

## Islam

### Introduction:

1. With the escalation of war in the Middle East attention is drawn not only to the conflict, but to the people. What kind of people are our forces up against?
2. With increasing frequency the term *Islam* is being heard. What is *Islam*? What kind of people practice this Islamic code for living?
3. This study will attempt to explain what *Islam* is -- some historical data plus a review of some of the basic beliefs held by the Islamic nations.
4. The more we understand other religions, the more equipment we have with which to help them understand Christianity and be converted.

### I. The Five Pillars of "Islam" (chart)

- A. Prayer -- (Muezzin calls devout Moslems to prayer five times a day. He begins this call to prayer by reciting "God is greatest" four times.)
  1. (Called "Salat".) Five times daily, Muslims must pray (dawn, noon, afternoon, evening and nightfall). Must face toward Mecca, their holiest city.
  2. On Friday, Moslem holy day, Muslims enter the mosque for prayer. With face, hands, and feet washed, they line up behind a prayer leader. Prayer consists of reciting passages from the Koran as well as praise to Allah.
- B. Recitation of their Creed
- C. Almsgiving or "Zakat".) Similar to the Jewish tithe. Almsgiving amount to 2 1/2 percent of the annual wealth of an Islamic believer.
  1. Free will offerings are called *Sadaqah*. A Muslim is not allowed to give when it deprives his family. Each family has a fixed legal inheritance.
  2. Required offerings are called Zakat.
- D. Fasting During Ramadan (relates to month of March). No food from sunup to sundown. Exceptions are travelers, sick, nursing mothers and soldiers on duty. All must make up the days, however.
- E. Pilgrimage to Mecca once during lifetime.
  1. When there, they walk seven times around the Kaaba, kissing the sacred black stone.
  2. The pilgrimage is concluded by offering an animal sacrifice called the "Great Festival."

### II. The Meaning of *Islam* "Submission to a single reality"

- A. Koran teaches absolute unity of God.
  1. Created universe.
  2. He is merciful, just, and desires human repentance.
  3. Moslems (discuss its meaning) believe Mohammed is God's last prophet -- Jesus was his predecessor. The Koran denies that Jesus was crucified (4:154-158).

- B. Man is to be submissive to Allah.
- 1. May not eat pork or consume alcohol (2:173;219).
- 2. Ethics and morality include:
  - a. No lying, adultery, murder (all of these have special definitions given by the Koran). (See 4:20-25).
  - b. Punishment is still "eye for an eye and tooth for tooth" (5:44-47).
- 3. Koran permits slavery under certain conditions and sexual intercourse with slave girls (23:5).
- 4. Divorce: "If a man divorce his wife, he cannot remarry her until she has wedded another man and been divorced by him..." (2:230) ... "If you wish to divorce a woman in order to wed another, do not take from her the dowry you have given her even if it be a talent of gold." (4:17).
- C. Doctrines:
  - 1. Koran (recitation) sent from God -- preserved (15:9).
  - 2. Paradise for death in battle (47:3).
  - 3. Wine and women in heaven (37:47-48;56:15).

### III. The Origin of Islam

- A. A.D. 610 Mohammed begins preaching.
  - 1. Had married a very wealthy widow named *Khadija*.
  - 2. Claimed a visit from the angel Gabriel commissioned him to remove idolatry from all Arabic people.
  - 3. Mecca (capital of Saudi Arabia's Hejaz province) became his first objective.
    - a. Was opposed by the priesthood.
    - b. Fled briefly to a small town called Taif, gained few followers there either.
- c. Begged permission to return to Mecca under proviso that he preach to no Arabs. He followed this proviso but preached to aliens and traders.
  - 4. A.D. 622, the most important Islamic date: Flight to Medina -- the "Hegira" -- marks the beginning of the Islamic religion. Their calendar is based on the "Hegira".
  - 5. A.D. 630 -- Mohammed returned with 10,000 troops to conquer Mecca -- the "jihad" (holy war) had its origin in the conquest of Mecca.
  - 6. A.D. 632 -- Mohammed died -- left the "Caliph" - hood to Abu Bakr.
 

(Known for his statement, "He who honours Muhammad must know that he is dead. But he who honours the God of Muhammad must know that he is living and immortal.")

    - a. Through successive Caliphs northern Africa, Iraq, Persian (now Iran), India, Spain, Pakistan, and Afghanistan (much of the ancient Byzantine Empire) came under the forced control of Islam.

- b. Mohammedan armies were stopped at Tours, France in 732. Otherwise the history of Europe would have been drastically changed.

#### IV. Christianity Versus Islam.

- A. Jesus is the last Prophet of God
  - 1. Deut. 18:15-18 is fulfilled in Christ (John 7:40; Acts 3:22-23).
  - 2. He is God's final spokesman (Hebrews 1:1-3).
- B. Christ's coming was prophesied (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 53; Micah 5:2).
- C. There is no prophecy at all dealing with Mohammed.
- D. All of Mohammed's teaching is based on pure subjectivity.
  - 1. Same as Mormonism or any other subjective appeal.
  - 2. The only reference to someone like Mohammed would possibly be embraced in Jesus words, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. By their fruits you will know them" (Matthew 7:15-16). -- "For many will come in My name, saying 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many" (Matthew 24:6).

