BA'TH PARTY IN IRAQ SINCE 1951

ABSTRACT

THESIS
SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
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IN
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BY
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ABSTRACT

The Arab Socialist movement in Iraq is part of a larger Socialist movement which began to spread in Arab land after World War II and to effect the structure and dynamics of Arab society in varying degrees of intensity. Broadly speaking, the Arab socialist movement in Iraq may not be different in theoretical framework from the other Arab socialist movements, but the impact and course of development of each movement varied from land to land.

The Arab Socialist movement, often called the Ba’th or the Arab Resurrection, emerged first in Syria in response to Arab nationalist demands as seen from Syrian perspectives, but after spreading to Iraq in conditions different from Syria, its goal and directions appeared not altogether similar to those in Syria or in other Arab lands.

Though the Arab socialist movement in Iraq appeared almost a decade after it had arisen in Syria, some of the influence that affected its scope and direction may be traced back to the intellectual and political activities of pre-war years as well as to the events and new conditions which gave rise to social upheavals that swept the country after the World War-II. As a result, the Arab socialist movement in Iraq has acquired a local colouring and the country’s principal political figures stamped it with their
own imprint and identified it with their own local interests and traditions.

Like the socialist movements in the other Arab lands, the Iraqi Arab socialist movement sought progress, social justice and prosperity which were not possible to achieve under the old Regime. It was hoped that in time that system would mature into a stable and truly parliamentary form of government which would provide the legitimate bases for political participation and opportunities for welfare and prosperity for all. Soon after independence, however, this system began to appear meaningless because the ruling elite betrayed authoritarian tendencies and had little or no respect for parliamentary process. After world war II, when a "new generation" began to grow and sought participation in the political system, they were denied the freedom necessary for political participation. Failure of the ruling oligarchy to accommodate itself to the new social conditions prompted the new generation to resist the monopoly of power, by force if necessary. When the young civilian leaders were unable to achieve power, the young officers felt compelled to overthrow the old regime, for these officers shared the same ideas and aspirations as their civilian contemporaries. They sought to achieve by the armed forces of the state what civilian leaders could not do by strikes and street demonstrations.
The early ideological structure of the Ba'th mounted a diverse ideological trends lie between extreme left and extreme right, Pan-Arabism and Regionalism, while the Ba’th rejects the military coups for achieving power, it came to power in Iraq and Syria only through its military organisation and through its alliance with other nationalist groups. But, instead of recognizing right of sharing power to other groups, it exercised absolute dictatorship.

As regards the religious policy of the Ba’th one may say that the question of religion has occupied an important place in the ideology of the Ba’th. The early literature shows lenient stance on the religious issues on different occasions.

In the later phase of the Ba’th which was demarcated by Saddam’s rise to power and his growing influence in the party in the late seventies, one finds that the Iraqi leadership sought a balance between religion, Pan-Arabism and patriotism. The promotion of patriotism was a necessary measure to consolidate Iraqi society which is ethnically a heterogeneous society. Revival of Iraq’s ancient history provided the main source for patriotism (wataniyya).

But the military achieved only a political
revolution which rid the country of the ruling obligarchy; 

The social revolution which reformers had dreamed of had yet to be achieved. The new generation was divided on what sort of "Social revolution" it should seek and what method it should pursue to achieve it. Some disappointed with the military, urged the revival of traditional symbols and values, because the social changes achieved by military methods did not measure up to expectations, others preached radical ideologies which sought basic changes in social conditions. Yet in Iraq—indeed in several other Arab countries only the Arab socialist party (the Ba’th) seems to excite young Arabs more than other radical groups because it sought to harmonize the Arab with modern social and economic doctrines considered necessary to modernize Arab society.

Perhaps a more important instrument to enlist popular participation would be a National Assembly in which various shades of opinion could be represented. The temporary constitution has indeed provide for such an Assembly but the relevant articles of the constitution (Article 46-55) have not yet been implemented. Leaders of various groups and national organizations prepared to cooperate within the framework of the regime seem to be awaiting the opportunity to express their views through an elected organ but plans for holding of elections have not been laid down.
The Ba’th leaders have shown a great enthusiasm in emphasizing "reconstruction" by planning and economic development than in the granting of freedom and political participation on the ground that no real progress and stability in the country can be achieved before poverty and other forms of deprivation were wiped out. Ba’th socialism, it is held is designed to improve social and economic conditions as a prerequisite to other ultimate objectives—democracy, freedom and Arab unity.

The 1991 war and its aftermath brought to the surface an emotional unity withdathal (unity of situation) among the Arabs. The sympathy expressed by many Arabs for Saddam and for his invasion and occupation of Kuwait, indicates that many Arabs do not take for granted the boundaries between Arab states because they do not consider the divisions of the Arabs world to be permanent.

In the Arab public eye some border are less popular than others. The borders that insulate the Gulf royal families and their fortunes are very unpopular and the elimination of the Gulf political orders and elites is desirable in the eyes of many Arabs.

Arab nationalism now consist of two major ideas; first the notion that the Arabs share common sentiments and
cultural and linguistic heritage and for some, a religious heritage. Second the idea that some of the borders between Arabs state are not only artificial but also undesirable. There are various arguments that Arabs promote regarding the efficacy of Arab nationalism. for Faysal Darray the well-known palestinian writer the crisis in Arab contemporary history do not underscore the divisions between the Arab people, rather they underline the schism between "the people" and "the regimes". The repercussions of the Gulf War, according to Darraj, sharpened the divisions between the people and the regimes but not among the Arab people themselves.

In a society where kinship, communal, tribal and other primordial loyalties prevail, the Ba’th has attached considerable value to the mystique of being an Arab. the self-assertion of his Arab identity would awaken the nationalist consciousness that lay dormant and trigger off automatic processes for self realization as an Arab nationalist. It is clear that Ba’thists are not prepared to distinguish between the individual being a national of the state and a nationalist.

However, the over-emphasis on people rather than territory, and nationality rather than citizenship, makes Ba’thist doctrine repressive as its strives for the
assimilation of heterogeneous communities so that everyone conforms to its militant nationalist requirements. It is a recipe for the establishment of authoritarian rule under the control of a totalitarian party.

It is in this background that the present study is divided into five chapters. The First Chapter begins with a brief description of the origins of Arab nationalism, showing how the idea of Arabs as a separate ethno-linguistic entity gradually took shape in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the latter part of the 19th century with the effective division of the West Asia between Britain and France after 1920. Arab nationalism subsequently developed in two different but essentially inter-related directions. First it took the form of a movement of national liberation, seeking independence from foreign rule or foreign influence. Secondly a number of writers, put forward ideas of pan-Arabism, the notion that the Arabs form a single entity stretching from Morocco to Iraq, which has been divided artificially by colonial imperialism and (since 1948) Zionism.

The Second Chapter highlights the growth and developments of the Ba’th movement in Iraq, as was elaborated by the Syrian Christian writer Michael Aflaq in the mid 1940s and 1950s. Aflaq and his associates gained
considerable influence in Syrian politics until 1958, when the Syrian Ba'ath, founded formally in 1944, agreed to dissolve itself as the price demanded by Nasser for the creation of the union of Syria and Egypt, known as the united Arab Republic. The failure of the union in 1961 precipitated a major and permanent split in the Ba'ath, which has been in some sense institutionalized ever since by the existence of two separate Ba'ath party in Syria and Iraq.

The Third Chapter, 'Political Development in the Republican Iraq', begins highlighting the February 1963 coup de'tat which brought the Ba'ath party to power in an orgy of bloodshed until their overthrow in November 1963 by a military nationalist coup. It further examines the successor governments that ruled Iraq until the Ba'ath regained power by a coup in July 1968 and Ba'ath rule since then. This chapter also attempts to cover the Ba'ath Party activity in early 1970 to gain wider support by having a national allegiance with some of the opposition parties, the Algiers Treaty with Shah of Iran in 1975; increasingly terrorist one party rule culminating from 1978 in violent repression of all opposition, life and history of Saddam Hussain and seizure of presidency in 1979 by eliminating all his opponents rivals in the Ba'ath Party. This Chapter also traces the involvement of the army in politics, the role of political parties and ideologies in the army; and the post-
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The Fourth Chapter – ‘Ba‘th Party and the Kurdish Question’, provides a detailed history of the Kurds since the 19th. century, including the Kurdish politics before the 1958 Revolution in Iraq and after. This study also includes the significance of the 1970 manifesto and Algiers agreement of 1975. The discussion however in its ultimate analysis highlights the underlying conflict between a central government, anxious to solidify its authority and to preserve Iraq’s territorial integrity and an entrenched Kurdish leadership whose desire for Autonomy was exploited by foreign interests, which sought to promote the instability, if not the destruction -- of the Ba‘th regime in Baghdad.

The last Chapter Republican Iraq at the cross roads demonstrates the causes and effects of the two Gulf Wars & subsequently its over all impact on the politics of the region.
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TO MY PARENTS
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Mr. Jamil Ahmed Khan has worked on his Ph.D. Thesis entitled, 'Bāth Party in Iraq Since 1951' under my Supervision. This is his own original contribution and suitable for the submission for the award of the degree of Ph.D. in Political Science.

Dr. Mohammad Gulrez
Supervisor
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( JAMIL AHMAD KHAN )
PREFACE

The modern state of Iraq has no historical antecedents for its present territorial dimensions. The heterogeneity of its society has preclude the development of a sense of political community among its diverse constituents. Hardly any community in a conglomeration of minorities--ethnic, religious, sectarian and denominational--wanted the state in the form it was created. Muslims, Sunnis and Shi’is, Arabs, Kurds and Turcomans, Christians and Jews entertained divergent political ends. Their new state was artificial as the lines drawn to demarcate its international frontiers. It was born out of the ruin of the Ottoman Empire, rejected and opposed by the people whose life and livelihood were to be determined and regulated by its laws and procedures. As such it failed to provide the general basis for the rule of law; nor could it serve as a single focus of loyalty or allegiance for the different communities. Thus, a salient feature of Iraqi politics has remained inherent instability and a marked propensity toward coercion in the settlement of political disputes, due mainly to its failure to develop an institutional framework under which political difference could be accommodated and resolved.

Milton Esman in his book Ethnicity, pluralism and the state in the Middle East addresses that ethnic
politics is a phenomenon that prevades the Third World. Since many of the states in Asia and Africa are the product of their colonial past, their national frontiers are no more than the reflection of the European imperial interests, conquest and domination. The same pattern obtains in the Middle East, only in a more pronounced fashion. Under the post-colonial arrangement the territorial state, as the new political authority, has claimed exclusive control over the territory it occupies and the allegiance of all communities and people residing therein. It becomes the task of the new authority to engage in nation-building practices to subsume the diverse and divergent primordial loyalties of the various minorities encouraging their assimilation into the dominant ethnic community in order to fuse a union between nation and state. But unfortunately the majority of the territorial states in the world have failed to secure such an achievement. The inheritors of the colonial states have shown little inclination to revise the boundaries to make them more compatible with demographic reality.

The state has had to establish its exclusive control through force and coercion rather than popular consent. Its instrument has been the Iraqi army, which has continued to be the repository of political power in the land. the imposition of its will did not resolve the prevailing hostility which the various communities harbo...
toward the state and to each other. The tribesmen, who had little enthusiasm for a centralized administration, have been crushed and pacified. The Kurds, promised a state of their own in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, have been bludgeoned but not completely cowed. The Muslim Arab Shi'is, who resented and opposed Sunni political domination following their enfranchisement from the disabilities imposed by the Ottomans, have witnessed the destruction of their tribal structure which afforded power and protection, the deportation, exile and execution of their religious leadership, while their more westernized and secular groups have remained alienated, resentful and ignored. The Turcomans, who awaited liberation at the hands of Mustafa Kamal Ataturk, caught between recalcitrant Kurds and a domineering Arab government in Baghdad, have been intimidated into submission.

Moreover, the elaborately devised means for national integration proved drastically inadequate. Iraq has been governed by different regimes, monarchical and republican, professing variants of the same ideology. Pan-Arabism transformed into a radical doctrine of Arab nationalism under the Ba'th has ill served the integrative processes sought in nation-building. It has been a disruptive factor as it tends to draw a distinction between Arabs and non-Arabs as well as Muslims and non-Muslims.
However, in the provision of historical perspectives for the right to nationhood, Arab nationalist ideologies both Muslim and Christian, rely on the Islamic legacy which closely associated with Orthodox Islam.

The glory of the Arab past owes a great deal to it, the unity of Arabia was achieved through the spread of Islam, and nationalist aspirations have been inspired by it. None the less the non-Sunni Muslims, particularly the Shi‘is, do not share the view of history. For them, as for other religious groupings, the invocation of religious symbols and the constant reference to Sunni traditions has raised doubts about the validity of the nationalist ideology.

It is rather paradoxical that the popularization of nationalist claims on religious grounds has rendered the nationalist doctrine more divisive. It is this dichotomy which Ayatollah Khomeini sought to exploit in his campaign against Iraq under the Ba‘th and conversely Saddam in the promotion of an Islamic concept of the state. It has become a common perception for states engaged in conflict to view the heterogeneity of society as an instrument of policy utilized for the purpose of obtaining territorial or other concessions at times of domestic upheavals.
The contribution of the Ba'th to this ideology has accentuated the inherent contradictions rather than resolved them. In a society where kinship, communal, tribal and other primordial loyalties prevail, the Ba'th has attached considerable value to the mystique of being an Arab. The self-assertion of his Arab identity would awaken the nationalist consciousness that lay dormant and trigger off automatic processes for self realization as an Arab nationalist. It is clear that Ba'thists are not prepared to distinguish between the individual being a national of the state and a nationalist.

