

TURK-KURD BLOWUP IMMINENT



Last month, we looked at the history of the Ottoman Empire and the current Turkish situation as it relates to Northern Iraq.

Promised Independence

The embattled Turkish Kurds had been waiting for a long time, and were crushed when their nationalism became violent in the 1930s and 40s. The Kurds were promised independence in the 1920 Treaty of Sevres, but that promise was rescinded in 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. The corners-of-four-nations area they inhabit is about 230,000 square miles, equal to Germany and Britain combined.

"We are frustrated because we can do nothing in Iraq since we failed to join Allied Forces there," one Turkish source said. The Turkish Parliament was torn when the Bush Administration asked Turkey to ally with the United States and the United Kingdom in invading Iraq. Turkish officials did not approve of the United States acting unilaterally.

But national interest was at stake. The Turks who wanted to go into Iraq believed that Turkey would have more control over the volatile Kurd question. Other Turkish officials said they wanted to protect the three to four million Turks in Northern Iraq—the forgotten Turkmen.

"Those who voted against going into Iraq wanted to respect the United Nations," one Turkish source said.

Most likely, that position was motivated by their push to join the prosperous European Union. Most European Union countries did not want the United States to invade, and Turkey needed to court EU members, as the vote to accept Turkey as a member was imminent.

Twelve Million Kurds

"There are over twelve million Kurds in Turkey, which is twenty percent of the total population," our Turkish source told us.

"The Kurdish minority in Turkey is pushing for its language to be made official, as in Switzerland where four languages are spoken. They want a Kurdish-Turk federation and more autonomy within Turkey. Not likely, states tend to accrue power, not disseminate it.

"Most Kurds are Moslems and many intermarry with the Turks, but they don't call it intermarriage if both are Moslem.

"Only a few thousand are fighting with the violent Marxist Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) for a separate state. I don't think most Turkish Kurds will want to fight if there is a civil war in Iraq. The south of Turkey where many Kurds live is not fertile and it is very developed so many of the wealthy Kurds come to Istanbul for business," he said.

Turkey wants desperately to become a member of the prosperous European Union. But Western Europe has a long memory. Europe sees the brutal treatment of the Armenians, and recent treatment of Kurd separatists as reasons for not accepting Turkey. A European Union delegation decided this year that Turkey has a long way to go in its journey to democ-



Top: Soldiers and Iraqi police work together to search a building belonging to the 'Party for a Democratic Kurdistan' in Kirkuk, Iraq. The soldiers and their allies were looking for illegal weapons and ordnance.

Top: www.army.mil • Department of Defense **Above:** Esprit d'Corps

racy and subsequent acceptance into the EU.

Some speculate that the European Union is hesitant to let Turkey join because it is an Islamic state.

"The European Union expects Turkey to allow the Kurds autonomy. But, Turkey wants the Kurds to be integrated into the society. Kurds are allowed to become educated; many are extremely rich, and some are in high positions. Two-thirds of the Kurds in Turkey are Sunni and the other third Shia.



Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division talk through a translator with a representative of about 100 former Republican Guard soldiers, members of the Free Military Officers of Iraq. The group gathered outside the Mosul government building demanding two months back-pay. Above: www.army.mil • SPC Robert Woodward Below: Esprit d' Corps

Communist Terrorist

"It is when the separatists try to establish their identity with violence, that Turkish authorities were forced to fight back," Isaac told us. "The EU is angry about the trial and prison conditions of Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the PKK.

Ocalan was a communist terrorist who was responsible for over seven hundred executions, and vicious firefights that have killed thousands of Turks.

"Your country would do the same to violent separatists. The death penalty is acceptable in your country, but Europe has abolished it. So Ocalan sits in prison, but he is still a force with Kurdish separatists," Isaac said. "In a sense, he holds Turkey hostage. His conditions and movement kept Turkey from Europe."

Turkish intel agents captured Ocalan in Kenya in 1999.

Many of the merchants and businessmen we met were indeed Kurdish. "Istanbul is a good home for business," one outspoken Kurd told us. "But we want our own language, news, and political parties. That is not allowed." Then he shut down, refusing to respond to questions on the future of a Kurdish state. "We have it good in Istanbul," he said.