#### Conclusion:

- 1. There is really no comparison to be made between Christ's religion and Islam. Mohammed offered nothing other than his own word that he had received a commission from God. The entire structure of Islam rests on his own word.
- 2. All other religions are the same. Christianity is the single religion in all of man's history to be based on the irrefutable truth that Jesus Christ is the Messiah of God, who took upon Himself human form, died for the sins of mankind, and was raised from the dead to ascend to the right hand of God.
- 3. It is our duty to teach Moslems, and all others who follow false religions, the truth of Christ, the Son of God.

#### -----

#### Why Islamic Soldiers Are Willing to Die in Battle

Rewards in Paradise --

Wine and Women in Paradise

"As for those who are slain in the cause of God (Allah), He will not allow their works to perish. He will vouchsafe them guidance and ennoble their state: He will admit them to Paradise He has made known to them" (47:5-10).

"When the earth shakes and quivers, and the mountains crumble away and scatter abroad into fine dust, you shall be divided into three multitudes: those on the right (blessed shall be those on the right); those on the left (damned shall be those). Such are they that shall be brought near to their Lord in the gardens of

delight: a whole multitude from men of old, but only a few from the later generations.

"They shall recline on jewelled couches face to face, and there shall wait on them immortal youths with bowls and ewers and a cup of purest wine (that will neither pain their heads nor take away their reason); with fruits of their own choice and flesh of fowls that they relish. And theirs shall be the dark-eyed houris (young virgin female), chaste as hidden pearls: A guerdon for their deeds...

"We (Allah) created the houris and made them virgins, loving companions for those on the right hand: a multitude from the men of old, and a multitude from the latter generation" (56:27-55).

### Unquestioned Duty to Fight

"Fighting is obligatory for you, much as you dislike it. But you may hate a thing although it is good for you, and love a thing although it is bad for you. God knows, but you do not...

"Fight for the sake of God those that fight against you, but do not attack them first. God does not love the aggressors.

"Slay them wherever you find them. Drive them out of the places from which they drove you. Idolatry is worse than carnage. But do not fight them within the precincts of the Holy Mosque unless they attack you there; if they attack you put them to the sword. Thus shall the unbelievers be rewarded: but if they mend their ways, know that God is forgiving and merciful" (2:190ff)..

"They will not cease to fight against you until they force you to renounce your faith -- if they are able. But whoever of you recants and dies an unbeliever, his works shall come to nothing in this world and in the world to come. Such men shall be the tenants of Hell, wherein they shall abide forever" (2:216).

"Say to the unbelievers: 'You shall be overthrown and driven into Hell -- an evil resting place!'

"Indeed, there was a sign for you in the two armies which met on the battlefield. (A reference to the Battle of Badr where 319 Muslims met a thousand Meccans) One was fighting for the cause of God; the other was a host of unbelievers. The faithful saw with their very eyes that they were twice their own number. But God strengthens with His aid whom He will. Surely in that there was a lesson for the discerning" (3:8-14).

"Those that make war against God and His apostle and spread disorder in the land shall be put to death or crucified or have their hands and feet cut off on alternate sides, or be banished from the country. They shall be held up to shame in this world and sternly punished in the hereafter: except those that repent before you reduce them. For you must know that God is forgiving and merciful" (5:31-34).

**What is a Moslem?**

"Anyone who confesses there is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the messenger of God."

### **What kind of a god is Allah?**

1. Promises very little grace.
2. Allah, to the Muslim, is "unique, everlasting, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, eternal, and living. He knows everything, and controls all destiny."

Note: Allah is not formed by substance or a body. He is not limited to dimensions. He hears with no ears, sees with no eyes and knows with no brain. He has no physical attributes at all. Therefore there can be no statue, idol, icon, or visible representation of him. Such is regarded in Islam as sacrilegious.

### 3. Moslems must:

- Accept one god (Allah) and Mohammed as His Prophet.
- Pray directly to Allah.
- Be honest.
- Speak the truth
- Practice mercy and charity.
- Live modestly.
- Avoid arrogance and slander.
- Defend the Faith against all infidels.

4. The god of the Koran is always felt -- never seen. He is "the sovereign lord, the Holy One, the Giver of Peace, the Keeper of the faith, the Guardian, the Mighty One, the All-powerful, the Most High! He is Allah, the Creator, the Originator, the Modeler" (59:23).

5. It is unthinkable that Allah should have an offspring. Thus, as Lippman describes, "What God is not is progenitor or offspring. The Christian concept of the Son of God as one with God and equal to God is specifically and repeatedly repudiated in the Koran, which describes Jesus as a prophet and no more. The uncompromising monotheism of Islam is incompatible with the trinitarian deity. To Moslems, acceptance of a three-natured God is tantamount to worshiping three deities, when there is only one. The association of any person or object with Deity is the one sin that Allah will not forgive, according to the Koran." (Lippman, Thomas W. *Understanding Islam*, New American Library, New York and Scarborough, Ontario, 1982, page 8).

