Sports: Political Influence on International Competition
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According to Stephen Figler, two philosophies surround international sports. First is the idea that “meeting on the fields of friendly strife reinforces the mutual humanity and worth of global neighbors” (Figler, 247). Second is an idea “attached to the modern Olympic movement” that says the “friendly battles taking place within the arenas...provide an outlet for hostile tension, that is, a symbolic substitution for war” (Figler, 247). If such a philosophy ruled the world in both sports and politics, perhaps the world would be war-free. Reality, however, appreciates the philosophy but maintains some sort of separation between sports and politics that keeps the fires of war burning for certain regions of the world. Despite reality, there is some sense to the political ties to the scope of international sports. In fact, “through the ages, sport has exhibited political importance in varying ways” (Figler, 248).

One way in which international sports is tied to politics is by “being associated with whatever values are endemic in a social system” (Figler, 248). Examples of such a tie might be linking sports with “values as disparate as democratic ideals in America, socialist ideals in the Soviet Union, and fascist ideals in Nazi Germany” (Figler, 249). All three societies have used the power of sports and its link to social value to better themselves in global recognition of their particular value system. Besides the socio-political link, there are other “specific ways in which international politics influences sport” (Figler, 250). These ways include identity and self-image of nations, dominance and propaganda among powers, recognition of governments, and political sanction through the boycott (Figler, 250). The influence of politics on sports can be seen most clearly when placed in the context of the Pan-American and Olympic Games.

As an example of national identity and self-image, the Pan-American Games “have been invested with political purpose, such as maintaining and increasing friendly contact among the nations of the Western Hemisphere” (Figler, 253). In promoting national identity and self-image,
the purpose of the Games “transcends individual countries and functions also at the level of political and ethnic multinational alliances” (Figler, 252). The sports-related quest for identity and self-image, however, is not without its obstacles. The Pan-American Games, for example, are “punctuated periodically by verbal and even violent conflict” (Figler, 253). The 1975 Games in Mexico City provide an example of such conflict when “fighting broke out during a water polo match and continued into the locker room following the match” (Figler, 253).

In looking at the political influence of propaganda and international dominance, “the important concern is that governments behave as if athletic superiority acts as propaganda to support their political system and way of life” (Figler, 254). A striking example of this type of influence occurred in 1952 when the former Soviet Union “entered Olympic competition...during the height of the Cold War” (Figler, 254).

One example of how political influence in sports is used for official recognition of governments is what is remembered as Ping Pong Diplomacy. The term “is a phrase coined during the Nixon Administration to describe the use of sports for establishing political ties between the People’s Republic of China and the United States” (Figler, 256). The diplomatic move brought the Chinese government out of years of isolation and back into the eyes of international politics and sports.

According to Figler, “probably the most heavy-handed political use of sports is the sanctioning of governmental policies in other nations,” with the most “widespread form of sanction [being] the boycott” (Figler, 256). In the scope of both politics and sports, the power of the boycott can be both effective and damaging. A prime example of the use of this power came in 1964 when South Africa “was banned from the Tokyo Olympics” (Figler, 257). The ban was based on the “boycotts of South Africa and Rhodesia,” for having what many nations perceived to
be racist policies (Figler, 257). The effectiveness of such a boycott was seen a few decades later when South African policies changed and apartheid ended. A less effective pair of boycotts plagued two more Olympic Games: a U.S.-led boycott in 1980 and a Soviet-led boycott in 1984. The 1980 Olympic boycott was “prompted by the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan,” and this boycott suffered from “criticism” and the “old cry that sport should be above and separate from politics” (Figler, 259). Despite the U.S.-led boycott, and in lieu of the call for separation of politics and sport, the 1980 Olympic Games went on. In what might be cast as a political retaliation, the Soviets led a “15-nation boycott of the Los Angeles Olympic Games” in 1984 (Figler, 260). Again, the boycott did not stop the Games from proceeding.

The significance of the Olympic Games themselves to the arena of international sports is obvious due to its historical contributions to athletic competition. The political repercussions of the modern Olympic Games, however, has become even more significant in terms of control and manipulation, surviving political unrest, and transcending violence. It might be said that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is “the most influential organization in international sport today” (Swanson, 339). Since “the beginning of the modern Games,” the IOC has been “plagued” concerning “which countries should compete” (Swanson, 371). The Committee, in its form of the host country, has also faced a loss of control. An example of this occurred in 1936 when “the Games had moved from the control of the German Olympic Organizing Committee to that of Hitler and the Nazi Party” (Swanson, 377). This move made in 1936 “clearly represented political manipulation” by a host government (Swanson, 379).

In recent times, the Games have been celebrated in a world that is often dealing with political unrest. Such an atmosphere held the Games at Melbourne, Australia “due to the 1956
unsuccessful Hungarian rebellion against the Soviet Union" (Swanson, 380). Amazingly the Hungarians were able to send a few of their athletes to the Games.

A final significance concerning the modern Olympic Games has to do with transcending violence. With the violent killing of nine Israeli athletes at the 1972 Games in Munich, “never before had the tension of the world intruded into the modern Olympic Games to this degree” (Swanson, 384). Following a debate “as to whether or not to end the Games, the IOC decided to continue them, thus reaffirming its position that the Games transcend politically motivated violence” (Swanson, 384). A tragic memorial to Olympic athletes was somewhat subdued by such a bold stand. The significance of political influence on international sports concluded those Games with an important message that has lifted sports to a new level: politics can only bring people down so far before they lift themselves back up.
References


Iraq: Political Dealings with Aggression and Distrust
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Some might say it was a deal with the devil, while others see the deal as the only chance to remove the real danger. The February 1998 meeting between U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Iraq leader Saddam Hussein was welcomed by much of the international community as a way to avoid armed conflict of uncertain proportions. However, “despite the fanfare over the agreement, there isn’t much faith inside the [United States] Administration that it will last” (Liu, 28). The world is no stranger to Saddam Hussein and his dictatorship in Iraq. Currently the concern is Hussein’s program of biological warfare. The program’s existence has been exposed to the public, but the weapons and materials for the program have become part of a dangerous game of hide-and-seek. Hidden agendas have been part of Hussein’s policy with the world for over two decades. The history of Iraq and its leadership give Hussein some sort of excuse for his behavior in contemporary times. In order to analyze Hussein’s motivation one must consider the ideas of aggression and trust according to the Iraqi leadership’s perception of their own situation.

