Coup-proofing

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Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East

In the aftermath of the U.S.-led coalition's defeat of Iraq in the Gulf War, many observers believed that Saddam Hussein would eventually be toppled in a military coup. After years of dashed hopes, however, few expect that the Iraqi military is likely to undertake such action. Many analysts claim that the Iraqi regime is, in fact, coup-proof. Saddam Hussein's staying power should cause any similarly led U.S. coalition to rethink not just the possibilities of both coups and coup-proofing but how it would fight and defeat a coup-proof regime.

In this article, I analyze how states become coup-proof, focusing specifically on the policies that Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria have adopted to achieve this goal. These policies include reliance on groups with special loyalties to the regime and the creation of parallel military organizations and multiple internal security agencies.

The United States has a particular interest in how these countries have made their regimes coup-proof. Saudi Arabia is an important U.S. ally, Iraq is a hostile state, and Syria is somewhere in between. Conflict between the United States and either Iraq or Syria, however, pits a superpower with a short attention span against regimes that have accepted serious constraints on their ability to exercise their full military potential. Both states have developed heavily politicized militaries that are incapable of realizing this potential as long as their leaderships continue to divert resources to protect their regimes. At the same time, they have created a militarized politics that is surprisingly resilient in the face of defeat.

If a U.S-led coalition decides that it wants to overthrow a coup-proofed regime through military action, it will have to devote serious attention to the regime's true underpinnings. Field commanders will need more extensive means of understanding their opponent's political-military situation and greater insight into the coalition's political intentions. Moreover, the coordination of political-military operations will require greater political involvement

in the direction of ground operations than both military and political authorities have come to expect.

I develop my arguments about coup-proof states in five parts. The first section offers a brief discussion of coups and coup-proofing. The second section analyzes the elements of coup-proofing and how Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria have used this strategy to preserve their regimes. The third section considers how such efforts reduce the military power of a state's armed forces. Drawing on the experience of the U.S.-led coalition after the Gulf War, I then discuss how a similar coalition might defeat a coup-proof state such as Iraq and overthrow its regime. I close with some observations.

Coups and Coup-proofing in Theory and Practice

Edward Luttwak's book, *Coup D'Etat: A Practical Handbook*, offers readers a guide on how to conduct a coup. The book has profoundly influenced nearly everyone's thinking about coups.[1] Its how-to style provides detailed and practical information on coups that many reviewers thought would be better left unwritten.[2] According to Luttwak, "A coup consists of the infiltration of a small but critical segment of the state apparatus, which is then used to displace the government from its control of the remainder."[3] The aim of a coup is not only to remove the existing government, but to seize power for the perpetrators. In this focus on the seizure of power, a coup is much more ambitious than the assassination of a regime's leader. As Luttwak makes clear, the essence of a successful coup is the rapid seizure of power by a small group followed by the speedy acceptance of the new authorities by the remaining portions of the government and the population. *Coup D'Etat* created the impression that coups are relatively easy to conduct. This impression was the basis for much of the

1. Edward Luttwak, *Coup D'Etat: A Practical Handbook* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969). There is a large literature on the coup and military interventions in politics, and Arab politics in particular. See S.E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics*, 2d ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1988); Eric A. Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977); Claude E. Welch Jr. and Arthur K. Smith, *Military Role and Rule: Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations* (North Scituate, Mass.: Duxbury Press, 1974); J.C. Hurewitz, *Middle East Politics: The Military Dimension* (New York: Praeger, 1969); Eliezer Be'eri, *Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society* (New York: Praeger, 1970); and Amos Perlmutter, *The Military and Politics in Modern Times: On Professionals, Praetorians, and Revolutionary Soldiers* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977).
2. The "how-to" format seems inevitably to lead to such a tone. An earlier book by Curzio Malaparte has a tone similar to Luttwak's, as do later handbook-style volumes. Malaparte, *Coup d'Etat: The Technique of Revolution*, trans. Sylvia Saunders (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1932); and Gregor Ferguson, *Coup D'Etat: A Practical Manual* (Poole, Dorset: Arms and Armour Press, 1987).
3. Luttwak, *Coup D'Etat*, p. 12.

commentary on both the 1991 attempted coup in the Soviet Union and the presumed likelihood of a military coup in Iraq after the Gulf War.

The Middle East has provided fertile ground for coups. Between March 1949 (the first coup after World War II) and the end of 1980, fifty-five coups were attempted in Arab states—half of them successful. The coups were launched for many reasons including power struggles among factions within the officer corps and dissatisfaction of foreign states with an existing regime. Although Iran is not an Arab state, the U.S.-sponsored overthrow of the government of Mohammad Mossadegh in 1954 contributed to coup fascination in the area.[4] By 1980, however, it seemed that the coup had become less popular among leading Arab countries (i.e., Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Algeria) for a variety of reasons, including the inability of military regimes to solve their countries' problems, the declining prestige of the officer corps in the face of military defeat, and an increase in the importance of civilian technocracies. At the same time, those who had seized power through coups "learned to take preventative measures to forestall their recurrence."[5]

If the essence of a coup is the seizure of the state by a small group within the state apparatus, the essence of coup-proofing is the creation of structures that minimize the possibilities of small groups leveraging the system to such ends. I define "coup-proofing" as the set of actions a regime takes to prevent a military coup. Although every case of coup-proofing has its own unique elements, they do share some common characteristics, including: (1) the effective exploitation of family, ethnic, and religious loyalties for coup-critical positions balanced with wider participation and less restrictive loyalty standards for the regime as a whole; (2) the creation of an armed force parallel to the regular military; (3) the development of multiple internal security agencies with overlapping jurisdiction that constantly monitor the loyalty of the military and one another with independent paths of communication to critical leaders; (4) the fostering of expertness in the regular military; and (5) the financing of such measures.[6]

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4. Kermit Roosevelt, *Countercoup: The Struggle for the Control of Iran* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979).

5. Eliezer Be'eri, "The Waning of the Military Coup in Arab Politics," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (January 1982), pp. 69–81.

6. This list replicates the recommendations and terminology of Donald L. Horowitz's section on coup prevention in ethnic conflicts. As Horowitz points out, these recommendations replicate many of the principles long used by colonial powers to recruit colonial forces. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). The techniques fit easily in the pattern of "pervasive division and personal rivalry" inherent in patrimonial leadership in the Middle East. James A. Bill and Robert Springborg, *Politics in the Middle East*, 4th ed. (New York: HarperCollins,

The remarkable decline in the number of coup attempts in Iraq and Syria and changes in the internal politics of both states since Luttwak's book appeared reveal the significance of the rise in coup-proofing techniques. Both Syria and Iraq figure prominently in *Coup D'Etat* as two of the most coup-prone states on earth. Syria, for example, experienced fifteen successful coups between 1949 and 1970. In 1949 alone, the year of Syrian independence, there were three successful coups. In November 1970, Hafez al-Asad seized control of Syria in a bloodless coup. In June 1979, Saddam Hussein became president of Iraq, and in the following month initiated a massive purge of the Baath Party and the Revolutionary Command Council. Both men remain in power despite military defeat—each serving longer than any U.S. president. Saddam Hussein has ruled Iraq longer than any U.S. political party has continuously held power in the twentieth century.

Both Saddam Hussein and Hafez al-Asad have learned a lot about coup prevention. Indeed, on just the evidence of these two regimes, *Coup D'Etat* may have been a primer more on the prevention of coups than on their execution—a possibility that S.E. Finer highlighted in his foreword, stating that the book might "suggest to the defenders of the government ways in which they can anticipate coups which deploy along the lines [Luttwak] describes."[7] Whether or not Finer's observation is correct, the process of coup-proofing regimes has reached a high state of development in the Middle East. Leaders in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria have all devised effective, if expensive, methods of protecting their regimes against military coups. They have done so through trial-and-error adaptation of the tools that first brought them to power. These leaders may not have initially understood what their regimes would come to be, but successive decisions on who would or would not be trusted with power have led to the development of states in which much of the leaderships' energy is now spent on protecting the regimes themselves. Of course, coup-proofing is only one aspect of the rich range of actions and policies that constitute a regime's politics.

The Elements of Coup-proofing in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria

The essential demonstration of successful coup-proofing is the continued survival of the Saudi, Iraqi, and Syrian regimes despite external threats, military

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1994), p. 166. These methods also bring the "traditional bonds" that complicate coup-making into more advanced bureaucratic states. Luttwak, *Coup D'Etat*, pp. 4–5.

7. S.E. Finer, "Foreword," in Luttwak, *Coup D'Etat*, p. xv.

defeats, and internal tensions. Although the regimes differ in their use of active repression, each has established political-military arrangements that share five structural elements: (1) the exploitation of family, ethnic, and religious loyalties; (2) the creation of parallel militaries that counterbalance the regular military forces; (3) the establishment of security agencies that watch everyone, including other security agencies; (4) the encouragement of expertise in the regular military; and (5) funding.

THE EXPLOITATION OF SPECIAL LOYALTIES

The building block of political action in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria is the "community of trust" that is willing to act together.[8] The essence of rule in these states continues to be the strengthening of one's community by building accommodations with other communities and suppressing those that cannot be trusted. The characterization of the Iraqi and Syrian regimes as "Tikriti" and "Alawite," respectively, has been a cliché for decades, but the use of special loyalties as a central support of these regimes is real and still not fully understood.[9]

Numbers determine whether individual groups can make up a state's entire power base. Only small numbers might be needed to staff the state's central administration, but larger numbers are required to staff security organizations and man military units. There are two distinct cases: (1) whether a group could man the security organizations to suppress the state's entire population; and (2) whether a group could provide group-homogeneous large military units for external defense. Table 1 presents figures for various "communities of trust" in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria. The figures are rough estimates reflecting the spotty availability of population data.[10]

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8. Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba'athists, and Free Officers* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978); and Charles Tripp, "The Future of Iraq and Regional Security," in Geoffrey Kemp and Janice Gross Stein, eds., *Powder Keg in the Middle East: The Struggle for Gulf Security* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1995), pp. 133–159.