However, the over-emphasis on people rather than territory, and nationality rather than citizenship, makes Ba'thist doctrine repressive as its strives for the assimilation of heterogeneous communities so that everyone conforms to its militant nationalist requirements. It is a recipe for the establishment of authoritarian rule under the control of a totalitarian party.

It is in this background that the present study is divided into five chapters. The First Chapter begins with a brief description of the origins of Arab nationalism, showing how the idea of Arabs as a separate ethno-linguistic entity gradually took shape in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the latter part of the
19th century with the effective division of the West Asia between Britain and France after 1920. Arab nationalism subsequently developed in two different but essentially inter-related directions. First it took the form of a movement of national liberation, seeking independence from foreign rule or foreign influence. Secondly a number of writers, put forward ideas of pan-Arabism, the notion that the Arabs form a single entity stretching from Morocco to Iraq, which has been divided artificially by colonial imperialism and (since 1948) Zionism.

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The last Chapter Republican Iraq at the cross roads demonstrates the causes and effects of the two Gulf Wars & subsequently its over all impact on the politics of the region.
CHAPTER - 1
ROOTS OF ARAB NATIONALISM

The body of ideas of oneness and unity from which Arab nationalism later emerged, developed only gradually during the second half of the 19th century. The earliest notion of the Arabs as a separate ethno-linguistic entity was essentially secular, and derives initially from the writings of Syrian and Lebanese intellectuals who were themselves inspired by European nationalism, liberalism and constitutionalism. Many, though not all, were either Christians or had been educated in the schools and colleges founded in Greater Syria during and after the 1830s and 1840s. A little later Muslim writers like Abd-al-Rahman al-Kawakibi and Rashid Rida, under the inspiration of European liberalism and the ideals of Islamic reform put forward principally by Mohammad Abduh, sought to identify the Arabs more closely with Islam, asserting that only the Arabs could purge the Islamic polity of the corruption into which it had fallen during the centuries of Ottoman control. Naturally, both these notions were a direct challenge to the 'Official' ideology of the Ottoman Empire as the universal Islamic State (dawla) ruled over by the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph. In this state, religion rather than language or ethnicity was the primary focus and indeed the only means of identity. Further in the course of his long reign Abd al-Hamid attempted to encourage the association between Pan-Islamism and Ottomanism1.

The aims of Arab nationalism were never formulated in a set of principles at the time Arabs grew aware of themselves as a group separate from others in the Ottoman Empire. Before World War-I, while the Arab idea of nationalism was mingled with the idea of Islamic unity, Arab nationalism scarcely aimed beyond the rehabilitation of Arab race in multinational empire. The aim of Arab nationalism was merely to restore the Arabs to their lost role in Islam to which they felt entitled. Even the early Arab Christian thinkers, who advocated complete separation from the Ottoman union, were ready to compromise their extreme nationalist views to Islamic unity so as to maintain solidarity with their Muslim compatriots.  

Muslim liberal thinkers who advocated the idea of nationalism did neither demand that Arab lands be detached from the Ottoman Empire nor indeed that religion be separated from the state. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi (1849-1903), the most radical thinker who attacked Ottoman rule, called for the restoration of the Caliphate from Turkish to Arab hands, but not for a break in Ottoman unity. He


3. Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi belonged to a family of Aleppo, of Kurdish origin. He had an old-fashioned Arabic and Turkish Education in his native city, and then worked there as official and journalist until he fell foul of the Turkish authorities and found it best to move to Cairo in 1898.

4. Al-Kawakibi's argument that the Turks usurped the Caliphate from the Arabs was based on the doctrine that one of the qualification of the Caliph must be his descent from the Arab tribe of Quraysh, according to authoritative legal texts.
failed, however, to define his frequent references to the Arab nation in clear nationalist terms, and his idea of nationalism represented but a transition from the ecumenical to the national stage.

Al-kawakibi was, in truth, a revolutionary in spirit and inclination and that he often used to say; "if I had an army, I would have overthrown the government of Abdul Hamid in twenty-four hours". This estimate is confirmed by the 'Characteristics of Tyranny'. In this book al-kawakibi attacks political and religious tyranny and its nefarious effects on science, morality and progress. "True Islam", he argues, "is incompatible with tyranny, and it must lead to the just state in which individual lives happily, at one with his nation, completely free, yet completely owned by it". It is only a just political order, he says, that makes possible science, morality and progress. In this book Taba'i al-Istibdad (the characteristics of tyranny) which was and still remains very popular al-kawakibi gave currency to a secular view of politics which holds that the only just government is government according to the will of the people, that any other government is tyrannical and can be removed by the governed. He held the tyrannical nature of the Ottoman state responsible for the stagnation of Islam and declared the Ottoman Empire unfit to protect the faith. Thus, the regeneration of Islam could only be undertaken by the Arabs of the Arabian peninsula.

since only they were free of racial, religious and sectarian bias.

The ideas that he expressed in his other book, Umma al-qura, were even more revolutionary. This book attempts to explain the stagnation of Islam and to provide a remedy for it. The Muslim, he says, "are now a dead people with no corporate being or feelings. Their stagnation is the result of the tyranny, of the decline of the Islamic culture, and of the absence of racial and linguistic bonds among Muslims, and partly for this reason the Ottoman Empire is not fit to preserve Islam. The Muslim Kingdom is made up of different countries professing different religions and divided into numerous sects, and their ministers are drawn from different nationalities. Thus the Ottoman Empire cannot effect the regeneration of Islam. Regeneration should be the work of the Arabs who would supply a Caliph, residing in Mecca, and acting as the spiritual head of an Islamic union. Al-Kawakibi also provides a list of twenty-six different reasons to prove the superiority of the Arabs and why the Caliphate should devolve upon them.  

There were no half measures in his attitude, he saw the Arabs as better Muslims than the Turks. As such they deserved to have their position of primacy in Islam acknowledged and recognized by other Muslims. Here lies the most glaring contradiction that has plagued Arab nationalism as an ideology of the Arabs. For the question that has

6. Ibid., p. 27.
remained unanswered is! 'which Arabs?' It was obvious, since the call was made on religious grounds, that Kawakibi, being a Sunni Muslim and a Syrian, meant that it was the primacy of the Sunni Muslims which out to be acknowledged. This fact in the evolution of Arab nationalism has been completely overlooked. Moreover, subsequent works on Arab nationalism especially, strangely as it may seem, by Christian ideologues of Arab nationalism have come to subscribe to this view.\(^7\)

Al-Kawakibi, then, may be considered as the first intellectual precursor of modern secular Pan-Arabism. He was the first to declare himself, without ambiguity, as the champion of the Arabs against the Turks.

The intellectual milieu of Istanbul in which many an Arab nationalist grew up was dominated by young Ottoman secular thought and most of the leaders who opposed Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid's Pan-Islamic tried to keep the nationalist movement immune from Islamic influences. Most Arab nationalists were not prepared to accept the young Ottoman view of Islam, because Islam was regarded as a product of the Arabs cultural heritage from which they did not want to depart; indeed, most of them, including Christian thinkers, took pride in Islam because it laid special emphasis on the Arabic character of the Qur'an and on the Arabic language.\(^8\)

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It is this significant cultural element which prompted Arab thinkers to regard Islam as a component of Arab nationalism. To the Arabs, Islam came into being in Arabia, the cradle of the Arab race, and Muhammad was an Arab Prophet and a national hero. The Qur'an was not only revealed in Arabic language but all believers, Arabs as well as non-Arabs, had it as their obligation to recite it in Arabic. The Arabs were the first believers of Islam and they struggled to spread it and establish the Islamic Empire. It was the Arabic language and Arab cultural heritage which superseded the racial bond and made possible the Arabization of people who adopted the Arab tongue and identified themselves as Arabs, especially the people of the Fertile Crescent.

It was the Arabic language and culture which inspired Arab thinkers, Muslims and Christian alike, to develop Arab national consciousness and call for an Arab identity separate from Ottoman identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As a product of the Arab heritage, Islam has been looked upon as a spiritual force and a set of moral values necessary for life. But if Islam is seen as a component of nationalism, it no longer remains the exclusive loyalty in the traditional sense.

Perhaps the representative thinker whose primary loyalty was to Islam but who accepted nationalism as

10. Ibid., p. 181.
a basis for the Islamic state was the reformer Rashid Rida (1865-1935). Rashid Rida left his native land Syria and came to Cairo in 1877 where he published the review Al-Manar (The Beacon) until his death in 1935.\(^{11}\)

If, on the one hand, Mohammad Abduh (1849-1905) makes no concession to nationalism or patriotism as a factor in achieving unity, Rashid Rida represents yet a second trend. While opposing Ottoman rule, he rejected any tendency towards establishing separate Arab states based on non-Islamic solidarity in the Islamic World. But the Arabs, for him, had a special place within the Islamic nations. "The Other Muslims", he held, "were pupils of the Arabs". This opposition to Ottoman rule was counterbalanced in Egypt by a strong pro-Ottoman movement with comparatively less interest in religion.\(^{12}\)

Infused with the Arab nationalism Rashid Rida often showed more concern about Arab problems than those of other Islamic countries. In the true traditional Arab view of Islam, Rida spoke of the founder of Islam as an Arab Prophet, the Qura'an as revealed scripture in the Arab tongue, and the Arabs as the carriers of the message of Islam beyond the frontiers of Arabia.\(^{13}\) Giving reply to a question set by an Indonesian correspondent regarding 'what


\(^{13}\) Khadduri, Majid, 1970, op. cit, p. 181.
is the attitude of Islam towards nationalism', Rida maintained that "As for the modern idea of nationalism, it is nothing but union of the inhabitants of a homeland who may be different in religion, who cooperate in the defence of their common homeland and in preserving its independence or in winning it back, when it is lost, and in increasing its prosperity. Such an idea does not manifest itself in Indonesia as it does in Egypt. Islam considers that it is the duty of Muslims to defend those of other religions who came under their rule and to treat them on a basis of equality, according to the just rulings of the Sharia'. As far the kind of nationalism that should adorn the Muslim youth, it is that he should set a good example to the inhabitants of his homeland irrespective of their religion and sects, and that he should cooperate with them in every legitimate action to further the independence of the homeland and to raise it up in learning, virtue, strength, and wealth, according to the rules of Islamic law which lays down that rights and duties devolve on the nearest relatives and then on those nearest to them. Further Muslim youth must not forget, while serving his homeland and his people, that Islam has honoured him and exalted his position by making him a brother to hundreds of millions of Muslims in the world; he is a member of a body bigger than his people, his own personal homeland is only a part of his religious homeland, and he must therefore seek to make the progress of the part a means toward the progress of the whole" 14.

The distinction between what he wrote and the action he was prepared to take is reinforced by his political record during his early years in Egypt. He came to Egypt as a radical, discontented with the situation of the Ottoman Empire and anxious for reform. And there significantly enough, he joined the party of the young Turks. It was after the young Turk Revolution, and indeed after the Balkan Wars, that Rashid Rida joined others in forming the decentralization party, when the Young Turks showed themselves bent upon a centralizing policy detrimental both to the Arabs and to the Empire.¹⁵

According to Rida, "the Europeans are active and successful because they have abandoned their other worldly religion and replaced it by the principle of nationality, but Muslims can find such a principle of unity and loyalty in their religion itself. For the second distinguishing sign of Islam is that it has created a single community; not simply a Church, a body of men linked by faith and worship yet separated by their natural characteristics, but a community in every sense."¹⁶

Perhaps the most forceful expression of this blend of Islam and nationalism by Muslim thinkers is to be found in the writings of Abdul Rahman al-Bazzaz. Abdul Rahman al-Bazzaz, educated in law at the University of London in the late thirties, imbued with humanistic

¹⁵. Ibid., pp. 24-25.
conception of classical western liberalism returned to his home in Baghdad in 1939. In his distinguished career first as a teacher and scholar and later as a diplomat and statesman, al-Bazzaz remained faithful to his fundamental conception of Arab nationalism in terms of a humanistic perspective of individual emancipation within the framework of evolutionary social progress.

Much of al-Bazzaz's early writings are concerned with defining the relation between Islam and Arab nationalism. In *Min Roh al-Islam* (From the spirit of Islam) published in Baghdad in 1959, he advanced the thesis that "there is no real opposition between Islam and Arab nationalism: the Arab nation is the core of the Islamic community; most of Muslims are also Arabs; the Qur'an is in Arabic and embodies the traditional morality of the Arabs the Prophet was an Arab; Islam is the medium through which the Arabs made their contribution to history".

This conception of the essential unity of Arab nationalism and Islam runs through al-Bazzaz's early formulation of the four basis of Arab nationalism: language, history, literature and customs and character. Arab nationalism for al-Bazzaz, like Zuraiq and other liberals, is inextricably fused with Islam.

18. Hourani Albert; op, cit, p. 309.
According to Bazzaz contradiction between Islam and Arab nationalism which is still present in the mind of many people is, in the first place, due to misunderstanding, misrepresentation and misinterpretation, involving both Islam and Arab nationalism. This, he maintained, sprang from a western conception of Islam and of nationalism, and that so many Arab had accepted it showed the intellectual domination of the West over them.