Iraq is a rather young country when placed in the center of a region of the world which is considered by many to be the birthplace of civilization. In attempting to understand Iraq’s search for international recognition and respect, “the starting point might be found in the aftermath of the First World War when Britain established the current borders of the region” (Musallam, I). After becoming a sovereign state in October of 1932, Iraq watched as Britain remained in neighboring Kuwait until 1961 (Musallam, I). After Britain left, the first evidence of Iraqi aggression appeared when “Iraq refused to recognize Kuwait’s independence and laid claim to large areas of Kuwait territory” (Musallam, 1). The Arab world and Britain supported Kuwait by sending in forces against Iraqi claims, and Baghdad was forced to back down (Musallam, 2).

The aggression building was given more fire when in 1975 “a long-simmering dispute with Iran over the sovereignty of the Shatt al-Arab waterway to the Gulf burst into the open”
The result of the dispute was the Treaty of Algiers, signed in 1975, which provided for "a discontinuation of Iranian support for the Kurds, but ceding Iranian claims to the Shatt al-Arab strait" (Musallam, 2). Saddam Hussein would claim a decade later that the treaty "was the result of a coercion" and one of the causes of the Iran-Iraq was of 1980-1988 (Musallam, 2). The war with Iran had "destroyed Iraq's newly built infrastructure, exhausted its oil reserve wealth, involved the country in a foreign debt of approximately $80 billion, and eventually even led to Iraq's concession of some of its territory" (Musallam, 3).

In order to solve this political dilemma, Iraq needed to find an "external enemy" to act as a "scapegoat for popular resentment," and Iraq chose to turn on former Gulf friends Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (Musallam, 3). The conflict in the Gulf that followed such an act of aggression was met with a "phenomenon of unity, organisation, and military-political cohesiveness without parallel in post-Second World War international affairs" (Musallam, 1). A coalition of thirty-three countries responded to "Iraq's surprise invasion of Kuwait" on 2 August 1990 with "rapid and clear" force (Musallam, 4). Although the aggression was clearly seen as "a violation of the formal rules of international society," many onlookers were "uncertain as to whether or not is was appropriate and 'just' to go to war before the economic sanctions had been given ample time in which to succeed or fail" (Musallam, 101-102).

It is this uncertainty with which foreign nations often look upon the situation in Iraq. The uncertainty of not knowing how Iraq will respond to its own internal conflict is what stops most nations from placing any trust in the troubled leadership of Iraq. Since Saddam Hussein's ascendancy to leadership in the late 1970s, a pattern of response to what is perceived by Hussein to be a threat has emerged. Iraq's history in dealing with the Kurdish population has shown such a pattern. Hussein "initially negotiated a political settlement with the Kurds, but when he felt that
Iraq’s internal fabric was strong enough, he moved swiftly against them” (Musallam, 60). In 1980, Hussein was not able to “remain silent in the face of Iranian provocation” and invaded Iran, feeling it was “his duty to strike back with all means at his disposal” (Musallam, 60). By invading Kuwait, Hussein was motivated by his “need to maintain his own position as the glorious Arab hero” (Musallam, 60).

It might be said that the invasion of Kuwait ended any chance that foreign nations might be able to trust Hussein as the leader of Iraq. The conflict with Kuwait remains in the shadows as politicians and other interested parties attempt to survey a rather dangerous and uncertain situation in Iraq. New attempts to remove Hussein from power have proved unsuccessful. As the chance of a United States strike on Iraq became more likely, the certainty about the repercussions of war with Iraq remained narrow. In February 1998 U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen said that “a military strike against Iraq would be substantial in size and impact but would be unable either to remove Saddam Hussein from power or eliminate his arsenal of deadly weapons” (Schafer, 14A).

Before a formal military strike from a major power like the United States seemed imminent, a few other interesting developments attempted to affect Iraq’s internal security and test the response of Saddam Hussein to some potentially threatening situation. In 1995 Lieut. General Hussein Kamel al-Majid and his brother Colonel Saddam Kamel al-Majid escaped with their wives into neighboring Jordan (Walsh, 52). The significance of this escape lies in the fact that both men were elite members of Saddam Hussein’s security and weaponry intelligence forces. Another blow to Saddam Hussein’s more familial security was the fact that the wives of the defectors were his own daughters. Although many did not see “his relatives’ flight [as] fatal, it at least displayed publicly some crucial flaws” (Walsh, 52).
In addition to the defection of his sons-in-law, Saddam Hussein faced a CIA coup led by intelligence forces from the United States. On August 31, 1996 in the Kurdish city of Erbil, “six unknown Americans in their fancy white Landcruiser...fled...just as the Iraqi army was rolling into the Kurdish city” (Fedarko, 42). The CIA has been “running a modest mission [for five years] to bind diverse factions of Kurdish and Iraqi dissidents into an opposition against Saddam Hussein” (Fedarko, 43). The failure of that mission in January of 1996 makes it difficult for the CIA to “persuade the U.S. Congress to fund similar operations” and for Iraqis to be able to trust foreign help (Fedarko, 44).

In all of the concern about the dangerous nature of Iraqi leadership and what response the international community must make, a final thought must be made on the fate of the Iraqi people themselves. It was toward the Iraqi people, particularly the middle- and merchant classes, that the U.S. and other parties looked in hopes that they might overthrow Saddam Hussein after the Gulf War (Arnett, 44). The five years that passed, however, following the war changed those same people who were the hope of concerned onlookers. In 1996 the “political discontent seem[ed] to have dissipated” and the “educated merchant class [had] settled into numb resignation” (Arnett, 44). “Rigorous economic sanctions” and the resulting poverty makes it difficult for ordinary Iraqis to focus on anything but “basic survival” (Arnett, 44). Fortunately, some onlookers are beginning to consider the fate of the ordinary Iraqi as they wait for diplomacy to solve to current conflict in Iraq. The situation is a serious one since biological warfare appears to be one of the deadliest threat to the world’s existence. A history of aggression and a lack of trust make Iraq and its leadership a difficult combination to compromise with.
References


SADDAM'S CIA COUP

The agency hoped to turn Kurdistan into a base for Hussein's opponents. The dictator's incursion, however, has wiped out the Americans' operations.