9. Nikolaos van Dam, "Middle Eastern Political Clichés: 'Tikriti' and 'Sunni Rule' in Iraq; 'Alawi Rule' in Syria: A Critical Appraisal," *Orient,* January 1980, pp. 42–57.

10. It is difficult to obtain reliable population figures for these countries. Saudi Arabia has long been known as a state in which demographic measurements are suspect if public, secret if accurate, and always controversial. Syria and Iraq are just as sensitive. Iraq's last publicly available census was conducted in 1977. The Iraqi census of 1987 may be unique in making failure to register for the census punishable by death. The 1987 census helped identify the location of Kurds for later extermination campaigns. Middle East Watch*, Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign against the Kurds* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993), pp. 10, 87. Completed forms from the 1987 census were provided to local offices of the General Directorate of Security together with directions on maintaining the files as a regular information source. Middle East Watch, *Bureaucracy of Repression: The Iraqi Government in Its Own Words* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994), pp. 137–138.

Table 1. "Communities of Trust."

Country	Group	Nature of Bond	Percentage of Population
Saudi Arabia	al-Saud	Family	~0.2[a]
Iraq	al-Bu Nasir	Saddam's tribe	0.1[b]
	Sunni Arabs	Religious	20
	Kurds	Ethnic	20
Syria	Alawite	Religious, tribal[c]	12

[a] Peter W. Wilson and Douglas F. Graham, *Saudi Arabia: The Coming Storm* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), p. 20.

[b] Amatzia Baram, *Building toward Crisis: Saddam Husayn's Strategy for Survival* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998), p. 21.

[c] The Alawites share a common religion, but they are also organized into four large confederations that are themselves further divided into individual tribes. Thomas Collelo, ed., *Syria: A Country Study,* 3d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, 1988), p. 97.

The practical measure of a group's ability to control, by itself, the general population is the number of people the group can provide to the security forces per 1,000 of the total population. In generally orderly populations, the number required to police the population might be as low as the slightly more than 2 uniformed police officers per 1,000 of population found in the United States. In internal conflict situations in which the security forces must forcibly maintain order, as many as 20 members of the security forces per 1,000 of population might be required (as in Ulster).[11]

The essence of this argument by percentage is shown in the case of Syria. The Alawites make up 12 percent of the total Syrian population, so there are 120 Alawites per 1,000 of total population. If the security forces are restricted to men aged 20–39, and the Alawite population shares the age distribution characteristics of the general Syrian population (which has 11.4 percent in this category), then only 13.7 members of an all-Alawite security force would be available for every 1,000 of population if every Alawite male in this age range were devoted to the security forces.[12] If we include all men in the age range 40–49, the ratio increases to 18.4 per 1,000 of population. These are relatively large numbers by the standards of peacetime security forces in democratic

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11. James T. Quinlivan, "Force Requirements in Stability Operations," *Parameters,* Vol. 25, No. 4 (Winter 1995–96), pp. 59–69.

12. Population data for age-sex distribution from U.S. Bureau of the Census, International Data Base. The corresponding figures for males aged 20–39 in Saudi Arabia and Iraq are, respectively, 14.4 percent and 13.9 percent. The effective "military age" starts when youth must report for conscription. In Iraq, this is 18; in Syria, 19.

Figure 1. Homogeneous Security Forces.
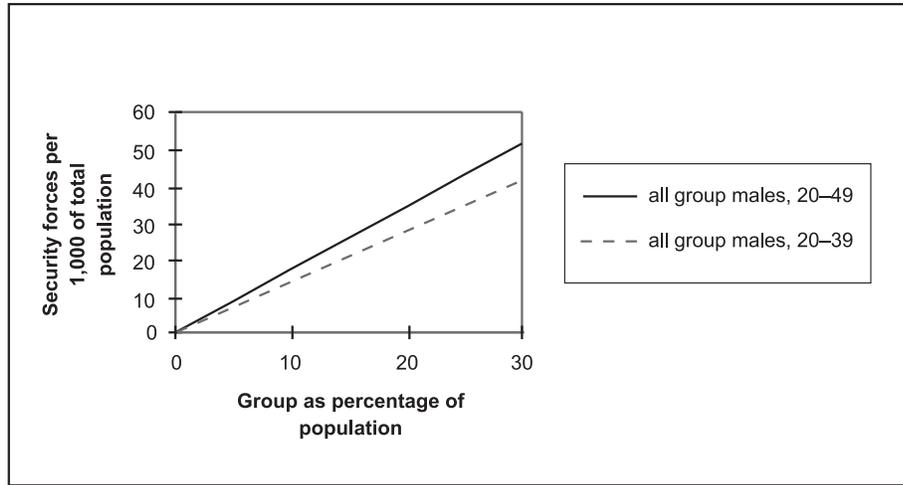
countries, but they are not large by the standards of repressive regimes or for regimes engaged in active counterinsurgency.

Figure 1 generalizes this calculation as a function of a group's representation in the overall population using the same age-sex distribution as in Iraq. The figure shows the security force numbers per 1,000 of total population that might be provided for a group-homogeneous force that drew on all males aged 20–39 and all males aged 20–49. A small minority (say less than 20 percent of the population) might be able to police a country at relatively high force ratios if nearly all its members were committed to the task.

Absolute population numbers are the most important factor when producing large ground forces. The translation of total population numbers into available divisions is essentially a calculation of how many men of "military age" are available within the population. Assuming that a particular community shares the same population pyramid as that of Iraq and is to provide 10,000 men in the 20–39 age group for a military unit (roughly the number of lower-ranking troops in a unit the size of a division), then the community must number more than 70,000 even if every male in the age group is taken for military service. As trivial a calculation as this is, it has profound implications for the plausibility of producing large units based on single communities and the need to include virtually all communities when the situation demands the formation of large field armies.

SAUDI ARABIA. The Saudi case in some ways seems the simplest both conceptually and in practice. This impression, however, is deceptive. As Joseph Kostiner points out, the formation of Saudi Arabia demonstrated "characteristics of an 'Ibn Khaldunian' type of chieftaincy, together with more Weberian, centralist, and institutionalized traits."[13] Ibn Saud, the founder of the Saudi state, was a Bedouin chieftain whose leadership reflected the belief that "group feeling results only from blood relationship or something corresponding to it" even while he strove to create a monopoly of force within a territorial boundary.[14] To date, Saudi balancing of tribal loyalties and interests, individual and religious interests, and the dynastic and individual interests of the extended royal family has resulted in a state unlike any other. While observers have pointed to the apparent fragility of this balance for decades, the longevity of the balancing act is both a tribute to the Saudi rulers and evidence that their tools are more effective than generally recognized.[15]

Ibn Saud's personal conquest of Arabia, supported by a community of trust of about sixty men willing to fight against the odds, began with the recapture of the family seat in Riyadh.[16] From there Ibn Saud went on to conquer the Nejd, the traditional heartland of Arabia, relying on both war and marriage to personalize his alliances and conquests. Marriage, even to bereaved relatives of defeated opponents, provided Ibn Saud an effective means of monitoring his enemies. The tribes of the Nejd made up the human core of Saudi Arabia, while Ibn Saud's numerous progeny comprised the dynasty's human core. Today the al-Sauds rule from a base within a family group that is not monolithic. Bonds of personal loyalty rather than of an "abstract notion of citizenship" extend from the family to the tribal groups.[17] Only nontribal Saudis define their relation to the Saudi rulers in the latter terms.

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13. Joseph Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916–1936; From Chieftaincy to Monarchical State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 191.
14. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History,* trans. Franz Rosenthal, ed. N.J. Dawood (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 98.
15. Morris Janowitz identified Saudi Arabia in 1975 as a country where a balance between the paramilitary and the national military establishment was being maintained with a proviso: "Such arrangements are fragile and likely to be transitional." Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 30. The proclivity of the United States to leak reports claiming instability in Saudi Arabia were a constant source of friction between the two countries during the early 1980s. Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability: Saudi Arabia, the Military Balance in the Gulf, and Trends in the Arab-Israeli Military Balance* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1984), pp. 261–262.
16. Robert Lacey, *The Kingdom* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), pp. 39–52.
17. Helen Chapin Metz, ed., *Saudi Arabia: A Country Study,* 5th ed., Area Handbook Series (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, 1993), p. 70.

IRAQ. Many consider Saddam Hussein's rise to power as the ultimate product of complicated family politics and tribal links to his hometown of Tikrit. His ascendancy is the culmination of a process that originated in the conspiratorial underground politics of the Baath Party. While out of power, the Iraqi Baath relied heavily on the same sort of personal relationships that are built around family and tribal contacts. The Baath seized power in a coup on July 17, 1968, and cemented its control in a second coup on July 30, 1968. The new five-member state leadership—the Revolutionary Command Council—already included three Tikritis, two of whom were related.[18] Although its reliance on trusted Tikritis and relatives was real, the leadership was so embarrassed by its obvious dependence on these relationships that in 1976 it banned public figures from using names that indicated tribal, clan, or local affiliations.[19] Even so, in 1978 one observer considered the Tikritis so central to the regime that "it would not be going too far to say that the Tikritis rule through the Baath party, rather than the Baath party through the Tikritis."[20]

Saddam Hussein may have lost his visible tribal identity in 1976, but he retained access to party dossiers that carefully recorded the tribal associations of each member of the Baath Party. Using this information, he was able to place trusted associates in key positions and to move those whose loyalty was suspect to the outer periphery of the power structure. After achieving sole power in 1979, Saddam made the process of selection more public and consciously dynastic. He has resorted to family politics as blatant as anything undertaken by Ibn Saud—even marrying two of his daughters to key functionaries in an effort to establish personal bonds and cement dynastic alliances. The apparent centrality of the family is reflected in the repeated attempts of Saddam's opponents to portray fractures and feuds within the family as evidence of "deteriorating" support for the regime.[21]

Although Saddam's inner family is still important, the central balancing act continues to be the nurturing of personal ties to Iraq's "houses," subtribal

18. Saddam Hussein is related to Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr through Saddam 's father-in-law, but both are also members of the al-Begat section of the al-Bu Nasir tribe. Batatu, *Old Social Classes and Revolutionary Movements of Iraq,* p. 1084. The tribe itself is a principal focus of the broader Tikrit association.

19. Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1985), pp. 212–213, 228.

20. Batatu, *Old Social Classes and Revolutionary Movements of Iraq,* p. 1088.

21. Barton Gellman, "Iraq's Family Feud Leaves Bloody Trail: Violence Close to Saddam Puts His Grip in Question," *Washington Post,* February 10, 1997, p. 1. The story is not unlike the flurry surrounding the defection, return, and murder of Saddam's sons-in-law. Caryle Murphy, "Family Feud Seen Splitting Saddam's Advisers: Opposition Members Say Rift Could Be Sign of Deteriorating Support for Iraqi President," *Washington Post,* January 21, 1992, p. 14.

groups, and tribes that bind them to the regime.[22] The regime's use of tribal ties to the larger society is a distinct change from the original policy of the Baath Party. After taking power in 1968, the regime declared its opposition to tribalism as a remnant of colonialism and acted to weaken the control of the tribes as economic units and the sheikhs as political leaders. By 1982, however, some tribes—the Jubbur in particular—were being specially recruited for the expanding Republican Guard. Since 1991 the tribal sheikhs have been given greater prominence in demonstrating their individual loyalty to the regime, pledging oaths of allegiance on behalf of their tribes, and controlling local militias to support the leadership.[23]

SYRIA. The French colonial administration recruited from the Alawite, Druze, Isma'ili, Christian, and Kurdish communities to produce an officer corps with very little representation from the majority population of orthodox Sunni Muslims. For twenty years after independence, these officer factions combined with and conspired against one another in a succession of coups, countercoups, and occasional civilian governments, sometimes with purges of virtually entire groups.

The Kurds were the first to suffer complete loss following a 1954 military coup. Sunni officers were later recruited and experienced brief prominence, but were purged after a 1963 Baath coup. With the Baathists' triumph, Alawites, Druzes, and Isma'ilis left their rural homelands and entered Syria's military academy. A party document described the influx into the military as drawing on people recommended on the basis of "friendship, family relationship, and sometimes mere personal acquaintance."[24] In the ensuing power struggles between the military and civilian wings of the Baath Party, the officer factions combined for momentary advantage around particular personalities. In a 1966 coup, two Alawite generals, Salah al-Jadid and Hafez al-Asad, with the backing of Druze and Isma'ili officers, decisively ended the competition in favor of the military wing. The failed attempt of a Druze officer to achieve a position of power within the new elite provoked a Druze coup attempt, the failure of which signaled the end of Druze prominence in the officer corps. The suicide of a prominent Isma'ili officer in 1969 marked the departure of the

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22. Amatzia Baram, *Building toward Crisis: Saddam Husayn's Strategy for Survival* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998), pp. 7–31.

23. Amatzia Baram, "Neo-Tribalism in Iraq: Saddam Hussein's Tribal Policies, 1991–1996," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 29 (February 1997), pp. 1–31.

24. Quoted in Itamar Rabinovich, *Syria under the Ba'th, 1963–66* (Jerusalem: Israel University Press, 1972), p. 76. In turn, cited in Alasdair Drysdale, "Ethnicity in the Syrian Officer Corps: A Conceptualization," *Civilisations*, Vol. 29 (1979), pp. 359–374.

Isma'ilis from power. By 1970, when Asad forced out Jadid and assumed sole power, he and his fellow Alawites were virtually in complete control of the principal positions of power.[25]

THE STRUCTURING OF A PARALLEL MILITARY

Regimes create parallel militaries to counterweight the regular armed forces—forces that can be used against the regime in a coup. Parallel militaries also permit the creation of much larger regular military forces that regimes can use to project power abroad with greater confidence. Because the purpose of a parallel military is to protect the regime, it must be bound to the regime through special loyalties and social relationships.[26]

Some portion of the security apparatus devoted exclusively to the physical protection of the ruler and his critical associates must be stationed in the immediate vicinity of the leadership. Assassination attempts directed solely at the regime's leader are very likely when the normal functioning of the regime produces large numbers of people seeking revenge for various grievances. The provision of bodyguards to protect members of the ruling class represents a substantial resource requirement. This constant security presence and the occasional near miss contribute to the ruling class's sense of paranoia and besiegement within its own society.[27]

Beyond the bodyguards is the parallel military itself. The parallel military does not have to be as large as the regular armed forces, nor does it need to be able to defeat the regular army in a full-scale civil war. But it must be large enough, loyal enough, and deployed so that it can engage and perhaps defeat any disloyal forces in the immediate vicinity of the critical points of the regime. In practice, the parallel military must be a "military" rather than merely a paramilitary force, and it should report to the regime leader through some chain other than the regular defense ministry. Parallel force units that are equipped in the same manner as regular army units ensure that the regular military will consider them in any balance-of-power calculation. Finally, the

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25. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* pp. 492–496; and Tabitha Petran, *Syria* (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp. 171–185.

26. The German SS is popularly understood as a parallel military force. Besides having military components that functioned as a parallel military force, the SS constituted a broad political attack on the structure of the German state. George H. Stein, *The Waffen SS: Hitler's Elite Guard at War, 1939–1945* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966); Helmut Krausnick, Hans Buchheim, Martin Broszat, and Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, *The Anatomy of the SS State,* trans. Richard Barry, Marian Jackson, and Dorothy Long (New York: Walker and Company, 1968); and Heinz Hohne, *The Order of the Death's Head: The Story of Hitler's SS,* trans. Richard Barry (New York: Coward-McCann, 1970).

27. See Gerard Michaud, "The Importance of Bodyguards," *Merip Reports,* November/December 1982, pp. 29–31.

Table 2. Parallel Military Forces: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria.

Country	Regular Ground Forces	Parallel Military	
		Element	Size
Saudi Arabia	3 armored brigades	National Guard	3 mechanized brigades
	5 mechanized brigades		5 infantry brigades
		Royal Guard regiment (army)	Regiment
	1 airborne brigade		
Iraq	3 armored divisions	Republican Guard Forces Command	2 armored divisions
	3 mechanized divisions		3 mechanized divisions
	12 infantry divisions		1 infantry division
		Special Republican Guard	4 brigades
		Special Forces	2 brigades
Syria	6 armored divisions	Republican Guard	1 division
	3 mechanized divisions	Special Forces	1 division

SOURCE: International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1998/99* (London: IISS, 1998).

parallel military must believe itself capable of facing the regular military units.[28]

The parallel military is almost inherently a ground combat force. Coup-proofing practices, however, frequently extend to air or naval forces—for example, restricting fuel (and hence range) for training flights is common in the Saudi air force. The essence of coup-proofing, though, is to prevent troops from moving on the centers of the regime, a task best accomplished by a ground-based parallel military.

Table 2 lists the Saudi, Iraqi, and Syrian military forces as well as numbers associated with both the regular army and the parallel armed forces.

SAUDI ARABIA. Saudi Arabia demonstrates the successful adaptation of balancing mechanisms. Its parallel army is the oldest in the Middle East, predating the corresponding Saudi army. Ibn Saud's conquering army comprised Bedouin tribes from the Nejd, levies from the towns, and contingents of *Ikwhan*

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28. Morris Janowitz predicted that paramilitary police formations might balance militaries, but that has not happened with militaries equipped with heavy weapons. Janowitz, *Military Institutions and Coercion in the Developing Nations,* pp. 28–29.

(Brethren).[29] This coalition did not survive for long, however. While Ibn Saud needed to demonstrate his authority over the nascent state, the *Ikwhan* wanted to continue raiding their traditional tribal rivals now located across an international border under British protection. The *Ikwhan* revolted against Ibn Saud's attempts to bring them to order in 1929, which tested the loyalty of all the tribes to his leadership. In a series of meetings, Ibn Saud succeeded in maintaining not only the loyalty of many of the tribes but also that of the Wahhabi religious leadership. Backed by tribal forces, town levies, and regulars brought in by transport, Ibn Saud defeated the rebels in a series of decisive battles.[30]

Ibn Saud created a state while maintaining the culture of the desert tribes. He could not, however, completely transform his desert warriors into a standing army. He built a Royal Guard from a small number of tribal retainers, but the standing army had to come from other elements, some of them military units won with Ibn Saud's victory over Hussein, king of the Hejaz. Much has happened since then to change the appearance of both the standing army and the White Army, yet each retains distinct elements of its original character. The standing army still recruits heavily from the Hejaz, while the White Army (which became the Saudi National Guard) draws on the Howeitat, Manasir, al-Murrah, Ruwala, and Aanaza tribes of the Nejd as well as the Shammar (the tribal confederation centered in the region just north of the Nejd).[31] These are the same tribes that stood with Ibn Saud in the 1929 *Ikwhan* revolt.