6. Sura 112 describes Allah as "the Eternal God" affirming that "He begot none, nor was he begotten. None is equal to Him."

7. As for Jesus, the Koran candidly affirms, "Those who say, 'The Lord of Mercy has begotten a son,' preach a monstrous falsehood, at which the very heavens might crack, the earth break asunder and the mountains crumble to dust. That they should ascribe a

son to the Merciful, when it does not become Him to beget one!" (19:88).

8. The god of the Koran is described at the beginning of each Sura as "the Compassionate, the Merciful." Yet the text clearly shows that just beyond that compassion and mercy is his brand of justice. It comes in the form of barbarous and incisive eternal condemnation for sinners, infidels (unbelievers to Islam), backsliders and those who fail to follow the commands of Allah.

(Note: The most vivid language descriptive of condemnation is found in Sura 81:1.

"When the sun ceases to shine; when the stars fall down and the mountains are blown away; when camels big with young are left unattended and the wild beasts are brought together; when the seas are set alight and men's souls are reunited; when the infant girl<sup>1</sup>, buried alive, is asked for what crime she was slain; when the records of men's deeds are laid open and the heaven is stripped bare; when Hell burns fiercely and Paradise is brought near; then each soul shall know what it has done."

9. Allah promises paradise to the faithful:

Allah will "reward them for their steadfastness with robes of silk and the delights of Paradise. Reclining there upon soft couches, they shall feel neither the scorching heat nor the biting cold. Trees will spread their shade around them, and the fruits will hang in clusters over them" (76:12).

"In that oasis-paradise, the faithful adorned with green silk and silver bracelets, will be attended by handsome boys and dark-eyed virgins, who will bring them refreshing drinks in silver goblets while their spirits are refreshed by the favor of God." (Ibid. page 11).

10. One of the strangest things about Allah is his creation of the jinn. The "jinn" are mysterious creatures, invisible to man, defined by the Islamic scholar Fazlur Rahman in his work *Islam* as "an invisible order of creation, parallel to man, but said to be created of a fiery substance, a kind of duplicate of man which is, in general, more prone to evil and from which the Devil is also said to have sprung." The Koran says Allah created the *jinn* but tells little about them. They seem to be some sort of spiritual creature whose impact on the lives of men is only very lightly discussed.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reference to the infant girl buried alive is a reference to the ancient pagan practice in Arabia of burying unwanted female children. Mohammed put a stop to that practice when Islam became powerful enough to enforce its laws on the people.

## **The Book of Islam -- The Glorious Koran**

1. Means "the reading," or "the recitation."
2. None of it written by Mohammed.
3. Reveals the actual words of Allah. Moslems affirm that only Arabic can truly represent the thoughts of Allah revealed in the Koran.

"We (Allah) have revealed the Koran in the Arabic tongue that you may grasp its meaning. It is a transcript of the eternal book in Our keeping, sublime, and full of wisdom" (43:1-2).

### 4. The Koran's view of the Bible:

"Say: think if this Koran is indeed from God and you reject it; if an Israelite<sup>2</sup> has vouched for it and accepted Islam, while you yourselves deny it with disdain, Truly God does not guide the wrongdoers.

---

"Yet before it the Book of Moses was revealed, a guide and a blessing to all men. This Book confirms it. It is revealed in the Arabic tongue, to forewarn the wrongdoers and to give good tidings to the righteous" (46:10,12).

5. Mohammed did not write down what he said the angel said. He spoke to different people at different times and often on the same subjects. This led to various contradictions in the Koran. Inasmuch as it was twenty years being fully revealed, Mohammed spoke several contradictory things on the same issue.

6. For his contradictions he had an escape clause. It is Sura 2:106.

"If We (Allah) abrogate any verse or cause it to be forgotten, We will replace it by a better one or one similar. Do you not know that Allah has power over all things?"

Note: In other words, Allah is saying, "Who are you to question the word of Allah?"

7. The text was completed in the time of the third Caliph, Uthman (644-656).

"A committee headed by Zaid ibn Thabit, a Medinese who had been the Prophet's secretary, gathered all the different fragments of text and memory extant, collecting pieces of parchment and bone on which verses had been recorded, and produced a text which the Caliph, Uthman, proclaimed the official version. All others (there were hundreds of them, DRS) were ordered destroyed, and

---

<sup>2</sup> Abdullah b. Salam, according to commentators on the Koran.

the work of Zaid and his associates remains the only and unchallenged versions of the Koran, never again to be revised or edited, exempted by its divine origin from the tinkering to which the Bible has been subjected." (Ibid., page 63-64).