By KEVIN FEDARKO

N'AIN KAWA STREET IN ERBIL, just beyond the green arch bearing the inscription FREE KURDISTAN, there stands a gray house, No. 23-7. Everyone in this Christian suburb whispers about the six "unknown Americans" in their fancy white Landcruiser who used to visit No. 23-7 regularly. They were CIA case officers, and until they fled on Aug. 31, just as the Iraqi army was rolling into the Kurdish city, this was their base in Erbil. When they departed—driving fast, well before dawn—they left three things behind. The first was the rent, four months' worth paid in advance. Second was hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of computers, scramblers and satellite phones, as well as equipment used by a TV-radio station that beamed anti-Saddam propaganda into Iraq.
BEREFET: Kurdish refugees from the losing faction at Iraq’s border, fleeing Iraqi troops interviewed an eyewitness who watched the execution of 30. “The Iraqis arrived at 4 p.m., interrogated his comrades, then blindfolded them and shot them at 5 p.m.” Meanwhile Abu Khadim and 250 comrades fled to the mountain town of Salahuddin, a stronghold of Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani, the very man who had invited Saddam Hussein into northern Iraq. Asked if they felt betrayed by the CIA, an Abu Khadim aide shook his head in disbelief and replied, “I was astonished that the U.S. Air Force did not come to our rescue.”

For five years, the CIA has been running a modest mission to bind diverse factions of Kurdish and Iraqi dissidents into an opposition against Saddam Hussein. With Baghdad’s re-entry into northern Iraq, the mission was obliterated. “Saddam has knocked out many of America’s eyes and ears, and your good name was tarnished,” says Professor Amatzia Baram of Israel’s Haifa University, a leading Iraq expert. “U.S. credibility and reputation for protecting its friends has suffered a terrible blow.”

Even as the U.S. deploys F-117 Stealth fighter-bombers to temper Saddam’s erratic outbursts, the CIA must rebuild its Iraqi operation from the bottom up.

When the U.S. and its allies established a safe haven for the Kurds in northern Iraq after the Gulf War, one goal was to use the territory as a base from which opposition groups could confront Saddam. The U.S. refused to support an all-out guerrilla war, but the White House and Congress did allow the CIA to spend between $10 million and $15 million a year running two clandestine operations. The smaller but more promising one was a paramilitary organization known as Wifaq (Iraqi National Accord), based in Jordan. Wifaq’s 80 to 100 members included several prominent former Iraqi army officers and one-time officials of Saddam’s regime. Its objective was to penetrate Saddam’s elite Republican Guard, but the group was infiltrated by his agents. Last June, Saddam got wind of a Wifaq coup plan and ordered organization members seized in Baghdad. By July, at least several dozen plotters had been executed, and as many as 2,000 suspects were held and presumably tortured before some were released.

The second CIA-sponsored effort in Iraq involved the I.N.C. An Erbil-based umbrella group founded in 1992, the congress included 19 Iraqi and Kurdish organizations. “The CIA financed the group but did not direct its activities,” says an agency official. The I.N.C.’s main tasks were to gather information, distribute propaganda and recruit dissidents. Two years ago, it published a fake issue of Babil, the daily newspaper owned by Saddam’s eldest son Uday. The expertly counterfeited copy, distributed for one day in Baghdad, exposed many of Saddam’s atrocities. The tactic backfired, however, because readers were more frightened than infuriated by the revelations.

The CIA’s aim was to help prepare the I.N.C. to form the basis of a new political system. Once Saddam was removed from power, by whatever means, I.N.C. representa-

11 hours each day. Finally, they also left behind 1,500 members of the Iraqi National Congress, an opposition group based in Erbil, to whom the CIA had given financing, arms and—the I.N.C. now claims—an implicit understanding that if anything went wrong, these U.S. allies would not be abandoned to fend for themselves.

CIA officials say the agency offered no such guarantee. But in any case, as the Americans raced their Landruiser toward the Turkish border and Iraqi troops began flowing the streets of Erbil, senior I.N.C. military officer Colonel Mukkadam Abu Khadim and his men were busy trying to stay alive. “The Mukhabarat [Iraq’s secret police] had names and addresses,” says Abu Khadim. “Those who didn’t get away were seized.” Of the 100 employees who worked for the rebel TV station, only 12 survived. Between 97 and 100 I.N.C. members were also killed on the spot; Abu Khadim says he...
As relations between Barzani and Talabani worsened, the CIA seems to have been unaware of the alliance that formed between Barzani and Saddam. "I have to conclude that the CIA was taken by surprise, because otherwise they would have evacuated every piece of equipment and looked after the I.N.C. and other friendly Kurds," says Baram. "The CIA isn't irresponsible; it just didn't have good information on what was happening inside Saddam's palace or in Barzani's headquarters."

This assessment appears to be confirmed by Abu Khadim, who said both the CIA agents and the I.N.C. soldiers in Erbil were completely astonished by the attack at 4 a.m. on Aug. 31. "We never thought they would be actively involved," said the colonel. "We thought they would just shell us, as they have done in the past."

When Saddam's army rolled north, CIA officials claim, they were able to extract everyone with whom the agency had a close association, meaning about two dozen security guards and their families, plus several paid informants. Even so, the CIA is viewed as having abandoned several hundred congress members. As for their mission, it no longer exists. "Our entire covert action program has gone to hell," says a U.S. official.

The impression that working for the CIA can amount to a kiss of death is unlikely to be mitigated by the news that the Clinton Administration will evacuate some 2,500 aid workers, clerks, drivers and translators employed with U.S. military and relief operations who fled to the Turkish border in northern Iraq. As for Abu Khadim and his men, they are still waiting in Salahuddin. "We are in great danger," he said. "The CIA couldn't help us; we are soldiers and had to fight. But now we are asking them to do something for us as soon as possible: evacuation."