The present basing of the security units of the National Guard and its larger organized brigades has strong parallels with Ibn Saud's conquest of Arabia. The National Guard's key bases are located in the tribal areas and traditionally have been poised to retake, in the event of capture, the same cities and regions once conquered by Ibn Saud and his forces.[32]

The crucial development decisions that resulted in the current configurations of the Saudi military forces and the National Guard were made in different development plans in the 1970s. In a 1974 defense survey, a decision was made to deploy the regular army to military cities that the Saudis had built at great

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29. Joseph Kostiner, "On Instruments and Their Designers: The Ikhwan of Najd and the Emergence of the Saudi State," *Middle Eastern Studies,* Vol. 21 (1985), pp. 298–323; and John Habib, *Ibn Saud's Warriors of Islam* (Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1978).
30. Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916–1936,* pp. 128–140.
31. "Expanding Saudi's Elite Fighting Force," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* January 24, 1996, pp. 17–18.
32. Indeed, during the succession struggle between Faisal and Saud, Saud, perceiving the underlying threat to his rule as coming from the educated people of the cities, reportedly threatened to turn loose the tribes, effectively restaging his father's original conquests. Nadav Safran, *Saudi Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 95.

cost along key trouble areas and invasion routes on the country's periphery. A survey for the National Guard produced a separate plan: the National Guard would be deployed to Hufuf to protect the oil-producing installations in the Shiite-populated Eastern Province. The remainder of the larger guard units would be deployed in military cities developed in the traditional tribal areas surrounding the capital. These key garrisons in Jeddah, Riyadh, and Ha'il placed guard forces between the capital and the regular military.[33]

Despite many proposals, the Saudis have not expanded either the army or the National Guard. This may reflect the regime's fears of the potential consequences of a more widely recruited army either as a coup danger or as part of a move toward a modern conception of citizenship, or it may reflect traditional disdain for regular military (as opposed to warrior) life. In any case, despite various post–Gulf War programs to improve the effectiveness of the Saudi forces, there has been no increase in the size of either component.[34]

IRAQ. Iraq has a long history of creating parallel military forces. Early phases in the development of the Iraqi military included the eradication of a colonial heritage and an unsuccessful attempt to supplant regular army forces with party paramilitary forces in the first Baathist regime.[35]

The history of the Republican Guard that U.S. forces faced in the Gulf War effectively begins with the 1968 coup that returned the Baathists to power. The consolidation of the Baathist regime demanded that the Iraqi army never again be a threat to the leadership. This meant a purge of suspect elements from the army and their replacement by Baathists, who were then quickly transformed into regular officers, and the creation of parallel forces in the Popular Army and the Republican Guard. The Baathists were quite clear in their desire to remove suspect elements from the officer corps, a sentiment captured in the expression: "Who does not take our path stays at home with his wife."[36]

The Popular Army was the party-based, party-led mass alternative to the regular army. Springing from Baathist ideology and having already failed the first Baathist regime in an earlier incarnation, the party militia was lightly

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33. Ibid., pp. 206–209.
34. Jacob Goldberg, "Demography as a Military Constraint: The Case of Saudi Arabia," in Benjamin Frankel, ed., *A Restless Mind: Essays in Honor of Amos Perlmutter* (London: Cass, 1996), pp. 189–205.
35. When the British ruled Iraq as a League of Nations mandate, they drew on the Assyrian Christian minority to form a ground force, the Iraq Levies, who supported Britain's "air control" strategy. After Iraq achieved independence, the Assyrians were massacred in the summer of 1933. David Omissi, "Britain, the Assyrians, and the Iraq Levies, 1919–1932," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* Vol. 17, No. 3 (1989), pp. 301–322; and Samir al-Khalil (pseud.), *Republic of Fear: The Inside Story of Saddam's Iraq* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), p. 170.
36. Batatu, *Old Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq,* p. 1095.

equipped and lightly trained. It did, however, permit party functionaries who were not from the military wing of the party (including Saddam Hussein) to dress up in elaborate general's uniforms replete with aiguillettes and swords.[37] With the coming of the Iran-Iraq War, the regime mobilized the Popular Army in large numbers. During some point in the conflict, the Popular Army numbered perhaps as many as 650,000 (including junior officers who had been removed in earlier purges and were then reintegrated into the military). The Popular Army had distinct limitations on its abilities as a combat force. It was poorly trained, lacked political leadership, and had little in the way of supporting weapons or combined arms skills to stiffen a predominantly infantry force. Largely relegated to rear-area security and quiet sections of the front, the Popular Army when faced with Iranian attacks frequently collapsed, contributing large numbers of prisoners to the enemy.[38]

The Republican Guard existed as a small, capital-based formation before 1968. With the coming of the second Baathist regime, the guard started to assume a new character. Saddam Hussein, using his position within the organizational apparatus of the party, restocked the existing capital forces with Baathists from the regular army and increasingly with those from his hometown of Tikrit. Viewed largely as a true parallel military countercoup force, the Republican Guard did not need to develop in large numbers. At the start of the Iran-Iraq War, it was no more than an overstrength mechanized infantry brigade. True to its mission as a countercoup force, the Republican Guard was not originally committed to the Iraqi invasion that began on September 22, 1980. The Iraqi forces reached the Iranian city of Khorramshahr within days but could not push out the Iranian infantry. A special forces brigade and the Republican Guard brigade hurried through a training session in urban warfare and were committed to the attack. Only then did Iraq win final control of the city on October 24.[39] However, even as the brigade was being committed to the war effort, a unit devoted to the guard's original function was sent back to the capital to protect the regime.[40]

The Republican Guard expanded from a single brigade at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War to some seven brigades by 1986. A crucial event in the history

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37. Photo of Saddam Hussein in the uniform of a People's Army general, in ibid., pictures preceding p. 709.

38. Anthony H. Cordesman and Abraham R. Wagner, *The Lessons of Modern War,* Volume 2*: The Iran-Iraq War* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1990), p. 426.

39. Ibid., p. 93.

40. Richard Jupa and James Dingeman, "The Iraqi Republican Guards: Just How Elite Were They?" *Command,* No. 13 (November–December 1991), pp. 44–50.

of the Republican Guard seems to have been a meeting held on March 15, 1987. The meeting of Saddam Hussein with his military commanders and senior government and Baath Party officials reportedly focused on the possibility that the Iraqi defensive strategy of attrition might lead to defeat. They therefore decided to escalate Iraq's tanker and gas attacks and expand the Republican Guard and other elite units to form a force capable of seizing the initiative and mounting an offensive.[41] Subsequently, the Republican Guard expanded to twenty-eight brigades organized into six commands or divisional equivalents. This component of the guard eventually became Iraq's critical operational maneuver element in later engagements. With this expansion, there was no possibility that the guard could be manned exclusively from within the Tikriti inner circle. The Republican Guard therefore began recruiting individuals from a variety of backgrounds and communities who had to be screened using different measures and motivated by a broader range of incentives. Placing a premium on proficiency, the regime transferred many competent officers and soldiers to the Republican Guard and drafted college students to fill out the ranks.[42]

By the time of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, the Republican Guard had become a force of many divisions. The Republican Guard Forces Command possessed sufficient strength and command flexibility to carry out corps-sized offensive operations. At the same time, the Republican Guard's central coup-proofing function had not been slighted. The Republican Guard's Baghdad Division appears to have been in the capital or its immediate environs throughout the ground war portion of the conflict. Additional Republican Guard infantry divisions began forming in the vicinity but were never committed to Kuwait. They reportedly remain in the Republican Guard's postwar order of battle.[43]

After the Gulf War, a new presidential guard unit was formed.[44] This unit, now referred to as the Special Republican Guard, drew on the battalions of the surviving divisions, reshuffling personnel for reliability and growing a new protective layer inside the guard. Besides protecting the regime's core from other forces, including the ordinary Republican Guard, this unit reportedly

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41. Cordesman and Wagner, *The Lessons of Modern War,* pp. 259–260.

42. Kenneth Pollack, "The Arabs at War: Arab Military Effectiveness, 1948–1991," unpublished paper, 1997.

43. Michael Eisenstadt, *Like a Phoenix from the Ashes? The Future of Iraqi Military Power,* Policy Paper No. 36 (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1993), pp. 84–85.

44. Ed Bianche, "Saddam Forms Special Force for Protection," *Washington Times,* January 30, 1992, p. 10.

was also heavily involved in concealing forbidden weapons and technology from United Nations inspectors.[45]

SYRIA. Syria has had a profusion of parallel military formations attached to different leading personalities. These units have waxed and waned with the political fortunes of their leaders. In the face of the regular military's repeated coups, Hafez al-Asad ordered the creation of the first of the parallel militaries—the Defense Companies—with his brother Rifaat in command. These forces originated as units charged with the defense of airfields and coup-critical government buildings and centers largely within Damascus and its immediate vicinity. At the same time, critical units of the army were subjected to controls and personnel selections that made them quite different from the regular run of the military. The 3d Armored Division in particular came to be known as the regular army's "anti-coup" division. It was positioned close to the capital with a leadership uniquely attached to President Asad. The special forces, also under a commander with special ties to the president, grew to become a parallel military in their own right.

After the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the 1982 Bekaa War, Syria engaged in the extensive acquisition of new military systems. Similar to the pattern of modernization before the 1973 war, the new rounds of modernization again came from the rear. New T-72 tanks first went to the Asad Defense Force and the Republican Guard divisions, both stationed in the immediate vicinity of Damascus. More T-72s were added to the 1st and 3d Armored Divisions. The T-62s from these units were then issued to the armored units on the confrontation line.[46] By 1982 the Defense Companies had expanded and reorganized into four brigade-sized formations (three armored and one mechanized) still under the command of Rifaat Asad. The Defense Companies had first priority for such key weapons as the T-72 tank and new surface-to-air missiles.[47]

A succession crisis in Syria occasioned by Hafez al-Asad's incapacitation in 1983 illustrates the ability of parallel military forces to prevent a rapid succession to power—essentially a coup—and how sustaining such gridlock can call into play other political forces inherent in parallel militaries based on particular groups. The crisis began with Asad's illness, hospitalization, and protracted convalescence in late 1983. With his health visibly weakened and widespread

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45. Anthony H. Cordesman, *Iraq and the War of Sanctions: Conventional Threats and Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1999).

