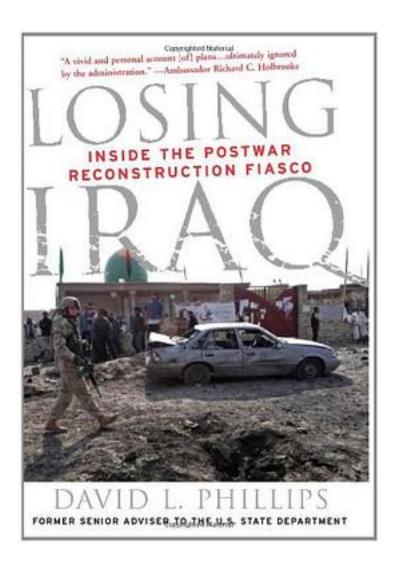
## Losing Iraq



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According to the Bush administration, the war in Iraq ended in May 2003, when the

president pronounced 'mission accomplished'. Yet resistance, fighting, and coalition casualties continue. The author characterises the resistance in Iraq as a national struggle, more tied in with the mood of Iraqis generally than westerners would like to think. Moreover, he argues that much of the anger Iraqis are expressing is fed by experiences of the whole people over the course of the last quarter century, when Iraq suffered three wars and twelve years of draconian UN-imposed sanctions. All this placed great strains on society, yet Iraq, rather than breaking apart, held up remarkably well. The author argues that one of the great hidden strengths of the society is the existence of a large cadre of army officers who fought in the war against Iran (1980-88) and in two successive wars against the United States. In the case of Iran, they were victorious over an ancient foe; ironically with help from the U.S.A. It is this cadre of officers who form the backbone of the resistance today. The author warns that, faced with this challenge, Washington is prepared to see the break-up of Iraq into a weak, disunited entity under the rule of warlords as a better alternative to a strong state with a central government which could challenge U.S. interests in the Middle East.

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