After the Kurdish debacle, the CIA will probably find it increasingly difficult to persuade the U.S. Congress to fund similar operations in Iraq and all but impossible to recruit new operatives. "The CIA has fled and abandoned a large number of people," says Rend Rahim Francke, director of the anti-Saddam Iraq Foundation in Washington. "All Iraqis—all those in the opposition—feel extremely let down by the U.S."

The damage may also spill into the CIA's semicovert operation, aimed at moderating the regime in Iran. "It's going to give pause to anyone wanting to work with us on Iran," says a knowledgeable official.

Because covert operations are usually kept secret, it is unlikely that any public hearing will ever be held to determine how many CIA associates were killed in Iraq. But this much is clear: the agency's reputation has been demolished. "It may be that the CIA actually made tremendous efforts to protect its people," says Baram. "But the perception among Iraqis is that having anything to do with Americans is dangerous to your health."

The rout will make the CIA's future tasks in the Middle East—and perhaps the rest of the world—harder still to achieve. —Reported by Scott MacLeod/Tehran, Elaine Shannon and Lewis M. Simonson/Washington and James Wilde/Erbil

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The Baghdad Blues

By PETER ARNETT BAGHDAD

The Iraqis I see in Baghdad this week bear little resemblance to those I met before the 1991 Gulf War. The same faces, yes; the same names: Sadoun, Ala, Sa'ad, Mahoud, middle-class government officials, merchants, staffers at international companies. Right after the Gulf War, these were the people the U.S. hoped, maybe expected, would overthrow Saddam Hussein. But the political discontent I saw then seems to have dissipated. Now, after enduring rigorous economic sanctions that have stripped away their wealth, the educated merchant class has settled into numb resignation. The dinar has been devalued to one five-nar. Gone too is the zest for life, the unpretentious way with visitors, the jocularity.

Iraqis are a proud people, but poverty has brought many of them low, poor in spirit as well as dinars. Their whole focus today is on basic survival. A government department head uses his car as a taxi after hours, while his wife takes in laundry. A young Iraqi woman fluent in four languages who once ran a hire-car firm now earns only $7 a month in a similar job. To keep going, she has had to sell so many possessions that she and her grandmother sleep on the floor and eat with their fingers from cooking utensils. I'm often asked after a Baghdad trip why these hard pressed people don't rebel against Saddam. The middle class has fallen the furthest and would seem to be a vast pool of potential discontent. But U.S. agents have attempted to stir them to rebellion with scant success. That the middle class is not in a revolutionary mood is understandable when you pair the severe U.N. economic sanctions with the government's preoccupation with protecting its internal security. Their priority is the struggle for sustenance for themselves and their families, a daily struggle that leaves little room for other than dreaming about the abstract chimera of political change.

A Baghdad journalist told me bitterly, "America says it's concerned about the Iraqi people. That's clearly so much rubbish. I'll do anything to spite Saddam Hussein, even depriving the people here of food and medicine that they desperately need." In times like these, I hear more talk about Iraqi nationalism, at least from those friends who want to talk. The others say nothing much at all. They have withdrawn into themselves, maybe better to contemplate their misery.

Peter Arnett, senior international correspondent for CNN, is on assignment in Iraq.
HORN OF ITS OUTWARD TRAPPINGS, the adventure might have been woven a thousand years ago under the caliphate of Baghdad: back-corridors palace intrigue; the mysterious wounding at a festival; a headlong flight across the desert by the ruler’s beloved daughters and his sons-in-law, one of them the land’s chief armorer; their reception by a friendly monarch who shelters them in a palace. Finally, the betrayed ruler’s son, who has wormed his way to grand vizier, leads a pursuit attempting to retrieve the fugitives. In a fury he denounces them before the neighboring king, who rebuffs the mission coldly.

It might have been a Thousand and One Nights romance, that is, had this story not played out last week—as fully modern Middle East politics, in deadly earnest and to spectacular international effect. For the Baghdad caliphate, read Saddam Hussein’s Iraq; as the fugitives’ vehicles, replace camels with Land Rovers and Mercedes sedans; and, in lieu of swords, understand the fleeing armorer’s specialty as ballistic missiles, warheads and lethal toxins. Whatever the reasons for it, the overland escape into Jordan by Lieutenant General Hussein Kamel al-Majid, his brother and their wives—both daughters of Saddam’s—resounded as a signal blow to the Iraqi regime’s inner fortifications.

Hussein Kamel, 47, who is also a relative of Saddam’s, figured as a pillar of that edifice. Since the 1980s he has overseen procurement of the nightmarish weaponry that variously made his boss a hero in the eyes of some Arabs and an outlaw menace to most of the world. Meanwhile, Hussein Kamel’s younger brother, Colonel Saddam Kamel al-Majid, headed the President’s elite corps of personal bodyguards. The U.S., thirsting for what a Pentagon official called a potential “intelligence bonanza,” pledged at once to defend Jordan against any reprisals and sent Arabic-speaking CIA specialists to Amman in hopes of debriefing the defectors. A senior Administration official exulted, “Outside of Saddam’s two sons, there is probably no one closer to him. This could be the most serious setback he’s suffered since the mutinies immediately after the Gulf War.”

Washington’s hopes could still prove to be wishful thinking. Even as President Bill Clinton portrayed Saddam as a falling deserter, “out of touch” with his closest aides, even as Hussein Kamel called for Saddam’s overthrow into “the garbage heap of history,” the brothers may not want to deal—or to be seen dealing—with the West. In any case, neither fits anyone’s idea of a flower-power liberal. They rose by nepotism, survived by cunning and thrived by doing their leader’s most morally questionable will. However quickly Saddam might replace them, though, Iraq’s slow strangulation under U.N. economic sanctions since 1990 continues to make life hard for the strongman’s subjects. If his relatives’ flight was not fatal, it at least displayed publicly some crucial flaws. Said Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon: “It’s clearly a vote of no confidence in Saddam Hussein.”