5. Came into being by Mohammed's word being memorized by his followers.

### **The Second Book of Islam -- The Sunna: Path of the Prophet.**

1. These are Mohammed's own words.
2. Must be taken in contrast with Allah's words.
3. Recorded in the "Hadeth."

### **The Moslem Tradition:**

1. Appeal to Abraham as their ancestral father.
2. Believe that Hagar and Ishmael reached Mecca when banished.
3. Believe Abraham also visited Mecca and built the Kaaba, a holy shrine in Mecca.

"Moslems believe there is and has always been since Abraham only one true religion, a consistent faith in the one omnipotent God, who from time to time has sent various messengers and prophets to reveal himself to men and tell men what he expects of them.

"These revelations were recorded in a hundred and four books, of which only four are extant: The Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Koran, given successively to Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammed. No more are to be expected as Mohammed was the last prophet and the Koran, 'all things are revealed'."

(Ibid., pages 5-6.)

(Lippman was bureau chief in Cairo for the *Washington Post*.)

### **Moslems on Rewards and Punishment:**

1. Paradise is "a garden watered by running streams" (5:114-120).
2. Sinners are consigned to torment of fire (22:1; 76:12; 78:21; 81:1).

### **Moslems and Prayer:**

1. The "Shahada" -- a declaration that "God is great."
2. The "Rakatin" -- Bendings (so called because each part of the prayer ritual is marked by a change of position -- standing, bending to put the hands on the knee, kneeling with palms on the thighs, kneeling with forehead on the ground.

### **Moslems and Almsgiving -- Zakat (31:4).**

### **Moslems and Fasting:**

1. From first light to last light.
2. First light is determined by the amount of light making it possible to distinguish between a black thread and a white one.
3. No food of any kind (except for the sick, travellers, nursing or pregnant women or soldiers in war.)

4. No sexual contact at all.

"These requirements affect the pattern of life in the entire Moslem world, disrupting the normal schedules of work and study. Public life, commerce, and government slow to a crawl especially when Ramadan falls in the long, hot days of summer, because the rigors of the fast inevitably result in curtailed work hours." (Ibid., page 20).

The end of Ramadan is the time of celebration called "Eid-al-Fitr"

### **The Moslem Calendar:**

1. Based on Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina ("the Hegira").
2. The first day of their year is our July 15, because Mohammed fled Mecca July 15, 622 A.D.
3. The Months are:

Muharram	July
Safar	August
Rabi al-Awwal (Rabi I)	September
Rabi al-Thani (Rabi II)	October
Jumada I	November
Jumawada II	December
Rajab	January
Shaban	February
Ramada	March
Shawwa	April
Dhu'l-Qadah	May
Dhu'l-Hijjab	June

The Moslem years are designated A.H. (Anno Hegirae).

### **The Moslim Pilgrimage -- "Haji"**

1. To be made one time in a life.
2. Numerous rituals to cleanse the soul as the Pilgrim sets out on his journey toward Mecca.
3. The Koran instructs those undertaking this pilgrimage to refrain from sexual intercourse, angry words, and obscenities while traveling, and prohibits the killing of game. It is to be a time of peace and harmony with all God's creation.
4. They are to walk around the Kaaba seven times.
5. The mysterious "black stone" is to be kissed.
6. The well "Zamzam" is where Gabriel is alleged to have provided Hagar and Ishmael with water to drink.
7. Moslems drink from the well, take samples of it home with them.

### **Moslems and "The Kaaba"**

"In Moslem tradition, Hagar and Ishmael remained at the site, and the community of Mecca grew around them. It was on a visit to his exiled son living at Mecca that Abraham agreed to the sacrifice from which God then spared him, and Abraham and Ishmael

built the Kaaba on God's command as a place of worship" (Ibid, page 25).

8. Rules for conduct on the pilgrimage found in Koran (5:95ff).

9. They are to arrive in Mecca on the seventh day of the month.

10. They recite prayers, perform seven counter-clockwise circumambulations of the Kaaba, three at a rapid pace and four at a normal walk. On each pass round the Kaaba, the pilgrim touches the black stone.

(Note: The Islam faith grew out of opposition to idolatry. It bans any kind of statue or image as an object of veneration.)

The Moslems kiss the stone for they are told the prophet Mohammed did so. This links them to him, and through him, to Abraham.

11. The pilgrimage ends with an animal sacrifice.

### **Mohammed -- the Prophet:**

1. Just a man -- "Islam is like Christianity in that it originated in the life and works of one well-known historical figure and is inseparable from him. The fundamental difference is the humanity of Mohammed." (Ibid., page 34).

2. Moslems reject the term Mohammedan -- it implies their worship of Mohammed.

3. Mohammed means "highly praised." He was born around 570 A.D. in Mecca. His father died before his birth, and his mother died when he was six. He was given to his grand father, Abdel Muttalib, a distinguished Arab who was allegedly a direct descendant of Ishmael and was assigned as keeper of the Kaaba. He allegedly uncovered the well Zamzam.

At age 8, Mohammed lost his grand father. He was then given to an uncle, Abu Talib who raised him. He was a very sensitive young man and yet was known to have behaved strangely. There is a valid theory that he was epileptic. That may be based on the tradition that when he received revelations, "he actually fell down, groaning and sweating."

