

**THE DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY ROLE OF IRAQ  
FROM APRIL, 1966, TO JULY, 1968**

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THE DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY ROLE OF IRAQ

FROM APRIL, 1966, TO JULY, 1968

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An Abstract

Presented to

the Graduate Council of

Austin Peay State University

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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by

Laurence Glenn Kennedy

August 1976



## ABSTRACT

The state of Iraq had a potent influence on the course of international affairs during the administration of President Abdel Rahman Arif from April of 1966 to July of 1968. The purpose of this work is to investigate Iraq's diplomatic and military role during this period and to gain a basic understanding of the major underlying factors which had great bearing on the course of Iraq's foreign policy. These factors included Iraq's importance as a major Arab oil producer, her desire for advanced military weapons, and her philosophical role as a member of the Arab "progressive" states, as opposed to the Arab "conservative" states. These three factors had an overwhelming impact on Iraq's foreign policy and tended to draw the nation into closer relationships with the Soviet Union, France, and other Arab countries in the late 1960's.

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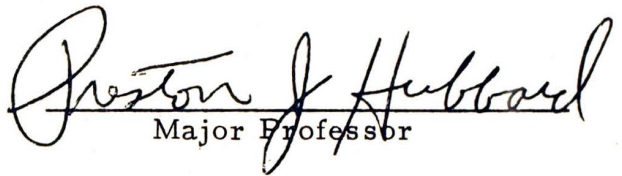
by  
Laurence Glenn Kennedy

August 1976



To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Thesis written by Laurence Glenn Kennedy entitled "The Diplomatic and Military Role of Iraq from April, 1966, to July, 1968." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in History.

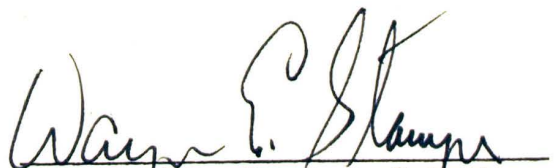
  
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## INTRODUCTION

Under the leadership of President Abdel Rahman Arif, Iraq rose in prominence among the nations of the world. International respect for Iraqi oil wealth brought her a higher sense of self-esteem and gave her a much stronger voice in world politics. The Arif years brought a degree of stability to coup-ridden Iraq, and a closer unity between Iraq and other Arab states began to develop. President Arif made many state visits to neighboring nations in the Middle East, particularly the United Arab Republic (U.A.R.). He also conducted visits to Western Europe and the Soviet Union. Several Arab conferences were held in Baghdad, and President Arif became a major voice among the Arab leaders.

But Iraq's foreign policy was not solely formulated by President Arif's personal disposition toward international situations. Other factors entered the picture--the most important of them being the oil issue, the arms issue, and the pan-Arab philosophical issue. Each of these factors had a powerful influence on the development of Iraq's approach to diplomatic and military affairs.

In order to understand more fully the underlying causes of Iraq's foreign policy measures, one should have a basic understanding of the ideological influences and political upheavals which have



manifested themselves in Iraq since the fall of the monarchy in 1958 when King Faisal II was assassinated.<sup>1</sup>

Iraq has been under the control of army officers since 1958 except for one cabinet headed by Dr. Abdel Rahman al-Bazzaz, a civilian premier from 1965 to 1966. Military coups since 1958 have taken place either because leading army officers decided to replace one unpopular regime with another or because the military desired direct control of the system.

When the revolt of 1958 took place, two ideological groups, the communists and the Baathists, rose to the forefront, campaigned for their parties, and approached the army officers for support. The Baathists (Pan-Arab Socialists) called for a union with the U.A.R., and the communists called for a separate state for Iraq and closer ties with the Soviet Union. The campaigns led to a split among the revolutionary leaders between the Baathist supporters and the communist supporters. General Abdul Karim Kassem, the head of the military government, tried to play off one faction against another but failed. Kassem then allied himself with the communists, and the Baathist group was suppressed in March, 1959. Relations were quickly established with the Soviet Union, China, and other communist countries.

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<sup>1</sup>Khadduri, Majid, "Political Trends in Iraq and Kuwait," Current History, February, 1967, pp. 84-89, and in subsequent paragraphs.

Kassem then turned against the communists in 1961 and tried to rule without a party's support.

The Kassem government was overthrown in February, 1963, by the Baathists when their party became allied with the Pan-Arab faction of the Iraqi army. The new government sought to achieve unity with the U.A.R. and to introduce socialist measures. The Baathists maneuvered to install Colonel Abdel Salam Arif as the new President, but he and a moderate faction of the army soon betrayed the Baathists. Their regime, having been in power only eight months, was overthrown in November of 1963.

The new President strengthened his administration by placing his supporters in key positions of power and by removing his opponents. He issued socialist decrees in July, 1964, nationalizing the banks and private companies. President Arif outwardly supported unity with the U.A.R. but in reality felt that President Nasser did not have the capacity to supervise Iraq properly.

President Arif hoped that the army would be gradually removed from politics, and he gave Dr. al-Bazzaz, a civilian lawyer, the premiership in 1965 rather than offer the post to a military figure. The military officers, therefore, grew distrustful of the President. Political life in the country became uneasy, suspicious, and punctuated by Egyptian, Baathist, and communist pressures.

The President's tragic death in a helicopter crash in April, 1966, opened the door for the dead President's brother to rise to power. Abdel Rahman Arif's ascendancy to the Presidency was looked upon by many as the best possible move that could have happened to Iraq, because this man was well-liked by the military. The new President began his administration in an atmosphere of optimism. And the world looked on, waiting for him to show his ideological colors.



## Chapter 1

### 1966: A YEAR OF IMPROVEMENT IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The first eight and one half months of President Abdel Rahman Arif's administration brought a general improvement to Iraqi relations with several countries. Iraq developed closer ties with the Soviet Union and Syria under the moderate Premiership of Dr. Abdel Rahman al-Bazzaz. The U.A.R. was given special favor under the leftist Premiership of Naji Talib. Despite an attempted coup d'etat and the formation of a new cabinet, much of the year was fairly calm in relation to Iraq's government and internal affairs. Iraq's foreign policy at this time predominantly centered around two objectives: the need for Arab unity in order to be prepared as a strong defense against aggression and the desire for more arms.

On April 13 President Abdel Salam Arif, 45, and ten of his aides were killed in a helicopter crash in a sandstorm while on an inspection tour of the Basrah area. Arif was on his way from Baghdad to northern Iraq to inspect industrial projects.

Arif's brother, Major General Abdel Rahman Arif, the acting chief of staff, was in Moscow at the time. He was the head of a military delegation which sought more Soviet arms for Iraq. Upon hearing news of his brother's death, the General cut short his talks

with Marshall Matvei V. Zakharov, the Soviet Army Chief of Staff. He immediately returned to Baghdad aboard a special Soviet plane which also brought a Soviet delegation to attend the President's funeral.<sup>1</sup>

Whether this Iraqi delegation had an important influence on the Soviets is not known. But on April 24 it was announced that the Soviet Union was going to provide spare parts for U.S.S.R.-built military equipment already in use in Iraq.<sup>2</sup> An important factor in the Soviet decision was its effort to counter the "Islamic alliance" proposed by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, who had called for an "Islamic conference" to discuss a political alignment of the Islamic nations of the world. The Soviets were highly suspicious of King Faisal's proposal and felt that it might damage their influence in the Middle East.<sup>3</sup>

Arif's sudden death came as a shock to Cairo and left the U.A.R. wondering about future relations with Iraq. Nasser immediately sent Vice-President Abdel Hakin Amer and a select group of Egyptian experts on Iraqi affairs to Iraq. They were to represent Cairo at President Arif's funeral. Egyptian officials were disturbed by the fact

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<sup>1</sup>New York Times, April 16, 1966, p. 8, col. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Times, April 22, 1966, p. 21, col. 4.

<sup>3</sup>Times, April 24, 1966, p. 1, col. 5.

that the announcement of the fatal crash had been delayed for ten hours by Iraqi authorities. This started speculation that political maneuvering had already begun in Baghdad, and it was considered another reason for haste in Amer's departure to Iraq. A New York Times dispatch stated that with Arif's death President Nasser was left without a single important loyal supporter for his leadership in the Arab world except for the republican government of Yemen.<sup>4</sup>

All Arab countries except Syria sent delegations to the funeral. Syria was the only Arab nation that did not observe mourning for President Arif. Leaders of the ruling Baathist party (Pan-Arab Socialists) in Damascus considered Arif their enemy and never forgave him when he removed their party from power in Iraq in 1963.<sup>5</sup>

A joint session of the cabinet and the National Defense Council unanimously elected Major General Abdel Rahman Arif, 49, to the Presidency on April 17. After the election, President Arif, described by Iraqi newspapers as "colorless," stated he would uphold the policies of his brother. This meant close cooperation with Cairo and cool relations with the Baathist regime in Syria. He hoped to maintain cordial relations with the Soviet Union, while at the same time keeping

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<sup>4</sup>Times, April 16, 1966, p. 8, col. 8.

<sup>5</sup>Times, April 16, 1966, p. 8, col. 4.



his country on friendly terms with the West.<sup>6</sup>

Egyptian diplomats had a potent voice in the selection of the new President. Nasser had wanted to be sure that Iraq's new ruler would be as friendly toward Egyptian objectives as President Abdel Salam Arif had been. Amer and the Egyptian delegation nudged Iraq's Cabinet and the top generals into picking General Arif as the new chief of state. On the first ballot, though, Arif was the last choice. The military brass wanted Major General Abdel Aziz Uqaili, Iraq's Defense Minister, who favored an all-out war to destroy Iraq's rebellious Kurdish minority. The Cabinet preferred Premier Abdel Rahman al-Bazzaz, who would slow down state socialism. Nasser wanted neither man. With Amer's help, the Iraqis finally settled on Arif. Major factors in Arif's character which contributed to Nasser's preference for him were his easygoing manner, his moderate views, and the fact that he had practically no personal enemies.<sup>7</sup>

Iraq operated at this time under a Provisional Constitution, proclaimed in May of 1964. It placed the legislature and other major powers in the hands of the President, the Cabinet, and the National Defense Council, which was composed of the Chief of Staff, the Defense Minister, and the commanders of the five army divisions, the air force,

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<sup>6</sup>Times, April 18, 1966, p. 3, col. 1.

<sup>7</sup>"A Moderate Choice," Time, April 29, 1966, p. 40.

the navy, and the Baghdad military garrison. General parliamentary elections had been promised for the summer of 1966 by the late President and Premier al-Bazzaz. A permanent constitution was to be drafted then by the new Parliament.<sup>8</sup>

On April 19, a New York Times dispatch stated that government-controlled newspapers in Baghdad urged the new President to seek union with the U.A.R.<sup>9</sup> The most authoritative newspaper in Baghdad, Al Jumhouriva, on May 12 appealed to the Arab states to forget their differences. It said that the Arabs "cannot hope to emerge victorious from battle with their enemies unless they reach an understanding among themselves." The Arabs were being distracted from "Israeli aggression" by their own differences, it added. The article appeared to reflect recent views of President Arif, who said he would seek to mediate between the U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia in order to help them face "enemies of the Arab nation." Both the U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia were vying for position as leader of the Arab states. The New York Times article which carried parts of this information mentioned that Iraq was the most conservative of the "Arab revolutionary" states and was perhaps more antagonistic toward her Marxist neighbor, Syria,

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<sup>8</sup>Times, April 18, 1966, p. 3, col. 1.

<sup>9</sup>Times, April 19, 1966, p. 2, col. 5.

than toward the nations of Jordan and Saudi Arabia.<sup>10</sup>

On May 23 the Iraqi government announced that the supply of American jet fighters to Israel "threatens peace and stability in the Middle East." A Foreign Ministry spokesman, quoted by the Baghdad radio, said the action would "encourage Israel in its aggressive acts against the Arab states."<sup>11</sup> This was the first public statement in which Iraq presented a semi-hostile attitude toward the United States during Abdel Rahman Arif's administration.