The Cradle of Civilization Flows with Oil Mixed With Blood

The Turks and Kurds in Turkey warned us that behind the present artificial calm in Northern Iraq, a raging tempest is brewing. The storm that threatens civil war cuts loose in savage bursts.

Northern Iraq, oozing black gold, is a magnet for greed and lust, marked by repeated



massacres that have flooded the valleys of the mountainous terrain with the blood of Kurds, Turkmen, Christians and Arabs. Ethnic groups have been forcibly and viciously shuffled in and out of the region by whatever strongman was in power.

"A Kirkuk branch of the Iraqi Turkmen Front was attacked and ransacked on 29 Feb 2004 by scores of PUK members," the Turkmen (descendants of Turkic tribes) spokesman Salman Mofak said.

"Ethnic violence has emerged as a new source of trouble for

U.S. led coalition forces in northern Iraq, in and around the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, between ethnic Kurds and Turkmen. A Kurdish Peshmerga, a member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), opened fire from their headquarters on a peaceful Turkmen demonstration in Tuzkhurmato, killing ten and injuring 21."

In March, a yellow taxi pulled up in front of a police station, and a passenger threw out a can. The officer that came out to inspect the can was blown up. The next day a truck full of police officers on the way to a funeral

were bombed. Kurdish police rounded up two Turkmen vegetable vendors and tortured them with cigarette butts, beat them with cables, and kicked them in the face. A *Knight Rider* reporter warns of escalating ethnic clashes, and possible civil war.

"The Kurdish ambition to eradicate the other ethnic group in the north of Iraq with the help of the U.S. administration would lead to civil war and destruction of Iraq. Kurdish authority in Kirkuk and the illegal Kurdish armed militia are terrorizing the ethnic groups in Kirkuk and surrounding area," Mofak said.

"The KDP and PUK have brought thousands of Kurdish families from the predominantly Kurdish north to Kirkuk.

"There have been bloody clashes between Kurds and Arabs and tough talking between Kurds and Turkmen.

A Battle Over Kirkuk

"Turkmen and Kurds are squaring off in a battle over Kirkuk. Turkmen claim they make up some 70 percent of Kirkuk, whereas the Kurds slice that figure down to 23 percent," Mofak said.

"Iraqi Kurds were always armed, ready to revolt and fight, and the Turkmen are unarmed, without outside support, disorganized and consequently docile," Mofak said.

The CIA and U.S. Special Forces armed and supported thousands of Kurdish peshmerga troops to defeat the Iraqi forces in 2003.

Oozing Black Gold

Iraqi Kurds, estimated at 3.5-4 million, or more than 20% of the Iraqi population, and Iraqi Turkmen, estimated at three million, or 15% of the population, live mainly in the North.

Forty percent of Iraq's oil reserves and six % of the world's oil flow from fields in the region that includes the towns of Kirkuk and Mosul.

The Kurds call the area 'Kurdistan', the Turkmen call it 'Turkmenili', while the Arabs, Turkey and the U.S. call it Northern Iraq.

"Everyone claims Kirkuk and Mosul. The minute you give the carrot to one, you've got four donkeys after it," says Robert Taylor, Canadian, publisher of the military magazine *Esprit d'Corps*, who had been in northern Iraq ten times since 2003.

The "No-fly Zone" and safe haven the U.S. created over northern Iraq after 1991, combined with the repeated arming of the Kurds, enabled Kurdish autonomy. Control of Kurdistan was split between two administrations after a 50-50 vote in 1992 elections. The two factions, the PUK headed by Jalal Talibani, and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) headed by Massoud Barzani shared control.

"The Kurds control Mosul and Kirkuk now, but until a few years ago the majority living there were Turks. The Kurds destroyed the land registration, although Turkey cannot prove that today," our Turkish guide, Isaac, said. "Kirkuk and Mosul were conquered by Suleyman the Great at the height of the Ottoman Empire in 1535."

