 allows Iraq to swap oil for needed food and medicine. But the last two directors of the U.N. program have resigned to protest the human cost of the continued embargo.

The Clinton administration does not dispute that Iraqis are suffering, but it blames Hussein for manipulating the aid and causing the widespread misery in his country.

"It's not necessarily bad for the Iraqi people to deprive Saddam Hussein of resources, and it is not necessarily to the benefit of the Iraqi people to provide increasing resources to Saddam," said Philo Dibble, director of the State Department's section on north gulf affairs.

The Clinton administration insists Hussein is callously letting the Iraqi people suffer while he spends money from black-market oil-smuggling on lavish palaces and his personal security forces. And he still refuses to come clean about his weapons, despite promises he made to the United Nations at the war's end in 1991.

"We do have a responsibility to keep weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of the regime," Dibble said. "That is a humanitarian concern — what else would it be?"

The Iraqi government line has plenty of inconsistencies. The Oil for Food program was proposed as early as 1992, but the government of Iraq blocked it.

Iraqi security still finds the resources to carry out operations against the Shiite Muslims in the south, where several popular religious leaders have been killed in the last year. The army still conducts operations against the Kurds



ASSOCIATED PRESS/1998

Saddam Hussein is the intended target of the embargo on Iraq.

in the northern city of Kirkuk, currently the source of about 40 percent of Iraq's oil.

The United States points to the Kurdish region in the north as proof that Oil for Food is working.

The Kurdish militias there have taken de facto control of three provinces, and the aid program is administered there by the United Nations, not the Iraqi government. Infant mortality and other indexes of human welfare have improved.

The United States contends this shows that Oil for Food would work throughout Iraq, if Hussein were not manipulating it.

But U.N. officials say that the northern sections are better off because they get more food aid per capita, and they are making their own black-market profits from trade with Turkey.

Hussein is not keeping the program from working, say the U.N. officials who run Oil for Food. Rather, they say, the program is simply inadequate.

Not starving, but not thriving

Regardless of who is to blame, the 22 million people of Iraq are experiencing what one U.N. official called "un-development."

The Oil for Food program does not attempt to rebuild war-torn Iraq. Some water may get purified under the plan, but by the time it passes through aging pipes and ducts, it is unfit to drink and makes people ill. Once people are run-down, the food ration is not enough to keep them healthy.

"An Iraqi living on (the ration) will not die of starvation, but neither will he or she become fat," said George Somerwill, U.N. spokesman for the program in Baghdad.

"Healthy people should certainly live, but if people are already run-down, as they often are here, if a child is sick for other reasons to do with, for example, dirty water, then the child often requires a much higher caloric intake."

Who's Watching Saddam?

The failure of the Unscm mission and its larger implications.

THE GREATEST THREAT

Iraq, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and the Crisis of Global Security.

By Richard Butler.

262 pp. New York:

PublicAffairs. \$26.

By Barbara Crossette

RICHARD BUTLER now calls it a "poisoned chalice." But in the beginning it was a job and a challenge like no other: to complete the disarmament of Saddam Hussein, one of the most menacing rulers in a century of tyrants. Butler assumed this task in 1997, more than six years after the Iraqis had been driven from Kuwait in the Persian Gulf war and nearly seven years after crippling sanctions had been imposed on the Iraqis. Yet Saddam seemed as determined as ever to cling to the most terrible weapons on earth — biological toxins, chemical gases and the nuclear bomb.

Butler seemed made for the job. He was a tough, plain-spoken Australian with a career in disarmament. Only a year earlier, as Australia's ambassador to the United Nations, he had outsmarted India to save the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty from premature death in an international conference. Perhaps it was because of these attributes that the Iraqis turned on him with a particular vehemence, employing all manner of diplomatic maneuvers and enlisting Baghdad's allies — the Russians, the Chinese and, from time to time, the French — to make his job unbearable. That, at least, is the story Butler tells in "The Greatest Threat," his account of his two years as executive director of the United Nations Special Commission — or Unscm, as the world came to know it.

It is a story rich in vivid detail. Butler not only reveals the increasingly sham activities that passed for arms inspection before all pretense of monitoring Iraq ended with American and British bombing in December 1998; he also chronicles his run-ins with Iraqi officials, particularly Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, who repeatedly made an issue of Butler's rough, outspoken manner. By early 1999, his relations with Secretary General Kofi Annan all but ruptured, Butler saw little left to do except bide his time until his contract expired and he could leave the United Nations for a berth as diplomat in residence at the Council on Foreign Relations, where he wrote this book.