In July Iraqi newspapers began to praise their new President for his simplicity and his straight forwardness. Some said that he even inspired confidence. The public particularly approved of his modesty, which was demonstrated when he ordered that his brother's picture be kept hanging in government offices and army posts. The new President's picture was not seen.<sup>12</sup>

On the surface political life in Baghdad seemed to be flowing smoothly under the leadership of the new President until it was announced that Arif and Premier Abdel Rahman al-Bazzaz had broken up a military coup d'etat directed by a former premier, General Arif Abdel Razzak, late in June. Razzak and four officers had been arrested at Mosul after they had launched an air raid on the Presidential Palace.

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<sup>10</sup>Times, May 12, 1966, p. 4, col. 7.

<sup>11</sup>Times, May 23, 1966, p. 20, col. 5.

<sup>12</sup>Times, July 17, 1966, p. 18, col. 1.

Razzak had been in favor of unity with the U.A.R.<sup>13</sup>

A few days after the attempted coup, President Arif invited four U. S. correspondents to dinner and replied to their questions in a manner of cautious moderation. The President said relations with the U. S. were "all right" but that "we would be happy if Zionism didn't influence American policy." He declined to reply to a question which had not been submitted in writing on his views of the Vietnam war. Iraqi relations with the Soviet Union "are good, as they are with other countries," he said. In reply to a question concerning Arif's arms-buying mission to Moscow in April, he said, "The Soviet Union granted our requests for all we wanted to buy."<sup>14</sup>

Relations with the Soviets improved further when Premier al-Bazzaz visited Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin in Moscow during the latter part of July. Soviet-Iraqi relations had been at a low ebb since the fall of President Abdul Karim Kassem in 1963, but al-Bazzaz did much to re-establish an economic and armament tie with the Soviet Union. On the day of al-Bazzaz's arrival in Moscow, the Soviet Communist party newspaper, Pravda, stated that the Iraqi Premier favored a cooperative association with the Soviet Union similar to that between Moscow and Cairo. Pravda quoted Dr. al-Bazzaz as having

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<sup>13</sup>"Miss No. 2: Abdel Razzak's Coup Attempt," Newsweek, July 11, 1966, p. 53; and The New York Times, July 1, 1966, p. 2, col. 6.

<sup>14</sup>Times, July 17, 1966, p. 18, col. 1.



said, "Iraqi-Soviet cooperation should be extended to all fields-- economic, cultural, and political. This will do good to both our peoples and strengthen peace in the Arab world."<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, Iraqi relations with Syria improved somewhat when, on July 16, Iraq backed Syria in the midst of a new conflict with Israel. Israel, in a so-called "reprisal raid," had attacked an anti-aircraft position and earth-moving equipment approximately eight miles inside Syria. This equipment was being used to divert the Baniyas River, a tributary of the Jordan River, as a part of a combined Arab plan to prevent water from the Jordan from reaching Israel. Iraq, along with the U.A.R., Lebanon, and the Palestine Liberation Organization, called this act "Israeli aggression."<sup>16</sup>

At the Security Council debate over the Israeli-Syrian conflict, on July 27, Iraq's chief representative, Kadhim Khalaf, joined Syria in demanding Security Council action against Israel for violation of the truce agreement when Israel carried out the air raid on July 14. The truce was reached after Arab armies invaded Palestine in 1948, when the British occupation there ended. Michael S. Comay, the Israeli representative, said that he saw no useful purpose for Iraq's participation

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<sup>15</sup>Times, July 28, 1966, p. 9, col. 1.

<sup>16</sup>Times, July 16, 1966, p. 5, col. 1.

in the discussion.<sup>17</sup>

On August 6 Dr. al-Bazzaz resigned as Premier and was replaced by Naji Talib, an army officer who had been foreign minister and was regarded as a strong Arab nationalist favoring strong ties with the U.A.R. It was known that nationalist army officers wanted to get rid of Dr. al-Bazzaz because they regarded him as a too right-wing and too pro-Western Premier. They were also dissatisfied with his brand of socialism and his recent remarks criticizing the military leaders "for not playing a proper role in the nation's development."<sup>18</sup> President Arif at first refused to drop Dr. al-Bazzaz. But he changed his mind after efforts to unite the nation's various factions failed--largely because various groups refused to cooperate with Dr. al-Bazzaz.<sup>19</sup>

A quiet, scholarly diplomat, Dr. al-Bazzaz had become a very successful, popular, and independent national figure, particularly after he had launched what he called a policy of "prudent socialism." Under the objectives of this policy, he had halted the trend toward nationalization, guaranteed private investment against expropriation, and restored a glimmer of prosperity to his nation, which had been suffering under

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<sup>17</sup>Times, July 27, 1966, p. 10, col. 13.

<sup>18</sup>Times, August 7, 1966, p. 14, col. 4.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

the doctrines of staunch socialism. Although he had just returned from Moscow with an arms agreement that should have pleased the military, the army forced him to resign.<sup>20</sup>

Four days after Dr. al-Bazzaz left office a decree was issued by President Arif forming a new eighteen-man cabinet under Naji Talib.<sup>21</sup> The new Premier lost little time in making his political views known. In a radio and television speech on August 22 Premier Talib emphasized a leftist foreign policy by pledging to "stand with the Arab states in support of the liberation movements and against the Islamic alliance and all foreign alliances." His speech appeared to be a declaration of support for Nasser.<sup>22</sup>

Talib's message of supporting "liberation movements" was later realized as more than just talk when, on November 28, Ahmad Shukairy, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, announced that young Palestinian refugees were being trained in Iraq, as well as China and Syria. He declined to comment on the number of trainees in each country.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>"No Time for Prudence," Time, August 19, 1966, p. 28.

<sup>21</sup>Times, August 10, 1966, p. 15, col. 4.

<sup>22</sup>Times, August 22, 1966, p. 29, col. 6.

<sup>23</sup>Times, November 28, 1966, p. 17, col. 1.

Iraqi relations with Israel became particularly cool when an Iraqi Air Force pilot defected to Israel on August 17 in a U.S.S.R.-built MIG-21. The pilot claimed that he had received discriminatory treatment in the Iraqi Air Force because he was a Christian. The Israeli Air Force commander, Mordechai Hod, said that the arrival of the MIG-21 was "too good to be true."<sup>24</sup> On August 18 an Iraqi delegation consulted with Secretary General Thant at the United Nations concerning the defection. There was no comment on what took place at this meeting.<sup>25</sup>

Iraq displayed her willingness to aid her Arab neighbors militarily in the cause against Israel by offering to send troops into Jordan. This willingness came to light at a meeting of the Arab League on December 12. On that day it was announced that the Arab League Defense Council had forced Jordan to join in a unanimous decision to send Iraqi and Saudi Arabian troops into Jordan within the next two months to meet any new attack by Israel. Jordan made certain conditions before accepting the Iraqi and Saudi Arabian troops. These conditions included the following: (1) the United Nations' forces must withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip, and (2) they must be replaced by troops of the U.A.R. The Arab League also

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<sup>24</sup>Times, August 17, 1966, p. 9, col. 3.

<sup>25</sup>Times, August 18, 1966, p. 7, col. 1.



decided to form a council to meet again by mid-January to review the progress of the Saudi Arabian and Iraqi troops in Jordan.<sup>26</sup>

During the first eight-and-one-half months of President Abdel Rahman Arif's administration, probably the most difficult situation the Iraqi government faced in relation to foreign affairs was the Syrian seizure of oil pipelines carrying Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean Sea. It began on December 7 when the Damascus government seized the trans-Syrian pipeline of the "imperialist" Iraq Petroleum Company (I.P.C.) after a battle between the two over oil transit royalties ended in a stalemate. Having cut off the flow of Iraqi oil, the Syrians showed that they clearly supported the extreme leftists in Baghdad, who wanted to nationalize the oil fields of the Western-owned I.P.C. The Iraqi moderates in the government and the I.P.C. carefully avoided any appearance of mutual support lest the moderates be branded by the Syrians as "tools of imperialism." Syria's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, Ibrahim Makhos, called on "progressive and nationalist forces in Iraq" to end their differences and rally around Premier Naji Talib to combat imperialism. Makhos said, "Anyone who deviates from this stand will be condemned as an agent of the oil companies."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Times, December 12, 1966, p. 1, col. 5 & p. 9, col. 1.

<sup>27</sup>Times, December 18, 1966, Section 5, p. 4, col. 1.

The moderates were anticipating the day, two weeks in the future, when the I.P.C. was due to make its next quarterly royalty payment, in advance, to the Iraqi government. The treasury had virtually no reserves. The disappearance, or even sharp curtailment, of royalties would have produced immediate financial chaos. Iraq had been taking in about \$390,000,000 a year in royalties on the 68 to 70 million tons of crude oil produced by the I.P.C. The thought of something very much like bankruptcy led to the first counsel of moderation on December 15 when the Baghdad newspaper, Sawte El Arab (Voice of the Arabs), published an open letter to Mr. Makhos urging that Syria should alter its attitude. It stated, "We in Iraq do not draw a line between the interests of Syria and of Iraq. . . , but we face two evils whenever pumping has stopped: damage to Iraq and damage to Syria. Our request does not mean sacrificing Syria's rights. We are only asking for a change of method."<sup>28</sup>

Although Iraqi-Syrian solidarity seemed outwardly amicable, relations between the two countries had been strained since November, 1963, when President Arif suppressed the Baathist Party in Iraq. In spite of reconciliation, the Syrians still regarded the Iraqi regime as

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

basically reactionary. One news source reported that "there may well be in the Syrian oil policy the streak of a desire to punish Iraq as well as the oil companies, possibly to topple the present regime and produce a more revolutionary government."<sup>29</sup>

The Syrian-pipeline crisis was carefully watched by Americans with investments in I.P.C. If nationalization did take place, as Syria hoped, it would hurt the pocketbooks of the Western investors. These people were particularly wary when Syria offered lower transit rates to the Iraqi government, if it would nationalize I.P.C. and export the oil itself.<sup>30</sup> The financial crisis was finally averted when, on December 30, the I.P.C. agreed to pay the Iraqi government \$93,256,000 in quarterly oil royalties.<sup>31</sup> But the dispute between the I.P.C. and Syria continued.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the study of Iraq's foreign policy in 1966. When one considers Premier al-Bazzaz's handling of relations with the Soviets and the Israeli-Syrian conflict, Dr. al-Bazzaz seemed to come forth as a more talented premier than Naji Talib. Premier al-Bazzaz, the first civilian premier since the fall of the monarchy in 1958, did much to instill confidence in the

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<sup>29</sup>"For glory not for cash," The Economist, December 17, 1966, p. 1231.

<sup>30</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1966, p. 449.

<sup>31</sup>Times, December 30, 1966, p. 8, col. 1.

administration of Abdel Rahman Arif and to create an air of cooperation between Iraq and other nations. Unfortunately, Premier al-Bazzaz's moderation in foreign affairs, his nonrevolutionary attitude, and his blunt criticisms of the Iraqi military leaders (the actual power behind the President) led to a forced resignation for Dr. al-Bazzaz. President Arif showed himself to be not so powerful when he bowed to the wishes of the military faction in his attempt to maintain peace and unity.

The hope of a reconciliation to Syria after Iraq backed Syria in the Israeli-Syrian conflict was partially dissolved when Syria took the drastic step of cutting off Iraqi oil to the Mediterranean. Even though Premier Talib had a pro-U.A.R. philosophy, he could do little to ease the crisis.



## Chapter 2

### 1967: THE MONTHS PRECEDING THE SIX-DAY WAR

In the months preceding the Six-Day War, Iraq's diplomatic endeavors centered largely around the attempt to solve the Syrian-I.P.C. controversy and the cultivation of better relations with neighboring nations through the medium of Presidential state visits. Iraq's military endeavors at this time largely consisted of routine drill until a border dispute with Kuwait put some of its forces on the alert. One might say that the general sequence of events in this period could be considered as an unsteady calm before the storm.

As the year 1967 opened, Iraq's economy continued to be affected by the Syrian seizure of the trans-Syrian oil pipeline owned by the I.P.C. This pipeline offered the only way for the oil from the northern Iraq fields to get to the Mediterranean Sea for market. Although Iraq's southern fields continued to send about 500,000 barrels a day to market through terminals at the head of the Persian Gulf, the Syrian seizure cut off the flow of some 900,000 barrels of oil a day, and, therefore, reduced Iraq's share of oil royalties. In January the Iraqi government began to demand that the I.P.C. make a settlement with Syria, or else it would take rather drastic action against the

company.<sup>1</sup> Soon international politics began to dominate the situation.