Turkey and the United States have made it clear that they will not let go of what power they have over the oil rich areas.

"The oil is the key to independence," Taylor said. "Once you open up the bottle and the genie gets out, it's impossible to turn back the autonomy,"

Nearly two million Kurds responded, with close to 99% voting for independence, in a recent referendum.

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Bloody Insurgency

Turkey has threatened to invade if the Kurds rule the two cities. Turkey is especially fearful that the huge Kurdish minority of 15 million in Turkey will join any independence movements of the Iraqi Kurds and re-ignite the bloody insurgency in Turkey and split up southern Turkey.

The United States has had its eye on the prize since WWII.

A 1945 U.S. State Department documents described Iraqi oil fields as “a stupendous source of strategic power, and one of the greatest material prizes in world history.” (*tacitconsent news*)

The U.S. is attempting to orchestrate an Iraqi government that it hopes will play its tune.

This time the two-faced game of manipulation and protection that the US has played with the Iraqi Kurds for the past half century may backfire.

The colorful, tribal Barzani, warrior-politician, current president of Kurdistan, wears Kurdish traditional clothing and speaks in Kurdish.

“Only death can stop me on this way. Other than this, no power or state in the world can make me give up Kirkuk. Moreover, these elections have shown Kirkuk’s identity”, he said. *Kurd-media*

Barzani is driven, obsessed with Kurdish sovereignty.

Bitter Rivals

The modern western-dressed Talabani, lawyer, and current President of Iraq, was Barzani’s bitter rival until they put aside their differences to win big (25%) in the Iraqi elections. Talabani speaks of Iraqi unity and cooperation with the United States in English.

Except for control of Kirkuk, that is. The former peshmerga guerrilla has no plans to give up the ‘Jerusalem of Kurdistan.’ He wouldn’t dare, for fear of losing the backing of his followers. He has one leg stretched to Baghdad to assure control in a central government if Kurdish sovereignty fails, while he keeps another foothold in Northern Iraq in case Kurdistan statehood succeeds.

“All areas which are part of Kurdistan historically and geographically, where the majority are Kurds, must be united in the regional government of Kurdistan. Kirkuk is one of those cities,” Talibani told *the Nation*.

The history of Kirkuk and Mosul, the surrounding area, and its inhabitants is a tale of betrayal, manipulation, allies of convenience, and horrific violence and bloodshed.

Both the Kurds and the Turkmen shout out their bloody histories of oppression that parallel in haunting ways. The Kurd story is familiar, but the story of the Turkmen is only now being revealed.

“The Turkmen have a lot of inbreeding, and are distinguished by their language, a blend of Arabic and Turkish. They tend to wear the Ottoman style moustache,” says Taylor, who wrote a book, *Among the Others* that chronicles the saga of the Turkmen.

Turkish spokesmen Salman Mofak and Orhan Ketene provided SOF with the following history.

“The Turkmen, the third largest ethnic group after the Arabs and Kurds, are concentrated in Turkmenili, which includes the provinces of Mosul, Erbil, Kirkuk, Salahaddin, Diyala and the city center of Baghdad. The majority of the Turkmen people live in Kirkuk, the capital of Turkmenili,” said Mofak.

“Iraq’s Turkmen are generally Sunni Muslims, although up to 40 percent are Shiites. There are 30,000 Christian Turks called the Kala Gaweri. Inter-marriage between the Shi’a and Sunni Turkmen is very common,” Mofak said.

Executed Royals

“Clashes between the Kurds and Turkmen have gone on for decades, since 1958 when a military coup toppled the Hashemite monarchy in a swift, pre-dawn coup executed by officers of the 19th Brigade, known as “free officers.” The royal family and other rulers were executed in al-Rehab Palace. The rabid mobs hung their bodies by their feet outside the palace.

“Nuri as-Said, (installed as ruler by the British) escaped, disguised as a veiled woman, but was caught the next day and executed by armed mobs, his body tied to the back of a car and dragged through the streets until there was nothing left but half a leg.