The misunderstanding of Islam, maintained by Bazzaz is due to the wrong significance attributed to the world 'religion'. He says, "We are influenced here as a result of the intellectual imperialism under which a group of us still labour by the western concepts which restricts religion within narrow limits not extending beyond worship, ritual, and the spiritual beliefs, which govern a man in his behaviour, in relation to his God and to his brotherman, in his capacity of an individual independent of society. Islam does not admit this narrow view of religion, but opposes it and the purpose it serves to the utmost. Many people still believe that Islam is similar to Christianity or Budhism, and consists in devotional beliefs and exercises, ethical rules and no more. But, in fact, Islam, in its precise sense, is a social order, a philosophy of life, a system of economic principles, a rule of government, in addition to its being a religious creed in the narrow Western sense."


21. Hourani Albert; op, cit, p. 308.

He further argues that there is absolutely no contradiction between Arabism and Islam. The two converge on many points, yet Islam cannot be included as a "necessary" element in the formation of Arab nationalism. What is interesting in his view is that;

"If we equate religion and nationalism, we would exclude one-tenth of the Egyptian population, and one-fifth of Syria and about one-half of the population of Lebanon from Arab nationalism. We would also exclude a sizeable proportion of the Iraqis, Palestinians, Jordanians, and Sudanese, as well as a great number of Arabs who have immigrated to America, Africa and other continents. But, on the other hand, when we lose these millions (of Arabs), the theory (that Islam is an essential element) would have us consider.... every Muslim in Asia.... brothers in the national sense, which means that the sons of the same nationality will have the same political destiny and one ultimate national interest, and requires the establishment of a social and political solidarity and association among them.... Can the advocate of an Islamic nationalism imagine the consequences of
thinking and .... the responsibilities and obligations, which are beyond our power and resources?"23


Abdul Rahman al-Bazzaz revived the old arguments when he asserted that nationalism and Islam went hand in hand in many respects. In the course of doing so he was to expose the nature of Arab nationalism as a divisive and elitist movement and so to provide an affirmation of the nationalist belief in the necessity for the preeminent position of the Sunni Community in Islam. To him nationalism had to take on the activist nature of Islam since nationalism was an assertion by the Arabs of the resumption of the mission of Mohammad. Thus the Prophet becomes the founder of the Arab nation, and Islam is the product of the Arab national genius. This kind of analysis leaves out the non-Muslim Arab, the Christian and the Jew, the non-Arab Muslim, the Kurd and Berber, and the heterodox Muslim, Shi'ite, Druze, Alawi and Ismaili. But Bazzaz claims to provide a solution for this dilemma too. "These groups become true Arabs when they recognize Muhammad as the hero of Arab nationalism and venerate Islam as the religion that entitled the Arab nation to assert its place in the world. This seems to be an open invitation not only to the non-Sunni Muslims but to the Christians, and the Jews to acknowledge that the Muslim Sunni Arab has the right ordained in orthodoxy to enjoy a position of primacy and presumably-rule all non-Sunni communities.24


Strangely as it may seem a number of Christian ideologues of Arab nationalism have accepted Bazzaz's thesis and condoned his pretensions. Indeed Qustantin Zuraiq, whom Bazzaz cites as a model Christian nationalist thinker, in contrast to the early Christian advocates of nationalism (who advocated the separation of religion and state), has also emphasized the compatibility between Islam and nationalism and called on his fellow Christians to accord Islam a special venation.25.

Like Zuraiq and other liberal nationalists, al-Bazzaz's primary concern was with individual freedom and dignity. The role of the State, then, is to secure individual freedom while protecting social justice as he wrote in 'This is Our Nationalism', "a happy mean between the absolute individualism that gave rise to capitalism and Marxist --- inspired communism --- Our Arab nationalism strives for social justice in every sense of the term, while at the same time it seeks to reinforce the basis of social solidarity between the individuals of the entire community in order to prevent exploitation and class domination."26.

In the early twenties the assertion of secular ideas alarmed religious circles, and nationalist leaders, who needed the support of religious groups in the struggle for independence, sought to conciliate religious leaders by paying lip service to Islam. Moreover, the

25. Ibid.
26. Ismail, Tariq, Y; op, cit, p. 8.
growing interest in Arabic and Islamic studies both in native and foreign educational institutions, created an awareness of the overlapping elements of culture and religion and of the importance of Islam to Arab nationalism.\(^{27}\)

At the outset this trend disturbed Christian Arab thinkers who feared that the association of religion with nationalism might arouse religious fanaticism and restore the social exclusiveness of Ottoman days. Meanwhile, secular thinkers regarded the trend as a step backward, construed to please religious and conservative quarters rather than to serve the cause of modernism and progress. Very soon, however, it was realized that the religious and ethical values of Islam were so ingrained in Arab society that they could not be ignored as a basic ingredient of nationalism. It was at this stage that Christian thinkers, like Qustantin Zuraiq and Edmond Rabbath, began to explain the inescapable association of religion and nationalism.\(^{28}\) In his first volume of essay on National Consciousness (al-Wa’y al-qawmi), which appeared in late 1939, Zuraiq has discussed these ideas at length.

In dealing with the fundamental issue of the relationship between Islam and Arab nationalism, Zuraiq argued, "that a basic problem of Arab society is that we have no convictions; having no convictions, we cannot

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27. Khadduri, Majid, op, cit, p. 183.
28. Ibid., p. 184.
subordinate our individual desires and passions to an organisation rooted in a principle; therefore, we can not act successfully as a group. Nationalism is the conviction we need; that is to say, a sense of collective responsibility, a feeling of belonging to a nation, but one of a special sort, a nation which draws its inspiration from a religion. For the Arabs this religion can only be Islam.\textsuperscript{29}

However, he draws a sharp distinction between "the religious spirit" (al-ruh al-diniyya) and "sectarian fanaticism" (al-asabiyy al-lai'fiyya). The assumptions underlying this distinction appear to be two-fold: first that all religions contain the same core of truth, accessible alike to all men; and secondly, that the moral principles of religion are those which are necessary to build a stable and prosperous society. In this sense, then, "sectarian fanaticism" consists of the dogmatic assumption by adherents of a particular religion that their particular religion has a special claim to moral validity, while "religious spirit" means participation of the individual in the moral truth inherent in all great religions.\textsuperscript{30}

Nationalism, therefore, spiritual movement as it is, must converged toward religion and draw from it strength, life, sublimity and excellence. Such is Arab nationalism in its true character; it does not in any way

\textsuperscript{29} Hourani, Albert; op, cit, p. 309.

\textsuperscript{30} Ismail, Tariq Y; op, cit, p. 4.
oppose or negate any religion, but it accepts all religions in order to draw from their sources the cups of purity and liberation, of strength and immortality. If nationalism does contradict anything, it is not the religious spirit but the destructive fanaticism, which makes the communal tie stronger than the national tie and refuses to dissolve itself in the all-consuming crucible of the nation; for it is the fanaticism which often exploits innocent religious feeling for its own Partisan ambitions and inclinations. Thus fanaticism is the chronic disease of the land, and its authors are the enemies of Arab nationalism and destroyers of its unity. True religion, however, which aims to develop the forces of the spirit, springs from the same sources as nationalism, and they both go in the same direction, towards the same end. It is, therefore, incumbent on the Arab nationalists to go back to the sources of their religion in order to draw from them spiritual excellence and strength of soul, and to seek inspiration, among other things, from the history of all their Prophets so as to enrich their souls with the strength and the purity which overflow from these religions.

It was at that time the Arab intellectual and political activists realise that the cultural and political aspirations of 'the Arabs' would be better served by the separation of the Arab provinces from rest of the Ottoman Empire or by the creation of an Arab State under an Arab

King\textsuperscript{32}. As a result of a number of Arab societies and political parties were formed by enlightened and educated young Arabs to defend the Arab cause and to protect the Arab rights (there were several of these but two came to dominate the movement. These two were the young Arab society (commonly known as al-Fatat) and convenant Society (commonly known as al-Ahd)\textsuperscript{33}.

On the eve of the first World War, therefore, there was a strong tide of opposition to Ottoman rule, although a more general changeover to Arabism only took place when the Ottoman Empire was finally defeated in 1918. Apart from the Arab Revolt there was no generalized anti-Turkish rising by Arabs in the course of the First World War, those Syrians who might have wished to lead one were either hanged in Beirut in 1916 or forced into exile\textsuperscript{34}.

The period following the First World War, which on the one hand coincided with Socialist revolution in Soviet Union, and on the other with the direct involvement of Western imperialism in West Asia, also witnessed the rise of the first nationalist movement in the Arab world. Having been betrayed by the French and British in their promises of independence, the Arab masses, especially in levant and

\textsuperscript{32} Sluglett, Marion Farouk & Peter Sluglett; Iraq Since 1958, From Revolution to Dictatorship, K.P.I., London 1987, p. 6-7.


\textsuperscript{34} CARDRI, op, cit, p. 90.
Palestine rose in a tremendous movement for national liberation.\textsuperscript{35}

The experience of the ex-Ottoman provinces in the next two decades was not uniform, which goes some way to explain the different forms which nationalism came to assume in Iraq and Syria. In Iraq, the British continued the direct rule which they had been extending over the area since 1914 until 1920, while in Syria an Arab government, admittedly financed and supported by Britain was actually running the country. However, in July 1920 the French defeated the Arab government by force of arms and introduced a system of direct rule. In Iraq, in response to the national uprising known as the Revolution of 1920, the British introduced a system of indirect rule, under which Arab ministers and provincial governors backed by British advisers managed the national affairs. However, those who held office under the monarchy, men like Nuri al-Said, Jafar al-Askari and Ali Jawdat al-Ayyubi, would have regarded themselves as nationalists in the sense that they had indeed fought to liberate the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire from the Ottoman, and were participating in the government of an Arab country.\textsuperscript{36}

From the end of the World War-I to the early thirties, the Arab nationalist demanding independence and Arab unity. It is not surprising, therefore, that Arab

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\textsuperscript{35} Berindranath, Dewan: Iraq the Land of Arab Resurgence, India, 1979, p. 16.
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\textsuperscript{36} CARDRI, op. cit, p. 91.
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attention was devoted mainly to obtaining political independence from European control and not to far reaching discussion on social reform or the adoption of particular political systems.

As Arab intellectuals had not created a clearly defined concept of Arabism before the war, it was natural that they confronted in the changed circumstances and divided ideologically as they were politically.

The search to overcome these divisions led to a variety of proposals, none of which were fully realized, but all of which have contributed to the formation of Arab nationalism. The externally imposed political borders encouraged localism, especially in Syria, where the French administration divided the region into four separate states (Syria, Greater Lebanon, The Jabal Druze and the State of the Alwites) based on ethnic or Sectarian concentrations. Representative and advocate of this regional trend in Arab nationalism was Antun Sa'adah (1904-1949), a Lebanese Christian, who founded the Syrian Social Nationalist Party in Beirut in 1930's.

Although Sa’dah sought to overcome the divisions within Greater Syria, he belonged to the regional current of nationalism for his out-spoken belief that "Syria was a distinct and complete entity which should not be part of a larger Arab nation". He saw in Syria's identification with Arab nationalism as a surrender of its unique qualities.

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and, in becoming part of a larger country that was less advanced or progressive than Syria, the acceptance of an inferior status.\(^{38}\)

Further complicating was the disinterested stance adopted by the majority of the Egyptian intellectuals. In the period between World Wars, Egypt was engaged in its own struggle for independence from Great Britain, and the foundation of Egyptian nationhood did not emphasize primarily Arab symbols. At the same time they did not identify themselves with Arabism, the idea of unity was projected by Syrian or Iraqi Politicians.\(^{39}\)

The third major expression of Arab political and cultural identity was formulated by those who rejected regionalism and Islamic sentiments in favour of secular Pan-Arab nationalism. Their writings have kept alive the idea of a unified Arab nation bound by ties of Arab culture. This doctrine received its clearest exposition from the Turkish ideologue and educator Sati' al-Husri (1880-1968). Husri pleaded for a secular type of Arab nationalism which was completely divorced from religion. His arguments were based partly on the nature of Islam, which stressed universal rather than national values; partly on the historical experiences of the Arabs among whom nationalism emerged as a reaction against Islamic unity; and partly


\(^{39}\) Ibid.
because of the existence of the Christian Arabs in Arab lands, whose bonds of unity with other Arabs were language and history.

Arab nationalism certainly meant something different to Christian than to Muslims. Some West Asian Christians see nationalism as a secular movement. Arab nationalism does not mean Arab unity or Pan-Arabism to most Christians. They accept the Islamic background as part of a civilization in which they have participated since immemorial times, speaking the same language, living as separate millets in the same framework of laws.

Scholar Wilfred Cartwell Smith on the other hand cautions that, "some writers have been too hasty in assuming or concluding that a Western-type nationalism in this positive sense could be or has been adopted fairly easily or effectively into the Islamic world... it was the Islamic impetus that carried the Arabs from their obscure home into historic greatness, in conquest and creativity. Islam gave the Arabs earthly greatness; and vice versa, it was the Arabs who gave Islam its earthly success... The synthesis is close: an identification, at times unconscious, of Islam and Arabism. On the one hand, an Arab need not be pious or spiritually concerned in order to be proud of Islam's, historic achievements. Indeed, he need not even be a Muslim; Christian Arabs have taken a share in that pride".