46. Anthony H. Cordesman, *After the Storm: The Changing Military Balance in the Middle East* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1993), p. 268.

47. Thomas Collelo, ed., *Syria: A Country Study,* 3d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Federal Research Division, 1988), p. 269; and Michael Eisenstadt, "Syria's Defense Companies: Profile of a Praetorian Unit," unpublished paper, 1989.

speculation that he was a dying man, Asad began to suspect that his brother Rifaat wanted to succeed to him as president. With four brigades, Rifaat's Defense Companies represented the largest group of forces in Damascus. President Asad reportedly directed a concentration of forces on the capital, bringing backing Brigadier General 'Ali Haydar's Special Forces and portions of the 3d Armored Division to reinforce the Republican Guard. From the night of February 26, 1984 (when the Special Forces and Republican Guard deployed in Damascus) until March 30, 1984 (when Rifaat ordered his Defense Companies to move into Damascus in force), the units engaged in a protracted test of wills. During this period, additional political forces came into play when the sheikhs of the Murshidiyya Alawites were said to have ordered their followers to quit the Defense Companies. The confrontation ended only after a face-to-face meeting in which Rifaat accepted his brother's continued authority.[48]

Rifaat's backing down and the return of his troops to their barracks did not end the intrigue, however. In late May, President Asad dispatched an entire planeload of senior officers, including Rifaat, to Moscow to await his instructions on when to return. The officers were eventually called back to Syria, but Rifaat went on to a comfortable exile in Geneva. Meanwhile, Asad reduced the Defense Companies' overall strength. The core of the unit was scaled back to a regular army division, Unit 569, and the pay of its soldiers reduced to regular army standards. Some reservists returned to civilian life. Others, probably reliable Alawites, transferred to the Special Forces and the Republican Guard, the remaining units of the parallel military that had served so well in the succession crisis.[49]

Syria at present has the same mix of elite parallel militaries, with full divisions of parallel military heavy forces concentrated in the immediate vicinity of Damascus.

MULTIPLE SECURITY SERVICES

Regime survival depends on the loyalty and effectiveness of the security services in ways more complicated than the regime's reliance on the regular military. The active opposition of the military, not its passivity, threatens a regime. In the case of the security services, however, the regime can fail if the security services do not actively carry out their responsibilities. The propaga-

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48. Patrick Seale, *Asad of Syria: The Struggle for the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 425–433; Eisenstadt, "Syria's Defense Companies," pp. 10–11; and Alasdair Drysdale, "The Succession Question in Syria," *Middle East Journal,* Vol. 39, No. 2 (Spring 1985), pp. 247–250.
49. Seale, *Asad of Syria,* p. 437; and Eisenstadt, "Syria's Defense Companies," p. 5.

tion of security agencies with overlapping charters creates a market with multiple sellers of "security services" and a single demanding buyer. This helps ensure that the services are both loyal and active.

In their repressive roles, the security forces function within a general order maintained by police forces of a more pedestrian character. The public loyalty and operation of the police and the private loyalty and operation of its associated informant rings are the most delicate and yet most powerful defenses against insurrection. Only the police in their daily contact with the people can recognize and prevent the transition from public unrest to mob insurrection.[50]

SAUDI ARABIA. Fundamental organs of internal security in Saudi Arabia are lodged within the Ministry of the Interior, the National Guard, and the independent religious police.

The Saudi Ministry of the Interior controls four principal organs of security: the Public Security Police, the Special Security Force, the Coast Guard, and the Frontier Force. The Public Security Police includes the regular uniformed police and the General Directorate of Investigations (the *mubahith* or secret police). The regular police are recruited on a national basis and operate from police directorates organized at the provincial and local levels. The Special Security Force is a counterterrorist unit equipped to handle large incidents. The Frontier Force of more than 10,000 men patrols land borders and administers customs inspections. In addition to these routine operations, it has fought small border actions with Yemen.[51] The General Directorate of Intelligence compiles extensive computer records of Saudi nationals and foreign workers and can hold suspects for questioning for long periods without charges or access to family or lawyers. In addition to these regular forces, the Ministry of the Interior is reportedly responsible for the *mujahidoun*, or fighters, a shadowy group recruited from among the progeny of Ibn Saud's original forces and charged with watching over critical infrastructure such as banks and offices The *mujahidoun* report directly to the ministry.[52]

Troops from the infantry battalions and tribal levies perform the National Guard's internal security role. Unlike troops in the National Guard's mecha-

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50. The disappearance or desertion of the regular police has always been a sensitive indicator of the impending success of an insurrection. This indicator is most particularly noted by the successful insurrectionists themselves. Leon Trotsky, for example, noted the desertion of the police in St. Petersburg in 1917. Trotsky, *The Russian Revolution: The Overthrow of Tzarism and the Triumph of the Soviets,* selected and ed. F.W. Dupree from *The History of the Russian Revolution,* trans. Max Eastman (New York: Doubleday, 1959), pp. 107–108.
51. Metz, *Saudi Arabia: A Country Study,* pp. 242–243, 278–281.
52. Peter W. Wilson and Douglas F. Graham, *Saudi Arabia: The Coming Storm* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), p. 159.

nized units, these infantry troops are more lightly armed and trained. They are organized along tribal lines under tribal leaders and thus closer in tribal allegiance to the House of Saud.[53]

The religious police, or *mutawwiin*, of the Committees for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice enforce standards of public behavior according to Wahhabi religious beliefs. This is sometimes expressed as the public confrontation and detention of people alleged to have offended prevailing standards. Current procedures require a regular police officer to accompany the religious police at the time of arrest, which is said to be the general practice.[54] As a component of internal security, the religious police are better at suppressing secular tendencies than the religious zealots who have led movements against the Saudi regime.

IRAQ. The proliferation of security agencies in Iraq begins with a cautionary tale. In June 1973, a coup attempt organized by the Baathist Party's security chief, Nazim Kzar, almost succeeded—his structural advantage as the regime's sole security chief nearly overcoming poor organization and lack of political support.[55] Since then, Iraqi security agencies have multiplied and are being constantly reshuffled and reshaped by the exigencies of the moment. Among the agencies with overlapping functions, the Military Security Service is an entirely independent agency. With a strength of 5,000, it can adequately provide agents for every formation and at every echelon within the military.[56]

The larger security agencies usually have a uniformed component equipped with heavier weapons and transport to support cordon and search operations. These forces backstop the Police Mobile Strike Force and the regular police. In addition, the Popular Army has participated extensively in rear-area security tasks during wars and in internal security operations.

The security agencies offer a path of upward mobility for many of the more ambitious and ruthless members of Iraqi society. Traditional blandishments of rapid promotion, high pay, and special privileges can attract and motivate those who are not particularly squeamish. These agencies are also sanctuaries for young sons of the leadership considered too dear to be sent to the fighting

53. Ibid., pp. 156–158; and Metz, *Saudi Arabia: A Country Study,* pp. 263–264.
54. U.S. Department of State, *Saudi Arabia Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1998,* released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, February 26, 1999 (http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1998_hrp_report/saudiara.html).
55. Marr, *Modern History of Iraq,* pp. 216–217.
56. A current list for Iraq with a detailed analysis of functions is found in Sean Boyne, "Inside Iraq's Security Network, Part One," *Jane's Intelligence Review,* July 1997, pp. 312–314. The agencies are described in more detail in Boyne, "Inside Iraq's Security Network, Part Two," *Jane's Intelligence Review,* August 1997, pp. 365–367.

forces.[57] Besides drawing on its regular members, the security agencies must also rely on informers across the entire population—both in those groups most suspect to the regime and in those supposedly loyal groups on which the regime most depends. The agencies have a vast range of resources at their disposal—from simple cash payments and access to special privileges to threats and intimidation.[58]

The complicity of the Iraqi security services in the excesses of the regime provides an additional guarantee of their loyalty. Those implicated in such behavior understand that they cannot simply switch sides in the event of a coup; their loyalty to the regime is literally to the death. As a journalist noted in reporting the Kurdish rebel conquest of an Iraqi prison defended by 300 secret policemen and prison guards: "None of the defenders survived."[59] The cumulative effect of the regular behavior of the security forces during normal times ensures that in a crisis the population and the security forces fear each other.

SYRIA. Many of Syria's security agencies have immediate access to Hafez al-Asad. According to one observer, Asad's management style has been to communicate with subordinates primarily through outgoing phone calls, although he has accepted calls from "only a handful of people, perhaps no more than three or four security chiefs, [who] had the right to ring him."[60]

The major Syrian security services include the General Intelligence Directorate, a civilian agency; General Military Intelligence; and Air Force Intelligence. Each can deal with both internal security and foreign intelligence and operations. At various times, the Defense Companies and the Special Forces had intelligence/security components that operated within Syria proper and Lebanon. Table 3 provides a list of identified Syrian intelligence and security agencies.

THE FOSTERING OF EXPERTNESS IN THE REGULAR MILITARY
As defined by Samuel Huntington, "professionalism" in the military has three requirements: expertness, social responsibility, and a corporate character.[61] In

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57. Hussein Sumaida with Carole Jerome, *Circle of Fear: A Renegade's Journey from the Mossad to the Iraqi Secret Service* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1991).
58. See the discussion of recruitment in Iraq under "The Law of Securing the Trustworthy (*al-mu'taman*) in Defending the Revolution," in Isam al-Khafaji, "State Terror and the Degradation of Politics in Iraq," *Middle East Report*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (May–June 1992) pp. 15–21.
59. Chris Hedges, "Kurds Unearthing New Evidence of Iraqi Killings," *New York Times*, December 7, 1991, pp. 1, 7.
60. Seale, *Asad of Syria: The Struggle for the Middle East*, p. 341.
61. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (New York: Vintage, 1957), pp. 11–18.