“Kurdish leader Mullah Mustafa Barzani Mulla, Mesud Barzani’s father, had returned from exile in the Soviet Union and started negotiation for a Kurdish autonomous region.

“The Communists took control of the city and carried out a horrific massacre. Many prominent Turkmen families in Mosul

were wiped out, and those involved in the rebellion against the Communists were tried and executed.

“More than 600 Turkmen, women and children marched on Al-Jumhariya Street in Turkmen dominated Kirkuk in 1959 to celebrate the first anniversary of the 1958 revolution. They were ambushed by Communist Kurdish militia as they passed the local Officer’s Resting House chanting Turkmen songs.

“My father, who participated in the march, said that the Kurdish Communists tied the hands and feet of the Turkmen behind cars and pulled them through the streets of Kirkuk.

“Kirkuk was put under curfew and its population slaughtered by Communists and Kurds. The streets of Kirkuk were filled with blood. Three Mukhtar brothers were killed in front of their family. Their 12-year-old sister, Emel, was killed while trying to defend her brothers. Ata Khayrullah and his brother Ihsan were hung in front of the Al-Shuhadia Bridge.

The Kurds were shouting in the Kurdish language “one kilo of Turkmen meat for fifty Cents.”

“Barzani’s Peshmerga and Iraqi soldiers plundered Turk’s houses and workplaces for three days, killing hundreds of Turks.

Following the Massacre

“Following the massacre, armed units were dispatched to the city by the central government in order to stop and quell the violence between the Turkmen and Kurds.

“The Communist Kurds demanded the inclusion of Kirkuk,



Staff Sgt. Chris Golde, a squad leader with Company A, Task Force 1-21, 25th Infantry Division, patrols Kirkuk, Iraq.
Photo: www.army.mil • SPC Sean Kimmons

a Turkmen city in their autonomous region in negotiations between the Iraqi government and Mullah Barzani.

"Tens of thousands of Turkmen political opponents and ordinary citizens have been subjected to arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, summary execution, and tortured by beating and burning, electric shock, starvation, mutilation, and rape. The wives of the Turkmen prisoners were tortured in front of their husbands, children in the presence of their parents.

"The Ba'ath party rule, commencing in 1968, opened one of the darkest chapters in Turkmen history. The Ba'ath party forced people to sign petitions asking for closure of Turkish language schools and appointed Arab administrators in Turkmen areas. Boycotts by Turkmen were suppressed in a bloody manner. Turkmen teachers were replaced with Arab teachers, and Turkmen teachers were forced to non-Turkmen areas. Arabs were encouraged to settle in Turkmen areas with monetary rewards and young Arab men were offered money to marry Turkmen girls.

"Erbil city used to be a majority Turkmen city until late Forties. But after the crushing of the second Barzani rebellion in 1949 by the Iraqi army, the rebel Kurdish population was brought and forcefully settled in big cities such as Erbil, Kirkuk and Mosul.

Turkmen Besieged

"Within three decades the Kurdish influx to big cities increased as well as the heterogamy (four wives), the high birth rate (six to ten children) increased the Kurdish population to a majority in Erbil. The Turkmen in Erbil are between 25-30% of the city population. Turkmen, who are besieged and under tight Kurdish control, cannot forge an armed struggle because of their geographical and logistical problems, as well as weak Turkish support.

"Most of them resort to passive resistance against Kurdish pressure and try to disguise themselves by speaking Kurdish in public and naming their children with Kurdish names.

"Elimination of Turkmen identity and entity by the Iraqi regime would discourage Turkey from demanding Kirkuk and Mosul provinces in case of the disintegration of Iraq.

"Turkey makes it clear that it wants to see the Turkmen gain political influence, to counterbalance the region's Kurds and contain growing restiveness in its own Kurdish provinces."