Rolf Ekeus, the Swedish diplomat who created Unscm and served as its first executive chairman from 1991 to 1997, has yet to write his book about Iraq. So it cannot be known for certain whether Ekeus — who once described his encounters with the Iraqi government as voyages into "The Arabian Nights" — bailed out only because the Swedish government wanted to send him to Washington as its ambassador. Was he also eager to leave because he knew that the Iraqis, having been forced to declare huge stocks of lethal arms they earlier denied having, had decided they had had enough of the game of search and destroy? Whatever the case, it seems clear today that his successor was given command of a sinking ship.

Butler stood out for his impatience with diplomatic dissimulation, a frank style that may have owed something to his working-class Australian background. The son of a landscape gar-

dener and World War II veteran, he grew up in Bondi, near Sydney, and developed a fierce loyalty to the Australian Labor Party. He received his first lessons in international affairs at Bondi Beach, Australia's most famous surf, where he played with children whose parents had escaped Nazi terror. By the time he graduated from the University of Sydney in 1964, he had decided on a career in international relations and was soon sent to the Australian Atomic Energy Commission. After serving in several other diplomatic posts, including the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, he became Australia's first ambassador for disarmament.

"The Greatest Threat" does not rewrite the history of the world's relations with Saddam Hussein. Yet the book fills in many important gaps, identifying members of the Secretary General's entourage who struck Butler as being more concerned about respecting Iraqi sensitivities than about holding Saddam to his promises to disarm. He reserves special contempt for Staffan de Mistura, a senior United Nations official who flabbergasted Security Council members and journalists by claiming that Saddam's ostentatious palaces were much admired by Iraqis, who expected their leader to live in such splendor. Unscm inspectors thought some of these buildings were obvious hiding places for arms or for arms research facilities. But when they suggested kicking down the doors, they were haughtily dismissed as cowboys by United Nations officials who preferred a more genteel approach. "The leadership of the U.N. had become a facilitator of Iraqi concealment," Butler concluded.

Some arms control experts will fault Butler for glossing over the Clinton administration's role in the failure of Unscm. Although the administration banged the drums for tough controls on Iraq throughout the mid-90's, it fell all but silent by late 1997, when Butler needed support most. Security Council solidarity crumbled, and Iraq, with Russian and French support, moved into the vacuum. In late 1998 and early 1999, American officials leaked information about the use of Unscm by the United States as a cover to conduct spying of its own. This was exactly what Saddam Hussein was waiting to hear. Butler maintains that the sharing of intelligence with the United States and other countries predated his arrival at Unscm, and Ekeus attests to that. But this does not undo the damage done to Unscm's reputation.

Butler's experience in Iraq has made him deeply pessimistic. "When a determined criminal flouts international law under the principle of state sovereignty," he writes, "the world system, as currently constituted, appears unable or unwilling to stop him." His book is a primer on the difficulties of enforcing any international arms control agreement when a country believes it is not in the national interest to comply. It doesn't have to be Iraq. It could be France or, for that matter, the United States.

In his final chapter, Butler expresses concern about Washington's abandonment of leadership in international arms control. For the moment, the politics of an election year have removed Iraq, and indeed most arms control issues besides antimissile defense, from public debate. Washington is not pressing Saddam Hussein to allow the newly established arms inspection team to resume work in Iraq. The United States, Butler argues, must reclaim the leadership in disarmament that it had after World War II. In the meantime, he reminds us, "No one is watching Saddam Hussein." □

Barbara Crossette is United Nations bureau chief of The New York Times.

NYT MAGAZINE
July, 2000

Survival of Innocents

How Iraqi children cope with poverty and homelessness

By Matthew McAllester

MIDDLE EAST CORRESPONDENT

Basra, Iraq — School is over for Mohammed Al Ramahi — for good. From now on, he's going to be selling vegetables in the market.

"There's no use going to school," said Mohammed, 13, who this month completed what his father has decided will be the boy's last year of formal education. "Life is so hard and I have to help my father. I don't feel so happy about it but I must help."

Mohammed stood behind a row of cucumbers at his father's stall, his body language confident and adult, his voice still unbroken. His father, Karim Al Ramahi, appeared out of the shopping crowd and explained why he had taken his son out of school.

"I appreciate that learning is very important and he's still a kid but things are so tough," said the father of five. "The embargo has created a real crisis so everyone has to do his best to get through. I have to take care of my family or they'll collapse."

Mohammed is part of a generation of young Iraqis who have grown up in a decade of increasing poverty and continuing economic sanctions. Many his age are dropping out of school to start work before they have started to shave. In Basra, Iraq's second largest city and a place of perhaps unparalleled poverty in this formerly wealthy country, there are many children like Mohammed. All over the town's souk, or market, young boys push large barrows of potatoes or flour. They call out the prices of car parts from stalls. They offer shoeshines. For the first time in people's memory, children are sleeping on the streets of the capital, Baghdad. The kids who do stay in school, teachers and aid workers say, are becoming increas-



Sunday: Iraq's Dying Babies

Yesterday: Smuggler's Paradise

Today: A Generation Lost

Wednesday: Nearly Independent Kurdistan

ingly apathetic, hopeless and bitter about the outside world that the children blame for their loss of opportunities and hunger.