Tor Andrae, a sympathetic biographer wrote, "It has long been thought that Mohammed was an epileptic. Even certain Byzantine writers made this discovery, and for a long time past western writers have edified their readers with this compromising fact about the archenemy of Christianity."

Henry Treece in "History of the Crusades," is probably nearer the truth in writing, "Mohammed's revelations are better attributed to the sun-crazed musings of a semiliterate trader lulled into a trance by the swaying of his camel."

4. Mohammed's father was of the Hashim family, of the tribe Quarish.

This was a well respected tribe among the Arabs.  
Later generations, collateral descendants of Mohammed  
claimed the status of nobility.  
Among them -- King Hussein of Jordan and the former  
king of Iraq, King Faisal.

5. The Koran refers to Mohammed as "the Unlettered Prophet" (29:48).
6. The prophet married a wealthy widow, Khadijah. She, more than any other, encouraged Mohammed in his reception of revelations.
7. His own tribe (the Quraish) banished him. Called all who followed him "moslems" (traitors).

"The Quraish ostracized Mohammed and his followers, refusing to trade or associate with them. Mohammed Abdul Rauf, in his brief sketch of the Prophet's life, says the Quraish also subjected the early Moslems to severe torture. 'They did not hesitate to apply the most appalling methods of persecution against the believers. Each tribe undertook to deal with its own members who became Muslims. They tortured them by fire and by heated rods of iron. The bodies of their victims were chained, exposed naked to the heat of the burning midday sun, and they were made to lie with heavy rocks placed on their chests. Some of them died and some lost their sight, but none gave in.'" (Ibid, page 42-43).

8. The persecution forced Mohammed to flee Mecca.
9. One of his uncles, Abu Lahab is the only man specifically cursed in the Koran. He was one of the most severe opponents of Mohammed. (see 111).
10. Khajida died in 619 A.D.
11. Mohammed fled to a small town southeast of Mecca called Taif (now the summer capital of the Saudi monarchy). He was stoned by the people and forced to sneak back into hostile Mecca.
12. In 620 A.D. he made his famous "night journey." He was allegedly transported to Jerusalem, then into the heavens, through the seven heavens to the "divine throne." (See 17:1).
13. The Moslems left Mecca September 24, 622 for Medina, which became their holy city.

### **Moslems and the "Holy Wars" (jihad).**

1. In Medina, for mainly economic purposes, Mohammed began organizing raids on caravans. He began increasing his sphere of power.
2. One famous engagement: The Battle of Badr.  
Two years after the hegira, a band of Moslems attacked a caravan and carried off the spoils.  
March 624 A.D. the battle began.  
Mohammed went against over a thousand armed men with only 300 followers.  
His victory was taken as a sign that Allah was showing his pleasure.

Note: When Egypt and Syria staged a joint attack against Israel in 1973, they called it "Operation Badr." Every Arab in the world knew what that meant.

3. Battle of Badr became (and remains) the basis for all Moslems belief that they can win over any odds, against any foe, regardless -- for Allah is with them now as he was with the prophet at Badr.

4. Some principles of the "Holy War."

The Koran forbids conversion by force (2:256).

Yet, this is the principal way Islam spreads.

Gibbon: "The Persian monarch Chosroes, while he contemplated the wonders of his art and power, received an epistle from an obscure citizen of Mecca, inviting him to acknowledge Mahomet as the apostle of God. He rejected the invitation and tore the epistle."

When Mohammed learned what Chosroes had done, he said, "It is thus that God will tear the (Persian) kingdom, and reject the supplications of Chosroes."

5. In the mid 600's Muawiyah became Caliph. He transferred the seat of the Moslem world to Damascus.

"By the sword, Muawiyah spread Islam into India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and northern Africa."

"The process by which Islam spread was almost opposite to that by which Christianity had been propagated. Islam was not carried to hostile shore by dedicated individuals such as Paul or Mark who made converts by oratory and dedication. Islam went with the armies of the Empire, so that those who embraced it were joining, not defying, the ruling authority." (Ibid., page 122).

6. The duty to fight (2:190ff; 2:216).

7. The barbarity and savagery of Islamic warriors (3:8-14; 5:31-34).

8. The Koran forbids bad treatment of Prisoners of war (8:70).

9. The rewards for brave warriors in "jihad."

Paradise (47:5-10).

Jewelled couches, immortal youths with bowls and ewers and a cup of pure wine.

Dark eyed *horis* (young maidens) as "loving companions" (56:27-55).

10. References to "jihad" in the Koran: 4:95; 8:65; 9:29-31; 2:190.

### **Moslems View of Christians and Jews:**

1. People of the book (19:58).

2. Believe in Abraham, the Torah, the Gospels and Psalms.

3. Deny the crucifixion (4:157) but not the virgin birth.

### **Permanent Divisions of the Islamic World:**

1. The Umayyads killed Mohammed's second son, Hussein, in the battle of Karbala in Iraq (680 A.D.).
2. The 700's were years of chaotic rebellion all through the Arab world.
3. The Shiites revered Ali and Hussein, son-in-law, and grandson of Mohammed. They refused to acknowledge any elected Caliph.
4. The principal difference in the Shiites and Sunnis has to do with whether the Caliph is a direct descendant of Mohammed or an elected Caliph. (Caliph is the successor to Mohammed throughout the Islamic world.)