Nixon, Kissinger and the Shah of

Iran encouraged an insurgency by the Iraqi Kurds in 1972 in order to weaken Baghdad. For three years, the CIA plotted to clandestinely supply arms to the Kurdish rebels, to the tune of \$16 million. Iran provided the Iraqi Kurds with 90 percent of their weapons, but never gave them more than three days worth of ammunition to preclude any chance of total victory. Larry Everest tells the "sordid" story of the U.S. betrayal of the Kurds in his book *Oil, Power & Empire*

Betrayal of the Kurds


Barzani, on the hit list of the Ba'athists, sought U.S. help, promising a gift of the oil if he could control the Kirkuk oil field. The Kurds were "a card to play" against Iraq, and, according to

CIA memos, "a uniquely useful tool for weakening Iraq's potential for international adventurism." Kissinger and the Shah hoped they would create enough insurgency to sap the resources of Iraq, but never wanted the Kurds to win. The betrayal of the Kurds is detailed by the Pike Commission report ordered by Congressman Otis Pike to investigate U.S. involvement with the Kurds.

By 1975, 45,000 Iraqi Kurd guerrillas, with the help of Iranian troops, pinned down 80 percent of Iraq's 100,000 troops.

Eight hours after Iraq agreed to U.S.-Iranian terms concerning the border and Shatt-al-Arab waterway in the Algiers Agreement in 1975, the Shah and

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U.S. cut off aid and closed Iran's border to cut off Kurdish lines of retreat.

Saddam retaliated in an all out "search-and-destroy" attack. The abandoned Kurdish forces were decimated and 250,000 Kurds were forcibly relocated.

Barzani wrote to Kissinger, pleading desperately for help. Kissinger did not reply.

Washington "refused to extend humanitarian assistance to the thousands of refugees created by the abrupt termination of military aid," Everest quotes the Pike Report.

"Covert action should not be confused with missionary work," Kissinger said.

The Pike Commission Report was suppressed by the White House under advice from the CIA.

"In 1975 the Iraqi army came and rounded up everyone in the widows' village, taking them to a compound in the southern desert. On the walls of the huts, which were unfit for human habitation, was scrawled 'Dar al-Fana'-House of Annihilation." *Tacitconsent.com*

In 1983, Barzani's sons continued to launch guerrilla attacks against the central government.

Iraqi security forces rounded up 8,000 Kurds, many innocent, and hauled them off.

"Before dawn, ... the soldiers charged through the camp. They captured the men walking on the street...they were breaking down doors...they looked inside chicken coops, water tanks, refrigerators, everywhere," Human Rights Watch quotes a Kurdish woman.

They all "went to hell" according to Saddam.

The 1988 Al-Anfal (The Spoils) campaign under Saddam's cousin "Chemical Ali" wiped out "battle-age" men between the ages of 15 and 70.

Al-Anfal was the "final solution" to the Kurdish insurgency. Death was the penalty for any male of age in the Anfal region to bear arms.

The town of Halabja was attacked with conventional bombs, artillery fire, and chemicals—including mustard gas, sarin and VX.

Mass Executions

Women, children, and elderly victims' bodies were shown huddled lifelessly in the streets or lying on their backs with mouths agape."

The men were "processed" and

trucked off to mass executions in concentration camps that held one and a half million Kurds. genocide.org

Ninety percent of Kurdish villages were wiped out, and 15 million landmines were left behind. More than 100,000 were dead or missing.

"After the 1991 Gulf War, the Shi'a and Kurds staged mass uprisings against Saddam," Mofak said.

"President George H. Bush's called to the Iraqi people to "take matters into their own hands to force Saddam Hussein, the dictator, to step aside." Kurdish guerrillas, briefly seized control of the city of Kirkuk. Vengeance killings targeted Ba'ath Party, local bureaucrats, and intelligence agents.

"The U.S. did not come to the support of the uprisings, and the Iraqi government was able to reorganize loyalists within the army to mount a counter-offensive. Saddam quickly crushed the uprisings, killing thousands of civilians, using indiscriminate force, rounding up tens of thousands more and executing them. Saddam sent his dreaded Minister of the Interior, Ali Hassan al-Majid, to Kirkuk with heavy reinforcements. Al-Majid ordered the arrests of thousands of Turkmen and Kurd males in Kirkuk.

