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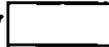


### Intelligence Report

Office of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Analysis

2 May 2000

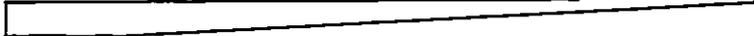
#### Iraq: Ethnic Relocation Bolsters Regime Security



*Baghdad is consolidating its stranglehold on internal security by continuing to forcibly relocate thousands of families of restive ethnic groups. Regime security services transfer potentially troublesome groups to remote or unfamiliar areas of Iraq—disrupting familial and financial support structures—in retaliation for suspected dissident activity and to preclude recurrences:*

- *The regime has uprooted roughly 4,000 Shia families from Baghdad and sent them to southern and western Iraq in reprisal for urban disturbances last year, according to Kurdish press*

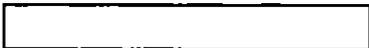
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- *Baghdad is dislodging Kurdish families from cities and villages in oil-producing regions near the Kurdish-controlled zone and is repopulating these areas with Sunni Arabs to serve as a loyal bulwark.*
- *Saddam also is moving Palestinian and other Sunni Arab groups to restive areas—and probably providing them incentives—for a more robust proregime presence.*

*Like other aspects of Saddam's efforts to reengineer Iraqi society for security ends—such as manipulating the tribal structure and strengthening the security services and Ba'th Party at the expense of key government institutions—Baghdad's ethnic relocation program has aided regime security efforts. In post-Saddam Iraq, however, the legacy of this policy will add to the turmoil facing a successor government:*

- *The victims of Saddam's relocation efforts have decades-long cultural and familial ties to their areas of origin and are likely to attempt to return home if the regime collapses—potentially clashing with those whom the regime has settled there.*



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**Iraq: Ethnic Relocation Bolsters Regime Security**

**Uprooting Troublesome Groups**

Baghdad has sought to consolidate its stranglehold on internal security since the 1970s by forcibly relocating thousands of families of restive ethnic groups. Regime security services transfer potentially troublesome groups to remote or unfamiliar areas of Iraq—disrupting familial and financial support structures—in retaliation for suspected dissident activity and to preclude recurrences. Official Iraqi media have not been observed to acknowledge the relocations, but

Kurdish and London-based Arabic press have cited regime claims that these measures are intended to alleviate unemployment and overcrowding—especially in the capital—and to improve economic planning.

Although the regime is concerned about unrest in outlying provinces, maintaining stability in Baghdad is of paramount importance. According to Kurdish and London-based Arabic press, population transfers from the capital—as well as recently implemented restrictions on Shia property ownership in Baghdad—suggest that the regime has an overall plan to decrease the number of potentially recalcitrant Shia in the capital:

- The regime has uprooted roughly 4,000 Shia families from Baghdad and sent them to southern and western Iraq in reprisal for urban disturbances last year, according to Kurdish press

Saddam Husayn also is moving various Sunni groups to restive areas—and probably providing them with incentives to relocate—for a more robust proregime presence:

- Recent press indicate that the regime is settling Palestinians in depopulated former Shia neighborhoods of Baghdad as well as in southern Iraq and in Kurdish and Turkomen areas.

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- Several families from Tikrit—Saddam's support base—have also relocated to southern provinces,

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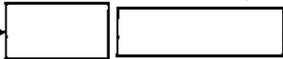
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Arabizing Kurdish Oil Areas



Baghdad also is removing Kurdish families from cities and villages in oil-producing regions near the Kurdish-controlled zone and is repopulating these areas with Sunni Arabs to serve as a loyal bulwark:

- The regime seeks to bolster its control over local oil resources with an eye toward the eventual reintegration of northern Iraq.
- Since January, the regime has dislodged more than 300 Kurdish and Turkoman families from villages fringing the Kurdish autonomous line to other parts of Iraq, according to Kurdish and London Arabic press.



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Relocations A Decades-Long Phenomenon (U)

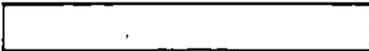
Baghdad has typically expelled or relocated restive groups in anticipation of—or in retaliation for—opposition activity:

- Following the Algiers Agreement with Iran in 1975, Baghdad moved to quell Kurdish dissidence by forcibly relocating 250,000 to 300,000 Kurds to southern Iraq. The regime also razed many Kurdish villages along the Iranian border or repopulated them with Arabs, according to academics.
- The establishment of Islamic government in Tehran in 1979 generated a wave of Shia unrest that Baghdad countered by expelling 40,000 Shia to Iran in early 1980. (U)

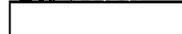
Saddam has also used regional developments as political cover for removing troublesome groups:

- In 1971, Baghdad expelled about 100,000 Shia Arabs and Shia Kurds to Iran after Tehran occupied three Persian Gulf islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates, according to academics. (U)

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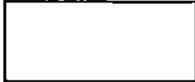


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**Limited Near-Term Gains, Greater Long-Term Problems (U)**

Like Saddam's other efforts to reengineer Iraqi society for security ends—such as manipulating the tribal structure and strengthening the security services and Ba'th Party at the expense of key government institutions—Baghdad's ethnic relocation program has improved near-term regime security. Nevertheless, the regime's ability to continue forcibly resettling segments of the population ultimately will be limited by logistical and security constraints. Half of Baghdad's population of 6 million consists of potentially restive Shia, whose large-scale expulsion would be almost impossible to achieve. Moreover, the regime probably cannot completely staunch the flow of rural migrants—many of whom are Shia—seeking better living conditions in the capital:

- Baghdad's efforts to relocate population groups also place an added burden on the security services, which, in many cases, must maintain a heightened presence in the areas where groups are resettled.
- Forced population transfers are likely to have inflamed antiregime sentiment among uprooted groups, which have been cowed into inaction for now but could nonetheless foment future unrest.



In post-Saddam Iraq, the legacy of this policy will add to the turmoil facing a successor government. The victims of Saddam's relocation efforts have decades-long cultural and familial ties to their areas of origin and are likely to attempt to return home if the regime collapses—potentially clashing with those whom the regime has settled there.

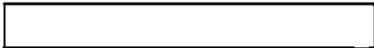


**Intelligence on Relocations Lacking**



This paper is derived from episodic and irregular information rather than a firm base of intelligence reporting. The available reporting on Iraqi ethnic relocation measures is sporadic and usually difficult to corroborate. Moreover, different sources give wide-ranging estimates on the frequency and extent of forced population movements. While imagery has revealed evidence of the regime's destruction of villages in the past, the regime's resettlement program does not have a visible signature—in most cases, rather than destroying depopulated neighborhoods or villages, the regime typically repopulates them with Sunni Arabs loyal to the regime. (S NF)

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**Subject: Iraq: Ethnic Relocation Bolsters Regime Security** [Redacted]

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**Subject: Iraq: Ethnic Relocation Bolsters Regime Security** [Redacted]

**NESAF/Iraq (2 May 2000)**

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