In fact Christians have played an enormous role in the initial stages of the birth of Arab nationalism and some Christians, like Michael Aflaq, are still recognized as the leader of nationalist movement. For example the fundamental ideological principles of the Aflaq's Ba'ath Party are more advanced and more elaborate than those of the other nationalist parties in the Arab countries, but it is curious that while the party's constitution stresses the historical continuity of the Arab nation, it makes no mention of Islam. This does not mean that the party's intellectual leaders are less concerned with the question of religion than were the forerunners of the Arab nationalist movements. In fact, there is a great deal of similarity between the concept of Michael Aflaq on this topic and earlier views of al-Husri and others. For Aflaq, "Islam is the beginning of Arabism". He sees a spiritual affinity between the two; a view which is also held by an independent Christian nationalist, Qustantin Zuraiq. But Aflaq is an ideologue par excellence, who is mainly concerned with establishing historical foundations for Arab nationalism in order to further the interest of his party.

In its politically meaningful phase,

42. Ibid., p. 50.
43. Op., cit., Curtis, Michael, p. 50.
Socialism developed in the Arab world almost entirely after World War-I and, especially, World War-II. Its birth was preceded and conditioned by the rise of nationalism and statehood, usually after monarchy or foreign rule were toppled by political revolutions. The beginnings of Socialism may be traced to the nineteenth century, when all nationalist thinkers and movements had social purposes.

The development of socialist ideas cannot be explained simply in terms of the Arabs' wish to improve their lot after independence. It is evident that Arab Socialism had adherents as early as the late nineteenth century. At that time major Arabic magazines and newspapers were engaged in heated debate about Socialism. Dr. Yakoub Sarrouf, owner and publisher of the influential magazine al-Muqtaf (Selections), was an ardent advocate of Laissez-faire theory and arch-enemy of socialism in Egypt. Another influential opponent of the socialism was the magazine al-Hilal (The Crescent), which branded socialism "immoral" and claimed it would kill private initiative.

The fact that the two major Egyptian magazines of the time declared themselves anti-socialist but suggested that socialism had a number of powerful adherents. Indeed, socialism had gained the support of influential men, one of whom was Dr. Shibli Shumayyit who may be regarded as

44. Karpat, Kemal H; Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East, Praeger, New York, 1982, p. xxx.

the first Arab Socialist. Shumayyil was a socialist Darwinist who believed socialism is the inevitable result of progress. According to Shumayyil "It [Socialism] does not [simply] teach the distribution of wealth .... but justice in the distribution of profits between labour and capital". He defined socialism as the reform of society through the reform of each individual within it.

As early as the first decade of the present century members of the Egyptian intelligentsia (e.g. Shibli Shumayyil, Salma Musa and Ismail Mazhar) discussed aspects of socialism in its European and particularly British Fabian and French continental sense and tradition. They considered it in the context of scientific rationalism, social reform and state welfare doctrines. A socialist party of Alexandria workers was formed in 1920 by Mahmud Husni al-Arabi, followed by a communist party in Alexandria two years later. Several Communist parties also appeared in the Fertile crescent and levant.

Socialism in the Arab world is an extension of nationalism. It aims to consolidate the power of the modern state through an internal reorganization of the productive forces and reassignment of roles and

46. Shibli Shumayyil (1860-1917), a Syrian Christian and a doctor, an early graduate of the medical School of the Syrian Protestant College. Studied medicine in Paris before settling in Egypt, where he practiced his Craft and become a frequent contributor to the Muqtataf and other periodicals of the type.
47. Abujaber, Kamel. S. op, cit, p. 3.
responsibilities, with the idea of creating a participant society. It proposes to create social consciousness, responsibility, and dedication to ideas above individual interests and loyalties.\(^{49}\)

Another major Arab intellectual of the socialist school was Nicola Haddad. As a political activist he defended socialism in magazines, newspapers, and books and even published his own magazine influenced by the writings of Eugene Debs, the American Socialist, he established an Arab writers association in New York in 1910 and brought out the magazine al-Jami‘ah (the universal) on a regular basis. In 1920 he wrote a book defining his ideas on Socialism, al-Ishtirakiyyah (Cairo: Dar al Hilal). Haddad believed in democratic Socialism for he was convinced that economic democracy cannot be achieved without political democracy.\(^{50}\)

Socialism in the Arab world has two facets. It may appear as a rejection of the Western economic System (capitalism), of excesses of individual economic power and of class differentiation. Socialism may also appear as an egalitarian movement to eradicate differences of wealth and position and thus pave the way for the social integration necessary for the survival of the modern state.\(^{51}\)

\(^{49}\) Karpat, Kemal, H. op, cit, p. XXXI.

\(^{50}\) Abujaber, Kamel, S; op, cit, p. 3.

As early as 1908 upon his return to Egypt from studying in France, Dr. Muhammad Jamal al-Din organized the Blessed Socialist Party (al-Hizb al-Ishtiraki al-Mubarak), which emphasize agrarian reforms but neglected nationalism. Despite some support from urban areas, this movement soon disintegrated. Further in 1920 Musa and a few other intellectuals organized the Socialist Party in the Arab world: the Egyptian Socialist Party (al-Hizb al-Misri al-Ishtiraki). This party continued its activities until 1930, when it too disintegrated.

At first Egypt was the centre of Arab socialist ideas and movements, but they were taking root in other parts of the Arab world as well. In Iraq in 1931 a group of Western-educated liberals formed what was later to be known as the Ahali Group.

Socialism is also a kind of modern moral system. It draws much of its ethical-moral strength from the Islam and the West. The Islamic ideas of charity, social justice and responsibility, mutual assistance and


54. First, the Ahali (Populist) movement made its appearance in the early thirties, first as an intellectual movement and then as a political party called the National Democratic Party. It was the first successful effort by a small group of thinkers and political leaders to break new ground in an essentially traditional Islamic Society for Socialist teachings.
communal solidarity, reinterpreted in the light of contemporary needs, provide powerful basis for socialist action. Even some conservative in the Muslim Brotherhood, such as Mustafa al-Siba'i, used the teaching of Islam to develop an Islamic brand of socialism. Other social-minded Muslim scholars, such as Mahmud Shaltut, the former head of al-Azhar, relied on Islamic idea to justify the social and economic policies of his government.

Gerbran Majdalany lists two main currents of Arab socialism today. The first and more important is that of the Ba'th Socialist Party, whose aims to join the entire region of the Arab world, which it considers united by culture and aspiration. The second current is represented by certain parties who base their action on the present political possibilities without regard or commitment to ideology. The Progressive Socialist Party in Lebanon represents this tendency. In Iraq this tendency was represented by three political parties that came into existence in 1946; the National Democratic Party (al-Hizb al-Watani al-Demograiti), the National Unity Party (Hizb al-wihdah al-wataniyyah), and the People's Party (Hizb al-Sha'b). These three socialist parties were very close and in fact agreed on most points in their programs. These parties called for social services, public education, agrarian reform, equality regardless of race or religion and

above all strengthening of democratic regimes in the region.\textsuperscript{56}

Thus one may divide socialism in the Arab world first according to the country and second according to its ideological characteristics. Egypt advocated Nasserite or Arab socialism, Syria, Ba'th Socialism, Algeria, Algerian Socialism, various groups in Lebanon promote progressive socialism; while Islamic and Marxist Socialism are found among all groups throughout the Arab world. Only Islamic and Marxist Socialism have international goals or look beyond their own national boundaries.\textsuperscript{57}

After the Second World War, attention concentrated on what was called Arab Socialism (al-\textit{ishtirakiyya al-arabiyya}) the main exponent of which was the Arab Ba’th Party, founded by Michael Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar in 1941-3, which later on in 1953 merged with Akram Hurani’s Arab Socialist Party to be known as Arab Ba’th Socialist Party. In the periods 1955 to 1961 and 1961 to 1967, Arab Socialism broadly divided in two major groupings i.e. the President Abd al-Nasir’s version of socialism of Egypt and in among the various Ba’th Party Organizations and regimes in the Fertile Crescent Countries, particularly in Syria and Iraq.\textsuperscript{58}

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\textsuperscript{56} Abujaber Kamel S, op. cit, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{57} Karpat, Kemal, H. op. cit, p. xxxiii, See also Khadduri, Majid, op. cit, pp. 150-75.
\textsuperscript{58} Encyclopaedia of Islam, op. cit, p. 125.
\end{flushleft}
As an ideological movement, the Ba'ath Party epitomizes the agonies and hopes of a large number of Arabs who are intent on achieving change and modernization. Ba'ath history is characterized by the often frustrated hopes of modern Arabs to bring about unity, socialism and liberty\textsuperscript{59}.

\textsuperscript{59} Abujaber, Kamel S, op. cit, p. 10.
CHAPTER 2
ORIGIN OF THE BA’TH PARTY

The idea of nationalism had begun amongst Christian intellectuals before it did among Muslims. The Christians had been more strongly exposed to Western cultural influence and they had read Arab history through the lenses of modern western scholarship. The impact of the Ba’th ideology on political thought of the Arab world is enormous and Michael Aflaq deserves much credit for the compelling way in which he placed his beliefs before the citizenry and attracted many to his cause.

The Ba’th’s founders were theorists with a vision and were able to put forth their ideas on social revolution and Arab nationalism more cogently and longer than any of their rivals. Thus in Syria, the Ba’th has grown from a purely Syrian Party into a regional inter-Arab movements with adherents in every Arab country and branches in most.

There is much controversy among Ba’thists as to whether Zaki al-Arsuzi or Michael Aflaq and Salah al-Din

al Bitar were the real founders of the Ba‘th.

In a more immediate sense the Ba‘th Party can be considered as a successor to the league of National Action ('Usbat al-‘Amal al-Qawmi) which was organized in 1932 to spearhead the struggle against the French and remained politically active until 1940. The league provided a relatively cohesive organizational framework, which the nationalist movement lacked at the time. Decline of the league came with the death of its first Secretary, ‘Abd al-Razzaq al-Dandashi, and the expulsion of its second Secretary Sabri al-‘Asali because of his agreement to serve in parliament before the termination of the Mandate. After the withdrawl of Zaki al-Arsuzi from active membership in 1939, league was gravely weakened and shortly after its activities were suspended because of the out break of World War II. A number of events in the late 1930s and early 1940s provided the stimulus for the formation of the Ba‘th Party. Probably most important was the crushing defeat of

4. Zaki al-Arsuzi was originally the head of the Arab resistance in the Sanjaq of Alexandretta, where he captured the admiration of the Syrian nationalist youth and became a veritable national symbol to them. After the loss of Sanjaq, he moved to Damascus, but remained politically active. The victorious radical Ba‘thists of the 23 Feb., 1966 coup have acknowledged al-Arsuzi instead of Michael Aflaq as the ‘Spiritual father’ of the Ba‘th.

France by the Nazis in 1940 and the consequent weakening of its power in its overseas dominions especially in Syria and Lebanon. The dangers of pro-Nazi control of these areas led the British and the Free French to invade both Syria and Lebanon in June 1941. The Free French representative, Delegate General Catroux, promised in a statement issued the day the invasion began that the Lebanese and Syrians would "be from henceforth sovereign and independent peoples". Five years of political turmoil and civil strife ending with French shelling of Damascus, were to pass before his promise was completely redeemed. However, it served to open up political possibilities in Syria.

The event that paved the way for the Ba'ath Party entry into Iraq was the formation of the Rashid Ali Gaylani Government in the Spring of 1941. Iraq had become formally independent in 1932, but retained close ties to Britain, especially in defence and security affairs. By treaty, Britain retained the right to maintain certain forces in Iraq. However the relations between the two got severed when London tried to introduce larger forces in Iraq on the pretext of the Germans' military threat against the will of the nationalist government of Gaylani in Iraq. Soon after fighting broke out when the Iraqis tried to capture the British Base at Habbaniyah. Military developments in Iraq caught the attention of young Arab nationalists in

6. Devlin, John F; op.cit, p.3.
Syria, and several Syrians, acting in accordance with the principles of Arab unity, went to Iraq to offer their services to the Gaylani regime. When British forces crushed the Gaylani movement all were interned by the French authorities.

Before examining the Ba'thist ideology more specifically, it is useful to try to place the Ba’th in the context of other ‘nationalist’ political parties and groupings of the 1940s. In Syria the older generation of nationalists, who had no experience for collaboration with the colonial power as their counterparts in Iraq, were organized into two main groupings, Hizb al-Sha‘b and al-Kutla al-wataniyya. Both these bodies opposed the mandate as constituted, and had been instrumental in conducting the abortive negotiations with the French, which had begun in 1936. In general, both the groupings believed in the notion ‘Syria for the Syrians’ and were fiercely opposed the acceding of Alaxendaretta to Turkey, and sought an independent united Syrian State.

For the Syrian nationalists the war years were trying, filled with soul-searching and sporadic

attempts to escape from political emptiness. In 1939 an Arab nationalist party was apparently founded by al-Arsuzi and a handful of followers, but it lasted for only a few months. At the end of November 1940 al-Arsuzi, with only five of his disciples, organized another party, al-Ba‘th al-Arabi (the Arab Resurrection). Sami al-jundi, a founding member of that demunitive group, records how he and al-Arsuzi incidentally learned of the existence of another, very similar, party which called itself al-Ihya al-Arabi and alternatively al-Ba‘th al-Arabi. Its leaders were Michael Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar, and all the members of the two Ba‘ths, with one or two exceptions, were their students at the Tajhiz Demashq high school. Al-Arsuzi Ba‘th eventually disbanded, and its members joined al-Ihya al-Arabi, which became a vocal protagonists of Arab unity and socialism in the country.