The I. P. C. was made up of firms from several nations. Ninety-five per cent of the company's interest was held in equal shares of 23.75 per cent by Royal Dutch Shell, the British Petroleum Company, Compagnies Francaise des Petroles, and the American-owned Near East Development Corporation. The last concern was owned in equal shares by Standard Oil of New Jersey and the Mobil Oil Corporation. Several of the companies in the I. P. C. felt that the Iraqi government was pressuring them to accept certain Syrian terms calling for an increase of oil transit rates from 56¢ a ton to 82¢ a ton. These companies felt that if they complied with the terms, the Syrian government would within a short time continue to increase their demands, demands which the I. P. C. said it could not meet.<sup>2</sup>

On February 6 Dr. Sami Droubi, Syria's permanent representative to the Arab League and the Syrian Ambassador to the U.A.R., made a statement to the official Egyptian news agency, Middle East News. He announced that an agreement had been reached with the I. P. C. The agreement provided that the company pay Syria \$11,000,000 the amount Syria had demanded for transit royalties dating back to January 1, 1966. Dr. Droubi said that the company was supposed to

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<sup>1</sup>New York Times, January 29, 1967, Section 3, p. 5, col. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

have deposited the money on the previous Friday, "but it surprisingly did not." The I.P.C. denied that it had reached an agreement with the Syrian government.<sup>3</sup>

A declaration of support for Syria's stand on the pipeline issue was made on the following day, February 7, by President Arif and President Nasser of Egypt in a joint communique. The two leaders also stressed that the flow of oil was "essential for Iraq's vital interests and national economy." This message was issued at the close of five days of talks between the two heads of state in Cairo.<sup>4</sup>

At these meetings Arif had asked for Nasser's help in influencing Syria to relax its attitude toward the oil crisis. Arif told Nasser that nationalization of Iraqi oil was impractical and would result in marketing outlets being confined to communist countries alone. This carried weight with Nasser, who wanted to protect Iraq's vital interests. The survival of Arif's regime in Iraq was of essential importance to Nasser's Arab policies.<sup>5</sup> Nasser needed a strong, stable Iraq both to form an opposition to an anti-Nasserite Syria, and to act as a potent influence in Nasser's struggle with Saudi Arabia and Jordan.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Times, February 18, 1967, p. 41, col. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>"Sword dance," The Economist, February 11, 1967, p. 506.

<sup>6</sup>"Your pipeline is cut," The Economist, February 4, 1967, p. 415.

On February 17 Iraq's Premier, Naji Talib, arrived in Damascus to begin talks with Premier Yussef Zayen of Syria on the pipeline dispute. No Iraqi premier had visited the capital of Syria for a number of years, and the arrival of Premier Talib was believed to reflect his deep concern over the oil deadlock.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, after three months of inactivity, Iraqi oil began to flow again through the trans-Syrian pipeline on March 2. The I. P. C. announced on that day that it had agreed to increase by about 50 per cent the rental fee paid to Syria for allowing the pipeline across her territory. Syria, in return, agreed to restore to the company all of the property which had been seized by the government in December of 1966. Under the agreement, the increase in royalties was retroactive to January 1, 1966. Therefore, Syria was given a lump sum of about \$11,000,000. President Nasser was said to have put pressure on the Syrian government to come to terms with the I. P. C.<sup>8</sup>

Baghdad radio announced on March 29 that an initial payment of \$60,600,000 had been handed over by the I. P. C. to the Iraqi government. This payment for oil royalties covering the first quarter of 1967 was noticeably below the amount that Iraq had demanded. In a speech, President Arif attacked the oil companies as "bloodsuckers who show

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<sup>7</sup>Times, February 18, 1967, p. 41, col. 3.

<sup>8</sup>Times, March 3, 1967, p. 3, col. 5.



no mercy."<sup>9</sup> With the budget heavily dependent on the oil revenues, the Iraqi government found itself on the verge of financial calamity. On May 4, it obtained from the I.P.C. a \$39,000,000 advance on future royalties.<sup>10</sup>

Relations between the oil consortium and the Iraqi government worsened on May 29 when the I.P.C. and its two subsidiaries, the Mosul Oil Company and the Basra Oil Company, were told by Iraq's Oil Minister, Abdel Sattar al-Hussein, that the government would cancel their oil licenses if they supplied oil to any country participating in aggression against the Arab states. Informal threats against Western oil interests had been growing stronger, but this was the first formal threat. This threat was largely the result of the rising tensions in the Middle East, which in a few days would culminate in the Six-Day War.<sup>11</sup>

Also on May 29 the Syrian Premier made a public statement that Arabs would "blow up pipelines and ignite wells" of Western oil companies operating in the Middle East in an effort to "stop the flow of oil to imperialism." Iraq, in reaction to that statement, maintained

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<sup>9</sup>Times, March 30, 1967, p. 61, col. 3.

<sup>10</sup>Times, May 5, 1967, p. 53, col. 3.

<sup>11</sup>Times, May 30, 1967, p. 3, col. 3.

a milder, more realistic outlook; for she realized that she could not afford to destroy the wells and pipelines installed by the Western companies.<sup>12</sup>

Several changes within the governmental framework of Iraq took place during the months preceding the Six-Day War. In January new laws were passed providing for the minimum ages of 18 for voters and 30 for political candidates. This seemed to project a trend toward a more democratic form of government, but the promised elections, required before May of 1967 under the 1964 Provisional Constitution, were not held. On April 3, the Cabinet and the Higher Defense Council extended President Arif's term indefinitely by dropping the one-year limit which had been set previously. On May 3 the Provisional Constitution, due to cease on May 10, was renewed for one more year.<sup>13</sup>

The government of Premier Naji Talib gave way to one supervised by President Arif on May 10. Arif took on the post of Premier and promised to provide future elections to re-establish a parliament.<sup>14</sup> The new coalition Cabinet had twenty members, including nine military leaders and two Kurds.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1968, p. 448.

<sup>14</sup>Times, May 11, 1967, p. 19, col. 1.

<sup>15</sup>Times, July 29, 1967, p. 15, col. 1.

President Arif conducted a series of diplomatic visits to improve Iraq's relations with her neighbors, which began in the spring and continued throughout the year. In addition to his visit to Cairo, mentioned previously, Arif traveled to Turkey, Iran, and Kuwait in the spring, and after the June war he went again to the U.A.R. and also to Syria and Jordan. He was the first Iraqi head of state to visit Turkey since the Iraqi revolution in 1958 and the collapse of the Baghdad Pact.<sup>16</sup> Arif and President Cevdet Sunay of Turkey issued a joint communique on February 26, which stressed the importance of developing good relations between the two countries.<sup>17</sup>

The most successful of Arif's state visits was the trip to Iran, which took place in spite of the exceptionally bad relations between the Shah of Iran and President Nasser, Arif's personal friend and ally. In the Iranian lower house, Arif eloquently stressed "friendship, brotherhood, and common interests, according to Islamic doctrine" between Iraq and Iran. In private he attempted to bring about a reconciliation between Iran and the U.A.R.<sup>18</sup>

Only one incident in the months before the June war led to the mobilization of Iraqi troops for possible action. In April a dispute

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<sup>16</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1968, p. 448.

<sup>17</sup>Times, February 27, 1967, p. 315, col. 2.

<sup>18</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1968, p. 448.

between Kuwait and Iraq erupted after Iraqi border guards had crossed the frontier, dismantled a tent camp of workers drilling water wells, and briefly occupied the area. Relations between Kuwait and Iraq had been simmering for several years over a boundary dispute over an area near the Rumaila oil field. Kuwait never forgot the statement made in 1961 by the then Premier of Iraq, General Abdul Karim Kassem, who claimed that Kuwait was an integral part of Iraq. When the April border incident occurred, the two countries moved troops to their borders and recalled their ambassadors. But no military action followed.<sup>19</sup>

With the Syrian-I.P.C. pipeline dispute resolved, a new coalition cabinet formed, and diplomatic communication between Iraq and her Arab neighbors (except Kuwait) on the increase, the stage was set for the rise of a united Arab effort to destroy the hated nation of Israel. Arab leaders, particularly President Arif, began to sense more than ever before the need for Arab cooperation with one another.

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<sup>19</sup>Times, April 21, 1967, p. 12, col. 4.



### Chapter 3

#### 1967: IRAQ AND THE "HOLY WAR" AGAINST ISRAEL

As Arab-Israeli hostilities intensified during the first five months of 1967, Iraq found herself caught up in the whirlwind of Arab nationalist emotionalism, an emotionalism full of hatred toward Israel and all adherents of the Zionist cause. News of Arab deaths prompted by repeated border clashes between Israel and Syria evoked Iraqi sentiments of sympathy and stirred up pan-Arab elements among the people. Iraq was one of the first to declare war on Israel in June. Although she played only a minor role militarily in the war, Iraq was an important force in the diplomatic arena. She sought to use her status as a major Arab oil producer to threaten other nations into aiding the Arab cause. Even though Iraq suspended oil shipments to the U. S. and Great Britain, these nations continued to recognize Israel's right to exist.

In May a quickly-moving series of events brought the Middle East to the verge of war: (1) the U.A.R. and Syria massed their troops on the borders of Israel from May 14 to May 20; (2) Saudi Arabian troops took up positions near the port of Aqaba, in Jordan, on May 24; (3) the United Nations Emergency Force concluded operations on the U.A.R. territory on May 19 after the U.A.R. had issued on the

previous day a statement that they must leave; (4) the U.A.R. announced on May 24 its blockade of Israeli shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba by lining the Strait of Tiran with mines; (5) Jordan and the U.A.R. formed a mutual defense pact on May 30, and King Hussein of Jordan announced on June 4 that the pact had been extended to include Iraq.<sup>1</sup>

The Iraqi Armed Forces were ordered to be on the alert on May 18,<sup>2</sup> just as Iraqi officials were preparing to leave for Cairo to attend the Arab League Council. At this meeting on May 20 twelve Arab states, including Iraq, sanctioned the U.A.R.'s "spontaneous actions to face the [Israeli] threat." The Council also declared that an attack against one would be considered an attack against all. These actions were made in the light of an alleged Israeli troop build-up along the Syrian and Egyptian borders. The U.A.R. ordered further Egyptian troop movements and an increase in radio attacks on the U. S. At this meeting Iraq announced that her troops were ready to join the Syrians in the event of an Israeli attack.<sup>3</sup>

Arab confidence gained much momentum at this time partly because of mutual rhetorical reassurances among Arab leaders and partly because of the U.A.R.'s success in bringing about the withdrawal

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<sup>1</sup>"Middle East War," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 198-199.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 200.

<sup>3</sup>New York Times, May 21, 1967, p. 1, col. 6.

of United Nations forces from the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip. Several Arab leaders made strong anti-Israel threats, including Iraq's Lieutenant General Taher Yahya, a Vice Premier. Just before leaving for Cairo, he said that "the time has come to get rid of the Zionist cancer in Palestine."<sup>4</sup>

Cairo announced on May 22 that army and air force units would be sent by Iraq to Egypt in order to strengthen the military build-up against Israel.<sup>5</sup>

The Jordanian government gave Iraqi and Saudi Arabian forces permission to enter Jordan, an official spokesman announced on May 24.<sup>6</sup> But on the following day Iraq's Defense Minister, Major General Chaker Mahmoud Shukry, refused Jordan's offer. He said that the offer "has come too late" and that Jordan had refused the entry of Iraqi troops several months before when the refusal was advised by the Arab League's unified military command. Shukry added that Iraqi troops had begun to move "in the direction of the front" to support Syria and the U.A.R.<sup>7</sup>

At first President Arif intended to send troops to support the Syrian (but not the Jordanian) military build-up against Israel. He in

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<sup>4</sup>Times, May 21, 1967, p. 3, col. 6.

<sup>5</sup>"Middle East War," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 200.

<sup>6</sup>Times, May 25, 1967, p. 17, col. 2.