How the stunning hegira unfolded was high drama in itself. Around nightfall last Tuesday, a dusty convoy of military Land Rovers bounced over an unfenced sector of Jordan’s border escorting Mercedes-borne worthies who turned out to be the presidential kinsmen. Exhausted and parched, the travelers had made a 14-hour desert trek to evade detection. Washington was their first request. “They drank tens of bottles,” related a high Jordanian security official. Though the inadequately provisioned party had seemingly departed on the run, the journey was not quite spontaneous. The Jordanian official said Hussein Kamel had visited Amman 10 days earlier to warn of his coming. According to another security officer, U.S. agents met with him at that time, although Washington officials said they had no knowledge of such contacts.

In any case, Hussein Kamel apparently did not leave Iraq empty-handed. The first Jordanian official reports that the general, before the flight with his brothers, their wives, assorted Saddam grandchildren and 15 army officers, had brought out
sein al-Majid and you're driving to Jordan, checkpoint? An Arab ambassador based of stealing public funds. $5 billion and no one will search you. You can bring out not only $50 million but $50 million. How did he clear the Iraqi commander underwent surgery in Amstruck up a warm friendship with Hussein granting asylum. Insiders say from king Hussein of Jordan received Al-Majid's band of fugitives in his palace and satiating Hussein. Saddam's son Uday, 33, who has recently ascended in power and prestige. In the view of some Iraq watchers, Hussein Kamel, whose teeter-totter fortunes looked to be on the upswing again recently, has been advocating a more aboveboard treatment of U.N. monitors, whose job is to search out and police the destruction of Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. According to this line, the general, who in the first place had presided over the stockpiling of Iraq's most dangerous arsenals, argued that the sooner the regime comes clean, the quicker the country might resume oil exports and normal economic life. At bottom, though, the quarrel seems to have been over spoils: black-market profits, cuts of foreign business deals and all the other perks flowing from high rank in a dictatorship. Said Phoebe Marr, an Iraq expert at Washington's National Defense University: "It's a terrific feud in the family, and it's been pretty grubby—over money and power."

Uday's rise, in short, has come at Al-Majid clan expense. About three months ago, Hussein Kamel reportedly escaped an attempt on his life that was hushed up. Although in July he was reinstated as chief of the Military Industrial Organization, the Saddam in-laws were reportedly still on edge. Last Monday seemed to be the climax. During a party celebrating the seventh anniversary of the Iran-Iraq war's end, the President's half-brother Wathban Ibrahim was shot in the leg. As a Jordanian official explained it, the episode, which was publicly reported as an accident, was privately called an attempted assassination and blamed by Uday on Hussein Kamel.

Next day the Al-Majids were off on their cross-desert getaway. The bonds that the elder had formed with King Hussein proved very useful, for Uday was soon in pursuit. As a high Jordanian government official related, Uday on his arrival in Amman first asked to speak with Hussein Kamel alone. The defector refused. Then Uday asked to see his sisters, Raghad and Rana. The Jordanians denied this request, for fear of how Uday might act.

Then, as in a gaudy fable recounted by Scheherazade, the pursuer and main fugitive were arrayed before the King in a royal audience chamber to speak their piece. In the senior Jordanian official's telling, Uday spewed recriminations at Hussein Kamel as sober dignitaries looked on. King Hussein then stood up, offered his hand to the guest in asylum, and escorted him out of the hall. The meeting had lasted seven minutes. Security personnel let Uday out, whereupon he returned to Baghdad.

During a press conference on Saturday, Hussein Kamel called on Iraq's to oust his father-in-law, saying that the military should be "prepared for the coming change." While Saddam's palace alliances have been mercurial, he is also a dedicated survivor. The invader of Kuwait would almost surely not attack Jordan, its sole outlet to the outside world, but with or without sons-in-law he has remained in effective mastery of Iraq through brutal wars and a hard peace for 27 years. A Western intelligence coup, should the defectors open up, could help hold him in check, but Saddam, like age-old fables seems always to endure... —Reported by Jamil Hamadi/Amman and J.F.G. McAllister and Mark Thompson/Washington
War, Rebuilding, More War

While America's leaders change, it's business as usual in Saddam Hussein's Iraq. An on-scene report.

Baghdad glistens in the winter sun, and a thin layer of smog on the horizon even hints at industrial prosperity. Heavy traffic crosses the eight bridges over the Tigris. The trains run on time. There is electricity everywhere, and water. Bureaucrats man their desks. Republican Guards man their posts. Saddam Hussein's portraits are as ubiquitous as ever: praying, soldiering, balancing the scales of justice, even carrying mortar, for reconstruction.

No wreckage hints that Baghdad was ground zero for wave upon wave of allied bombers during the gulf war two years ago. Or that a factory on its outskirts was obliterated just last week by $40 million worth of American cruise missiles. Even the luxury Al-Rasheed hotel, where a wounded cruise landed in the garden at the beginning of the week, was mostly repaired by Thursday, ready for business as usual.

No surrender: War, Reconstruction. More war. That is business as usual for Saddam Hussein's Iraq. The cycle has gone on now for more than a dozen years, and despite some sudden Iraqi peace overtures to Bill Clinton, it is likely to continue. As one senior official in Baghdad told Newsweek, Iraq may want to do business with the rest of the world, but ultimately it has no intention of bending to the demands of the United Nations, the United States or anyone else. After Desert Storm "we accepted a cease-fire, but we never signed a surrender document with anybody," he said. "What we accepted at the end of the fighting we refused to accept a year later. What we accepted a year later we do not accept now, and what we are accepting now we will refuse a year from now."

Only hours after Clinton took office, skirmishing resumed. In the northern no-fly zone, U.S. and allied jets attacked Iraqi antiaircraft positions after the Iraqis took the hostile step of turning on their fire-control radar. Apparently surprised, Baghdad asserted it had done nothing to warrant the first attack and claimed it didn't even have an antiaircraft battery at the site of the second attack. U.S. officials weren't sure the Iraqis meant to provoke them—but the incidents continued over the weekend with more attacks on U.S. fighters, this time in the southern no-fly zone.

