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WILLIAM O. BEEMAN

IRAQ. Since its inception, Iraq has been perilously divided among three key constituent communities—the Shī'ī, the Sunnī Arabs, and the Kurds. Sunnī Arabs have historically dominated the state, and are the primary force that led to the creation, development, and bureaucratization of the modern Iraqi state. However, since 2003 there has been a significant change in fortunes. The Kurdish population has managed to attain, as a formal, legal matter, the broad self-rule it had long sought for itself, and the Shī'ī dominate Iraqi politics from Baghdad. It is now the Sunnī Arabs who feel marginalized and alienated. Irrespective of who is in control, however, the same core problem remains for Iraq that existed at the time of its creation; namely, the difficulty of finding a way for three distinct identitarian communities with vastly different conceptions of ideal state structure and organization to coexist in the same political state as a single nation.

Historical Background: 1921–2003. Iraq was created by a League of Nations mandate awarded to the British in 1920. In many ways, its existing severe political divisions date back to its turbulent

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together; in the context of ISNA, the ethnic or denominational identities of members are secondary at best, if at all relevant. Accordingly, the activities of ISNA primarily revolve around issues that are of interest to all practicing Muslims in North America. This inclusionary orientation helps ISNA remain a mainstream organization and increases its ability to represent Muslims in North America.

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SERDAR KAYA

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ISLAMIC SUPREME COUNCIL OF IRAQ. An association of groups committed to establishing Islamic government in Iraq, the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) (al-Majlis al-A'lā al-Islāmīyah al-'Irāqīyah) was organized in November 1982 as the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) when Iraqi opposition groups in Iran banded together at the behest of the Iranian government. The group's name was changed in May 2007 to reflect the fact that revolution was no longer a goal, given that Iraq's new political system provides for the peaceful transfer of political power through public elections.

The groups that formed SCIRI were Ḥizb al-Da'wah al-Islāmīyah (Party of the Call to Islam); Harakāt al-Mujāhidīn (Movement of Fighters in a Holy Cause); Munazzama al-'Amal al-Islāmīyah (Islamic Task Organization); Harakāt al-Mujāhidīn fī al-'Irāq (Movement of Iraqi Fighters in a Holy Cause) led by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Saghir; Harakāt al-Mujāhidīn fī al-'Irāq (Movement of Iraqi Fighters in a Holy Cause) led by 'Abd al-'Hakīm; Jund al-Imām (Soldiers of the Imam); al-Da'wah al-Islāmīyah (Call to Islam); and al-Harakāt al-Islāmīyah fī al-Kurd (the Kurdish Islamic Movement, or KIM). All were Arab Shī'ī groups except the latter, which consisted of Sunnī Kurds. SCIRI was committed to an Iraq united within the framework of Islamic brotherhood and to self-rule for the Kurds. Its governing body was a central committee elected by a general assembly representing the constituent Islamic movements. Funding came from the Iranian government and from the *marjī'īyah*, the Shī'ī religious establishment.

The leader of SCIRI was Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ḥakīm (b. 1939–d. 2003), the charismatic son of the deceased Grand Ayatollah Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm, Iraq's chief religious authority in the 1960s. Among the other leaders were Ḥizb al-Da'wah's Sayyid Ibrāhīm al-Ja'farī, who became prime minister of Iraq in 2005, and Shaykh Kāzim al-Ḥā'irī, who became a prominent ayatollah in Iran. SCIRI acknowledged the Islamic Republic of Iran as the foundation of the world Islamic revolution and aimed to establish a representative Islamic government in Iraq by pursuing two paths: militarily resisting the tyrannical regime of Saddam Hussein and uniting Iraqi opposition groups. To those ends SCIRI formed an alliance with the Kurdish National Union led by the Barzānīs, Iraq's most powerful Kurdish family. Later the group also allied with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, Iraq's other major Kurdish party. The constituent groups met annually and opened offices in Iraqi Kurdistan, Damascus, London, and elsewhere.

SCIRI oversaw prisoner-of-war camps for Iran during the Iran–Iraq War (1980–1988) and organized conferences to call attention to the plight of the Iraqi people. SCIRI's military arm was the Badr Brigade (*faylaq badr*) set up in cooperation with Iran's Revolutionary Guards and trained by them near the Iranian city of Dezfūl. Members of the Badr Brigade were predominantly ex-Iraqi army personnel, tribesmen, and former Iraqi

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