<sup>7</sup>Times, May 26, 1967, p. 17, col. 3.

fact dispatched a brigade into Syria which is discussed later in this chapter. However, after the May 30 Defense Pact between the U.A.R. and Jordan was formed and cordial relations seemed to be established between King Hussein and President Nasser, Arif reversed his plans. He withdrew his brigade from Syria, suddenly became friendly with King Hussein, and agreed to send a whole division into Jordan.<sup>8</sup>

Approximately 5,000 Iraqi troops went into East Jordan. Other sources which I will mention later placed the number of troops at 10,000. They played only a very minor role in the war, and Iraqi losses were light.<sup>9</sup>

Damascus radio disclosed on May 28 that Syria and Iraq had signed an agreement in Damascus May 24 providing for bilateral military cooperation against Israel.<sup>10</sup>

President Arif sent letters on May 27 to the Shah of Iran and the Premier of Turkey, encouraging them to stand with the Arabs in their confrontation with Israel. Arif, along with other Arab leaders, exhorted Iran to stop the consortium of oil companies in Iran from sending supplies of Iranian oil to Israel.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>O'Ballance, Edgar, The Third Arab-Israeli War, (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1972), p. 179.

<sup>9</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1968, p. 447.

<sup>10</sup>"Middle East War," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 200.

<sup>11</sup>Times, May 28, 1967, p. 4, col. 2.



General Mahmoud Ereim arrived in Damascus, Syria, on May 24, with the first Iraqi troops for stationing on the Syrian border. Six days later, on May 29, he signed a military agreement with General Abdel Sheik Amin of the Syrian Defense Ministry stressing cooperation of their armies against Israel.<sup>12</sup>

Representatives of eleven Arab nations met in Baghdad on June 4 and agreed to stop the flow of Arab oil to nations that attacked Arab states or their territorial waters, "particularly the Gulf of (Aquaba)."<sup>13</sup>

The foreign-owned oil companies operating in Arab nations were warned by President Arif that they would lose their concessions if they did not agree with the Arab view toward Israel. The President also warned the foreign companies operating in Iran that if the companies continued to supply Iranian oil to Israel, an Arab boycott would be applied. Participants in the conference were Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, Algeria, Qatar, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, the U.A.R., Syria, and Lebanon.<sup>14</sup>

The U. S. News and World Report stated that on June 5 elements of Iraq's 70,000 troops were moving up to the Israeli-

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<sup>12</sup>Times, May 29, 1967, p. 2, col. 6.

<sup>13</sup>"Middle East War," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 210.

<sup>14</sup>Times, June 5, 1967, p. 5, col. 4.

Jordanian border in preparation for the "holy war" against Israel.<sup>15</sup>

Statistics dealing with Iraq's military forces vary from source to source. Newsweek stated that Iraq's military manpower, including both regulars and reservists, was 82,000. Iraqi tanks numbered approximately 350, and her war planes numbered about 200.<sup>16</sup> The U. S. News and World Report stated that Iraq had about 80,000 troops, again both regulars and reservists, 300 tanks, and 200 war planes.<sup>17</sup> It is interesting to note that on June 1, President Arif pardoned and freed army and air force officers involved in the 1966 coup plot against him in order to allow these men to serve in the war against Israel.<sup>18</sup>

On June 5 Iraq, along with Algeria, Syria, Sudan, and Kuwait, declared war on Israel. All five nations pledged to send troops to the U.A.R. to aid in the struggle against Israel.<sup>19</sup> Following the U.A.R.'s example, Iraq severed diplomatic relations with the U. S. and Great

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<sup>15</sup>"The 3-Day Blitz From Gaza to Suez," U. S. News and World Report, June 19, 1967, p. 34.

<sup>16</sup>"The Middle East: The Scent of War," Newsweek, June 5, 1967, p. 40.

<sup>17</sup>"If Egypt Does Fight Israel--Who Wins?," U. S. News and World Report, June 12, 1967, p. 32.

<sup>18</sup>Times, June 1, 1967, p. 19, col. 2.

<sup>19</sup>"Middle East War," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 205.

Britain on June 6 because of their alleged aid to Israel in the Middle East war.<sup>20</sup>

The Iraqi Air Force at this time consisted of about 220 aircraft, about half Soviet and half British, which included 60 MIG-21's, 15 MIG-17's, 15 MIG-15's, 6 TU-16's, and 10 Ilyushin-28's. It also had 50 British Hawker Hunters, 20 Provost trainer aircraft, 26 British Wessex helicopters, and about 40 transport planes.<sup>21</sup>

On the first day of the war the Iraqi Air Force made a false claim that several of its aircraft had raided Tel Aviv and "destroyed seven Israeli aircraft on an airfield." But a single Iraqi bomber (TU-16) flew to Nathanya at dawn on June 6 and bombed a factory which caused several casualties. This plane was shot down on its return journey by Israeli ground forces in the Jezreel Valley later that morning. About one hour later, an Iraqi air base at H-3 (a desert station on the oil pipeline near the Iraqi-Jordanian border) was attacked by several Israeli fighter-bombers. The Israeli act of retaliation brought about the destruction of six Iraqi planes on the ground.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Times, June 7, 1967, p. 19, col. 6.

<sup>21</sup>O'Ballance, p. 61-62.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 75-76; and "Middle East War," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 204.

Also on June 6 Israel issued statistics on the number of Arab aircraft which Israel had shot down during the first two days of the war. This included figures on Iraqi aircraft which consisted of the following: 1 TU-16 bomber, 5 Hawker Hunter fighters, 9 MIG-21's, and 2 transports, a total of 17 aircraft.<sup>23</sup>

According to the Israeli Air Force, the Iraqi pilots were discovered to be the most adept of all the Arab pilots who were involved in the June war. One reason for the Iraqi flying expertise was the fact that many of these pilots had gained experience fighting the Kurds in Northern Iraq for the past several years.<sup>24</sup>

General Abdul Munim Riad, the overall Arab commander on the Jordanian Front, began moving a Palestinian battalion and an Iraqi brigade (the Eighth Motorized Brigade which had arrived in Jordan on June 4) across the country from Mafraq to Irbid and Jerash on June 5. The Israelis discovered this Arab military movement and attacked the Arab formations until sunset, completely disorganizing them and causing many casualties.<sup>25</sup>

Three other Iraqi brigades were making their way into Jordan at this time. But when President Arif heard the news of the Israeli

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 71.



attack on the Eighth Motorized Brigade, he realized how serious the entire situation was becoming and gave orders that the three other brigades be held back at the Iraqi border until further notice. These brigades never saw action during the war.<sup>26</sup>

Kuwait and Iraq announced on June 7 that they were cutting off the flow of their oil to the U. S. and Great Britain. West Germany was later added to the list.<sup>27</sup> Officials of eleven Arab nations meeting in Baghdad on June 5 had agreed to suspend the shipment of oil to nations that attacked Arab states or their territorial waters, "particularly the Gulf of (Aquaba)." A New York Times report stated that the Western world reacted to the Arab oil embargo with optimism. Great Britain, who received 55 per cent of her supplies from the Middle East, planned to turn to nations such as Iran and Nigeria for more oil, if needed. The U. S. imported only about 5 per cent of its oil from the Arab bloc, although nearly half of the oil supply needed for the war in Vietnam came from the Arab countries. A U. S. Defense Department spokesman said that even if the Arabs upheld their threat to stop oil supplies, the U. S. would have plenty for the Vietnam War and for domestic use.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>27</sup>Times, July 29, 1967, p. 15, col. 1.

<sup>28</sup>Times, June 7, 1967, p. 19, col. 2; and "Middle East Wars," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 210.

Widespread public anti-American and anti-British demonstrations occurred in capitals throughout the Middle East, including Baghdad, after the U.A.R. charged on June 5 that U. S. and British carrier planes had flown cover for advancing Israeli troops in certain sectors of Jordan and the Sinai Peninsula.<sup>29</sup>

On June 11 the Six-Day War came to a halt when a cease-fire agreement was signed by Israeli and Syrian officers at a meeting in El Qunertra, Syria, with United Nations military personnel looking on. On that day Iraq, Algeria, and Sudan initiated plans for Arab leaders to meet and form a common policy concerning Israel's war gains. Certain sources told a New York Times reporter that the Arab conference would probably agree to demand Israel's withdrawal from positions in Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.<sup>30</sup>

An Iraqi army report said at the close of the war that Iraqi military casualties were minor, ten killed and thirty wounded. Unlike the Egyptians, Iraqi military equipment losses were inconsiderable. Most of this equipment had been supplied by the Russians.<sup>31</sup> An article in The Economist placed the number of Iraqi troops which were killed on their way to the front in Jordan at twenty-seven.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>"Middle East Wars," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 209.

<sup>30</sup>Times, June 12, 1967, p. 1, col. 7.

<sup>31</sup>Times, July 4, 1967, p. 4, col. 3.

<sup>32</sup>"The first to fall," The Economist, July 20, 1968, p. 23-24.

The Six-Day War was savage, but short. Israel's daring and skill made the difference. Her highly trained forces outmaneuvered and severely cut up the Arab armies. Israel's overwhelming victory brought about the Arabs' overwhelming sense of defeat. Although Iraq did not suffer the humiliation which Egypt, Syria, and Jordan had to endure, the Iraqi people were left with a profound sense of indignation. Iraqi military losses were light, but her powers of diplomacy with the Western World were greatly weakened after she had enacted the oil embargo and had severed diplomatic ties with the U. S. and Great Britain. The scars of defeat were to bring about new problems for Iraq and particularly for President Arif.

## Chapter 4

### 1967: JULY, AUGUST, AND SEPTEMBER MONTHS OF DIFFICULTY

The period after the war was one of serious internal and external difficulties for President Arif and his government. During the late summer the President carried on impotent discussions with Soviet leaders, he resigned as premier, and he was defeated in his objective to continue the oil embargo at the Khartoum summit conference. The administration was confronted by widespread unrest arising from the Arab defeat and the ill effects of the Khartoum resolutions on Arab nationalists. Many accused the government of corruption and even called for a renewal of the war. Much diplomacy was carried on among the Arab nations, even though a split was taking place between the extremists such as Iraq, Algeria, Syria, and the U.A.R. and the moderates such as Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Tunisia, Libya, and Morocco. This split was particularly evident in the delicate situation surrounding the placement of Iraqi troops in Jordan. Iraqi troops, burning with desires for revenge after the war, would not leave Jordan, a nation that wanted to get on with living in peacetime. Repercussions from the Six-Day War continued to impose a severe strain on all concerned both diplomatically and militarily.



Arab unity in the Middle East was beginning to crumble again.

The British and Americans who did business with the Arab nations, including Iraq, underwent a period of panic after the Six-Day War. Many of them wondered if they could return to their former status in these countries. They envied those business men who had stuck it out and were still inside Arab frontiers. Many of those who fled found it difficult to get new visas. Work on a Baghdad airport and particularly on its instrument landing system had come to a complete halt while agents of the British government tried to find out whether the Iraqi government wanted British engineers back.<sup>1</sup>

The month of July saw a strong flow of communication between the governments of Iraq and the Soviet Union. On July 3 President Nikolai V. Podgorny of the Soviet Union arrived in Baghdad for talks on the Middle East. This was the first visit of a Soviet chief of state to Iraq. The results of these talks were undisclosed.<sup>2</sup> Then in late July brief talks were carried on between President Houari Boumediene of Algeria, President Arif, and Russian leaders in Moscow. The two Arab leaders arrived in the Soviet capital on July 17, after having attended a two-day strategy conference held in Cairo by the presidents of five Arab states (Algeria, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, and the U.A.R.).

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<sup>1</sup>"Trouble at the docks," The Economist, July 8, 1967, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup>New York Times, July 4, 1967, p. 4, col. 3.

President Arif and President Boumediene were believed to be carrying a message on behalf of these five Arab countries to Leon Brezhnev, the Soviet Communist Party chief, and Premier Kosygin. Tass, the Soviet press agency, described the trip merely as a "friendship visit." The talks produced an agreement on "eliminating the consequences of Israel's aggression."<sup>3</sup>

The Soviet Union on July 20 authorized Tass to issue a formal statement warning that Israel and the countries supporting her were playing "a risky game with fire." This statement came as a result of mounting Arab pressure on the Soviet Union to take a more militant stand, but this statement appeared without a threat of drastic action on the part of the Soviet Union. Some analysts saw this as an indication that President Arif and President Boumediene of Algeria had failed in their mission to persuade the Soviet leaders to seek a solution through means other than in the area of diplomacy.<sup>4</sup>

President Arif retired as Premier on July 10 to concentrate on pan-Arab strategy against Israel. Lieutenant General Taher Yahya, a former vice premier, headed the new Cabinet which included six military leaders and six members of the pro-Nasser Arab Nationalist

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<sup>3</sup>Times, July 18, 1967, p. 8, col. 5; and "Six weeks after the ceasefire," The Economist, July 22, 1967, p. 297.