Michael Aflaq was born in 1910 into a Greek Orthodox Christian family in the Maydane quarter, a centre of nationalist agitation, of Damascus. His father a middle class merchant was twice imprisoned for his nationalist activities, first by the Ottomons and then by the French mandate authorities. Aflaq received his secondary education in Damascus and participated in the Syrian uprising against the French. In 1928 he won a scholarship to the Sorbonne.

9. Kalyani, Nabil M; IJME’s, op, cit, p.4
where he completed licentiate of History in 1932. While in Paris he acquired a thorough knowledge of the cultural and philosophic issues of the day. Influenced through the intensive study of the works of Anatole France, Andre Gide, Nietzsche, Marx, Dostoeivski, Tolstoi and Bergson, Aflaq formed a union of Arab students in France which set as its goal the independence and unification of the Arab world. The rich intellectual background of Paris had made significant impact on Aflaq's mind. He was lured by communists to attend some of their meetings but did not become member of the communist party, he seems to have been fascinated by Marx and may have become in theory, if not in practice, a Marxist above all, he was most impressed by communist discipline and tenacity, which taught him at first hand the practical methods of a highly organized political party.

Before going to France I was simply a nationalist (Aflaq said later), I had been greatly influenced by my father who have taken an active part in the struggle against the French and had been imprisoned several times. Nationalism was our local reality, but Bitar and I

discovered socialism in French. On our return we were eager to pass on these ideas to a new generation.  

On his return to Damascus in 1932 he started teaching at the (Al-Tajhiz) government secondary school. He objected to the methods of instruction and examination and when after many warnings the Minister of Education fined him a fifteen days salary deduction he resigned from the school along with his colleague Bitar. At the same time he made contact with the Syrian nationalist leaders to begin to work more particularly with the National Bloc, consists of fire-brand Syrian nationalists for the liberation of Syria from the French mandate. From 1933 to 1936 he was attracted by communists, hoping to get their support to the cause of Arab nationalism. During this period he even wrote for the communist magazine al-Talia'h (The vanguard). The message Aflaq preached was fundamentally Arabism that the Arabs as one people - the Ummah' Arabiyyah - had a distinct existence and a special role in the Arab world. For him and his followers this belief was a self evident truth, as it was also for a growing number of politically conscious Arabs who


did not associate themselves with the Ba'ath Party or who did not accept all of its other doctrines. In Aflaq’s view, devotion to and love for one’s homeland were articles of faith which needed no reasoned explanation. Writing in 1940, he asserted:

The nationalism for which we call...... is the same sentiment that binds the individual to his family, because the fatherland is only a large household and the nation a large family.\(^\text{14}\)

Here lies the crux of Aflaq’s political philosophy: he was an Arab nationalist with a Western education and Western European attitudes. For a time he was torn between the doctrines of Marxist materialism and romantic nationalism. This romantic nationalism touches a chord close to nearly all Arab hearts harking back to the days of glory and Islamic Arab Empire which stretched from Morocco to the Indian Ocean. But Aflaq being of Christian Origin, has been compelled to establish his nationalism on a secular basis, despite the fact that Arab nationalism is often equated with the Arab Muslims.\(^\text{15}\)

\(^{14}\) Devlin, John F; op. cit, p.24

\(^{15}\) Torry Gordon H; MEJ, op. cit, p. 449.
From 1943 onwards, Aflaq, Bitar and their supporters used the term Ba’th (resurrection) in place of the earlier more common use of ihya (revitalization). The first mention of Harkat al-Ba’th al-Arabi (The Arab Resurrection Movement) appears in a statement issued by Aflaq and Bitar in support of Shukri Quwatli in June 1943. In essence his basic political principles may be summarized as follows:

1. Emphasis on the dynamic nationalist ideas which represents the aspirations of the Arab people.

2. Emphasis on protecting the integrity and unity of Arab culture from the fragmenting influences of Western culture.

3. Rejection of religious factionalism and localism.

4. Condemnation of communism which represent an artificial materialistic progress.

16. Aflaq wrote that the party was named the "Arab Resurrection party not only because it was the first party to believe ideologically and practically in Arab unity, and to place its organization on a universal Arab foundation but also because it believed that any viewpoint or remedy of the vital difficulties of the Arabs, either in parts or in toto, which does not emanate from the axiom 'The Unity of the Arab people' is an enormous outlook and injurious cure".

17. Devlin John F; op; cit, p. 11.
5. Emphasis on the freedom and unity of the Arab World.

By this time Arab students in Syria as well as in other countries had become highly politicized, and started showing readiness to listen to those revolutionary ideological groups who approached them to enlist their support in organizing strikes and street demonstrations. Aflaq wielded strong influence on several thousands young Arabs. In the last analysis, his political strength had depended on them as the vehicle of his political ideas.

At this point, the followers began to consider the Ba'th a political party rather than a movement. In August 1944, Aflaq signed a propaganda bulletin on behalf of the Arab Ba'th Burea (Maktab al-Ba'th al-Arabi). And finally the Ba'th movement (Harkat) was replaced in the name of Arab Ba'th Party (Hizb al-Ba'th al-Arabi) when they applied for a license to function as a legal political party in July 10, 1945 and assumed to himself along with Salah al-Din, Bitar and Midhat Bitar the membership of the central executive body. Although the three were applying for a license to function as a party in Syria, the application pointed out that the Ba'th party was intrested in all parts of the Arab nation and addressed its appeal to all Arabs.

The request for a license was not granted. The party renewed its application for a license in May 1946, after the French had left Syria.\(^{20}\)

Legal or not, the Ba'th was in full swing as a political party by the end of 1945. In December of that year, a general meeting of the party membership was held in Damascus. It issued a statement ranging over a broad array of Arab problems, the Palestine question, relation with England and France, and conditions in virtually all Arab countries. Hence, after the departure of the French, the party moved to obtain its own press outlet, and the first issue of its daily newspaper, al-Ba'th, appeared on July 3, 1946. The paper was issued under the party slogan "One Arab Nation, One Immortal Mission". Its checkered career reflected the fortunes of the party to a considerable extent. It was suspended for the greater part of 1948 and 1949.\(^{21}\)

After Syrian independence, the party assumed the role of opposition to the government. In a speech by Aflaq to party members in November 1946, he commented on the newly formed government, saying "The truth is that this

\(^{20}\) Devlin; John F; op; cit; p. 12.

\(^{21}\) Ibid.
regime is inflicted with a disease; it is not faithful to its constitutional principles.22

Throughout 1946, the Ba‘th party continued its campaign to hasten the French withdrawal, to Syrianize the administration and the army, and to spread its triple slogan of independence, Unity and Socialism for the entire Arab world. During this period, it acted pretty much as would any conventional political party in an Arab State.23 For the party itself however, size was becoming a problem. By 1947, the party had branches in Syria’s half-dozen major cities and members in many of the larger provincial towns, and the party leaders realized the time had come to put the organization on a more formal basis.

The founding congress of the party began on April 4, 1947 at the Luna Park Coffee House in Damascus open to any party members who were able to come, the congress was attended mostly by Syrians, naturally but Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq were represented by students studying in Syria. The 247 people who attended were mostly students, teachers, government employees, and private professional people. Jalal al-Sayyid was elected Chairman of the congress. Michael Aflaq gave the opening address and Salah Bitar a

22. Abujaber; Kamel S, op; cit, p. 25.
23. Devlin; John F; op; cit, p. 13.
statements of policy. The congress approved the constitution of the party, which was read, discussed, and accepted article by article. The Congress ended by electing Michael Aflaq as amid or doyen — later Secretary General of the party and choosing an executive body consisting of Salah al-Din Bitar, Jalal al-Sayyid, and Wahib al-Ghanim. With this Congress, the Ba’th Party completed its transition from a movement to an organized political party. Ba’thist themselves refer to the three-day April 1947 congress as the founding date of their party.

That is how the Ba’thists reject the Western theory of nation state being a political entity and instead of emphasize the moral, spiritual, and dynamic qualities which people possess through their heritage, dreams and aspirations to qualify them for being called a nation. An authoritative translation of the Arab Ba’thist position explaining their view-point on Nationalism and Arab regions, invariably appears in all their publications as a sort of preface. It would be revealing to go through it. It says "the Arab Socialist Ba’th Party regards all Arabs as being part of one nation both in cultural and spiritual sense. The different countries in which they live, make up

24. Ibid.
politically and economically united Fatherland.\textsuperscript{25}

The Arab has been defined as early as the first congress of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party in 1947. The constitution of the party adopted, laid down "an Arab is any one whose language is Arabic, who lives on Arab land or aspires to live their and who is convinced of his belonging to the Arab nation."\textsuperscript{26}

The definition of the 'Arab' in itself makes it clear that the Ba'thist faith in the nationalist idea is not a fanatical concept as has been propagated by many a philosopher of Europe. The very first resolution of the party in 1947, emphasized the point that Arab nationalism was an integral factor of world humanism and was to develop in harmony with humanistic principles. It made it abundantly clear that Arab desires for unity, liberation and collaboration among the Arab is in the context of the good of the humanity as a whole, and aims towards the creation of a free harmonious and peaceful world progressing continuously\textsuperscript{27}.

\textsuperscript{25} In the party's documents, the Arab Fatherland means all the Arab countries. Each of these is a 'Qutr' which, literally translated, means country; in the Ba'th context, it should be read as province or region. The adjective 'Qutri' (provincial or regional) is used when referred to an individual country.

\textsuperscript{26} See Appendix-C, Constitution of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, Article 3 and 22.

\textsuperscript{27} Berindranath, Dewan; Iraq the Land of Arab Resurgence, India, 1979, p. 12.
The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party had declared, "the concept of nationalism that we propose is marked above all by a spirit of brotherhood. It proceeds from the same feelings that tie its family members to its home, for we consider that a homeland is one vast heart and that a nation is one large family."

To Aflaq Arab nationalism is formulated as an ideology which would achieve its goals in two stages, each stage embodied in a movement intimately connected with the other. The first is the emancipation of Arab lands from imperialism, the second the unification of Arab homeland. The first cannot completely disappear until the second one is realized. There seems to be nothing new in this formulation, for Arab thinkers have been calling for independence and unity long before the Ba'th came into existence. But the Ba'th Party was perhaps the first ideological group to put forth Arab unity as a primary demand to call for revolutionary approach to achieve it. The Ba'th call for unity came indeed at a time when the Arabs were in greater need for it, that is, when it became evident that the Arabs were unable to stand up to Israel as a result of disunity. The Ba'th expressed this point in its well-known slogan of "Common Arab Destiny", which was an apt cry against bickering Arab leaders who revealed their

negativism, traditionalism, and vested interests. Aflaq outlined Pan-Arab ideology through defining three objectives for his party: The National unity, Freedom and Socialism. The three ends were believed to be fastened together in an organic relationship. They were indivisible whole, none can be realized at the expense of the others. This find expression in the following words:

"In order to reach this level, the level of National unity, our party defined its three ends, It's belief in Arab unity, Freedom and Socialism. (Arab nationalism) People understand that none of these aims can be brought about without the achievement of the other two. We believe that there will be no unity without freedom and no freedom without socialism and no socialism without freedom and Arab unity".

"These aims must move side by side because if one precedes the other two ends, we go astray from the road and enter the road of tyranny. The unity might be frightful unless it has spirit of freedom and the freedom might be frightful unless it contains socialism. Our nationalism is not a racial nationalism as long as the freedom is a

base and a pillar for it, therefore it is linked with the human consciousness which is existing nowhere but in the chest of the liberal man".

"The freedom is nothing but a word if equity is not achieved between individuals. Therefore socialism is a fundamental factor in the real freedom and at the same time, the real freedom is a perfect and right way to achieve socialism, thus we find the three ends are always there in one motto: Unity, Freedom and Socialism.  

The struggle for unity is not conceived simply in straight forward Pan-Arab terms as the elimination of divisive political boundaries, it is seen as a regenerative process leading to reform of Arab character and society. This can only come about when Arabs free themselves from all regional, religious, and communal loyalties, liberate themselves from all 'ambivalence' and submit to the external values of mankind. Unity, therefore, is not merely a clear cut political objective, it is search for the 'treasure of hidden vitality', the moral and spiritual founts of nationalism.

The arguments given by Dr. Munif al-Razzaz

31. Ismail, Tariq Y; op, cit, p. 32.
are more systematic, in the sense that they convey essence. According to him, unity means not just unification of existing states but the transformation of society itself:

"This unity is horizontal in the sense that it aims to bind the present parts into one economic, political and military unit. And it is vertical in the sense that it tends to fight familism, tribalism, racism and sectarianism and to unite people in the way of liquidation of colonialism firstly and secondly to build up a free dignified life".