Table 3. Syrian Security Agencies.

Major Agencies	Branches	Character
General Intelligence	Internal branch External security Counterespionage	Civilian
Political Security	Political party Students and student activities Surveillance and pursuit City	Civilian
Bureau of National Security of the Baath Party		Civilian
Military Intelligence	Palestine Commando police Military interrogation Military intelligence in Lebanon	Military
Air Force Intelligence		Military
Military Police		Military
Military Security		Military
Special Forces		Parallel military
Presidential Guard		Parallel military
	Presidential security	

SOURCE: Middle East Watch, *Syria Unmasked: The Suppression of Human Rights by the Assad Regime* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 48–53.

his extended discussion of motives that inhibit the military, S.E. Finer analyzes how these same motives impel the military both toward and away from intervention.[62] In practice, a regime seeking to become coup-proof tries to break down the corporate identity and corporate loyalty of the military; at the same time, it may try to increase the expertness of the military in a strictly technical sense.

Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria have all created comprehensive systems of military education—from the cadet academy to the staff college. These schools provide real opportunities for the members of the officer corps to learn their profession. The essence of the military officer's "expertness" is his understanding of the force required to carry out particular military operations and the procedures needed to bring this force to bear on the operation.

Improving the technical skills of regular military officers increases not only their ability to deal with foreign regular armies, but also their sense of the

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62. Finer, *Man on Horseback,* pp. 21–22.

military risks involved in a coup attempt. Understanding these risks in turn renders them less likely to attempt a coup and more susceptible to detection should they try. Faced with the presence of parallel military units and the worst-case judgment that parallel units cannot be neutralized but may have to be defeated, technically skilled regular officers will perceive a requirement for combat power at some multiple greater than that possessed by the parallel military. As the number of units required to execute a coup increases, so does the difficulty of ensuring that the required units will act as part of the conspiracy. As the number of communications between conspirators increases, so does the probability that they will be uncovered. The very dependence of technically skilled officers on the creation of detailed plans and their coordination opens the conspirators to active measures by the security forces. It also reduces the probability that the required units and all the conspirators can ever be made ready by the standards of a true military operation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MONEY
Parallel militaries and multiple security agencies can, of course, be expensive to create and maintain. Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria have all found means to pay for them, however, while balancing the regime's other requirements.[63]

Saudi Arabia and Iraq are rentier states with oil revenues normally providing the majority of government funds. The ability to tap oil revenues makes the state largely independent of the need to generate revenue domestically.[64] Indeed, with sufficiently opaque financial transactions, an oil-rich state can free itself from public knowledge of how much money it has raised externally and how the money is distributed internally.

The importance of money extends beyond the ability to buy weapons for parallel militaries and to provide their members superior pay and benefits. The sustained expenditure of money over time creates a kind of politics with a certain stability that goes unnoticed by outsiders. The "wholesale" operation of this politics is expressed in the creation of subsidies and entitlements that bind entire groups to the regime. For example, long before the discovery of oil, Ibn Saud rewarded loyal tribes with gold and rifles. Since the discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia and the oil boom, money generated from the export of oil and oil by-products has permitted the survival (through subsidy) of a tradi-

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63. Balancing "efficient repression, extensive propaganda, and enough economic development to create new *elites* committed to the regime." Luttwak, *Coup D'Etat*, pp. 190–191.
64. Giacomo Luciani, "Allocation vs. Production States: A Theoretical Framework," in Luciani, ed., *The Arab State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

tional Bedouin culture coexisting with a modern commercial culture. The subsidy is most noticeably passed through the Saudi National Guard both as a traditional expression of the culture of the desert warriors and as an armed expression of the personal loyalty owed to the House of Saud. The subsidy allows the tribes to remain in their traditional tribal areas both as families and as tribes and as formed units of the National Guard. Huntington dated the birth of the modern Saudi state from the 1964 replacement of King Saud by Prince Faisal as an "assertion of the priority of public objectives and public needs over the claims of family and kinship."[65] Nevertheless, the Saudi state continues to make substantial public expenditures for public purposes that reinforce kinship ties to the al-Saud family.

In Saudi Arabia and Iraq, the large quantity of available money ensures that many groups, not just the core group, can experience the regime's largesse. This politics of money operates on a wholesale and a retail scale: the sense that whatever one has is a gift from the regime pervades both systems. The regime's interest-group politics permits the cultivation of small, previously marginalized groups that can expand the regime's base without running the risk of the smaller groups coming to dominate.

Syria exports some oil, but it has much tighter financial limits than either Iraq or Saudi Arabia. As a frontline state in the confrontation with Israel, Syria has been subsidized by other Arab states. Even so, it has never had ready access to easy money and has to resort to methods other than direct payment to reward the regime's key elements. In a state like Syria that imports both essentials and luxuries, the financial advantages attached to import licenses can be substantial, and control over such licenses is a prerogative of the state. The rewards are considerable, and the opportunity for the regime to monitor and control the traffic is very high. Even when such controls become corrupt— for example, allowing the entry of goods from Lebanon into Syria or the movement of drugs from Syrian-controlled areas into Lebanon—the beneficiaries of such corruption are the security officials themselves, further reinforcing their desire to do what is necessary to keep their positions. Episodic reform campaigns seem designed only to control the extent of such practices, not to exclude them completely.[66]

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65. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 157.
66. Yahya M. Sadowski, "Cadres, Guns, and Money: The Eighth Regional Conference of the Syrian Ba'ath," *Merip Reports,* July/August 1985, pp. 3–8; and Douglas Jehl, "Syrians Struggle to Decipher Assad Clan's Dirty Laundry," *New York Times,* January 28, 1997, p. 1.

How Coup-proofing Reduces Military Power

The techniques of coup-proofing have reduced the threat of military coups in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria, but they also have lessened these states' usable military power. The creation of parallel militaries does not hinder the development of good tactical units—in fact, parallel military units may be quite effective as individual units—however, parallel militaries and their parallel chains of command do impede the effective application of military power.

Better weapons, better-trained soldiers, and greater self-confidence are among the elements that help to make parallel military units individually more effective than their regular military counterparts. The benefits of greater access to the most modern weapons in the state's arsenal are obvious. Higher pay and more privileges help ensure that a high proportion of parallel military soldiers will serve longer or become career soldiers. Longer service means more time for training and greater assurance that such training will be absorbed.[67] Supplied with better weapons and aware of their superior training, parallel military soldiers will show greater confidence in their military abilities. In addition, if the parallel militaries draw on groups with established military traditions—"warrior clans"—their collective self-esteem can reinforce their other advantages. Conversely, members from less advantaged groups in the regular military, acutely aware of their older weapons and weaker training, will tend to feel inferior to soldiers in the parallel military.

The negative effects of coup-proofing on military power occur at levels higher than the individual soldier or unit. Table 4 summarizes how Saudi Arabian, Iraqi, and Syrian regular and parallel military forces develop military power. Three effects evident in the table are the monopolization of key capabilities within parallel military forces, the concentration of the operational reserve within the parallel military forces, and a delay in the modernization of frontline forces by starting modernization cycles with the parallel military forces.

MONOPOLIZATION OF CAPABILITIES INSIDE THE PARALLEL MILITARY
To varying degrees, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria have come to concentrate key capabilities of offense and defense in parallel military forces. The total military power of the state is reduced, however, when these forces are not made available when needed. The procedures by which these units are made

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67. Francis Tusa, "Aspects of Arms Absorption in Arab Armies," in Brassey, *Defence Yearbook, 1990* (London: Brassey's, 1990), pp. 341–353.

Table 4. Effects of Coup-proofing on Military Power.			
Attribute	**Saudi Arabia**	**Iraq**	**Syria**
Offensive power	Small under all circumstances; land capability against small Gulf states	No offensive capability within regular army infantry divisions; tactical offensive capability within armor and mechanized units of regular forces	Ordinary divisions of regular forces have carried out tactical offensives
		Offensive capability to operational depth confined to Republican Guard	Exploitation capabilities within second echelon regular forces and parallel military
Defensive power	Provided by peacetime positioning of units of the regular forces along critical axes of approach	Proliferation of enemies has complicated past practice of mobilizing and positioning reserve infantry divisions for static defense	Provided by peacetime positioning of units of the regular forces along critical axes of approach
	No second echelon in normal posture	Second echelon of regular army armor and mechanized divisions	Second echelon of regular forces (primarily armor)
Central reserve	Held in vicinity of capital; army and National Guard units have not operated as a cohesive unit	Republican Guard has operated as a corps	Diverse parallel military elements have not operated as a cohesive higher element unit
Combat power improvement through modernization	Army and National Guard have separate, uncoordinated programs	Delayed effect on frontline forces because of modernization sequence from back to front	Delayed effect on frontline forces because of modernization sequence from back to front

available for operations is the critical variable. When operations can be carefully planned, are supervised by competent commanders whom the regime trusts (at least for the duration of the operation), and proceed at a pace consistent with information flows within the joined forces, they have a chance of succeeding. When operations must be carried out without planning or clear chains of command, and at a pace that stresses information flows, prospects for success are not good.