<sup>4</sup>Times, July 21, 1967, p. 8, col. 2.

Movement in key positions.<sup>5</sup>

The new Premier announced on July 28 the objectives of his government program. This included strengthening and rearming the army and the police forces, reinforcing "national unity," and giving all citizens the opportunity "to participate in the battle against imperialism and Zionism." A promise was made by the Premier to seek over-all Arab unity, beginning with union with the U.A.R. and to work for the "restoration of Arab rights in Palestine." In his radio speech, Premier Yahya also announced that his government would seek increased royalties from "foreign oil companies" that extracted and sold Iraqi oil.<sup>6</sup>

A general idea of the attitude which Iraqi officials had toward the U. S. government could be seen in a letter to the editor of the New York Times, which appeared on July 21. The author of the letter, Mohammad Fadhel Jamali, was a former foreign minister and premier of Iraq. Jamali severely condemned the American press for maintaining an "Israeli-Zionist point of view on the present-day Middle East Crisis." He stated the following:

Unfortunately, America, traditionally the bulwark of democracy, freedom, and religious tolerance, has supported the unjust and unfair aggressive colonial

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<sup>5</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1968, p. 448.

<sup>6</sup>Times, July 29, 1967, p. 15, col. 1.

policy of the Zionists in Palestine at a time when Western colonialism had been practically liquidated in both Asia and Africa. The United States Government has not given due weight to the natural and human rights of the Arabs to their own homes in Palestine.<sup>7</sup>

Another letter to the editor of the New York Times appeared on August 7 condemning the American press after an editorial entitled "Iraqis, Go Home" had been published on August 2. The editorial stated that several thousand Iraqi troops, who had been invited by King Hussein at the time of the Six-Day War, had remained in Jordan after the war. The Iraqi troops argued that they needed to remain in Jordan, since the hostility against Israel was still at a high pitch. The editorial mentioned that the Iraqis were "a nuisance and an embarrassment to King Hussein," who was in "too delicate a situation to ask them to go."<sup>8</sup>

Upon reading the editorial, Muhammad H. el-Farra, the Jordanian Ambassador to the United Nations, attacked the editor of the Times in the following terms:

While ignoring the fact that half of the Jordanian territory is occupied by Israeli armed forces you seem to divert the attention of your readers from the real invader to the presence of our Iraqi brothers in Jordan . . . It is indeed unfortunate that neither the widespread Israeli use of napalm against our people, nor the continued occupation of the west bank of Jordan,

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<sup>7</sup>Times, July 21, 1967, p. 3, col. 4.

<sup>8</sup>Times, August 2, 1967, p. 36, col. 1.



Gaza, Sinai, and parts of Syria, nor the tragic plight of the Jordanians who have been and still are being forced out of their homes, has moved you to take a positive stand calling for the liquidation of the consequences of the Israeli aggression . . . . The fact of the matter in the present case is: if there are foreign troops to be withdrawn, they are not the troops that came to help and defend but rather the troops that came to annex and plunder.<sup>9</sup>

In the period following the Six-Day War the Arab bloc in the United Nations underwent a shift in leadership away from the U.A.R. and toward Algeria, Syria, and Iraq. Western observers began to state that Adnon Pachachi, Iraq's Foreign Minister, was emerging as the most forceful spokesman of the Arab cause. Just before the General Assembly ended on the night of July 22 without achieving a demand for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from conquered territories in three Arab states, Mr. Pachachi advised the U. S. and Israel "not to be too happy too soon, because they have not heard the end of the discussion in the Assembly."<sup>10</sup>

During the first five days of August officials from Iraq and twelve other Arab countries were involved in a series of meetings at Khartoum, the capital of the Sudan. An agreement was announced on August 4 that these countries would soon convene at a summit conference to weigh joint strategy against Israel. During these preliminary

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<sup>9</sup>Times, August 7, 1967, p. 28, col. 4.

<sup>10</sup>Times, July 23, 1967, p. 16, col. 2.

meetings differences arose between the oil producing nations over their embargo of oil exports to the U. S. and Great Britain and over other economic matters. Dissent centered on an Iraqi economic program proposing ways to strengthen the Arabs' economic position and to retaliate against Western countries supporting Israel. This program was supported by Algeria but was disliked by the conservative countries of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Libya. The program called for a complete stoppage of oil production by Arab countries in September, October, and November. During these months the need for oil in Europe increases with the approach of winter. The plan also included a suspension of oil exports to nations which the Arabs consider to have "participated in or supported Israeli aggression."<sup>11</sup>

On August 15 President Arif spoke at a pan-Arab economic conference in Baghdad and urged the Arab states to adopt a plan for a tighter economic boycott of "states that supported Israel during the Middle Eastern War." He added that if the Arabs were to "live in dignity, we should reconsider our position, protect our wealth against monopolies, and use our transport routes for the interest of our nations."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Times, August 5, 1967, p. 2, col. 5; and "Three-month blockade?", The Economist, August 12, 1967, p. 594.

<sup>12</sup>Times, August 16, 1967, p. 6, col. 5.

The major purpose of the pan-Arab economic conference was to lay down a program for a unified Arab economic war against the Western powers that were allegedly pro-Israel, in a bid to force an Israeli withdrawal from Arab areas captured during the Six-Day War. The hope of such a plan coming to pass seemed to fade when reports came out of Beirut, Lebanon, and other Arab capitals on August 16 that a split had occurred between Arab conservatives and liberals at the conference. The reports said that Iraq's proposal for the nationalization of all British and U. S. holdings, including the oil interests, was strongly opposed by Saudi Arabia. Kuwait and Libya later joined Saudi Arabia in her stand, whereas the more revolutionary regimes of Iraq, Algeria, and Syria continued to pressure the conference into accepting Iraq's proposal.<sup>13</sup>

A compromise was finally reached on August 19 when the pan-Arab economic conference agreed upon a gradual nationalization of oil companies owned by the U. S. and Great Britain. Press dispatches from Baghdad stated that, at the beginning, "Arab governments would buy appropriate shares of the companies' stocks. These shares would then be gradually increased until the national oil companies would replace entirely the western oil cartels." No word was available at

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<sup>13</sup>Times, August 20, 1967, p. 3, col. 1; and Times, August 17, 1967, p. 13, col. 1.

that time on the outcome of the Iraqi proposal that oil production throughout the Arab world would be shut off completely for three months. Recommendations of the five-day conference were to be presented for final approval at the upcoming Khartoum summit conference.<sup>14</sup>

The leaders of thirteen Arab states arrived in Khartoum on August 29 with high expectations. President Arif continued to advocate the Iraqi proposal for a total suspension of all Arab oil exports at the summit meeting, but he finally accepted the counterproposal that oil exports should be reestablished and the revenues be used to compensate the Arabs who had suffered from the war. The Arab leaders agreed on August 31 to permit each Arab state to decide independently whether it wished to end the oil embargo. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait ended their embargoes on September 2 and 3 respectively.<sup>15</sup>

Several other resolutions were adopted at the Khartoum summit conference. An Arab fund was set up for the U.A.R. and Jordan, two Arab countries badly hit by the Six-Day War. The Arab leaders pledged a continued non-military struggle against Israel, and the adopted anti-Israel resolution said that the members of the conference

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<sup>14</sup>Times, August 20, 1967, p. 3, col. 1.

<sup>15</sup>"Middle East War," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 210; and "Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1968, p. 448.



had "agreed to unified efforts at international and diplomatic levels to eliminate the consequences of aggression and to assure the withdrawal of the aggressor forces of Israel from Arab lands, but within the limits to which Arab states are committed: no peace with Israel, no negotiations with Israel, no recognition of Israel and maintenance of the rights of Palestinian people in their nation."<sup>16</sup>

Another important measure to come out of the Khartoum summit conference was the U.A.R.-Saudi Arabian agreement designed to end the five-year-old civil war in Yemen. Iraq, along with Morocco and the Sudan, agreed to supervise the execution of the peace plan, which was to begin immediately. The agreement called for a withdrawal of approximately 25,000 Egyptian troops from Yemen. The republican regime in Yemen had been maintained since 1962 by Egyptian troops, whereas Royal forces had been supported by Saudi Arabia.<sup>17</sup>

President Arif was quoted as saying that the Khartoum summit conference was "a positive step but lacking in certain practical measures." He especially criticized "the failure to discuss military action and the reorganization of Arab armies."<sup>18</sup>

Upon hearing that political turmoil was underway in Baghdad, President Arif rushed home immediately after the summit conference,

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<sup>16</sup>"Middle East War," News Dictionary: 1967, p. 221.

<sup>17</sup>Times, August 31, 1967, p. 1, col. 8.

<sup>18</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1968, p. 448.

canceling a scheduled visit to Algeria. Widespread discontent among Arab nationalists and other leftist groups over the Khartoum resolutions was observed by travelers in Baghdad. These leftist groups considered the resolutions much too moderate and compromising, and they were particularly critical of the resolutions which allowed each country to decide for itself whether to continue the oil embargo against the U. S., West Germany, and Great Britain. Demonstrators, many of whom were members of the pro-Nasser Arab Nationalist Movement (A.N.M.) marched through Baghdad streets on September 5 demanding resumption of the war with Israel. A leading Beirut newspaper stated that during this period of unrest six A.N.M. ministers in the Iraqi government offered their resignations, but President Arif prevailed upon them to remain. According to travelers in Baghdad, the Iraqi government was under pressure from nationalists not to lift the embargo although President Arif had signed the resolution.<sup>19</sup>

On September 12 Ismail Khairallah, Iraq's Acting Foreign Minister, returned to Baghdad after concluding three days of talks in which he tried to persuade Syrian leaders to allow Iraqi oil to pass across their territory. Syria had boycotted the Khartoum summit conference and had been campaigning against its resolutions.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Times, September 13, 1967, p. 12, col. 3.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

Relations between the U. S. and Iraq continued to deteriorate in the fall of 1967. A New York Times article on September 23 stated that the U. S. Ambassador to Iraq had resigned, but a White House aide reported that the U. S. still had hopes of restoring diplomatic ties.<sup>21</sup> But on September 30 the Defense Department terminated the military training of twenty Iraqi and Sudanese military personnel and prepared to send them home. Word of this termination had been conveyed in the form of a private letter to the American Jewish Congress on September 12. Officials of this group had sent a written protest to the Pentagon stating that they had heard unfavorable reports that the Defense Department would virtually double the number of Arab trainees in 1967.<sup>22</sup>

Iraq's reaction to the termination of Iraqi officer training in the U. S. came quickly. On October 1 Iraq announced that she had decided to stop the importation of American and British cigarettes. Egyptian and Jordanian brands were to be imported instead.<sup>23</sup>

Iraq's internal and international relations underwent a period of stress and strain from July through September, 1967. This is evident when one considers the outcome of Arif's talks with Soviet

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<sup>21</sup>Times, September 23, 1967, p. 3, col. 4.

<sup>22</sup>Times, October 1, 1967, p. 28, col. 1.

<sup>23</sup>Times, October 2, 1967, p. 3, col. 6.

leaders, Arif's failure to maintain the boycott of oil exports to the U. S. and Great Britain at the Khartoum conference, the rift between extremists and conservatives in the Arab world, and the tensions between the Arif regime and leftist Arab nationalists. These are but a few of the many factors that would lead to the downfall of Abdel Rahman Arif and the rise of a more militant regime in Iraq.



## Chapter 5

### 1967: OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, AND DECEMBER GROWING TIES WITH FRANCE AND THE SOVIET UNION

The two topics at the forefront of Iraq's international affairs during the last three months in 1967 were the oil issue and the effort to obtain more arms. The oil issue largely centered around the controversy between the Iraqi government, the I.P.C., and other oil companies over rights to untapped potential oil fields. This issue had a potent effect on the course of international politics due to the competition between nations for more oil. By the end of the year France and the Soviet Union had achieved successful negotiations after they had gained separate oil exploration rights in Iraq granted by the Baghdad government. The U. S., Great Britain, and the Netherlands were shaken by these moves, and a French agreement to send arms to Iraq added further tension to the situation.