A cardinal point that dominated the literature of the party and occupied the minds and hearts of party adherence was the question of unity. Writing in 1962, Michael Aflaq noted that "the aim of the Arab unity is the strongest and deepest motivation, for the existence of the Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party as a popular revolutionary and progressive movement". In the constitution of the Ba‘th, innumerable references were made to the need and plausibility of unifying Arab countries. The existing divisions and frontiers were shunned as fabrications of colonial powers with no substantive reality to them. Unity

was considered an existing reality that merely needs to be embodied in formal institutions. A primary object of the party was to break down and eradicate the barriers separating the Arabs.33

Ba‘th constitution spoke not only on political and economic unity but also on the cultural unity. The first and second fundamental principles of the constitution read:

1. The Arab fatherland constitutes an indivisible political and economic unity. No Arab country can be alive independent of the other.

2. The Arab nation constitutes a cultural unity. Any differences existing among its sons are accidental and unimportant. They will disappear with the awakening of Arab consciousness.34

For more than two decades, this Ba‘th notion of Arab unity remained almost unaltered. The experience gained by the 1958 Egyptian – Syrian union and its dissolution in 1961, however, enriched and transformed the theoretical formulation of this notion. In 1963, in the Sixth National Conference of the Ba‘th, for instance, the

33. Seale, Patrick; op, cit, p. 154.

34. See Appendix-C Constitution of the Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party.
Conference criticized the high level abstraction in the concept of unity and the party's over-emphasis of unity to the neglect of socialism. The place of unity in the literature of Ba'th in Sixties was minimized while Socialism received more importance than others. The conference also directed the Ba'th provincial leadership in Iraq and Syria to unify the two countries. The directive, however, was not realized due to the external disagreements and conflicts within the party. The assumption to power of Hafiz-al-Assad in Syria in 1970 witnessed the last Ba'thist attempt at unity. Following negotiations between Egypt, Syria and Libya, a union of Arab Republic was declared in 1971, but this too could not be materialized.

The party also strongly believes that sovereignty belongs to the people which alone is the source of all authority and leadership, that the value of the state is measured by the support it received from the masses, and that its sanctity is contingent upon the freedom they would enjoy in the choice of their government. It is, moreover, committed to create objective conditions conducive to the exercise of full rights by the citizens in the individual capacity as well as in national life. These includes establishment of a constitutional representative system.

requiring the executive to be responsible to the legislative, independence of the judiciary, and a single code of laws for all citizens in harmony with the spirit of the present age.

Central to Aflaq's thinking is the quest for freedom, conceived not merely as emancipation from political tyranny and oppressive poverty, but the liberation of the Arab people, unified in mind and spirit, joined together in social brotherhood. Freedom, should therefore, emanate from the very soul of the Arab and be cherished as an indivisible part of his cultural heritage. Here again the path to freedom is that of struggle strewn with sacrifice. Since such a generic conception of freedom could not be achieved or even promoted without state action, especially in the education of the masses, the political machinery of the state had to be freed from the grip of the privileged classes, considered to be custodian of the feudal past, and intrisically opposed to the idea of the Inqilab.

As far as freedom was concerned, the construction of the Ba'th tapped the question of freedom in the following article:


37. Kalyani, Nabil, M; IJMES, op, cit, P.6.
"The party of the Arab Ba'th therefore believes that: Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of belief, as well as artistic freedom are sacred, no authority can diminish them."\(^{38}\)

The article dealt with the freedom of individuals but ideologically, the Ba'hist ideologists speaks more on freedom of nation which directs its affairs and freedom from external control as well as from indigenous arbitrary rule. Freedom is elaborated by al-Razzaz in these words:

"Arab nationalism believes in freedom. The freedom outside through establishing a free relations with the people of the world without any disintegration of Arabian Authority (al-Sayadah al-arabiyya) and the freedom inside by establishing a perfect democracy that represents the will of the people and gives them the responsibility and it realize that its struggle against imperialism contains this essence because one of the faces of colonialism is the liquidation of freedom and destoration of people’s will."\(^{39}\)

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38. See Appendix-C, Constitution of the Arab Ba’th Socialist Party.

Perhaps Aflaq, more than any other writer, sees the ills of Arab society as a result of weakness in the Arab "self". Thus he demands an end to the evasion of responsibility. He deems necessary a regeneration of those noble values within each individual that once made the Arab nation strong.

Aflaq is very frank in his approach to the problem of personal freedom. At one point he is merciless in his treatment of those who do not accept the tutelage of the vanguard during the 'Inqilab' period. In effect, he wants to force them to be free. He says, "our mercilessness has for its objective to restore them to their true selves which they ignore, to their hidden will which they have not yet clearly discerned and which is with us even though their swords are against us."40.

The Ba’th constitution calls for a "Parliamentary constitutional Regime" (Art. 14). Emphasizing their democratic spirit, the constitution also insists on a decentralized government (Art.16). Decentralization is required to curb the power of the bureaucracy and secure more popular participation in government. Munif al-Razzaz, writing in 1952, elaborated on this article in the following words:

"It is not possible for this sense of community

(among the individuals in a society) to be completely achieved except through a popular democratic system, by democratic meaning a freely elected parliamentary system with the government directly responsible to the representatives of the people, by popular meaning one built on the will of the majority of the Ummah where in each person enjoys freedom of thought and opinion in the widest application. 

The sixth national congress of the party acknowledged that in the past the party did act in a way suggesting that it accepted bourgeois liberal democracy as "a permanent and adequate framework for struggle and political action". And this was the main reason for its failure to formulate a new theoretical basis for a clearly defined concept of freedom and democracy consistent with a socialist framework. The starting point of the quest for a new theoretical basis derived from the objective conditions of Arab life was a critical evaluation of the bourgeois concepts of freedom and parliamentary democracy.

It was in this context that the congress VIth of the party commended the alternative model of popular

42. Engineer Asghar Ali, op, cit, pp. 55-58.
democracy. This was considered to be the most suitable system of government during the period of change-over from a feudal capitalist order to a socialist order. The theory of popular democracy, which the Ba'thist government of Iraq has translated into reality, rests on a series of interrelated postulates.

Regarding socialism, though it was placed in third position but it had become a pre-fix word and a part of the party’s name "Socialist Arab Ba’th Party". Socialism occupies a greater scope in the constitution and literatures of the party and only one among the three objectives which could partially be implemented in Syria and Iraq after the capture of power. Thus, it is more interesting to examine socialism of Ba’th on both theoretical and practical levels.

On the theoretical level, socialism like other values of Ba’th was subjected to spiritualization for gaining an independent identity as an ‘Arab Socialism’. But what exactly Arab Socialism meant? Aflaq gives the following answer:

"If I am asked about the definition of Socialism, I will not find it neither in the treaties of Marx nor in Lenin’s book but I shall reply that it is the religion of life and victory of life against

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43. For detail see Appendix-B, decision of the Sixth National Convention of the Arab Ba’th Socialist Party, 1963.
Socialism is also intimately bound up with other elements of the party doctrine. In fact, Aflaq in an early writing (1946) went so far at one point as to equate it with nationalism. He says, "The Arab nationalists are the socialists, hence there is neither incompatibility nor contrition nor war between nationalists and socialist."

The concept of Arab socialism actually existed for many centuries before modern Arab nationalism came upon the scene. Its roots were planted long before Marx. They lie deep in the soil of Islam and in the cultural heritage of the Arabs.

The idea of socialism has long been the subject of discussion in the Arab world, but Arab nationalists showed no great interest in it mainly because the overriding principle of Arab union was uppermost in their minds. Young Arabs who exhibited concern about social problems tended to become socialists or communists, and paid little or no attention to Arab union. Such was the trend of thought among young men before World War II. It was the

44. Aflaq, Michael, Fi Sabil al-Ba‘th (In the Way to Ba‘th), Beirut, Dar al-Tali’a, p. 22.
45. Devlin, John F, op. cit, p. 32.
Ba'ath thinkers who made the first attempt to reconcile the two divergent viewpoints and demonstrated that Arab union can not be achieved or possible endure unless it is based on socialism 47.

In the pre-1947 writings of Michael Aflaq, socialism signifies an ardent commitment to social justice unsupported by any serious comprehension of the socio-economic realities of Arab life or of the ways and means to achieve the socialist goal. "My concern is not", wrote Aflaq in 1936, "that people should be equal in the distribution of food but that every individual should be allowed to realize his gifts and potential. We are not concerned about alleviating misery (we are concerned about) increasing the wealth of life 48.".

Speaking on Militant Arab Nationalism as cited in 'selection from a collection of article and speeches by the founder of the Ba'th Party, Fi Sabil al-Ba'ath (for the Resurrection, Beirut, 1959), Aflaq further explains his positions:

"When we say that we are in need of an Arab Socialism, all we mean is that attention should be given to


the special circumstances that pertain to us as Arabs in this phase of our history. We all agree as to the principle of socialism, but not as to the manner in which it should be applied or to the place it should occupy in our national life. We cannot accept the view of Western Socialism that nationalism is merely a transient phase in the process of economic evolution. On the contrary, socialism must be suited to our national and to our political struggle and not become an instrument of conspiracy against our fatherland, or a means of external divisions and strife, or a screen for antinationalist maneuvers.

We want socialism to serve our nationalist cause, to increase our intellectual daring and to strengthen our call for individual freedom and the fruitfulness and richness of our spirit—not to kill our new freedom in its cradle.....

...... What would become of Arab thought if it were overcome by an artificial philosophy such as communist socialism..... with all that is false and distorted in this philosophy? If we adopt (communist) socialism as our philosophy of life..... then we shall destroy the future of Arab thought and its freedom with our own hands49.

Michael Aflaq had written earlier that communism was a product of abstract eighteenth century philosophy and that its practice in Russia seems to be the product of Russian spiritualism and scientific European thought. To him, communism had no resemblance to any Arab intellectual traditions or to the past and present life of the Arabs. The insistence of Ba’th on differentiating its socialism from Marxist scientific socialism has led to the coining of the term "Arab socialism", not as a derivative of Marxism but as an opposing and contradictory ideology. Besides, both Aflaq and Bitar believed that Marxism greatly exaggerated the importance of class struggle, ignoring the vital historical role of nationalism.50

Aflaq advocates the independency of Arab socialism in these words:

"Socialism is for all people, it is an independent socialism which does not follow specific school and it is not an instrument for fanaticism and dispute but it benefits from all theories and experiences of the nations. It tends to be in harmony with the spirit of the nation, its conditions and deeds. This is Arab

50. Ismail Tariq Y op, cit, p. 44. See also Aflaq Michael; The Socialist Ideology of the Ba’th; in Karpat Kemal H (ed); Political and Social Thought in Contemporary Middle East, America, (1982), pp. 140-145.
Also, for the sake of legitimacy, socialism was described as an "Islamic Socialism". This was expressed by Jalal al-Sayyid a senior Ba'hist leader.

"The Ba'ath Socialism is actually an Arab Socialism but it is possible to say that Ba'ath Socialism is an Islamic or more specifically it is a 'Hanbalite' version because the Hanbalite Jurists went away than the Ba'ath Party in this regard".52

But Salah al-Din Baytar unambiguously disclosed the nature of Arab Socialism:

"Before everything else, I would like to remove a confusion that surrounds this slogan (Socialism). The phrase "Arab Socialism" may reveal that we are inventing a new kind of socialism and here I want to affirm that socialism in our view is one. It is the scientific socialism".53

51. Aflaq Michael, Ma'alim al-Qawmiyya al-Taqadumiyya (Characteristics of the progressive nationalism); in Derasat Fi al-Qawmiyya, Beirut, Dar al-Tali'a 1960, p.29.
As regards the constitution, it reads:

"The Party of the Arab Ba’th is a Socialist Party. It believes that socialism is a necessity which emanates from the depth of Arab nationalism itself. Socialism constitutes, in fact, the ideal social order which will allow the Arab people to realize its possibilities and to enable its genius to flourish which will ensure for the constant national progress in its material and moral output. It makes possible a trustful brotherhood among its members."

The Ba’th constitution is a little more specific in that it incorporated a series of propositions prescribing national ownership of major natural resources and public utilities, ceiling on agricultural holdings, worker’s participation in management and share in profits and equitable distribution of wealth. But the over-all pattern it envisaged was one of moderate socialism complete with class cooperation and protection of the rights of private property and of inheritance.

The constitution does specify the economic plan of the party. Article 26 described the Ba’th as a

54. See Appendix-C the Constitution of the Arab Ba’th Socialist Party.

55. Ibid.
socialist party claiming that all the economic resources of the Arab nation should be owned by Arabs themselves. Article 27 declared that this economic wealth had been distributed unjustly; hence, it should be redistributed equally among the people. It followed in Article 28 that the exploitation of man by man was condemned, for all citizens are equal. The state’s manipulation of the means of production was also approved by virtue of Article 29. The aforementioned article clearly stated that the state should run co-operations of public interests natural resources, factors of production, and the means of transportation.

Aflaq wrote in 1950 "..... Socialism in the Arab Ba‘th is limited to economic organization that aims to reconsider the distribution of wealth in the Arab fatherland and to layout economic basis which would guarantee equality and economic justice among the citizens.....". Again in 1955, after explaining that socialism could be defined as a doctrine or a system, with specific origins, Aflaq wrote that "all of these were reducible to the simple statement that socialism is the sharing of the resources of the country by its citizens".

Changes in Ba‘thist attitudes regarding socialism began to appear in the mid 1950s. Jamal Attasi,

56. Ibid.
57. Devlin, John F, op, cit, p. 34.
writing in 1956, repeated the party's oft-stated differences between communism and Ba'thism, but noted that Ba'thists could learn a good deal from the manner in which socialism had been put into practice in the socialist countries. Attasi said in a companion article for example, "Socialism cannot realize its goals unless it starts from the (fact of) division, differences and conflict among society's structures and classes".

