



The American military began paying many members of the Awakening movement as the program expanded, even including Shiite members who make up about one-fifth of the program. They were paid roughly \$300 a month by the United States to guard checkpoints and buildings and — for those who used to be insurgents — to no longer blow up American convoys and shoot American troops.

Although the “surge” is often described as the turning point that led to lower violence, a number of American officers contend the Awakening that began well before the surge in 2006 in Anbar Province and continued in Baghdad last year was the most significant reason for the decline. In some places, American casualties plunged within weeks of the Sunnis joining with American forces. All told, the movement is thought to have about 100,000 members.

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**TVNL Comment: The propaganda continues that the Bush 'surge' has been a great success. The truth about payments to Sunnis and Shiites alike has been carefully hidden from the US public. The reduction in violence has come at a cost of \$300 of taxpayer money a month for EACH of the 100,000 Iraqis who became part of the so-called "Awakening."**