The Iraqi government formally launched on October 3 a new oil company called the Iraqi National Oil Company (I.N.O.C.). The government's objective in doing so was to place Iraq's untapped potential oil fields, which the I.P.C. had planned to exploit, into the hands of the new government-owned oil company. A board of directors was named to supervise the I.N.O.C. The board was to be headed by a

former Economic Minister and a pro-Nasser advocate, Adib al-Jader. This company had existed on paper for four years but had never been active. The government-controlled Baghdad press called the board's appointment "a step on the road to oil revolution." It stated that the government hoped that "further steps would follow until we reach the end of the road by ridding our country of foreign oil exploration."<sup>1</sup>

The I.P.C. threatened to sue any foreign companies that planned to join the I.N.O.C. to work in areas where it had been assigned rights. Originally, the I.P.C. had been given the right to search for and exploit new oil fields in large areas of Iraq. But this permission was revoked early in 1967, and in August the Iraqi government passed Law 97, which allocated all unexplored oil fields to the I.N.O.C. The government then announced its intention to open these areas to offers from other foreign companies in partnership with the I.N.O.C. Italy's state oil company, E.N.I., began to bid furiously for some of the oil fields, particularly the North Rumaila field. The Iraqi government approached Japan and Spain on this issue as well.<sup>2</sup>

Relations between Iraq and the I.P.C. reached an all-time low at this time not only because of the creation of the I.N.O.C. but also

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<sup>1</sup>New York Times, October 5, 1967, p. 55, col. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; and "Middle-East oil: asking for more," The Economist, September 9, 1967, p. 914; and the New York Times, October 31, 1967, p. 1, col. 5.

because the Iraqi government had asked the I.P.C. to increase its oil exports by ten per cent. The I.P.C. provided no reply to the government's demand.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Malik Dohan al-Hassan, the Iraqi Minister of Information, said on October 21 that his country would resume direct exports of oil to the U. S., Great Britain, and West Germany within the next few months. It was believed that Iraq had postponed the resuming of oil shipments for fear that the militantly anti-Western government of Syria would object and would interfere with Iraqi oil exports that were piped through Syria. Dr. al-Hassan also stated that it would be "very difficult" for Iraq to resume diplomatic relations with the U. S. if American policy in the Middle East remained at the status quo. He said that the U. S. should try to oblige the Arab states more or risk having them become more closely allied with the East.<sup>4</sup>

The oil issue became more heated at the end of October when one of the I.P.C.'s own major shareholders, Compagnie Francaise des Petroles, started negotiating with the Iraqi government for a concession or production contract over the North Rumaila field, which was believed to contain a billion tons of oil. The French company was a private corporation in which the French government had a 35 per

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Times, October 22, 1967, p. 9. col. 1.

cent interest. Sources in France said the Iraqi officials had approached President de Gaulle directly in early September with an invitation to discuss oil. According to other sources, the French had made the first approach. The I.P.C. became upset over the idea of one of its members becoming a business rival, but the French told the I.P.C. that they were prepared to share their privileges with their partners.<sup>5</sup>

American, British, and Dutch members of the I.P.C. enlisted the support of their governments in attempting to fight the move by their French partner to develop a nationalized oil field in Iraq. The American, British, and Dutch concerns feared that a radical new oil deal with Iraq might force a drastic revision of all oil concessions in the Middle East in favor of the Arab countries. Washington, London, and Amsterdam expressed their concern to the French government on behalf of the oil companies. These three governments saw the French-Iraqi deal as a way of rewarding France for her growing "pro-Arab neutrality" since the Six-Day War.<sup>6</sup>

It is not known how much of an effect the diplomatic pressure from the governments of the U. S., Great Britain, and the Netherlands had on the course of the French-Iraqi oil talks, but a November issue of The Economist mentioned that talks between Compagnie Francaise

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<sup>5</sup>Times, October 31, 1967, p. 1, col. 5; and "Traitor or ambassador?," The Economist, October 28, 1967, p. 437.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.



des Petroles and Iraq over the North Rumaila oil field were suspended in early November to be continued at a later date.<sup>7</sup> This seemed to reduce the prospect of a French-Iraqi oil deal, but in late November the Baghdad government granted Entreprise de Recherches et d'Activites Petrolieres (E.R.A.P.) the right to seek and produce oil in 3,088 square miles in Iraq and 1,080 square miles off shore. Iraq has a total land area of 173,259 square miles. The agreement between Iraq and E.R.A.P., the French government petroleum company, excluded the North Rumaila oil field.<sup>8</sup>

France was also competing at this time with U. S. companies for a concession to exploit the sulfur deposits of Mishracq in north-western Iraq. Iraq is one of the few countries which has huge sulfur deposits that could be rapidly put into production. Former Secretary of the Treasury Robert B. Anderson went to Baghdad to bid for the Mishracq concession on behalf of the American sulphur companies.<sup>9</sup>

General Hassan Sabri, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Iraqi forces, arrived in Paris on October 4 to negotiate with the French on arms shipments to Iraq. The Iraqi "shopping list" included fifty French Mirage V supersonic fighter-bombers, as well as transport planes

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<sup>7</sup>"Raising the ante," The Economist, November 11, 1967, p. 659.

<sup>8</sup>Times, December 8, 1967, p. 1, col. 1.

<sup>9</sup>Times, December 8, 1967, p. 24, col. 3.

and armored cars. Four days after General Sabri's arrival French authorities announced that France would soon lift her arms embargo to Iraq and a number of other Arab countries that had not been involved directly in the June war.<sup>10</sup>

Iraqi anxiety over the arms race in the Middle East could be sensed in Iraqi newspapers published in late October. The Baghdad press was upset by the U. S. decision to resume arm shipments to Israel and the easing of the U. S. arms embargo toward Tunisia, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia. None of these nations had fought against Israel in June.<sup>11</sup>

The Beirut newspaper Al-Anwar stated on December 10 that France had contracted its first arms deal with Iraq. The French agreed to supply Iraq with seventy-five self-propelled tracked machine-gun carriers. Sources in Beirut believed that France would probably give arms to the Iraqis as part of an oil deal between France and Iraq. They said that the Iraqi government had asked for about \$400,000,000 as cash payment for the granting of a contract to the Compagnie Francaise des Petroles for the right to exploit the North Rumaila field. Sources said that Iraq was probably considering the idea of accepting French

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<sup>10</sup>Times, December 8, 1967, p. 1, col. 1; and Times, December 16, 1967, p. 10, col. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Times, October 26, 1967, p. 12, col. 8.

weapons as part of the payment.<sup>12</sup>

Diplomatic sources believed that Iraq was seeking French arms in order to reduce her dependence on Soviet weaponry. Certain Arab leaders thought that the Soviet Union might eventually reach an agreement with the U. S. on withholding arms supplies to the Middle East, and Iraq wanted to be prepared to have an alternate source of military supplies. Earlier in the fall the Soviet Union had replaced the relatively modest plane losses of Iraq in the Six-Day War. Approximately twelve Iraqi planes had been destroyed in the war.<sup>13</sup>

The Economist carried an article on December 16 which referred to an official announcement by the French government that Mirage V fighter-bombers would not be sent to any nation in the Middle East in the near future "in view of the explosive situation" there.<sup>14</sup> Thus Iraq's hopes of obtaining these planes were removed for the time being.

The only news of interest to involve Iraqi troops at this time was an Israeli report that Iraqi and Jordanian troops aided eleven members of the Palestine Liberation Front, a left-wing guerrilla organization, in entering occupied Jordan. The eleven infiltrators,

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<sup>12</sup>Times, December 11, 1967, p. 10, col. 1; and "Iraq," News Dictionary: 1968, p. 247.

<sup>13</sup>Times, December 11, 1967, p. 10, col. 1; and Times, October 12, 1967, p. 13, col. 1.

<sup>14</sup>"The case of the vanishing Mirage," The Economist, December 16, 1967, p. 1136.

recently captured by the Israelis in a cave east of Jenin, were said to have been trained in Syria. After having learned guerrilla warfare tactics, the eleven were met at the Syrian-Jordanian border by members of Battalion 421, a Palestinian unit of the 10,000-member Iraqi Army stationed in Jordan. The Iraqis were said to have moved the infiltrators 25 miles, using Land Rovers, to villages near the Israeli border. These infiltrators had been paid 200 Syrian pounds to leave refugee camps and participate in the endeavor.<sup>15</sup>

Adnon Pachachi, Iraq's Foreign Minister, continued to make the Arab viewpoint known in the United Nations when he attacked Israel's proposal for a five-year refugee plan. This would have involved negotiations with Israel amounting to recognition, which the Arabs had always refused. Mr. Pachachi said the refugee problem was "not negotiable" and could be resolved only on the basis of the refugees' wishes.<sup>16</sup>

On December 24 the Soviet Union signed an agreement with Iraq to develop rich oil deposits in the southern part of the country. The agreement was signed in Baghdad by Semyon A. Skachkov, chairman of the Soviet Committee for Foreign Trade, and by Adib al-Jader, president of the I.N.O.C. The Soviet Union promised to give technical

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<sup>15</sup>Times, October 21, 1967, p. 2, col. 6; and Times, May 15, 1968, p. 2, col. 6.

<sup>16</sup>Times, December 16, 1967, p. 10, col. 4.



assistance and machinery for drilling and to help market the petroleum produced. The Soviets also promised to assist in geological and topographic surveys in the northern part of the country. The territories involved were not specified. Therefore, it was not known whether or not the North Rumaila field was included in the agreement.<sup>17</sup>

Two days after the Soviet-I.N.O.C. oil agreement was signed, President Arif spoke at the School of Sciences at Baghdad University and attacked the I.P.C. in a most malicious manner. He called the I.P.C. a "blood-sucker," and he blamed "foreign oil monopolies" for having sabotaged one of the company's pipelines. He further added that "Iraq has succeeded in breaking the chains of Western oil monopolies" and "no pressure will deter us from attaining our national goals."<sup>18</sup>

The I.P.C. had been accused by Baghdad newspapers of sabotaging its own line on December 1 at a point twelve miles south of Kirkuk, presumably in an attempt to put pressure on the Iraqi government by reducing oil output and thus reducing royalties going to the government. The damaged pipeline did not halt oil production, and newspapers reported that sixty persons had been arrested. The Iraqi press declared that the I.P.C. had inspired the sabotage because the

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<sup>17</sup>Times, December 25, 1967, p. 17, col. 3.

<sup>18</sup>Times, December 27, 1967, p. 11, col. 1.

Iraqi government had recently granted concessions to the French state oil company, E.R.A.P. Previously the I.P.C. had been the only oil company operating in Iraq.<sup>19</sup>

During the last three months in 1967 Iraq's anti-Anglo-American attitude continued to mount and was a motivating factor in Iraq's growing relationship with France and the Soviet Union. Closer ties between France and Iraq could not only be seen in the successful negotiations between the two over the oil issue but over the armament issue as well. Although Iraq wanted to depend less on the Soviet Union for arms, she needed Soviet technical and oil-drilling assistance, as well as that of E.R.A.P., to counteract the monopolistic power of the I.P.C. in Iraq. President Arif's regime had taken the toughest line with the I.P.C. yet.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

## Chapter 6

### 1968: EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE OVERTHROW OF PRESIDENT ARIF

The political situation in Iraq during the first half of 1968 grew more and more serious as events unfolded. Student unrest, the resignation of six cabinet members, and the appointment of Iraq's four highest-ranking army officers to civilian posts were but a few of the signs of mounting turmoil in the relationship between President Arif's regime and the public at large. On the other hand, the Arif regime had several successes in the realm of foreign affairs. A diplomatic relationship with Great Britain was reestablished, and the French agreed to sell Mirage V fighter-bombers to Iraq. The Iraqi government even gained a higher price for its oil in an agreement with the I.P.C. Nevertheless, internal criticisms of the Iraqi government grew worse, and Iraq grew ripe for revolt.