Munif al-Razzaz, an early member of the party in Jordan, was equally forthright in his article entitled "Why socialism now? It takes a very different approach to socialism than Aflaq did.

To him, "Socialism is a way of life, not just an economic order. It extends to all aspects of life: economic, politics, training, education, social life, health, moral, literature, science, history and others, both great and small". Disgressing from the established practice of placing nationalism above everything else, he sought to demonstrate that socialism, freedom and unity were interrelated and independent. 58.

It was in this context that the party's Sixth

58. Ibid, pp. 36-37.
National Congress in 1963 reviewed the Ba‘th’s outlook on socialism focusing on its positive as well as negative aspects. While nothing that in the early stage the Ba‘th’s concept of socialism was not clear and well defined, it maintained that this deficiency was partly compensated by the party’s revolutionary standpoint in struggle which indeed saved it from being submerged in bourgeois reformism.\(^{59}\)

In the new formulation socialism aims at the establishment of a new social order in which objective, economic, social, intellectual and political conditions are established that free the individual from all forms of exploitation, subjugation, and stagnation and allow him to become a completely free human being. This new conception of socialism which the Sixth National Conference had approved however was soon attacked by both rightist and leftist elements within the Ba‘th. The former discredited it as being extremist and the latter condemned it as being selective and not sufficiently radical.\(^ {60}\)

The Arab nationalist doctrine dictated by Michael Aflaq had at its heart a call for a revitalization

\(^{59}\) For detail see Appendix-B, Decisions of the Sixth National convention of the Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party, 1963.

\(^{60}\) Ismail Tariq Y, op, cit, p. 45.
of Arab society. This was the essence of the sacred mission of the party and was what Aflaq intended to convey when he used the word Inqilab. Thus in a talk given to a party branch in February 1950, he said:

"Revolution then, before being a political and social program, is that prime propelling power, that powerful psychic current that mandatory struggle, without which the re-awakening of the nation is not to be understood" 61.

Thus, to Aflaq 'Inqilab' means changing people rather than the system. Once the people, or enough of them had undergone an interior transformation, "liberating the intellect.... and releasing the source of faith in the soul". Change in the system would follow automatically 62. This interpretation of 'Inqilab' as transformation came to have considerable influence in the Ba'th Party in the forties and early fifties. As article 6 of the Ba'th constitution states, "The Party of the Arab Ba'th is revolutionary. It believes that its main objectives for the realization of the renaissance of Arab nationalism or for the establishment of socialism can not be achieved except by means of revolution and struggle. To


rely on slow evolution and to be satisfied with a partial and superficial reforms is to threaten these aims and to conduce to their failure and their loss.63.

Aflaq laid down three essential conditions for the Inqilab.

1. Awareness of the historical and contemporary realities which called for drastic transformation

2. A feeling of responsibility rooted in a strong moral base and

3. A genuine belief in the feasibility, at the existing stage of Arab history, of the proposed Inqilab.

These conditions were to be fulfilled by al-Talia (the vanguard) who constitutes the membership of the Ba’th. The struggle which designated as the practical expression of the Inqilab, wrote Aflaq, creates its own crusaders. The Inqilab becomes a living thing in their souls, minds and manners or it become life itself. Once achieved, the Inqilab would presumably usher in the Ba’thist trinity - unity, freedom, and socialism. Conversely, the trinity are indispensable ingredients for the success of the

63. See Appendix-C, Constitution of the Arab Ba’th Socialist Party.
Inqilab, since the ideal of unity, freedom and socialism are considered fundamental and inseparable objective of equal importance.\textsuperscript{64}

The concept of secularism in the Arab World emerged as a result of the impact of the West on the Arab intellectuals. Serious attempts were made by the Arab intellectuals to philosophize the concept of secularism in nationalistic terms for the purpose of legitimacy in the Arab World.\textsuperscript{65}

The Ba'ath party, indeed, worked out for decades to define Arab secularism or more specifically, the relationship between State and Religion. In order to provide a detailed description for the ideological development of the Ba'athist secularism, it is necessary to analyse the problem on constitutional, ideological and practical level.\textsuperscript{66}

On constitutional grounds, the manifesto of the Ba'ath which was drafted by Michael Aflaq in 1947 and the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{64} Kalyani, Nabil M. IJMES, op. cit, p. 5.
  \item \textsuperscript{65} David Robert writes: The West displayed the Successful and secular nation - State to the visitors including the Arab nationalist. The intellectual influences which swayed them, Hegel, Marx, Stalin, Rosenberg and Hitler in Europe and Antun Sa'adeh at home, all had one common denominator, the exaltation of the State in one form or another.
  \item \textsuperscript{66} Roberts David; The Ba'ath and the Creation of Modern Syria, Croom Helm, London, 1987, p. 18.
\end{itemize}
Interim Constitution of the Iraqi State promulgated in 1968 are better specimens for study since this may still be regarded as the primary power of Ba'hist programme in Iraq.

The Ba'th Constitution tries to project the ideal vision of the party to the Arab people, which is epitomised in the dictum that "Arab nation constitutes a cultural unity and that the Arab land belongs to Arabs who alone have the right to administer its affairs". Such secular tendencies and nationalistic colour dominated the forty eight articles of the constitution. The first fundamental principle reads:

"The Arabs form one nation. This nation has the natural right to live in a single state and to be free to direct its own destiny".

The Ba'th therefore believes that:

1. The Arab fatherland constitutes an indivisible political and economic unity. No Arab country can live apart from the others.

The Arab nation constitutes a cultural unity. Any differences existing among its sons are accidental and unimportant. They will all disappear with the awakening of the Arab consciousness.

The Arab fatherland belongs to the Arabs. They
alone have the right to administer its affairs, to dispose of its wealth, and to direct its destinies.\[67\]

In the Ba’th ideology, Arab nationalism is the essence of the Ba’th theory. It is "an eternal and living reality", "the will of the Arabs", "sacred feeling" and "the only tie in the Arab State".

"The party of the Arab Ba’th is a national party. It believes that nationalism is a living and eternal reality. It believes that feeling of national awakening which intimately unites the individual to his nation is a sacred feeling. This feeling has within itself a potential of creative power; it binds itself to sacrifice, it seeks the exercise of responsibilities, and it directs the individual personality in a concrete and active manner.

The national idea to which the party appeals is the will of the Arab people to free themselves and to unite. It demands that the opportunity be given to it to realize in history its Arab personality, and to collaborate with all the nations in all the fields which will ensure the march of humanity toward welfare and progress".

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Further the Constitution reads:

"The national tie is the only tie that may exist in the Arab State. It ensures harmony among all the citizens by melting them in the crucible of a single nation and counteracts all religious, communal, tribal, racial, or regional factions."\(^68\).

This concept of secular nationalism is reinforced by Article 18 which prescribes "a single code of laws" in harmony with "the spirit of the present age" and "the past experience of the Arab nation".

Thus it is clear that the Ba'th replaces Islam by nationalism to be the only tie that binds Arabs in a State and a weapon to counter all religious factions.

The Ba'th's preference for secularism is also reflected in its cultural and educational policy. Article 41(a) states that "the party endeavours to develop a common culture for the Arab homeland - a culture that will be Arab, free, progressive, comprehensive, deep and humanist in its aims". And Article 43 declares that the party's educational policy aims at creating "a new Arab generation believing in the unity and immortal mission of its nation, taking to scientific thinking, freed from the bonds of superstition and reactionary traditions.... and serving the

\(^68\) Ibid.
cause of human progress 69.

But as Ba’th captured power in Iraq in 1968, a clear departure from the above fundamentals came to be seen in the interim constitution of Iraqi State which supposed to be based on the principles of the Ba’th.

The Ba’thist regime seems unable to neglect the religious factor since religion is a deep rooted phenomenon in the Iraqi society.

The Arabic text of the interim constitution speaks in terms of religion on six occasions. The first and fourth articles of the first part of the constitution define the Arab heritage and the spirit of Islam as a source of democracy and popularity. Also they consider Islam as the religion and fundamental base of the Iraqi State:

Article - 1:

"The Iraqi republic is a democratic republic state. The Arab heritage and the spirit of Islam constitute the source of its democracy and popularity".  

Article - 4:

"Islam is the religion of the State and the fundamental base for its constitution and the
Arabic language is the official language."\(^{70}\)

Here, the purpose behind declaring Islam as a base of Iraqi constitution is nothing but to give rise to a sort of ambiguity which tends to win over the majority in Iraq. Such ambiguity also surfaced in Article 8, 17 and 30 of the second part and Article 57 of the third part of the constitution:

Article-8:

"Inheritance is a recognized right regulated by the Islamic law."\(^{71}\)

Article-30:

"The State shall maintain the freedom of religious and the right of religious ceremonies provided that this freedom shall neither contradict the law nor violate the morality."\(^{72}\)

Article-57:

"I swear by the Almighty God to be a faithful to my religion, country and nation and to preserve the republican regime and abide by its constitution and care for the people’s interests

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70. See Appendix-A, Interim Constitution of the Iraqi Republic.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid.
with full attention and to protect the independence of the country and the integrity of the lands" [73].

The above articles shows that the ideal principles of Ba'ath could not be transferred into the interim constitution. The State's Constitution was made to correspond to Iraq society and theoretically, the constitution is more applicable and realistic as compared with the Ba'ath constitution of 1947.

73. Ibid.
CHAPTER 3
As an ideology, the Ba'th began to spread in Iraq long before the party came into existence. The political parties that made their appearance after the World War-II failed in Ba'thist eyes to meet the country’s needs and aspirations except the Istiqlal Party, the embodiment of the neo Pan-Arab movement, as it was a little bit different from other parties. Later even, the Istiqlal leaders appeared complacent and ready to compromise with the ruling obligarch which was considered reactionary and corrupt and therefore unworthy of survival. It was therefore natural that a more dynamic nationalist organization should become the center of attraction to young nationalists¹.

Ba'thist teaching began to enter into Iraq in a steady though in an unorganized way, first by Syrian students and teachers who went either to study or teach in Iraq, and then by Iraqi students who went to study in Syria and Lebanon. The earliest missionaries were a few young men from Alexandretta who, after their homeland had been annexed by Turkey in 1939, went to Iraq to study or settle their in a possible new home².

2. Ibid.
Among the Syrians, Faiz Ismail and Wasfi al-Ghanim were Alawis from Alexandretta, who came to Iraq in the second half of the 40s. In Baghdad University they succeeded in organizing some Iraqi students under the Ba'thist ideology. Other prominent Syrian Ba'thist ideologue at that time was Zaki al-Arsuzi, who in Iraq participated actively in spreading Ba'thist teaching in Baghdad. Prominent among the non Syrian political activist was Abu al-Qasim Mohammed Karu a Tunisian national, who actively participated in preaching Ba'thism in Baghdad University. A number of Iraqies, who had came in contact with Michael Aflaq in Damascus and Lebanon like Abd al-Rahman al-Damin and Abd al-Khaliq al-Khudyari, started preaching the ideas of the Ba'th, after their returning home3.

During the first three year, the Ba'thism in Iraq was merely an intellectual circle of students. In 1950, the Syrian command over Iraqi Ba'th was transferred to Iraqi members when Fayi'z Ismail returned back to Syria. Abd al-Rahman al-Damin took the charge of the organization. Subsequently in 1951, Fu'ad al-Rikabi took the charge of the Ba'th Organization and successfully organized it for eight

It was under him that the Ba‘th rose in number from 50 members in 1951 to more than 100 members in the middle of 1952. According to al-Rikabi the total number of the Ba‘thists reached up to 1500 in 1958. The first decade of Ba‘thist movement in Iraq was significantly marked with the increase of Shi‘i members. This was due to the influence exercised by al-Rikabi in the Shi‘i provinces including his native place Nasiriyyah.

The party had grown sufficiently by the fall of 1952 for its participation in the riots of that period against the government’s policies. The party issued its first handbill over the signature, Arab University Youth in Iraq, at this time.

By 1954 the party was strong enough in Iraq to issue statements and distribute them in the streets. It opposed the Nuri al-Said policies in Iraq on the national and International level. When the Iraqi government signed the Iraqi-Turkish agreement in 1955, later to be known as

4. Fau‘d Rikabi, who succeeded Qadduri as Secretary General, was born in Nasiriyya, a town in Southern Iraq, in 1931 and joined the Ba‘th Party while still in college. He became a member of the National Command when he attended the party’s second congress in Damascus in 1954 and served in that capacity for the next five years.


Baghdad Pact, the party went into a frenzy of activity against the government. In a statement distributed in the streets of Baghdad in January, 1955, the Ba'th called on the Iraqi people to overthrow the Said government. The greatest boost to the party's popularity in Iraq came, however, after the Suez Canal crisis. By this time the party had become a major "street power" in Baghdad and was distributing its literature throughout Iraq.

Despite the extreme repressive measures taken against the Ba'th by the Qasim regime, the party grew stronger in Iraq. With its strong machine, it was able to dominate a number of trade unions and the influential Iraqi students organization. It was also able to publish four official underground newspapers: viz Wa'yz al-'ummal (Workers Consciousness), Al-Ishtiraki (The Socialist), Al-Ittihady al-Watani li al-Talabah (The National Union for Students), Hisab al-Jamahir (Mass Judgement) respectively.