Some aid workers and diplomats are worried that the Western countries like the United States and Britain that insist on continuing the decade-old embargo are helping to create a generation that is demoralized, under-educated and developing a hatred of the West.

"If you look at the possibility of a whole generation not feeling that their hopes and aspirations can be met, combined with this situation of isolation by the international community and feeling to a great extent that the rest of the world is responsible, you have to look at the ramifications for peace," said Anupama Rao Singh, the head of the United Nation's children's organization, UNICEF, in Iraq.

Abdul Razak Hashemi, a minister in the Iraqi government, was less diplomatic: "God help the West for the hate growing up in Iraqi children."

A State Department official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, acknowledged that the United States government is aware of the hostility to the West among the younger generation in Iraq but said it is not a top priority. "At this point, it's not a war for the hearts and minds," the official said. "It's a question of the security of the region. At this point it's not a popularity contest."

Young Iraqis, the official said, are bound to feel hostility toward the United States and its allies because the people of Iraq do not have access to free information and are susceptible to President Saddam Hussein's propaganda.

For many young people, however, daily survival is life's main concern.

It was past midnight on a recent night and the platforms of Baghdad's bus station were dark and punctuated by the bodies of sleeping men. By the bare electric light bulbs of the food stands that stay open all night, a boy sat behind his shoe-shine box.

He can't read or write. Behind his bony chest are lungs that struggle with asthma. His mother is long dead. He's a sweet boy, polite and a little nervous and usually hungry. He left home more than a year ago because his stepmother wanted him to beg in the streets and he hasn't been back since.

"Sometimes I sleep here," said the boy, Ibrahim, 15. "Well, every day."

Ibrahim makes 1,000 dinars, or 50 cents in a day, sometimes a quarter. What he makes he has to split with the man who actually owns the box full of brushes, rags and polish. He's a nice man, Ibrahim said. No one in the bus station, the regulars, takes advantage of him. Even the police are sympathetic.

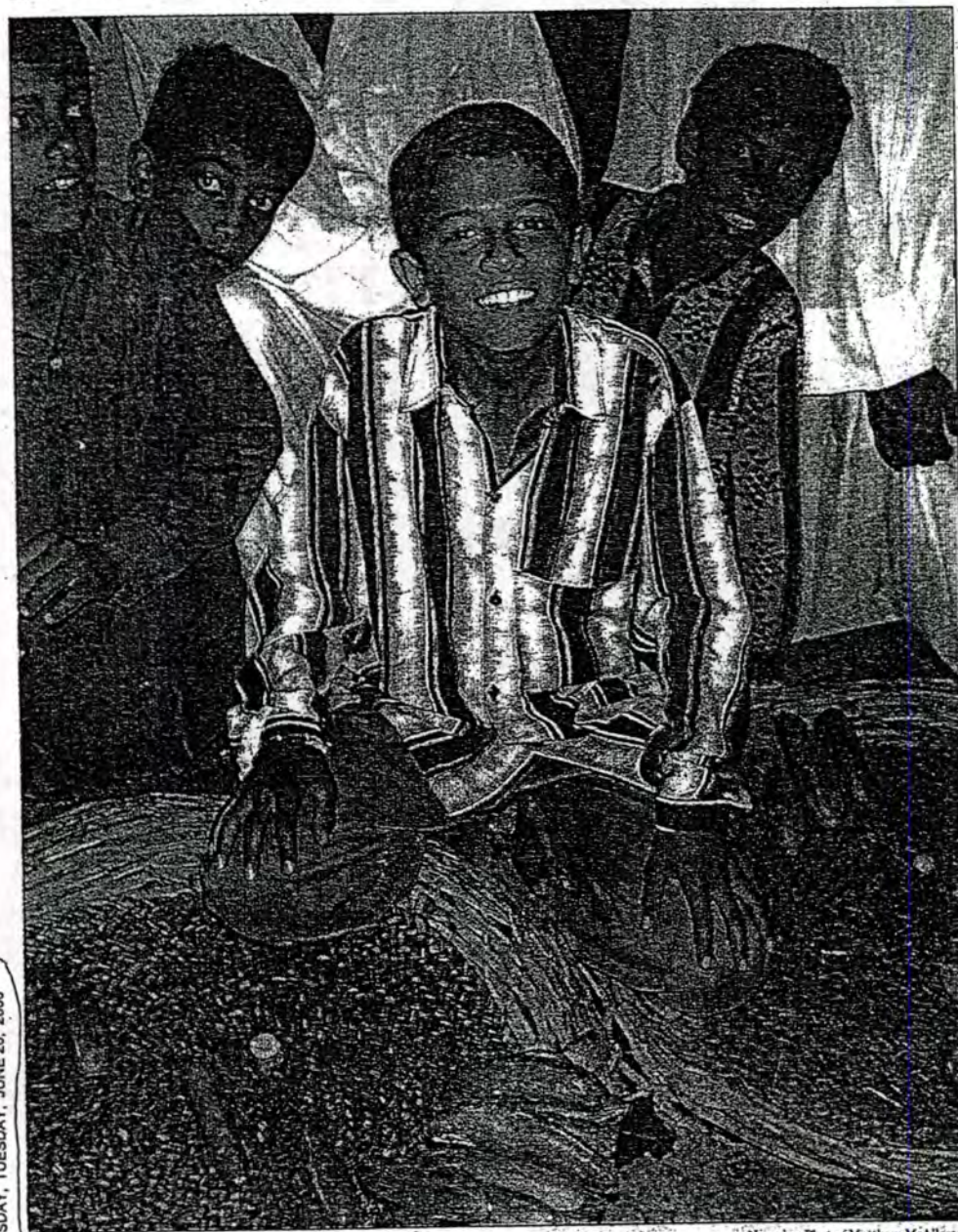
"Sometimes they even offer me food," he said.