"This sect (Shiites) which was more theoretically inclined, confined itself to disputing the spiritual authority of the elected Caliphs. They were intransigent orthodox believers who recognized only the family line of the Prophet himself (Fatima, his daughter; Ali his son-in-law; and Hussein, his grandson.) This was more a problem of individuals than of religious style. In fact they were attacked by the Kharijites as being decadent in respect to the Prophet's spirit, just like the Omayyads.

"For the Shiites, their imam (religious leader) is more than a holy man, he is the dispository of a portion of hereditary divinity. For them the first imam was Ali and the second Hussein. They thus recognize twelve dynastic imams. Generally speaking all Arabs, the Turks, and remote Muslims (Africa, Asia) are Sunnites (i.e., faithful to the elected Caliphate), while the Iranians and some Irakians are Shiites, that is to say, faithful to the dynasty of the imams."

Mathe, Jean, *The Civilization of Islam*, Crescent Books, New York, pages 161-162).

"An incident that occurred during the war between Iran and Iraq in 1980 illustrates the dedication with which Moslems cherish their faith and the lengths to which they will go in the most trying circumstances to fulfill their religious duties.

"As the time for the pilgrimage to Mecca approached, a convoy of buses left Iran, crossed into Turkey, and made its way across Turkey and Syria to Jordan, where the buses rolled down to the Allenby Bridge. This bridge is the crossing-point over the Jordan River between Jordan and the West Bank, which has been occupied by Israel since the 1967 war. There the buses picked up a group of Moslem Arab citizens of Israel, who for the first time in twenty-nine years were being allowed to go to Saudi Arabia to fulfill the duties of their faith. This exercise required cooperation among Iran (which sent the buses because it would have been politically embarrassing to use Israeli buses), Turkey, Syria, Jordan, and especially Saudi Arabia, which was breaking precedent by allowing citizens of Israel onto Saudi territory. It is probably that no mission other than the fulfillment of

Islamic duty could have brought about that collective effort."  
(Op. Cit., page 180).

## Glossary of Terms

*Allah*: The Arabic word for God, used by Christian Arabs as well as Moslems.

*ansar*: Helpers; the residents of Medina who supported Mohammed.

*Ashura*: The Tenth day of the month of Muharram in the Islamic lunar calendar; a day of mourning, especially among Shiite Moslems, commemorating the death of the Prophet's grandson, the Imam Hussein.

*Caliph*: Successor to Mohammed's temporal, but not spiritual authority over the Moslem community. The Caliphate no longer exists.

*darwish*: An initiate in a Moslem mystical brotherhood; in English, dervish.

*dhimmis*: People of the covenant, Jews and Christians who as members of revealed religions had a special status in the Islamic Empire.

*eid*: Feast or festival. Eid al-adha, festival of the sacrifice, at the end of the annual pilgrimage, commemorating Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son; eid al-fitr, festival of breaking the fast, at the end of the month of Ramadan.

*fatwa*: A pronouncement or ruling issued by the Moslem authorities of a country or institution.

*hadith*: The sayings of the Prophet, consulted as a source of doctrine on matters not made clear by the Koran.

*haji*: The pilgrimage to Mecca, which all Moslems are obliged to make once in their lives, if they are able.

*hijra*: The migration of Mohammed and his followers from Mecca to Medina in A.D. 622; usually rendered as "hegira" in English.

*iftar*: Breakfast; the meal taken in the evening during the month of fasting.

*ijma*: Consensus; in Islamic law, the agreement of the Moslem community as a basis for legal interpretation.

*ijtihad*: Individual reasoning. In Islamic law, synonymous with freedom of interpretation and intellectual liberty.

*ikhwan*: al-Muslimun. Moslem Brotherhood, semi-clandestine fundamentalist group, based in Egypt.

*Imam*: The leader of group prayer; also, in Shiite Islam, the divinely inspired successor to the Prophet or, in general, the spiritual leader of the community.

*jihad*: Utmost effort or struggle, not necessarily physical, in support or defense of Islam. Also known as "holy wars."

*jinn*: Spirit-creatures, created by God along with men and angels.

*jizya*: A tax levied on dhimmis in the Moslem empire; it exempted them from military service.

*Kaaba*: The most sacred shrine of Islam, believed to have been erected originally by the patriarch Abraham. It stands in the courtyard of the Great Mosque at Mecca. The Kaaba is a boxlike structure of no obvious devotional significance; it is revered for its history.

*Koran*: The holy book of Islam, a transcript of God's words as revealed in Arabic to Mohammed. Means "recitation."

*madrasa*: Religious school, where boys of high-school age study the Koran, Islamic law, and related subjects.