What one Iraqi intellectual calls the "dialogue of bitterness and accusation" continued. In the streets, weary resignation reigned. During one air-raid alert, the national soccer stadium left its lights on and continued play as tracer shells crossed the sky like fireworks. During the cruise-missile attack, a group of painters at the Artists Club ordered another bottle of arrack and kept on drinking, debating and smoking. That same night, a government official was talking to a reporter as the cruise missiles and rooftop guns started their thunderous percussion. The Iraqi glanced out his window, checked to see what CNN was showing and continued the interview to its end.

Saddam Hussein and the men around him regard this kind of cool as courage. The ability to impose order and rebuild the country in the face of adversity is, by their estimation, part of what makes their dictatorship legitimate. "Is there any president who can do this [reconstruction] without the support of his people?" one of Saddam's aids asks rhetorically.

Born again: For the true believers near the top, and perhaps for Saddam himself, such claims may make a kind of mystical sense. The name of their party, the Baath, literally means "resurrection" in Arabic. Their secular ideology has blended Christian notions of redemption with the Islamic idea of martyrdom. To be crushed and to reconstruc, to die and be reborn, may even be a fate for which the Baath faithful devoutly wish. "In less than two years, our people could rebuild the country," Izzat Ibrahim, a top party official, told a delegation of Muslim fundamentalists last week. "We are people who have a message."

Few ordinary Iraqis join in the refrain. Exhausted by rhetoric and war, they see themselves as victims of both Saddam and Washington. The allies' failure to support the postwar uprising among Kurds in the north and Shiites in southern Iraq has not been forgotten by those who were exorted to oust the dictator. "After the war, I've never seen Saddam so off balance," said a merchant in the upper-class Mansour area. "They had their chance, but they missed it." Now Saddam has reorganized his army.
INTERNATIONAL

and tightened his control. "The Iraqi people can't do anything about him," says a shopkeeper in the Baghdad souk, and now I think maybe America, Britain, all the world can't do anything either.

Coalitions of exile opposition groups, always low on credibility, have been falling apart over the past two months. Saddam's men are confident that quasi-independent Kurdistan will collapse if the no-fly rule is ever lifted, and his troops are positioned to take the enclave by force if they get the chance. Scattered rebels in the south have yet to capitalize on the air cover they've been given. Many Iraqis fear that, if the rebels do act, the civil war to come, will be worse than the dictatorship they already have. A Palestinian resident of Baghdad argues that only Saddam "actually has the skill, the personality and the ruthless will to keep the country together."

Daily suffering: Many of Washington's erstwhile allies in the Gulf coalition are looking to make peace with Saddam, not war. And despite last week's skirmishes, nothing suggests that Clinton is ready to take on Iraq alone. So U.S. and allied attacks, at this stage, strike many Baghdad residents as mean-spirited potshots, pointlessly increasing their suffering. "If something happens again, reconstruction won't be easy," says an once prosperous intellectual who has spent his savings trying to keep the country together. "This time, when it resumed, people were really terrified that [George Bush] was going to attack our electricity and our water supply."

To keep Baghdad's services going in spite of the sanctions, the country has cannibalized itself. Diplomats report that in remote villages, government teams have simply stripped away the wiring and other infrastructure components to use in more important places. For the trains to run at all, damaged engines are stripped to provide parts for those in operation. Saddam and his cohorts are not oblivious to these privations, merely immune to them. Their resolve is strengthened by the conviction that eventually the world will come to them. "A country with 160 billion barrels of oil in the ground they cannot just scratch off their calendar that easily," a senior official says, exaggerating the size of Iraq's reserves.

So in the first minute of Clinton's presidency, Iraq officially declared a unilateral cease-fire and suggested a honeymoon. Long-delayed U.N. inspectors were welcomed with unprecedented hospitality. "There is a huge gap of time, extending to several months, provided for the new American administration to reconsider all previous hostile stances and measures," said the official newspaper Al-Iraq. Almost disastrous of the airstrikes in the north, Baghdad adds, has been to show that the rest of the world is giving in.

Christopher Dickey in Baghdad

Some castle, different job: The playwright in his Prague office

'There Is a Kind of Absurdity'

A talk with once-and-future president Vaclav Havel

Vaclav Havel left the Prague Castle last July, his resignation as president of Czechoslovakia prompted by the failure of his efforts to avert the split between the Czechs and Slovaks. That split became official on Jan. 1. This week the Parliament of the Czech Republic is expected to elect the former dissident playwright president of the new country, sending him back to the castle. But Havel's presidential powers will be tightly circumscribed, and his apparent eagerness for the job has opened him to political attacks aimed at weakening his popularity and stature as a moral authority.

In Prague last week, Havel talked with Newsweek's Andrew Nagorski. Excerpts:

NEWSWEEK: If you could write a play about your return to the presidency of a smaller country than the one you presided over before, what kind of play would it be?

HAVEL: No doubt you want to hear that it would be theater of the absurd, and I must admit that there is a kind of absurd element in this story. That is why it took me some time before I came to terms with it, before I found enough convincing arguments to prepare myself internally.

You have said that "politics is the kind of beast which, once it sells someone, does not let go." Has this happened to you?

I have done many things in my life because of an inner feeling of responsibility, even if they were things that brought me more suffering than joy... I don't feel that I am a person enchanted by power; some- one who longs for power, who wants to hold any office. The point is that I want to work for something, that I cherish some values, that I want to publicize this activity or work. If I were only concerned with being president at any price, I would have had somewhat differently than I have. I would have behaved as not to have any adversaries, and I have plenty of them.

You differ from Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus on many issues. For instance, you insist that the free market should not be a jungle, while he is deeply unenthusiastic about regulation.

I identify myself with the systemic changes toward a market economy. However, I agree with these systemic changes, there is no dispute between me and Klaus about them. I have, however, tried not to make an ideology out of these systemic changes. I believe that a market economy is not the purpose of life.

You said of the Czech-Slovak split, "Maybe we have to separate to come together again." But the opposite seems to be happening, with the economies growing farther apart.