"The city was under heavy bombardment from Iraqi tanks, helicopters, and artillery. Hundreds of civilians were killed. The worst killings took place after Iraqi troops recaptured Kirkuk in late March, 2001. Tens of thousands of Kurds and Turkmen fled for the mountains above the city.

"The Kurdish and Turkmen exodus from Kirkuk turned into permanent displacement in camps inside the Kurdish areas."

I asked Orhan Ketene why Kurdistan news reported that Turkmen were supporting the Kurds, and forwarded him the following comments:

"We share the same position as the Kurds on this issue," said Jawad al-Najjar, a Turkmen minister in the KDP.

Sold Out for Oil

"For 30 years nothing was done for this place; no government of the Turks ever helped us. They sold us out for an oil pipeline and three contracts. Nothing was ever said to Saddam. Why?" journalist Ilnur Cevic said in *Kurdish-Media.com*.

"The Turkmen will fight against the Turks, alongside the Kurds," insisted the minister at KDP headquarters in Ar-

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bil. "Turkey says that it wants to protect us but that's not true. They want to take control of the oil and the land," said Azzedin Karsti. "Ordinary Turkmen say they fear Kurdish reprisals in the event of a Turkish military intervention."

"The Turkmen do not feel Turkish at all, and have no interest in seeing the arrival of Turkish soldiers," said Gerard Gauthier of Arbil who works for the French language institute.

"But at the same time they worry that the Kurds will blame them for the arrival of Turkish troops and that would place them in an impossible situation," Gauthier said.

Ketene's response to those statements made a complex situation appear to be an impossible tangled web.

"In the late nineties Kurds created puppet Turkmen parties from half Turkmen (one parent is a Kurd), which are called Kurdmen, as a reaction to the formation of Turkmen parties who refuse Kurdish domination," Ketene responded.

"Their members are very few and do not have any popularity among Turkmen. They are considered collaborators."

"There are five Kurdmen parties supporting Barzani and one supporting

Talabani. Jawad Najjar is one of those Kurdmen who are the mouthpiece of Barzani and Talabani. What he or they say does not bind the Turkmen and does not reflect the thoughts and the desires of the Turkmen."

"Its unbelievably complex", Taylor told SOF, "Kurds identify with Kurds more and Turkmen with Turkmen more, but Turkmen do line up with Kurdish authorities. It's tough to find dividing lines."

"The KDP has been the governing authority in Erbil City, which is composed of half Turkmen since Saddam sent his army to Erbil to oust their rival, the PUK, and to destroy the opposition headquarters, specifically the Turkmen. Hundreds of renowned individuals were executed. Since then, KDP has adopted similar methods for oppression and assimilation of the Turkmen. Clashes and frictions are frequent between the KDP forces and the Iraqi Turkmen Front."

Kurds Attack Turkmen

"When Kurds recently attacked Turkmen, Shiia and Sunni Turkmen united. "Turkmen throughout Turkmenili rushed to the street to demonstrate their support for their Turkmen brothers and sisters," Ketene said.

"On 10 April 2003, hundreds of Peshmerga forces poured into Turkmen city Kirkuk. The municipality buildings, government offices, military buildings, large hotels and a historical military barracks, and the land registry office were torched by Kurdish rebels.

"The looting was meant to remove all official evidence proving Turkmen presence in the Kirkuk. The land deeds for the Turkmen have been taken from the registry office, making it difficult for the Turkmen to establish the original inhabitant of the province.

"In short, I can tell you that the Turkmen are a lonely nation, no one supports them except for Turkey, which offers limited help due to its own handicaps. In Iraq they are sandwiched between Kurds and Arabs who both want to grab their land, due to the oil fields. Both want to show them as a small minority so they don't have a say in the Iraqi political equation." Ketene said.

"It was clear that the recent election would be tailored to fit Kurdish desires that are supported by unconditional U.S. support. Turkmen were firm about boycotting elections because there was no neutral international observation. It was a clear trap. The U.S. was eager to

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increase the legitimacy of those elections, so they pressured everybody to participate.