*mahdi*: In Shiite Islam, the awaited one, the Imam who will return to be the spiritual guide of the community.

*Mecca*: City in Saudi Arabia, Mohammed's birthplace and site of the Kaaba.

*Medina*: The city to which Mohammed and his followers migrated in A.D. 622, when the message of Islam was rejected by the people of Mecca; Mohammed died and was buried at Medina.

*minaret*: The tower of a mosque, from which the call to prayer is issued five times daily.

*Mohammed*: The one claimed as the last prophet in a line which included Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Mohammed (c.a. 570 A.D. - 632 A.D.) brought monotheism and Allah's message as revealed in the Koran to the pagan people of the Arabian peninsula.

*mosque*: A building or enclosed courtyard where Moslems gather for prayer. Architectural styles vary, but almost every mosque contains a fountain for ablutions, a pulpit, and a niche in the wall indicating the direction of Mecca, which Moslems face as they pray.

*muezzin*: A corruption of *mu'adhdin*; he who calls the faithful to prayer.

*mufti*: Islamic legal officer or legal adviser to the ruler.

*qadi*: Judge of a religious or *sharia* court.

*qadr*: Usually translated as "power," sometimes as "glory."  
Night of Qadr, the night in the month of Ramadan which the first verses of the Koran were revealed to Mohammed.

*qiyas*: In Islamic jurisprudence, reasoning by analogy.

*rakah*: (plural *rakatin*). Bending. A collection of prayers at congregational service, so called because the prayers are accompanied by bending of the body, bowing and prostration. A service consists of several *rakatin*.

*Ramadan*: The ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. It is the month of fasting; no food or drink may be taken from first light to last light.

*shahada*: The profession of faith, a statement of the fundamental belief of Islam, "there is no god but Allah and Mohammed is the messenger of God."

*shari*: The code of laws and rules governing the life and behavior of Moslems; comprises not a single book but various compilations of precedents.

*Shiite*: A member of the Shia branch of Islam, the official creed of Iran. Shiites accept the spiritual authority of a divinely inspired Imam descended directly from Ali, cousin and son-in-law of the prophet Mohammed.

*sufism*: Islamic mysticism. Brotherhoods of Sufis, or mystics, exist throughout the Moslem world.

*Sunna*: The "path" or "way" of the prophet, the body of traditions recording the deeds, pronouncements, examples and silent approvals of Mohammed, cited by Moslems as a guide to personal and communal behavior.

*Sunnite*: A Moslem of the majority Sunni grouping, comprising about 85 percent of all Moslems. Sunnites, unlike Shiites, recognize no divinely guided heir to Mohammed's spiritual authority; they are followers of the Sunna. Historically, the Sunnites have been those who, unlike Shiites, accepted the temporal authority of the Caliphs.

*sura*: One of the 114 chapters or sections of the Koran.

*ulama*: Learned elders; the senior religious officials of a Moslem community.

*umma*: The community of Moslems, worldwide.

*umrah*: Lesser pilgrimage, an abbreviated form of the pilgrimage to Mecca, undertaken at any time of the year.

*Wahhabism*: A back-to-basics reform movement within Sunni Islam, named for its originator, Mohammed ibn Abd al-Wahhab, a legal scholar of eighteenth century Arabia. Wahhabism, which is characterized by strict application of the rules of the Koran, is the prevalent form of Islam in Saudi Arabia.

*waqf*: (plural *awqaf*) Religious charitable foundation; operated by the state or by private associations, the foundations often control vast wealth and large expanses of real estate, used to support various charitable and social-welfare activities.

*Zakat*: The "alms-tax," a mandatory donation to charity, one of the essential duties of all Moslems.

## IRAQ -- HISTORY

Iraq was one of the most ancient centers of urban civilization and settled cultivation. SUMER, AKKAD, ASSYRIA, and BABYLONIA all developed major civilizations in ancient Mesopotamia. In the early centuries AD, the area was part of various Persian empires. After the Arab conquest in the 7th century, Baghdad (founded in 762) became the seat of the CALIPHATE of the ABBASIDS. With the Mongol conquest by Hulagu in 1258, the country was virtually ruined.

In the 16th and 17th centuries control over Iraq was contested by the Ottoman and Persian empires. From 1638, however, Iraq was part of the Ottoman Empire, although often with some degree of autonomy. During World War I a British force occupied Iraq, and in 1920 it became a British mandate of the League of Nations, with FAISAL I of the Hashemite family as king. Following civil disturbances in the 1920s, the mandate was terminated in 1932, but the British maintained strong influence over Iraq until 1958.

Iraqi politics was dominated during the 1940s and '50s by the pro-Western leader Nuri es-Said, who initiated the modernization of Iraq. The country joined the CENTRAL TREATY ORGANIZATION in 1955, the only Arab state to do so. Radical nationalist forces created a ferment, however, that led to a military coup under Gen. Abdul Karim Kassem on July 14, 1958. A pro-Communist republic was proclaimed, and the royal family, along with Nuri es-Said, was murdered.