I don't think that in the foreseeable future the Czech and Slovak republics can be joined together. First of all, I believe that there is a kind of absurd element in this story. That is why it took me some time before I came to terms with it, before I found enough convincing arguments to prepare myself internally.

In his Inaugural Address, President Clinton said that he would use force if necessary when the will and the conscience of the international community are defied. Some people interpret that to mean a willingness to use force in Bosnia. Would you support such an intervention?

I believe that a larger, more massive intervention will be the only way to prevent further suffering and further losses of human life. It would be better if the whole international community would participate in such an intervention than if it is only an action by the United States.
Northern Ireland: The Long-Term Attempt at Political Compromise
Christy Wilson
HNRS 4000
Dr. Gloria Cox
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According to David Bloomfield, "the current phase of the Northern Ireland Troubles represents Europe’s most enduring post-war armed conflict" (3). The most enduring to be sure, the conflict that continues to divide the country of Ireland into two regions, North and South, can be traced back over three hundred years when a conflict emerged between Protestant and Catholic kings. At first glance, the conflict that has centered in the Northern region of Ireland appears to emerge from a difference in religious preference. Historically, the conflict began with a division among Protestant and Catholic people who lived in the same region. Looking at how the conflict has progressed over the years, however, provides a different source for the conflict. The current trouble in Northern Ireland continues to place Protestants against Catholics, but the people in Northern Ireland are no longer fighting over religious sovereignty. The conflict has become one based on cultural sovereignty in which “the religious labels gain their deepest salience from their references to heritage or culture, rather than religious observance” (Bloomfield, 11). To understand the complexity of the situation in Northern Ireland, three sources of the conflict must be examined. The people of Northern Ireland, and those outside parties who have become involved, must deal with a historical source of conflict, a religious division of duty, and a more contemporary source of political conflict that has driven the people to violence.

Pinpointing the one event that marks the beginning of any long-term conflict might seem insignificant in determining a solution to the current status of the continuing conflict. Nevertheless, the conflict that has divided the people of northern Ireland finds a significant source in the historical battle that some might say ignited the flame of conflict. It was in 1690, at the Battle of the Boyne, that “William of Orange defeated the refugee English king, James II, a Roman Catholic” (Boyd, 16). This event is celebrated annually on July 12 by Orangemen who “interpret the Boyne as the conclusive victory of the Protestant Reformation in the British Isles” (Boyd, 16).
Defending the victory it claimed, Protestant societies during the eighteenth century began to “protest against an oppressive system of land tenure” (Boyd, 17). “What was originally a matter of rents and rural discontent became, therefore, a bitter religious war...between...the Defenders (Catholics) and the Peep-O-Day boys (Protestants)” (Boyd, 17). Several battles followed that put Protestants against Catholics, including the Battle of the Diamond in 1795. It was also in 1795 that the Orange Order emerged with an oath that “excluded Catholics and acknowledged the monarchy of Britain so long as the monarchy uphold and defends the Protestant establishment” (Boyd, 23). As Orangeism grew in popularity in Northern Ireland communities, the Catholic populations in Northern Ireland suffered the consequences. The Orange Order was aggressively anti-Catholic and showed such aggression in the Armagh Outrages, “during which hundreds of Catholic families were driven from their homes and forced to seek refuge elsewhere in Ireland” (Boyd, 18).

The influence of the Orange Order continued to affect the state of conflict in Northern Ireland during the late 1800’s and early twentieth-century. The Order was implicated in several outbreaks of violence in the 1890s, 1920s, and 1930s (Boyd, 21). The influence appeared even more significant from 1921 to 1972, “when there was a government in Northern Ireland,” and “every one of the six prime ministers was an Orangemen, as was almost every cabinet member” (Boyd, 21). The historical influence of the Orange Order on the conflict in Northern Ireland is made more obvious with every annual celebration of the 1690 victory. Looking at the present-day status of Northern Ireland as the Orange Order continues to hold its parades and processions, it is evident that “the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland are...more alienated from each other than they were almost three hundred years ago” (Boyd, 23).

Regardless of the changing perspective of the conflict in Northern Ireland, from one of historical significance to one of political difference, the role of religion remains an important source of the conflict among the common people who sit in the middle of the
situation. In fact, “since the inception of the Northern Ireland state in 1921 religious segregation has been the distinctive characteristic of the education system” (Gilligan, 120). The conflict, however, is not over “the correct way to worship a Christian god,” but rather a difference in defining themselves and each other (Bloomfield, 14). Any reference to Irish nationalism in Northern Ireland is linked to the Northern Catholics, and unionism is used to refer to the Protestants (Bloomfield, 19-20). The significance of the religious labels marks the definition of the relationship each side has with the state of Northern Ireland. “On the one hand, Northern Catholics...have a recognised state to which they can make full allegiance...In contrast, the Protestant case...involves a much more equivocal and uneasy relationship” (Bloomfield, 19-20). The Catholics are able to identify with their state with more “confidence and certainty” than the Protestants, a situation which is mostly due to the role of the Catholic Church as the “prime provider and controller of community” up until the recent successful growth of the Republican movement (Bloomfield, 20-21). The religious source of the conflict in Northern Ireland has become one of narrower proportions in recent years, as political issues have emerged as headliners. Religious labels will always remain in the hearts of the common Irishmen, be they Catholic or Protestant. The current situation, however, focuses more on the political minds of new leaders and outside parties that have been part of a process that hopes to find an end to the conflict.

John Darby describes his community in Northern Ireland to be:

“[L]ike a bottle containing two scorpions. If the scorpions cannot be persuaded to mate, or at least to co-habit in a civilised manner within the same space, it may be better to recognise the fact, and to look around for another bottle” (xi).

The solution prescribed for this community at the center of what has become violent conflict is one that many onlookers might agree with. According to Chris Gilligan, “the peace process of the 1990s appeared to offer the best chance yet of ending violent conflict
in Northern Ireland” (3). The peace process refers to “the various political shifts and developments which enabled the IRA cease-fire, and six weeks later the Loyalist cease-fire” (Gilligan, 19). The IRA cease-fire that occurred in September 1994 was quickly ended in February 1996 with the IRA bomb at Canary Wharf, thus appearing to also end the peace process (Gilligan, 5).