In the early months of 1968 there were numerous signs of impatience with the government. On January 12 students of Baghdad University displayed their disgust by protesting against the lack of freedom in the country and the failure of President Arif to establish parliamentary democracy. On the following day, six Iraqi ministers (of predominantly pro-U.A.R. dispositions) resigned and were replaced

by men loyal to the President.<sup>1</sup>

Many people in Baghdad openly accused President Arif's administration of allowing widespread corruption. Premier Yahya became widely known as "the Thief of Baghdad." The President was said to be a poor administrator and a weak boss. Many critics continued to call for a constitution and democratic elections to achieve a parliamentary government. Iraq had not held a national election since the revolution of 1958. Many in Baghdad also indicated that they would be opposed to a change of regime by a military coup, even though most Iraqis said that the army officers formed the power base of the regimes.<sup>2</sup> President Arif stated in an interview on February 17 that a new constitution could go into effect only when "our internal organization has been completed." He stated that his government had already taken "successful steps" and that he was hopeful.<sup>3</sup>

On February 26 President Arif issued decrees which removed Iraq's four highest-ranking army officers from their military posts and appointed them to civilian positions. No explanation was given for the sudden changes, and no announcement was made on replacements for the newly vacant military posts. Informed sources in Baghdad

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<sup>1</sup>New York Times, January 14, 1968, p. 21, col. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Times, February 21, 1968, p. 19, col. 1; and "Civilized Coup," Time, July 26, 1968, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup>Times, February 21, 1968, p. 19, col. 1.



speculated that the removal of the four could have been part of a purge of the Iraqi officer corps in an effort to put younger men in key military positions.<sup>4</sup>

The Arif regime continued successful endeavors to improve Iraq's relations with its neighbors. In May a state visit to Iraq was made by the Turkish President, and in the same month Premier Yahya went to Iran for the main purpose of defining frontier boundary lines in the Persian Gulf area. In January a high-ranking French military delegation traveled to Iraq, and in February President Arif talked with General Charles de Gaulle during a four-day state visit to France.<sup>5</sup>

Several issues were discussed during Arif's visit to Paris. In the joint statement that emerged from the French-Iraqi talks, General de Gaulle associated himself for the first time with the Arab and Russian view that Israel must withdraw from the Arab territories she occupied before moves could be made for further peace negotiations. The French desire for oil interests in Iraq and the Iraqi desire for French arms were also discussed, but no public statements on these issues were made. President Arif's regime had been heavily criticized within Iraq for giving away too cheaply the oil exploration contract to E.R.A.P. mentioned previously. Therefore, President Arif was in no

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<sup>4</sup>Times, February 27, 1968, p. 19, col. 1.

<sup>5</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1969, p. 438.

mood to make concessions to Compagnie Francaise des Petroles, except in terms of bargaining at some fabulous price.<sup>6</sup>

President Arif offended many Frenchmen when he used his visit to Paris as an occasion publicly to attack Israel. His vehement attacks on Israel were made at a reception in his honor given by the Paris municipal council. Many Frenchmen were shocked at his statements, and Arif came across as a tactless war hawk.<sup>7</sup>

On February 17 President Arif had his first interview with a correspondent from the U. S. since the Six-Day War, and he had several important comments to make. When asked about President de Gaulle's offer to help settle the dispute between the Arabs and Israel, President Arif replied, "de Gaulle expressed his views, saying Israelis should withdraw from occupied Arab lands, and we expressed our views." President de Gaulle had provided a list of five points as a base for settling the Israeli-Arab conflict in the Middle East. Two of the points implied the recognition of Israel by the Arabs and Israeli use of the Suez Canal, both of which official Arab policy could not accept.<sup>8</sup>

It is not known how much of an influence President Arif's visit to Paris had on the French government in relation to Iraqi military

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<sup>6</sup>"Friends to Arabs," The Economist, February 17, 1968, p. 35; and "Good politics, bad business," The Economist, February 10, 1968, p. 60.

<sup>7</sup>"Friends to Arabs," The Economist, February 17, 1968, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup>Times, February 20, 1968, p. 7, col. 1.

aims. But on April 6 the French government agreed to sell Iraq fifty-four French Mirage V fighter-bombers at a cost of \$70-million.<sup>9</sup>

During the interview of February 17 President Arif announced that Iraq was ready to reestablish diplomatic relations with Great Britain if the government in London preferred to do so. He also made it plain that he was not ready to resume diplomatic relations with the U. S. An influence that may have swayed the President in this decision was the fact that the U.A.R. and the Sudan had recently resumed relations with Great Britain but not with the U. S. President Arif mentioned that Great Britain had recently sent feelers indicating a desire to resume relations. He added, "Prime Minister Harold Wilson said in a formal statement that Israel should withdraw from the Arab lands taken in June. That was an important declaration of policy for us. But we have not heard a single friendly word from the United States, which has continued to support Israeli aggression."<sup>10</sup>

The Baghdad radio announced on April 18 that Sir Harold Beeley, the British Ambassador to Egypt, had been instructed to go to the Iraqi capital to discuss resumption of relations between Great Britain and Iraq. And on April 25 the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that Iraq and Great Britain had agreed to resume diplomatic relations

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<sup>9</sup>"Iraq," News Dictionary: 1968, p. 247; and Times, April 21, 1968, Section 4, p. 5, col. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.



beginning in May.<sup>11</sup>

Evidence of strong relations between Iraq and the Soviet Union was observed when a cruiser and a submarine chaser of the Soviet Pacific Fleet arrived on May 11 for an eight-day visit at Umm Qasr, a southern port on the Persian Gulf. Iraqi naval ships greeted the Soviet warships with a 21-gun salute as they entered Iraqi territorial waters. The Soviets returned the greeting. The governor of the Basra district surrounding Umm Qasr conveyed to the commander of the Soviet force Iraq's appreciation of Soviet support for Arab causes. The New York Times dispatch which carried this information mentioned that Iraqi cooperation with the Soviets had been increasing since the beginning of the Six-Day War and that ninety per cent of Iraqi armaments came from the Soviet Union and other Communist-bloc nations.<sup>12</sup>

The mystery over what oil company would gain access to the North Rumaila field was finally resolved on April 11 when the Iraqi government decided to exploit the oil field itself. The government rejected offers for the field from the I. P. C. and from French, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish companies. The decision appeared to mark the end of France's "great leap forward" in Iraq. The board of directors of the I. N. O. C., in a closed meeting with President Arif and Premier

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<sup>11</sup>Times, April 19, 1968, p. 14, col. 6; and April 26, 1968, p. 49, col. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Times, May 12, 1968, p. 12, col. 1.



Yahya, agreed that the foreign offers "all fell short of benefits Iraq can obtain by direct development."<sup>13</sup>

A New York Times article on April 12 stated that Iraq did not have the money to develop the North Rumaila field itself. An Iraqi trade mission group, headed by Adib al-Jadir, the president of the I.N.O.C., was planning to visit Moscow soon in an effort to obtain money and technical assistance from the Soviets.<sup>14</sup>

The mystery over who would gain access to Iraq's sulfur wealth was also resolved in April. The Wall Street Journal reported that a high government official stated over Iraqi television that Iraq would do its own mining of the rich sulfur deposits of Mishracq. This report was seen as a blow to several major U. S. sulfur companies which had been bidding for rights to the valuable mineral. The Iraqi Guidance Minister told a television audience that "wherever we turned (in the mineral rights negotiations) the U. S. was hidden behind" every tender offer. The official also noted that Iraq would be aided in the mining of its sulfur by Poland.<sup>15</sup>

In June the Iraqi government and the I.P.C. resolved some of their differences when the I.P.C. agreed to pay the equivalent of seven

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<sup>13</sup>Times, April 11, 1968, p. 63, col. 5.

<sup>14</sup>Times, April 12, 1968, p. 53, col. 5.

<sup>15</sup>The Wall Street Journal, April 15, 1968, p. 14, col. 3.

U. S. cents a barrel for oil pumped through the Kirkuk pipeline since the Arab-Israeli war. The Iraqi oil had become more valuable due to the closing of the Suez Canal. <sup>16</sup>

The Arif administration came under heavy attack in May and June for its abusive and unjust treatment of Jews in Iraq since the Six-Day War. The American Jewish Committee in Paris stated on May 4 that the plight of Iraqi Jews was desperate. A new series of decrees had been giving the Iraqi government control over nearly all Jewish sources of income. Nearly all of the approximately 2,500 Jews in Iraq at this time were shopkeepers and self-employed tradesmen. <sup>17</sup>

Yosef Tekoah, the Israeli representative to the United Nations, told Secretary General Thant on June 12 that the Iraqi Jews, as well as those in the U.A.R. and Syria, were being persecuted as a matter of official policy. He called for an end to "this revival of Hitlerite practices." Mr. Tekoah stated that the authorities of these countries had carried out "campaigns of anti-Jewish incitement in their state-controlled press, radio, and television." <sup>18</sup>

A Newsweek report seemed to confirm Mr. Tekoah's statements. It revealed that within days after the end of the Six-Day War, Baghdad

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<sup>16</sup>"Iraq," Britannica Book of the Year: 1969, p. 438.

<sup>17</sup>Times, May 5, 1968, p. 10, col. 1.

<sup>18</sup>Times, June 13, 1968, p. 12, col. 1.

radio launched a campaign of condemnation against the Jews, which was repeated over television and from mosque pulpits. The government-controlled newspaper stated: "The first thing we must do . . . is to establish that Jews living in Iraq are second-class citizens." Seventy prominent Iraqi Jews were jailed without charges, and all Jews were placed under a curfew. Their telephones were disconnected. Their bank accounts were frozen. Their passports were confiscated. Their commercial licenses were revoked. Business firms were ordered to fire Jewish employees, and those who owed money to Jews were told that they did not have to pay their debts.<sup>19</sup>

Demands for the formation of a coalition government were voiced by thirteen influential retired army officers on April 16. They proposed the establishment of a thirty-man interim legislature until a constituent assembly could be elected within a maximum of two years. They said their demands were the "only way out of the country's political crisis."<sup>20</sup>

President Arif responded to the officers' demand in May by issuing a law that would set up an interim legislature-council. He also stated that elections would probably be held before 1970, but at the same time the Provisional Constitution was amended to extend the transitional period two more years. To put it more bluntly, the President extended

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<sup>19</sup>"Let Us Out," Newsweek, February 10, 1969, p. 32.

<sup>20</sup>Times, April 22, 1968, p. 3, col. 5.

his term of office two more years, to the consternation of many Iraqis, particularly certain members of the military.<sup>21</sup>

A New York Times report on May 15 revealed many of the underlying causes for mounting unrest in Iraq. Many Iraqis had grown frustrated over the government's inability to get the potentially rich country's economy moving. There was bitterness among militant groups who wanted Arif's regime to follow more closely the leadership of President Nasser of the U.A.R. Many argued that defense was being built up at the expense of economic development. Many believed that the government could not risk offending the army by cutting down on defense projects. But the army disliked Arif's strong leanings toward the Soviet Union, and the military feared Soviet influence as a threat to its own independence. Other citizens formed a growing opposition to the continued rule by presidential decree. The trade unions charged that the government had frozen wages outside the oil industry and had added useless workers to payrolls. One business man said, "As long as there is no parliament, no real political parties, no free press, the government does as it likes . . . . They worry about Israel instead of Iraq." Discontent had infected the army, the students, the labor unions, and the middle class--almost every important group of Iraq's 8,250,000 people.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Times, May 7, 1968, p. 10, col. 1.

<sup>22</sup>Times, May 15, 1968, p. 2, col. 4.