Irregularities and Fraud

"Sunni Arabs did not vote. The Turkmen were pressured by Turkey, which was pressured by the U.S., to participate in the elections.

"Turkey, as sole supporter of the Turkmen, has a leverage on the Turkmen and they are obliged to follow their instructions.

"Elections in northern Iraq were marred by irregularities and fraud in a scale seen only in communist countries.

"Over 800,000 people in Mosul were prevented from voting. Over two million Turkmen votes were exchanged with Kurdish ones. Over 100,000 Kurds brought from Erbil and Sulaimania had multiple votes up to five times. Hun-



Esprit d'Corps

dreds of complaints were forwarded to the election committee, but to no avail.

"The Syrians, Turks, and Iranians won't stand for autonomy. Turkey won't allow Kirkuk to belong to the Kurds. There's no oil in the Sunni triangle. The oil must be controlled by the central government. It's a chessboard checkmate since the U.S. went in," Taylor said.

"In Sept 2003, U.S. troops tried to get in Sulaimaniyah to pull down Sunburst (Kurdish) flags claiming territory, the mob rolled the hummers and put them on fire. The area is controlled by armed warlords. They

know how strapped the Americans are," Taylor said.

"If the Americans try to disarm the Kurds, there will be trouble, because they don't trust the Americans. If the situation flares up, the Kurds have organized militia, and it will become a

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fight. The U.S. would need another 30-40,000 troops. That could happen very easily."

"The Kurds, with unconditional American support, are living their Golden Age, misusing and abusing their dominant powers to the level of German collaborators during World War II," Ketene said.

A Very Bleak Future

"They have earned the hatred of the Arabs, Turkmen and Assyrians. I am afraid that they face a very bleak future when the winds turn in the reverse direction."

"Kirkuk has been for centuries and still is a predominantly Turkmen province.

"It is utterly incomprehensible that 2.5 million Turkmen should come under the rule of 3.5 million Kurds. Turkmen have been living in present Iraq for over a millennium.

"One hundred ethnic Turkmen, protesting against their lack of representation in the new constitution, began a hunger strike in Baghdad in February 2004," Mofak said.

"The strikers, who included intellectuals, writers, students, women, gathered in and around about half a dozen large tents erected outside the main U.S. military headquarters in the Iraqi capital.

"We are here to protest because they ignore the role of Turkmen in the new constitutions in Iraq," said a spokesman Mohammed Jasim Aga Oglo.

A banner strung up in front of the Turkmen strikers' camp said "Today a pen and a strike, tomorrow a Kalashnikov to kill those who would deny us our rights." ❧

Dr. Martin Brass is an international lawyer and longtime SOF contributor.

Bulletin Board

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on expensive antibiotics, diabetes meds, heart meds, etc.) worth about \$25,000 to Mother Teresa's Nuns, the Sisters of Charity, for their Doctors to use.

They had just returned from a Mass honoring their Pope who had passed just hours before. I think us showing up unannounced raised the spirits, especially given that we had kiddie school supplies in the mix too. We even got smiles outta these stoic ladies of God before we left. When you look at the screaming misery of those slums, which occasionally echo gunfire, that the humble and abandoned, yet brave, little children who are being cared for so carefully by these dedicated Sisters, these poorest of the poor, it throws you so off-balance. The meager effort NDCF has done in Haiti (4 Tons of meds there since 1993, 141 Tons to 12 other countries) is a mere grain of sand to what these people need, I am so frustrated to the point of guilt. I look at my priorities and examine the priorities of others, which left me pondering my worth, and even my mortality, which I thought I had come to grips with as an Infantry soldier in combat at age 20. When I came back from a Med Mission in Somalia over a decade ago, it took me a while to decompress. Fortunately, I am back on the Ark Angel in Key West "Dick the Dog" surrounded by neighbors that are wonderful so, the adjustment to Paradise should be rapid. In July or so, I will do yet another Med Mission to my old stomping ground, El Salvador, to see Father Flavin Mucci, a man who has a knack at putting life in perspective. By then I'll need the battery charge from a Pro that does good works for a living. That's my report....

Best Regards,
Andy ❧



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