The peace process attempted to find a solution for the political violence that had engulfed Northern Ireland and its neighbors. The concern for violence can be explained by the fact that “between July 1969 and December 1993 there were 3,285 deaths directly linked with the conflict in Northern Ireland” (Gilligan, 103-104). Killing has occurred on both sides:

“Republican groups have been responsible for nearly 2,000 of the deaths of which over 1,000 have been members of the security serves killed by the IRA. Loyalist groups have killed nearly 1,000 people of which 713 have involved the deliberate killing of Catholic civilians or Protestant civilians who were mistaken for Catholics” (Gilligan, 104).

A recent event in February of 1998 reminded onlookers of the violence of what came to be known as “Bloody Sunday”. Catholics numbering close to 10,000 “retraced the path where British soldiers shot and killed 13 protesters in 1972, a massacre that fueled Catholic bitterness toward British rule of Northern Ireland” (Thousands, 4A).

Britain has been involved during much of the violence that has plagued the conflict in Northern Ireland. In approaching the problem in Northern Ireland, the British position has changed throughout several stages. Up until the 1960s, Britain had a policy of laissez-faire; between 1969 and 1972 Britain “concerned itself only with a minimal intervention”; and between 1972 and 1974 Britain was forced to “take on direct responsibility through direct rule, assuming that such involvement would be temporary” (Bloomfield, 48).
While outside parties have become significant arbiters in more recent years, especially in the peace process of the 1990s, the significance of the ordinary people should be considered when looking for a solution. The current "exclusion of ordinary people from the peace process...stands in stark contrast to the 1960s and 1970s when masses of people were engaged in 'politics on the streets'" (Gilligan, 32). The current exclusion of ordinary people presents a strength to the peace process in that "their political representatives [are given] greater room to manoeuvre," yet a weakness is that "the peace process has not established any roots in Northern Irish society" (Gilligan, 32). As political compromise wears on the arbiters of the conflict, the prospects for the reform of security "do not look hopeful" (Gilligan 113). The political parties involved, including Sinn Fein, IRA, Irish and British governments, Ulster Unionists, Democratic Unionists, and the Labour Party, show little evidence of willingness to compromise. The conflict will go on, perhaps until the scorpions are removed and placed in separate bottles.
References


Secular State Suspended?
In a curious partnership, a pro-Islamic populist takes power in Turkey

HE IS A POPULIST, PRO-ISLAMIC POLITICIAN whose party did not field a single female candidate in the last elections; she is a decidedly secular, right-wing former Prime Minister who got her husband to take her surname. Odd couplings are common in politics, but the notion of Necmettin Erbakan and Tansu Ciller is especially curious. Last week Erbakan became the head of the first Islamist-majority coalition government in Turkey since Kemal Ataturk declared it a secular state in 1923. In two years' time, Erbakan is due to hand over power to Ciller and her True Path Party. The deal was ratified during a parliamentary vote of confidence that provoked the wildest scenes the National Assembly has seen in many years. The ascension of an Islamist party to power, according to the Turkish Daily News, was viewed in some circles as "the end of the world." But Erbakan and Ciller quickly set about trying to reassure everyone that there is nothing to fear from an Islamist-led government. Turkey is a member of NATO and a crucial ally of the West, he has now backed his new partner. In recent months, Erbakan initiated corruption investigations against Ciller. Now he may backpedal on those probes, and presumably Ciller will no longer describe an alliance with Erbakan's Welfare Party (Ilefa) as "plunging the country into darkness." There is nothing quite like the opportunity to take high office to make people see past their differences. -By Rod Usher.

The Battle of Portadown
A 306-year-old event sparks Northern Ireland riots

VIEWED FROM ONE DIRECTION, THE scene early last week in Portadown, Northern Ireland, evoked a country fair. The meadows surrounding the Protestant church Drumcree, 25 miles southwest of Belfast, were dotted with people, tents and a large marquee. But the sight on the opposite slopes was anything but bucolic. Two rows of razor wire separated the church and the main road into town. Behind this first barrier was a second: a gray wall of armored Land Rovers, parked nose to tail. And behind the second cordon was a third: a phalanx of policemen from the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

By week's end all that armature saw service. An RUC decision to obstruct a traditional Protestant march sparked three days of rioting, with insults to their heritage. Then, when the march was allowed to proceed, Catholics exploded with protests of their own that injured hundreds and left a Catholic youth dead.

This is "marching season" in Ulster, a time when Catholics commemorate July 12, the day in 1690 that William of Orange vanquished his Catholic rival, King James II, at the Battle of the Boyne. The victory established England's Protestant ascendancy in Ireland, and it was in memory of this event that 1,300 Orangemen had gathered in Portadown. The town's Catholic minority, however, regard these marches as provocative. Drumcree church has become a flash point because the Orangemen's route takes them along a stretch of Carvagh Road, where the majority of residents are Catholic. Thus on July 7 police ordered the march to be rerouted.

That infuriated the Protestants. For three days, gangs of hooded men blocked roads and torched cars. On Wednesday 180 fires raged, and the commander of Belfast's fire brigade called it his department's busiest night since the Luftwaffe bombed the city in 1941. The following day, RUC Chief Constable Sir Hugh Annesley reversed his orders. Police began shooting Catholic protesters out of the way and escorting Orangemen down Carvagh Road. Unionist marches unfolded across the province. When Catholic demonstrators tried to block them, the police went to work with their nightsticks. Running battles ensued, with petrol bombs from rioters and volleys of plastic bullets from police.

By week's end, only one person, an Irish Catholic car-factory worker, had been killed. He had reportedly been hit accidentally by a troop carrier. Two days later, in Enniskillen, 80 miles southwest of Belfast, a bomb exploded in a hotel and injured two people, serving to raise tensions further (no one has claimed responsibility). Many in the troubled land fear a return to the 1980s, when assassinations and bombings were as commonplace as they were terrible. -By Kevin Fedarko.