President Arif tried to divert the attention of the Iraqi people from the weaknesses of his government as much as possible by continuing the emotional fervor against Israel. He told an Arab interviewer in May that it was of the utmost importance to intensify and unite guerrilla resistance against Israel. He wanted a meeting of Arab leaders to agree on a "unified plan" of action, and he agreed with the Arab leaders' stand that there be "no peace and no negotiations with Israel."<sup>23</sup>

With widespread unrest mounting day by day, it was not long before the military faction in opposition to the President made their move. A communique was broadcast over Baghdad radio on July 17 that President Arif's government had been overthrown in a military coup. A curfew had been imposed with all ports and airports closed. Railways and roads were opened only for military purposes. A Revolutionary Command Council had been formed to run the nation.<sup>24</sup> The New York Times article which carried the news of the coup mentioned that the Soviet Union had been benefiting from the widespread unrest in Iraq because Soviet diplomats and propagandists were able to reach the country's discontented while the U. S. was not represented.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Times, July 17, 1968, p. 1, col. 2.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

It was later revealed that at 3:00 a.m. on July 17 a high-ranking officer had phoned President Arif and announced, "I am speaking from the Ministry of Defense. Tanks are now proceeding toward the palace." Five warning shots were heard near the palace to confirm the officer's statements. Soon the President took off in a special Iraqi airliner to join his ailing wife in London. In his place, a nine-man, military group called the Revolutionary Command Council gained control of the government. This group consisted largely of members of the right-wing of the divided Iraqi Baathist Party. This party had been removed from governmental power in 1963 by Abdel Salam Arif.<sup>26</sup>

A leading victim of the 1963 purge had been Major General Ahmd Hassan al-Bakr, a 52 year-old ex-premier and ex-defense minister. He constantly worked to overthrow the Arifs. When conditions in Iraq grew worse in 1968 he began to work meticulously with other officer-politicians to plan an overthrow of the government. He had worked closely with the thirteen retired officers who presented to the President in April the petition calling for a coalition government. He obtained the help of the air force and even Arif's trusted presidential guards. General al-Bakr was now head of the Revolutionary Command Council.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>"Civilized Coup," Time, July 26, 1968, p. 36; and New York Times, July 18, 1968, p. 1, col. 5.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

This sudden political take-over, the fourth Iraqi coup in ten years and reportedly Iraq's first bloodless coup, created quite a shock among diplomats both inside and outside the Middle East. Egyptian officials said privately that the coup was likely to hinder efforts toward a peace settlement between Israel and the Arabs. They remarked that one of the communiques broadcast by the new regime accused Arif's government of negligence in working for the "liberation of Palestine."<sup>28</sup>

A report in Time stated that there were some hints of the new regime's coolness toward Cairo and toward the government in Syria, which was controlled by left-wing Baathists. It was known that General al-Bakr was openly hostile to President Nasser and his views.<sup>29</sup>

The U. S. reacted calmly to the news of the military take-over. One government analyst said, "Judging from the Revolutionary Command Council's first communique, there won't be anything very new in Iraq's policies . . . . It doesn't look as if the new group will seek restoration of relations with the United States."<sup>30</sup>

The Belgian government, which supervised U. S. interests in Iraq, was said to have reported that the U. S. civilians in Iraq were not in danger following the military take-over. Officials said that the

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<sup>28</sup>Times, July 18, 1968, p. 14, col. 7.

<sup>29</sup>"Civilized Coup," Time, July 26, 1968, p. 36; and "Thieves of Baghdad," Newsweek, July 29, 1968, p. 45.

<sup>30</sup>Times, July 18, 1968, p. 14, col. 1.

number of Americans ranged from 400 to 800. They consisted of employees of private companies and their dependents and the American wives of Iraqi nationals.<sup>31</sup>

General al-Bakr, the new President, swore in a new 26-man cabinet in a secret ceremony on July 20. Lieutenant General Abdel Rezek el-Nayef, the master mind of the coup, became the Premier, and Lieutenant General Ibrahim Abdul Rahman Daoud became Defense Minister. However, Mr. el-Nayef and Mr. Daoud, both leaders of the young conservative military officers and opponents of Baathist Socialism, were ousted by the Baathists on July 30. The Revolutionary Command Council, on the following day, named President al-Bakr as Premier, and the new Premier formed a new 26-man cabinet, the second in two weeks. Reports from Baghdad on July 31 seemed to indicate that Mr. el-Nayef's dismissal meant a sharp swing to the left in the policy of the new regime.<sup>32</sup>

The new Foreign Minister, Dr. Naser el-Hani, the former Iraqi ambassador to Beirut and the Soviet Union, stated on July 21 that the new Iraqi regime was not considering a restoration of diplomatic relations with U. S. He remarked, "We see no change at all in the United States stand, which supports Israel at the expense of the Arabs."

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>"Iraq," News Dictionary: 1968, p. 247-248; and Times, August 1, 1968, p. 5, col. 1.



At the same time he praised the Soviet Union, Communist China, and the Communist bloc countries for standing by the Arabs in their attempts to regain territory that Israel occupied in the June war.<sup>33</sup>

An article in the New York Times stated that the Iraqi foreign policy seemed almost certain to remain pan-Arab with "more sympathy for the Communist world perhaps than for the West and certainly than for the United States." It also said that Baghdad observers had hoped that their change of regime would lead to a change in Syria's government from an extremist-wing Baathist rule to a conservative-wing Baathist rule.<sup>34</sup>

The closest statistics of the Iraqi armed forces at this time came from work done by London's prestigious Institute for Strategic Studies. This organization estimated that Iraq had 70,000 in total manpower of the army, 13 infantry brigades, 3 armored brigades, and 575 tanks. Total manpower in the Iraqi air force was numbered at 10,000. Air Force armaments included 18 bombers, 214 fighters, 40 transports, 20 helicopters, and 215 combat-ready aircraft. Total manpower of the navy was numbered at 2000.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Times, July 22, 1968, p. 7, col. 5.

<sup>34</sup>Times, August 4, 1968, Section 4, p. 6, col. 1.

<sup>35</sup>"Collision Course," Time, September 20, 1968, p. 39.

An international report in The Economist stated that the 17,000 Iraqi troops stationed in Iraq (The New York Times placed the number at 10,000<sup>36</sup>) had been helping the Palestinian commandos in their activities against Israel.<sup>37</sup> This was the only report which I found that mentioned Iraqi military activities in the latter part of the summer of 1968.

The defeat and exile of President Arif marked the end of an era--an era of general moderation in international affairs and close cooperation with the U.A.R. and other Arab states. President Arif was now no longer present in Iraqi affairs to follow in Nasser's footsteps and shape Iraqi foreign policy in accordance with Nasser's principles, particularly the principles of Arab nationalism and Arab independence from European-American "imperialism." Two examples of the casting off of foreign domination in Iraqi affairs during Arif's last months in power were Iraq's decisions to exploit the North Rumaila field and mine the sulfur deposits of Mishracq herself. But even in these two situations Iraq found herself turning to the Soviet Union and Poland for technical assistance. President Arif's regime had a wonderful dream of bringing Iraq into a higher level of prominence among her Arab neighbors and the nations of the world. The President felt

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<sup>36</sup>Times, July 21, 1968, Section 4, p. 2, col. 1.

<sup>37</sup>"Rubbing it in," The Economist, August 10, 1968, p. 24.

that this could be achieved partly by utilizing Iraq's natural resources in the most beneficial manner and by working closely with other Arab nations to form an economic and military base of power in the Middle East. But before Arif's dream was realized, the bubble burst. Perhaps the military take-over under General al-Bakr could have been avoided if only the government had lent a more sympathetic ear to the Iraqi people. The most critical complaints concerning the Arif administration were repeatedly ignored. The Arif government was more interested in maintaining its power both inside and outside the country and in continuing the aggressive spirit against Israel than in working to improve the living conditions of the Iraqi people as a whole. And because he refused to heed the voices of those around him, President Arif woke up one morning to find himself deposed, despised, and devoid of any power to regain control of his country.

## CONCLUSION

Since it was proclaimed a republic in 1958, Iraq has followed an unsteady course involving intrigue, coup d'etat, and political assassination. The unpredictable involvement of soldier-politicians in Iraqi politics undoubtedly contributed to a sense of instability within the government and uncertainty as to what the course of Iraq's foreign policy would be. But the administration of President Abdel Rahman Arif attempted to do away with Iraq's unpredictable and unstable image among her neighbors. The Arif administration had high hopes for Iraq's future and sought to create a higher degree of communication between Iraq and other nations, particularly those from whom she could benefit. Iraq's foreign policy was of the utmost importance, according to the Arif regime, in building up Iraq's new image as an Arab nation of influence and wealth with a potent voice in world politics.

Having investigated Iraq's diplomatic and military role during President Arif's term of office, one can clearly see the emergence of three underlying themes which had great bearing on Iraq's foreign policy--the oil issue, the arms issue, and the philosophical issue to which Iraq adhered as a member of the Arab progressive states.

The oil issue seemed to have had more bearing on Iraq's foreign policy than either of the other two themes. More news items were



written by Western papers concerning Iraq's dealings in oil than concerning any other issue. Iraq's economy depended largely on oil, and the oil industry was a major factor in pulling the Arab oil producing states together or pulling them apart. The oil issue was not only evident in the triangle of relationships between Iraq, Syria, and the I.P.C. at the time of the trans-Syrian pipeline crisis but also in the relationships between the Arab conservative states and the Arab progressive states at the Khartoum summit conference. President Arif endured a major diplomatic defeat at this conference when the Iraqi proposal for a total suspension of all Arab oil to pro-Israel nations was rejected by the conservative states. The use of oil wealth in diplomatic affairs was particularly evident in Iraq's attempt to use her prestige as a major Arab oil producer to threaten other nations into favoring the Arab cause during the Six-Day War. One of the main causes for Iraq's growing ties with the Soviet Union and France was Iraq's desire to allow these countries to gain access to untapped oil fields in order to break the I.P.C.'s monopolistic control of Iraqi oil. Yes, the oil issue had a profound effect on Iraq's attitudes and actions toward other countries.

A second cause for Iraq's closer ties with the Soviet Union and France was the arms issue. President Arif placed a high priority on modernizing and expanding Iraq's armed forces, and he lost no time toward achieving this objective. Many of Iraq's military armaments

had been built by the Soviets. Therefore, Iraq was to continue to depend upon the Soviets for spare parts. But Iraq's desire to be less dependent on Soviet arms led to the establishment of arms agreements with France for Mirage V fighter-bombers and other weapons. The Soviet Union showed her desire to keep a grip on the supply of Iraqi armaments by replenishing Iraq's meager military losses after the Six-Day War, and this diplomatic act of goodwill did not go unnoticed by the Iraqi government.

Iraq's philosophical role as a member of the Arab progressive states had a predominant influence in two realms of Iraq's foreign policy--her relationship with her Arab neighbors and her relationship with Israel and Israel's allies. Iraq's progressive role was particularly apparent as a cause for her close cooperation with the U.A.R. President Arif and President Nasser were intimate friends and personal allies. Both men agreed on taking a radical stand against Israel and her supporters, the U. S. and Great Britain, during the Six-Day War. One should remember that Iraq led the other Arab oil producing countries in initiating an oil embargo on the U. S. and Great Britain during the war. The Nasserite concept of Arab nationalism was an underlying factor in President Arif's attempt to bring about a stronger sense of Arab unity during his presidential state visits to neighboring countries. Iraq's cooperation in the Arab League, her military maneuvers to work with the Palestine Liberation Organization, and her stand in the

United Nations each reflect this viewpoint.

President Arif demonstrated other Arab nationalistic and socialistic tendencies when he stressed the importance of freeing his country's natural resources from foreign domination. This anti-imperialistic attitude resulted in Iraq's decision to exploit the North Rumaila oil field and mine the sulfur deposits of Mishracq herself. However, Iraq's technical inability to supervise these government operations drove the Arif regime to seek help from the Soviet Union and Poland.

Without a doubt, President Arif wanted the Arab nations to work together as a single power base against Western imperialism and Zionism. And it seemed that this vision of Arab nationalism was coming into focus at the outset of the Six-Day War. But this pan-Arab unity was short-lived because the fact remained that the Arab world was divided into two mutually-hostile camps: (1) states ruled by revolutionaries who toyed with the idea of becoming an economic and political union and who were willing to use radical means to obtain their objectives, and (2) states ruled by conservatives made up largely of monarchies who maintained the traditional viewpoint of cautious cooperation (but not intense incorporation) with other Arab states. Evidence of growing antagonism between the progressive and conservative states was displayed at the first Khartoum conference in early August, 1967, in which the conservatives (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Libya) opposed

Iraq's proposal for the nationalization of all British and U. S. business holdings in the Arab world. This philosophical split was further evidenced in the tense situation in Jordan from which Iraqi troops refused to leave.

It is interesting to speculate what would have been the future of Iraq's foreign policy if the Arif regime had been allowed to continue. Undoubtedly, the oil issue, the arms issue, and Iraq's philosophical role would have continued to be three underlying influences in the course of Iraq's foreign policy. But the military take-over by General al-Bakr and fellow members of the right-wing Baathist Party changed the course of Iraqi history, and a new era began. The age of close ties between Iraq and the U.A.R. was past, and the vision of a united Arab bloc in the Middle East was rapidly fading away.



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