



From a Trickle to a Flood

Keith Mines, a BYU alumnus (1982) with over twelve years of experience in the Foreign Service, volunteered from August 2003 to February 2004 as the provincial governance coordinator in the Sunni Triangle of Iraq. Steve Bitner, also a BYU alumnus in international politics with a minor in Arabic (2001), worked with Mines in the Al Anbar Province as political advisor from December 2003 to February 2004.

Replacing Traditional Power Systems

The war in Iraq is being played out in two disparate images: one of insurgents who are bombing and kidnapping, and the other—less covered by the media—that of political and economic progress. In an unusual and coincidental partnership, two BYU alumni spent two months trying to form a new provincial council in the Al Anbar province of

Iraq, currently one of the most violent and fractured provinces in the country. Their experience offers a rare firsthand glimpse at the challenges, and the promise, that lie in Iraq's future.

"While military operations in Iraq continue to steal most of the headlines, experts generally agree that the fight for Iraq's future will not be determined on the battlefield, but rather in the political process that eventually emerges there," said Keith Mines, governance coordinator. "In Al Anbar Province, this complex process involved a struggle between the old tribal structure and more modern technocratic methods of governing, between authoritarianism and democracy, and between tradition and modernity."

No Events