Since 1958 the history of Iraq has been marked by both extremism and violence. The Kassem regime collapsed in 1963. The government of Col. Abdul Salam Aref, which succeeded it, was replaced by that of the Baathist Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr in a 1968 coup. Saddam HUSSEIN succeeded al-Bakr in 1979.

Consistently anti-Israel, Iraq participated in the Arab-Israeli War of 1973. Israel bombed (1981) a French-supplied Iraqi nuclear reactor because the Israelis feared it would be used to produce atomic weapons. Iraq, which signed a treaty of alliance with the USSR in 1972 and still receives Soviet military aid, has since resumed (1984) diplomatic relations with the United States. Longstanding border and ideological differences between Iran and Iraq escalated into war in 1980, when Iraq invaded Iran (see GULF WAR). Although vastly outnumbered on the ground, Iraq was backed by most other Arab states and used its air superiority to attack Iranian economic targets and involve other nations in the conflict. After the two countries accepted a United Nations mediated cease-fire in August 1988, the government allegedly used chemical weapons to crush a Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq and began to reassert its influence in the Arab world.

Bibliography: Axelgard, F. W., ed., *Iraq in Transition* (1986); Farouk-Sluglett, M., and Sluglett, P., *Iraq since 1958* (1988); Ghareeb, E., *The Kurdish Question in Iraq* (1981); Khadduri, M., *Independent Iraq*, 2d ed. (1980), *Republican Iraq* (1969; repr. 1980), and *Socialist Iraq* (1978); Marr, P., *The Modern History of Iraq* (1986); Morony, M. G., *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest* (1984); Niblock, T., ed., *Iraq* (1982); Roux, G., *Ancient Iraq*, rev. ed. (1980).

## **Facts on: Iraq**

### **OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Iraq**

**LAND.** Area. 434,924 sq km (167,925 sq mi). Capital and largest city. Baghdad (1981 pop., 3,400,000). Elevations. Highest--Mount Halgurd, 3,728 m (12,230 ft); lowest--sea level, along the coast.

**PEOPLE.** Population (1986 est.). 16,019,000. Density (1986 est.): 36.8 persons per sq km (95.4 per sq mi). Distribution (1982 est.). 68% urban, 32% rural. Annual Growth (1980-85). 3.4%. Official Language. Arabic. Major Religions. Islam, Christianity.

**ECONOMY.** GNP (1984 est.) \$27 billion; \$2,150 per capita (1983). Labor Distribution (1981). agriculture--39.6%; construction--10.9% manufacturing--9.8% Major Crops, Products, and Industries. wheat, barley, rice, tomatoes, corn, dates, grapes, beans, cucumbers, watermelons, onions; refined petroleum, textiles, clothing, footwear, food products, construction materials; mining, fishing. Foreign Trade (1985 est.) imports--\$11.5 billion; exports--11.7 billion; principal trade partners--Japan, West Germany, Pakistan, United Kingdom, France. Currency. 1 Iraqi dinar equals 1,000 fils.

**GOVERNMENT.** Type. republic. Political Parties. Arab Baath Socialist party, Iraqi Communist party, Kurdistan Democratic party, Kurdistan Revolutionary party. Government Leader (1989): Saddam Hussein--president. Legislature. National Assembly. Political Subdivisions. 18 provinces.

**EDUCATION AND HEALTH.** Literacy (1985 est.) 50% of adult population. Universities (1987). 6. Hospital Beds (1985). 37,000. Physicians (1985). 6,000. Life Expectancy (1980-85). women--59.1; men--55.9. Infant Mortality (1981). 31 per 1,000 live births.

**COMMUNICATIONS.** Railroads (1982). 2,035 km (1,265 mi). Roads (1984). 25,385 km (15,775 mi) primary. Major Ports. 3. (none operational). Major airfields 1985). 3.

### **Languages and Religions**

Arabic is spoken almost universally, but Kurdish is commonly used in Kurdistan, and Persian is used along the Iranian border. The dominant religion is Islam, evenly divided between the Sunnites and Shiites. Christians of various sects constitute about 3.5% of the population.

### **Education and Health**

A major expansion of educational facilities has taken place since 1958. Primary enrollment of children aged 6 to 11 reached 100% in 1978 but had fallen to 94% by 1982. Approximately 49% of children, aged 12 to 17, attended secondary schools in 1981. Six universities have been established, all of them since 1957. Additionally, many Iraqis study abroad. Health services have been expanded, as part of the domestic policy of the recent socialist governments.

## **GOVERNMENT**

The overthrow of the monarchy in 1958 was followed by a succession of revolutionary socialist regimes that have ruled the country under a provisional constitution. Since the mid-1960s the Arab Socialist BAATH PARTY has controlled the nation, forming a coalition known as the National Progressive Front in 1973. The small governing junta is the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). Since 1979, Gen. Saddam HUSSEIN has served as president, chairman of the RCC, commander of the armed forces, and secretary general of the Baath party. In 1980 the first elections for a new national assembly were held; in 1989 a committee began preparing a new constitution. The Kurdish area has had limited local autonomy since 1970.