



The Iraq Special Operations Forces (ISOF) is probably the largest special forces outfit ever built by the United States, and it is free of many of the controls that most governments employ to rein in such lethal forces. The project started in the deserts of Jordan just after the Americans took Baghdad in April 2003. There, the US Army's Special Forces, or Green Berets, trained mostly 18-year-old Iraqis with no prior military experience. The resulting brigade was a Green Beret's dream come true: a deadly, elite, covert unit, fully fitted with American equipment, that would operate for years under US command and be unaccountable to Iraqi ministries and the normal political process.

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