Special forces' capabilities are an obvious monopoly possessed by parallel military forces. Both Syria and Iraq have concentrated these capabilities in large formations. Syria's Special Forces' formation has functioned as a parallel military in its own right. The concentration of offensive ground capabilities within Iraq's Republican Guard has progressed significantly since the guard expanded in the Iran-Iraq War. In the key offensives at the close of that war, the guard cooperated with regular army units in corps-level formation. In Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the then chief of staff reports that the Republican Guard had carried out the invasion without his knowledge. Coordination of the army and the Republican Guard remains a problem, with the army now at a planning disadvantage because of the guard's increasing primacy in offensive operations.[68]

CONSTITUTION OF THE OPERATIONAL RESERVE
The reserve is that portion of the total force withheld from action at the beginning of an operation so as to be available for commitment at a decisive moment. The "central" reserves are those forces withheld from commitments and positioned for movement to exploit victory or stave off defeat. In theory, the central reserve might comprise any units not in the immediate vicinity of enemy forces. In practice, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria position the majority of their military forces on the borders and along traditional invasion routes. Only parallel military units have positions that permit ready relocation and movement. Saudi Arabia and Syria have chosen to construct their operational reserves as individual units without an organizing headquarters. In practice, this means they are applied as individual reinforcing units to existing higher-level formations. Iraq has constituted corps-level headquarters within the Republican Guard Forces Command in a way that permits the operational reserve to be used as a field formation of its own.

68. Interview with Staff General Nizar al-Khazraji, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Near East and South Asia Daily Report,* FBIS-NES-96-076, April 18, 1996, p. 21.

The fate of the Syrian Republican Guards in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War is an example of the military problems of such an arrangement. With the Israeli 7th Brigade fighting for the "Valley of Tears" against the Syrian 7th Infantry Division and the 3d Armored Division, the Republican Guards were committed as a brigade-sized unit in a battle fought on the Syrian side at the scale of divisions. Much of the guard's T-62 force seems to have been lost in an individual attack of two battalions on the third day of the war in which their performance was assessed by the Israelis as "very mediocre."[69]

MODERNIZATION CYCLE

The modernization cycles of the Iraqi and Syrian forces have always begun with the parallel military forces. The Syrians have been unable to bring their best units and best equipment to the opening battles of recent wars. The Iraqis have used their best-equipped forces only in carefully planned offensives and to redeem badly broken defenses. Only the Saudis have ensured that their regular frontline forces routinely have the best equipment available in the Saudi arsenal.

The 1973 Arab-Israeli War shows the effects of different modernization approaches. Just before the war, both the Egyptian and the Syrian militaries received several hundred T-62 tanks from the Soviet Union. The Egyptians placed their tanks in new first-line armored and mechanized brigades that crossed the Suez Canal and led the offensive fighting in the Sinai. In contrast, the Syrians placed their new T-62s with the 1st and 3d Divisions and the Asad Republican Guards rather than with the frontline divisions that conducted the initial assault (the 5th, 7th, and 9th Infantry Divisions). The Syrians held back their modernized divisions from the initial breakthrough battles with the intention of exploiting any future breakthrough and as a general reserve.[70] Virtually all of the Syrian T-62s eventually fought, but not under optimal conditions. Syria's initial assault divisions, which had the element of surprise on their side and a carefully scripted plan, were denied the best equipment with which to mount their attack. Meanwhile, Syrian units that did have the best equipment were not provided the best conditions for using it. Rather, they were saved for a later series of desperate attempts to break through.

69. Chaim Herzog, *The War of Atonement, October 1973* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975), p. 111.
70. Trevor N. Dupuy, *Elusive Victory: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947–1974* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 441.

The Overthrow of a Coup-proofed Regime: The Case of Iraq

The United States did not explicitly set out in the Gulf War to overthrow the regime of Saddam Hussein or to foment a popular uprising against his government.[71] No meeting involving General Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ever considered "dismembering Iraq, conquering Baghdad, or changing the Iraqi form of government."[72] And even with the coalition's success in the ground war, there was no desire to push on to Baghdad or to oust Saddam Hussein using U.S. power.[73] Although many had predicted that Saddam would likely fall in a coup within a few months of Iraq's defeat, the greatest threat to the regime actually sprang from a wholly spontaneous insurrection.[74]

The insurrection following the Iraqi defeat in Kuwait comprised two separate events: a low-level Kurdish insurgency that flared into open revolt as Iraqi forces were withdrawn and reduced, and an uprising originating in the vicinity of the southern city of Basra where elements of the Iraqi regular army, bloodied in the fighting in Kuwait, rose against the regime. The largely Shiite population of the Basra region joined in the revolt. Forces loyal to the regime in the immediate vicinity of Basra, however, contested the rebel forces from the beginning and never lost control of the city.

The southern disorders spread toward Baghdad along the main highways, the news percolating through rumor and "I saw it" declarations from travelers from the region. A chronology of the uprisings in southern Iraq suggests that they moved northward along the highways slightly faster than 100 kilometers per day at the start, ultimately taking six days to move from Basra to Karbala, just south of Baghdad. While this speed of propagation is certainly faster than

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71. U.S. intent to foment a rising is sometimes ascribed to President George Bush's statements in August 1990 with the additional statement during the air war that "there's another way for the bloodshed to stop, and that is for the Iraqi military and the Iraqi people to take matters into their own hands to force Saddam Hussein, the dictator, to step aside." Quoted in "Excerpts from 2 Statements by Bush on Iraq's Proposal for Ending Conflict," *New York Times,* February 16, 1991. Bush's statement was carried in regular Voice of America transmissions to Iraq. The more seditious Voice of Free Iraq carried stronger messages but without overt U.S. sponsorship. Barton Gellman, "Voice of Free Iraq at Heart of Debate over U.S. Backing of Rebels," *Washington Post,* April 9, 1991. The background to the president's comment and his disavowal that removal of Saddam was a goal of U.S. action is described in George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), pp. 471–472.

72. Colin Powell with Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 490.

73. Ibid., pp. 519–528; and James A. Baker III with Thomas M. DeFrank, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War, and Peace, 1989–1992* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995), pp. 435–442.

74. In the opinion of the coalition's Arab partners, the time frame was "within six to eight months"; ibid., p. 442.

movement on foot, it hardly matches the speed of light of the communications revolution. Moreover, the radio reports propagated at the time by both Tehran Radio and the BBC were, in retrospect, "exaggerated and sometimes unfounded."[75]

The nature of the uprisings, the violence against the Baathist regime and the security forces, and the regime's massive repression of the revolts are still poorly understood. Clearly, the rebellions represented a widespread desire for change in the regime as well as a desire to drive out the security forces, but these were not the only reasons for the unrest. The collapse of the food distribution system and the exhaustion of individual stocks produced widespread looting of warehouses and consequent disorder as Iraqis struggled to survive. Both sides committed atrocities. Rebel violence against surrendered Iraqi security forces and the families of Baathist and government officials may have solidified support among those inescapably linked to the regime and perhaps also among those who had doubts about how the insurgents would treat them. The government's countervailing measures were massive and indiscriminate.[76]

Perhaps the most interesting of the uprisings is what one observer refers to as "the Uprising that Wasn't." Throughout the period of unrest, Baghdad remained quiet. Rumors of uprisings or demonstrations within the capital invariably proved false.[77] Three factors produced this calm: the predisposition of the population to support the regime, limitations on U.S. actions, and prophylactic measures taken by the Iraqi regime.

Baghdad is a city of some 4 million people, its large population the result of decades of migration from the hinterland to jobs in the capital. These employment opportunities are the creation of the Baathist regime, and have traditionally gone to those the party considered most worthy. The influx into the capital contributed to the development of Iraq's substantial middle class, whose members depend on the government and the regime itself for their livelihoods.

Although the coalition launched multiple air and cruise missile attacks on military headquarters and offices in the Baghdad area during the Gulf War, there was none of the widespread indiscriminate civilian damage that occurred during the missile war phase of the Iran-Iraq War. For a variety of reasons, only a few Baghdad targets were hit at the start of the Gulf War and fewer

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75. Faleh al-Jabbar, "Why the Uprisings Failed," *Middle East Report*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (May–June 1992), pp. 8, 12.
76. Middle East Watch, *Endless Torment: The 1991 Uprising in Iraq and Its Aftermath* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1992).
77. Al-Jabbar, "Why the Uprisings Failed," p. 12.

were bombed as the war continued.[78] One observer conjectures that the coalition's restrained air attack around Baghdad limited the effect on the populace: "The very modesty of the campaign had a disastrous countereffect."[79]

Meanwhile, the Iraqi regime launched a series of prophylactic measures. According to coalition intelligence estimates, the regime's military forces in Baghdad in January 1991 included two Republican Guard brigades (with possibly two more present) and one mechanized infantry division forming in the immediate area.[80] None of these units appears to have been targeted by the coalition air attack. The regular police and security units stayed at their posts. Together, the military and security units were visibly able and willing to quell any potential unrest. In addition, the regime's control over and provision of food as well as the evacuation of some civilians strengthened the regime's presence among the civilian populace, demonstrating that the regime itself was still providing the minimal necessities for the population.[81]

With the survival of some combat-ready loyal units, the attrition of dissident units because of coalition attacks or desertion, prophylactic population-control measures, and Saddam Hussein's own strong will to retain power, the Iraqi regime survived. In retrospect, the Gulf War Air Power Survey observed that "in fact, it was the (Iraqi) military who were the weak link, while the political regime displayed an impressive capacity to absorb punishment and retain its hold on power."[82]

Any future war with Iraq would necessarily be fought on entirely different military and political assumptions than those that guided the Gulf War effort. Any coalition supporting such a war would hold different beliefs on the regime's ability to survive simple military defeat. It is entirely possible that removal of the regime could be an avowed goal rather than an objective explicitly ruled out by the coalition's political forces. At the same time, the Iraqi

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78. William M. Arkin, in "Analysis," *Fog of War* project, on *Washington Post* home page (http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/lonterm/fogofwar/).
79. The extent to which the attack on Baghdad targeted installations rather than capabilities is dealt with at length in William M. Arkin, "Baghdad: The Urban Sanctuary in Desert Storm?" *Airpower Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Spring 1997), pp. 4–20, at p. 17.
80. U.S. Public Law 102–25, *The Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress Pursuant of Title V of the Persian Gulf Conflict Supplemental Authorization and Personnel Benefits Act of 1991,* April 1992, p. 111.
81. Prior to the bombing, Iraq had announced a large-scale evacuation exercise of Baghdad on December 21 as a demonstration of its resolve and preparedness. This exercise appears to have been a deception, but substantial numbers of people did leave Baghdad during the war. On the deception, see John Simpson, *From the House of War: John Simpson in the Gulf* (London: Hutchinson, 1991), pp. 261–262.
82. *Gulf War Air Power Survey,* Volume 2, *Operations and Effects and Effectiveness* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1993), p. 331.

military and civilian population would start from a different understanding of coalition military and political capabilities.

