



Iraqi Turkmen Human Rights Research Foundation

"Underestimation of the Turkmen population size by Great Britain in the 1920s established a base for successive Iraqi governments and now for the Kurds to marginalize the Turkmen"

Report

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Subject: **Attempts to change the demographic structure of Kirkuk city by the American supported Kurds**

After the war and occupation of Iraq by the Anglo-American forces in April 2003, the Kurdish political parties KDP and PUK who had supported it with their armed militias - for their own old political agenda to take control of Kirkuk province and its oil wealth - were rewarded for their collaboration with the Americans who allowed their militias to enter Kirkuk and perpetrate in this mainly Turkmen city the exactions, human rights abuses and looting that they allowed to happen in all other parts of what they called "liberated Iraq", as we have all seen on the TV screens last year.

One of the most dangerous acts of looting that took place in Kirkuk city after its tragic "liberation" was politically motivated; it targeted the city's Turkmen identity and its Turkmen population. It was committed by the Kurdish militias with the complicity of the American occupying forces who turned a blind eye to their exactions in the city.

As soon as the Kurdish militias entered the city they started looting and destroying **the two most sensitive office buildings, namely the offices of civil population registrations and the offices of property and deeds registrations after seizing all the archives and registers.**

This despicable and politically motivated act of looting of Kirkuk city's most important offices happened without much publicity. Their other aims being to take control of Kirkuk municipality and to be allowed to carry out a Kurdification policy in the Turkmen region.

Effectively, we have seen that the Americans have given the majority of the seats of the municipality council to the Kurds; even the post of mayor was given to a Kurd, despite the fact that the Kurds have never been the majority in Kirkuk. No doubt this was the Turkmen's share of the "democracy" promised by the Anglo-Americans to the Iraqi people!

Once the Kurdish controlled council of Kirkuk municipality was installed, the Kurdish majority started applying their policy of Kurdification of the Turkmen region in and around Kirkuk. Indeed, they **brought in tens of thousands of Kurds from outside Kirkuk province**, from Suleymaniya, Duhuk and even from Iran and Turkey. They provided them with logistic support to reach Kirkuk where they installed them not only in Kirkuk's municipality properties and in Iraqi army buildings but also in Turkmen registered properties and lands.

These new Kurdish migrants to Kirkuk have been given financial help and incentives to start building houses in their new location in and around the city in order to change the demography and the ethnic composition of this Turkmen city and province in preparation for the upcoming census and elections.

All the above exactions continue to happen despite Turkmen denunciations, objections and demonstrations and despite their complaints to the Iraqi Interim Government and to the occupation authorities.

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It is a well known fact that during the 1980s the Baath regime, in pursue of its Arabization policy of Kerkuk province, has confiscated Turkmen lands and homes and has destroyed and levelled to the ground more than 20,000 Turkmen houses, namely in the Turkmen populated sectors 39, 52 and 63 in the Old Tisin neighbourhood of Kirkuk.

Today, the Kurdish controlled municipality of Kirkuk is installing thousands of their new migrants whom they brought to Kirkuk in Turkmen areas which had been confiscated by the old regime, i.e.:

1. The Officers Houses in the Al-Wasiti neighborhood.
2. Hundreds of houses in region number 63 and Khalid Military Camp.
3. Social Care Office houses in the al-Wasiti neighborhood, region number 39.
4. Mikdad Center which is located in the Sikak Houses, region number 39
5. The houses near the Northern Gas Company, Old Tisin region number 39.

All the above mentioned localities and regions are located in the Old Tisin neighborhoods of Kirkuk.

These new confiscations of Turkmen lands and properties are carried out by the Kurds with the full knowledge and tacit agreement of the occupation authorities, in contradiction with the basic principles of equity and human rights.

Therefore, we, Turkmen of Iraq, denounce all these illegal and politically motivated acts against the Turkmen in Iraq by Kurdish political parties with the consent of the occupation forces and we call upon the Iraqi Government to put an end to these practices. We also call upon the General Secretary of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, who declared that the war in Iraq was illegal, to stop these illegal acts which are contrary to the principles of human rights.

We urge all the human rights organizations and the world communities to put an end to the policy of expropriations, ethnic cleansing and human rights abuses of Turkmen in Iraq, perpetrated this time by the Kurds.

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