Ibrahim is part of a growing number of homeless children in Baghdad, a fact that the government is highly sensitive about. Although the government minder who accompanies foreign journalists everywhere was quite willing to take a journalist to see dying babies in Iraqi hospitals, it took several days for Newsday to gain permission to interview homeless children. Requests for access to Baghdad's only center for homeless children, Dar Al Rahma (House of Mercy), were denied.

And the reason for the sensitivity is this: Iraqis, people with a history of extended family responsibility and extensive government social welfare programs, are simply embarrassed that families and society at large can no longer guarantee a home for every Iraqi child. While dying children is a crime against Iraq, to many Iraqis, the existence of homeless children is a stain on the national honor.

Officials from the Iraqi Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs did not respond to requests for interviews, but Singh said the Iraqi government is beginning to address the problem.

"It's one of the areas we've had a lot of forward movement in the last two years," she said. "Two or



Newsday Photo/Matthew McAllester

Mohammed Al Ramahi, 13, center, had to quit school to help his father sell vegetables in the market.

See IRAQ on A38

Newsday - Tuesday
6-30-2000

Iraqi Child's Greatest Lesson Is In Survival

IRAQ from A6

three years ago they weren't willing to discuss the issue."

Some are critical of the progress. According to aid workers who have been there, the 18-month-old Dar Al Rahma center resembles a prison more than a haven for homeless children. Armed guards surround the building, which the children cannot leave. Street kids are mixed inside with young criminals. There are no social workers to help the roughly 75 children inside — only a sociologist and a psychologist. Still, inside the center the children can go to school and learn crafts like carpentry, so things are getting better, aid workers said.

But the news has spread on the streets that Dar Al Rahma is best avoided.

When the police do speak to Ibrahim, they tell him he should go home or find the center. Home is where his drunken father and abusive stepmother are. He won't go back there. And he said he hasn't made it to the center because "I don't know the address."

An Iraqi man listening to the conversation had his own interpretation. "He knows where it is," the man said. "He just doesn't want to go there."

What are Ibrahim's dreams? An end to the sanctions perhaps? A change of government in Iraq?

"I hope one day I'll have at least enough clothes and pocket money to survive," he said. "And I would like to go to school."

Some young Iraqis are more politically aware and have complex, conflicted views of the West. They are bitter at what they perceive as an unjust economic stranglehold that countries like the United States and Britain support and yet they are attracted to the fruits and freedoms of the West.

Fahed Yousser Hamoud is 19 and hopes to go to medical school in September. He lives in the old city of Basra, once a neighborhood of elegant homes and canals that Iraqis called their Venice. Most of the houses are now on their last legs and the canals are dried-up dribbles of sewage and trash.

On a recent afternoon, Hamoud was walking home after finishing his final exams at high school. Many of his friends have dropped out of school, knowing they can make more money in the *souk* or driving cabs than they could as doctors or engineers. Hamoud is determined to push ahead with his studies, hoping that by the time he is a fully qualified doctor, in eight years, the sanctions might be over.

One of the things Hamoud most wants is access to the Internet — illegal in Hussein's Iraq.

His Chicago Bulls T-shirt and Phoenix Suns baseball cap give a clue to the country in the world he would most like to visit. "I would love to go to America," he said. "I would love to see the countryside there. And Michael Jordan."

Even so, Hamoud strongly opposes the U.S.-backed sanctions against Iraq. "It's no use continuing the embargo on people," he said. "It's a crime to join politics and this campaign against innocent people. It will just create hatred."

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