If removing the regime—without fragmenting the state—becomes the coalition's political objective, then its military force must be capable of directly engaging and removing the parallel military forces within the immediate vicinity of the capital and key population centers. It must also be capable of undermining the regime's political structure by providing a survivable exit strategy for key factions controlling the state apparatus. Both the assurance of devastating force and the guarantee of survival if certain conditions are met are necessary elements in undermining the political structures of the regime. Given the surfeit of destruction available from both foreign and domestic suppliers, an offer of survival is more likely to erode regime support than is the threat of destruction. The disorder, however, can come to an end only if the various elements can be brought in to support a new government.

The geographical objectives that correspond to these aims include the capital as well as the oil fields and facilities that support the export of oil and its by-products. Baghdad, as the focus of all social, professional, and political activity, corresponds exactly to those characteristics of a capital that make it an object of seizure in Clausewitz's view.[83] Possession of the Iraqi capital traditionally has been considered a legitimizing event in earlier coups. In addition, coalition capture of the oil fields and an explicit commitment to transfer their control to a new regime with permission to export oil are potentially decisive weapons.

The capture of Baghdad is a difficult goal. The prospect of urban combat is sobering, and the tactical and military-technical problems of urban warfare are formidable.[84] Therefore, even as the coalition is developing a genuine capability to wage urban warfare, it should also strive to create a situation in which this capability will not be required. The fundamental fact of urban warfare is that cities provide a difficult fighting environment, but it is the defenders who provide the fight. Hence coalition forces should aim to make it as difficult as possible for opposing forces in the city to defend the regime.

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83. As Clausewitz states, "The acts we consider most important for defeat of the enemy are (1) destruction of the army, if it is at all significant; (2) seizure of his capital if it is not only the center of administration but also that of social, professional, and political activity; [and] (3) delivery of an effective blow against his principal ally if that ally is more powerful than he." Carl von Clausewitz, *On War,* trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 596.
84. Russell W. Glenn, *Combat in Hell: A Consideration of Constrained Urban Warfare,* MR-780-A/DARPA (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1996). See also Colin Powell's reflection on having avoided the "Siege of Baghdad," in Powell, *My American Journey,* p. 527.

In any new war, both sides would start with the understanding that Iraqi ground forces have limited survival prospects in combat against coalition forces. Many Iraqi soldiers surrendered in the Gulf War, and all are undoubtedly well aware of both the certainty of surviving surrender and the positive treatment provided by the Saudis, who took control of all prisoners during the war.[85] This experience must be exploited in both tactical and operational psychological operations.[86] A basic principle of psychological operations targeted at enemy forces is that "troop propaganda must…aim at eventual willing *capture* of the individual—not at surrender by his individual initiative."[87]

At the same time that coalition forces present the military defenders with a genuinely bad situation, the mass of the regime's defenders—paramilitary forces, regular police, secret police, party functionaries, and their families—must be given confidence that surrender does not amount to turning themselves over to their domestic enemies—and that only prompt surrender can avoid such a fate. Under normal circumstances, the presence of families serves as a guarantee of service to the regime. In wartime, the families would become virtual hostages whose presence would increase the chances that surrender could be negotiated.[88]

One view of the social base of the Iraqi Baathist regime holds that it is "ephemeral . . . in the sense that it can disappear overnight as the experience

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85. His Royal Highness General Khaled bin Sultan with Patrick Seale, *Desert Warrior: A Personal View of the Gulf War by the Joint Forces Commander* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), pp. 308–309, 441–444.

86. Joint doctrine states: "Operational PSYOP are conducted prior to, during war and conflict, and at the conclusion of open hostilities in a defined geographic area to promote the effectiveness of the area commander's campaigns and strategies." Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3–53, *Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations,* July 1993, I-2. Approval of the theater psychological operations plan for the Gulf War took three months. Lieut. Col. Salvatore J. Sinatra, Col. James L. Selders, Lieut. Col. U.S. Adolph, Lieut. Col. Benjamin F. Findley, Lieut. Col. Stanford A. Paul, and Lieut. Col. John E. Wilks III, *Psychological Operations during DESERT SHIELD/STORM: A Post-Operational Analysis,* 2d ed. (MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.: U.S. Special Operations Command, November 1993), pp. 2–3.

87. Paul M.A. Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), p. 211 (emphasis in original). Linebarger provides a list of rules to encourage the surrender of combat troops: "First, the notion that the enemy soldier may have to surrender as his side loses or retreats ('other [named] units have surrendered, with so-and-so many men; you will have to, too'); second, themes which make the enemy soldier believe that an all-out effort is wasted or misapplied; third, the idea that he or his unit may find themselves in a hopeless situation soon; fourth, identifying the next authentically bad situation with the 'hopeless situation' situation; [and] fifth, concrete instructions for the actual surrender." Ibid., p. 212.

88. Cities are not inherently protected from military attack unless they are undefended; civilian populations are protected under the basic rule of the immunity of civilians and civilian objects, but this protection is not absolute. Under the existing laws of war, a force invading a city is not obliged to permit the passage of civilians fleeing the city. U.S. manuals state: "It is within the discretion of the besieging commander whether he will permit noncombatants to leave and under

of Nazi Germany in 1945 showed; but in order to evaporate, the crisis of the regime must be complete, and its defeat a foregone conclusion."[89] Conveying the "foregone conclusion" to various groups requires different degrees of communication. As the experience of the Gulf War shows, the only groups potentially predisposed to mobilize rapidly for insurrection are those chronically disaffected and already poised to revolt, even they may now be reluctant. The task for military-political operations is not to incite those already incited but to separate the primary supports from the regime in a way that encourages indigenous leaders to speak for all of the principal elements of the society.

The current regime could fall only if these elements give their support to a new regime. The increased political authority that Saddam Hussein has vested in tribal leaders not only makes them pillars of his regime but important targets of political warfare. Always conscious of the consequences for their members, tribal leaders will be acutely aware of the potential consequences of a regime change and the importance of being on the winning side. The informal political process of tribal politics may conclude that the existing regime must be abandoned, thus putting the sheikhs in a position to speak for their tribes.

To help bring this process to a successful conclusion, the coalition must provide enough time for the process to work, protect the participants from the existing regime and other rivals, and provide an act of separation as the final outcome of the process. This act has to be something clearly visible to the United States, the opposing regime, the other groups in the society, and—most important—all the members of the group seeking separation. To support this process, the coalition forces must have people on the ground who can sort out who is who and whom they legitimately represent.

The process of dissolution and rebuilding might be lengthy, but the coalition's possession of oil fields and the means of exporting oil with a commitment to transfer them to the new regime can underline the urgency of reaching an accommodation. The coalition can hold out the promise that the new regime will soon possess the fiscal advantages that underwrote the old regime.

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what conditions." Department of the Army, FM 27–10, *The Law of Land Warfare,* July 1956, p. 20. In 1977 a protocol was added to the 1949 Geneva Conventions that outlaws starvation of civilians as a method of war. Although the United States is not a party to this additional protocol, it substantially accepts its contents as within customary law. See Michael J. Matheson, deputy legal adviser at the U.S. Department of State, "The United States Position on the Relation of Customary International Law to the 1977 Protocols Additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions," speech on January 22, 1987, at the Sixth Annual American Red Cross–Washington College of Law Conference on International Humanitarian Law: A Workshop on Customary International Law and the 1977 Protocols Additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, *American University Journal of International Law and Policy,* Fall 1987, p. 426.

89. Al-Khalil, *Republic of Fear,* p. 105.

Conclusions

Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria have applied techniques that provide robust protection against coups. These include building on groups with special loyalties to the regime; creating parallel units in the vicinity of the capital that balance the power of the regular military; creating multiple security services that watch potential dissidents and plotters, as well as each other; and fostering expertness in the regular military. Together these techniques not only "coup-proof" the regime, but permit the creation and use of military forces that draw on elements of the society whose loyalty to the regime cannot be totally assured. The regime is thus able to create an army that is effectively larger than one drawn solely from the trustworthy segments of the population.

At the same time, a state that organizes its forces according to the coup-proofing principles described above has a military capability smaller than indicated by inventory counts of units or weapons. The units of the parallel military, armed with the best weapons, may not be readily available for military operations against external enemies. The appearance of parallel military formations in the order of battle and the weapons inventories distorts a true perception of the military capabilities of such a country. The reductions in effectiveness are most pronounced at the highest levels of integrating forces and applying the right units in the most effective way. Parallel militaries in Iraq and Syria have come to possess weapons, equipment, and combat skills genuinely superior to those of the regular military. The positioning and chain of command of the parallel military units, however, may not readily permit their application at the decisive point—that is, for operations against a foreign opponent. In the same way, Iraq's and Syria's practice of introducing new equipment first to the units of the parallel military and only later equipping the units of the regular military delays the time when new generations of weapons appear in the hands of frontline soldiers. The net effect is to present a more formidable force in the pages of military publications than can be brought to real battlefields.

Iraq has demonstrated the ability of a coup-proofed regime to survive in the face of overwhelming military defeat, extensive destruction of the regular military and field units of the parallel military forces, and a popular insurrection. The survival of key military and security elements, their loyalty to the regime, and their organized firepower won out over the poorly armed civilians and broken military units that opposed them following Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War.