The inter group rivalry in the Syrian Ba'th and the emergence of a new trend within the Ba'th particularly affected the structure of Iraqi Ba'th during the U.A.R. period.

Fu’ad al-Rikabi who was a member of National Command differed with Aflaq and al-Hurani for their opposition to Jamal Abd al-Nasir’s policies. He along with other National Command members adopted a unionist trend that led to their expulsion from the party in 1959. The group formed their own Ba’th Party in Lebanon in 1961 while the Iraqi Ba’th re-organized itself under the leadership of Ali Salih al-Sa’di.

In 1962, the Iraqi Ba’th entered a broad alliance with the nationalist officers in the armed forces and together prepared the way to the first coup in February 1963. Subsequently through which for the first time it formed its own government in Iraq.

After the fall of the Monarchy, the military leaders who carried out the Revolution of 1958 began to fall under the influence of competing parties and groups and each tried to influence the revolutionary process along one ideological line or another. Rivalry between the two top leaders - ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim and ‘Abd al-Salim ‘Arif - led to the division of civilian leaders into two camps, the Nationalists (essentially Ba’th and other Pan-Arab elements) and Communists, supported by left wing groups. Moderate

leaders who might have played a constructive role failed to reconcile the two camps and the gap between them became ever wider. Since the Nationalists supported 'Arif, who championed the cause of Arab unity, Qasim sought the support of Communists who, though in favour of Arab unity in principle, was against unity with the united Arab Republic\textsuperscript{10}.

The Ba‘th captured power from Col. Abd al-Karim Qasim after having alliance with its military officers and other nationalist factions in Feb. 18, 1963. The alliance was aimed to bring Ba‘thist to power. Through this alliance the right for participation of other nationalist groups was legally denied by the government. Although Abd al-Salam Arif a pro-Nasserite military Colonel was elevated to the post of presidency of the republic but the real power was in the hand of the Ba‘thist who dominated the cabinet and the National Council\textsuperscript{11}.

In the cabinet the Ba‘thists occupied a majority or, to be specific, twelve out of the twenty-one seats including all the key ministers. Three other seats were filled by prominent members of the old Free Officers

\textsuperscript{10} Khadduri, Majid; 1978, op,cit, p. 13.

\textsuperscript{11} Haddad, George M; Revolutionary and Military Rule in the Middle East: The Arab States, Vol. 2, California University of California, 1971, pp. 131-37.
movement — staff Brigadier Naji Taleb, an independent nationalist, Brigadier Faud Arif, a Kurd, and Staff Brigadier Mahmud Sheet Khattab, who sympathized with the Moslem Brotherhood. Of the remaining portfolios, one went to a member of the landowning Kurdish family of the Barzeingi Sayyeds, two to ex-affiliates of the defunct, right oriented independent party and three to specialists of distinctly conservative temperament.\textsuperscript{12}

It was clear that the Ba’th party, with its roots in Syria, was dedicated to the principles of Arab unity and Socialism. The new Iraqi leaders who were now in power were seeking reapproachment with the united Arab Republic in order to strengthen their hold on the basis of Arab unity before they introduced socialist measures. President Nasser responded on February 21, when he addressed a large gathering in Cairo that Egypt and Iraq were "one nation having one aim" and that "the U.A.R. people whole heartedly with the Iraqi people."\textsuperscript{13}

The differences between the Ba’th-dominated government in Syria and the Ba’th – Arif government in Iraq


vis-a-vis the issue of unity came to surface at this time. Aref, a non-Bathist, wanted cooperation among the Arab governments along the lines of the European Economic Community (Common Market), to be followed by a political and legal union. The Syrian Ba'th government, on the other hand, was advocating immediate union between the "revolutionary governments" of Syria, Iraq, the U.A.R., Algeria and Yemen. The new Ba'th plan called for a federal union with collective leadership.

Consequently, negotiations for a federation between Iraq, Syria and Egypt were initiated in order to form a new united Arab Republic. Meetings were held in Cairo, Baghdad and Damascus during February and March. Out of these and other consultations came an agreement, signed at Cairo on April 17, 1963, for the federation of these States.

A referendum was to be held in five months to elect a President of the Federation, a transitional Council and Cabinet were provided for, with provision for an eventual legislative Assembly and Senate, Regional Parliaments and a federal government which would control foreign affairs, defense and national security, finance.

economic planning, justice, education and communications. However, the Syrian and Iraqi Ba'thists clashed with Nasser on certain policy issues. Three major issues dominated the conflict:

1. equality versus inequality of the three parties,
2. collective versus personal leadership, and
3. the monopoly of the Syrian Ba'thists across a broader front which include Pro-Nasserites.

Interpretation of the agreements following its conclusion began to vary between Cairo and the other two capitals with the consequence that the provisions of the agreement were never implemented\textsuperscript{16}.

The outcome was to derive the Iraqi Ba'thists into closer cooperation with their Syrian counterparts. On September 2, 1963, the two countries announced their agreement to establish closer cooperation with a view to achieve the ultimate objectives of unity, Freedom and Socialism\textsuperscript{17}.

The Sixth National Congress of the Ba'th Party, meeting in Damascus on 5-23 October, 1963, passed a resolution approving the principle of full federal union between Iraq and Syria but the Syrian Government made no

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid. See also Batatu Hanna, op, cit, pp. 1014-1016.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
more to establish political union between the two countries, since such a union would be construed as an alliance against Egypt.\textsuperscript{18}

However in this newly formed Government, the Ba'th leaders were divided into three groups. The right wing group consisted of Talib Shabib, Hazim Jawad, Minister of State, Hardan al-Tikriti, commander of the air forces, Tahir Yahya, Chief of the General Staff and Abd al-Sattar Abd al-Latif, Minister of Communications respectively. This group advocated cooperation with other national elements, especially in the army, whom they thought it might eventually become members of the party and strengthen its position in the country. They therefore pressed for the postponement of the implementation of radical principles, especially Socialism, until the time had came when the country was ready for it. The Left-wing group on the other hand consisted essentially of leaders like Ali Salih al-Sadi, Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior (later Minister of Guidance), Muhsin al-Shaykh Radi, Hamdi Abd al-Majid, Hani al-Fukayki, and Abu Talib al-Hashmi. This group insisted on the implementation of basic principles, especially socialism, on the ground that socialism would secure the support of the masses and of the new generation.

\textsuperscript{18} Khadduri, Majid; 'Republican Iraq' A Study in Iraqi Politics since the Revolution of 1958, Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 207.
Between these two extremes there was a centre group, composed of Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, Prime Minister and Salih Mahdi Ammash, Minister of Defence. The centre tried to reconcile the two extreme groups hoping that solidarity might be maintained if both were induced to cooperate on certain matters acceptable to them but Bakr and Ammash did not carry enough weight to be able to prevent the party from breaking asunder.\(^{19}\)

Shortly after the coup, the regime found itself challenged by its partners, the Nasserites, the Communists, and the Radical Ba’thists. Therefore it launched campaign against all, starting with the communists then Nasserites and lastly with the hard liners of the Ba’th. During their course of confrontation, the Ba’th survived four plots: The first was carried out by the Nasserites and subsequently on May 25, eleven Nasserites Officers were executed by firing squad. The second was held by the Communists on July 3, 1963 in which 35 Communists were condemned to death. The third attempt was designed by several retired senior officers and politicians of the old regime. The plotter received sentences of one to three years in jail. On November, 13, 1963, the fourth attempt was carried out by the radical group of the Ba’th headed by ‘Ali Salih al-Sa’di, the deputy premium and interior

\(^{19}\) Ibid.
minister. The attempt followed by a decision of the Regional Command to expel Ali Salih al-Sa‘di from the command and his deportation to Spain along with four of his supporters. The Commander of the National Guards (the Ba‘th militia) Mandher al-Mahdawi had led the air attack against the ministry of defence and the presidential place but the coup was crushed, resulting in killing of hundreds of Ba‘thists. An emergency National Congress of the Ba‘th was held in Baghdad in the evening of 13, November, 1963, to settle the crisis and it was decided that a new regional command should be formed in which al-Sa‘di and his followers should rejoined it to further strengthen its Organizational base.

The Ba‘th Party in Iraq with this support of Abdus Salam Arif was the first ideological party to dominate the government and monopolize power in any Arab country. Its domination, however, was entirely dependent on the power of the military, and it ended when the military withdrew its support. The Ba‘th ruler in Iraq as well as in Syria were never able to restore representative democratic government and could never face the electorate in any kind of parliamentary elections. Their regime was troubled by Pro-Nasserist and Communist attempts to overthrow the Ba‘thists,

20. Four Supporters were, Hamdi Abd al-Majid Muslim al-Shaykh Rodi, Hani al-Fukaykl and Abu Talib al-Hashimi.

and by disputes and disagreements between the Ba'th rulers themselves which, in addition to their serious blunders, led after nine months to the end of their rule.

Thus, the crisis continued to set the stage for the coup of 18 November, 1963 and the fall of the Ba'th. In fact, the conflict that brought about the end of the Ba'th rule, was between the Iraqi regular army and the National Guards of the Ba'th.

The military coup of 18 November, 1963 was carried out by Abd-al-Rehman Arif with the cooperation of the Ba'thist Commander of air force. The rebels had a full control of power after they succeeded in eliminating the national guardsmen of the Ba'th. Abd al-Rahman Arif was chosen as the new statesman of Iraq. The coup of 18 November, 1963, was a serious setback in the history of the Ba'th in Iraq.

An honest assessment of the achievements of the party after nine months of rule in Iraq leaves the impression that it acted as a reformist party more than a revolutionary one. For inspite of its radical new concept of mass organization, which constitutes the only serious

22. Ibid, see also Devlin, John F, op, cit, pp. 259-72.
23. Ibid.
basis of any popular revolutionary movement, and inspite of its clear views on the shape of new socialist society, incompetence, lack of experience and rifts among its leaders left little scope for serious radical changes.  

In July 1968, the Ba'ath returned to power in yet another coup. The coup of July 17, 1968 was the eighth among the attempted millitary coups — after the revolution of July 14, 1958 and sixteenth since Iraq became independent in 1932. It was carried out by the cooperation of the retired Ba'hist Officer — politician, Ahmad Hasan Bakr, with two younger independent Officers in the active service, Lt. Col. Ibrahim Da'ud, Commander of the Presidential Guard, and Abdul Razzaaq Nayef, deputy chief of military intelligence and liaison man between President Aref and the army. Two weeks later, on July 30, it was followed by another coup in which the Ba'histists ousted the two young officers who brought them to power. But the root cause lies in the fact that the regime had neighter been sufficiently consolidated under the Premiership of Yahiya nor attained legitimacy by popular consent. Both in the army and the outside official circles, their existed certain groups that were determined to effect a change by force if


25. Haddad, George M, op, cit, p. 157
their demands to participate the political process were not heeded. Since the regime was not prepared to tolerate the opposition its tenure of office ultimately depended on the loyalty of the army.

The major military units on which the ‘Arif regime depended were the Republican Guard, the Baghdad Garrison and Military intelligence. The first was headed by Colonel ‘Abd al-Rahman Ibrahim al-Da’ud, the second, under the command of colonel Hammad Shihab, the third under the control of colonel ‘Abd al-Razzaq al-Nay’ef. And these officers, especially Naif and Da’ud, who had already become conscious of their power, had their own ambitions and plans for the future. They seems to have tacitly come to the conclusion that if ‘Arif were overthrown, they would be the successors on whose shoulders the mantle of the ‘Arif regime should fall. Keenly feeling that they were in need of a front that would disguise their personal ambition, they agreed to cooperate with Ba’th party because it was thought it might provide legitimacy for their rule. With a poor record under the first ‘Arif regime, they felt the Ba’th party would be the ideal tool in their hands.

On the morning of July 16th., 1968, the

27. Ibid, p. 22.
Regional leadership was meeting in the house of Regional Party Secretary General Comrade Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr to review and settle the final assignments. Unexpectedly, a messenger from Abdul Razzaq al-Nayif arrived with an offer from him to participate in the proposed operation. It was revealed that Ibrahim al-Da‘ud had in fact informed Al-Nayif of the coming event and proposed that he will take part with an understanding that he would become the Prime Minister of the new regime. The Party leadership, had to act quickly in view of this dangerous development. Accordingly Lt. Col. Abdul razzaq Nayif, thirty-four years old, thus became Prime Minister and Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, assumed the charge of Presidentship in place of Abdus Salam, Asif, Ibrahim Da‘ud, thirty-nine years old, was given the defence portfolio and became Lieutenant General and Deputy Commander of the Armed Forces. Among the Ba‘th military leaders who had been retired under the preceding regime. Lieut. Gen. Hardan Takriti became army chief of staff and Maj. Gen. Saleh Mahdi Ammash, Minister of Interior. The cabinet included four Kurdish ministers, two of whom were regarded as adherents of the Khurdish leader Mustafa al-Barzani.

No sooner did the Government begin to


function than a conflict between the Ba’th and Nayif – Da’ud group ensued, both inside and outside official circles. Premier Nayif made several statements to the press unfavourable to socialism which were unacceptable to Ba’th leaders. President Bakr, on the other hand, pointed out that the new regime was in favour of an Arab nationalist contrary to socialist policy to which his party was committed and would expect its representatives in the Government to carry out. No less significant was the conflict on foreign affairs. The Nayif – Da’ud group was inclined to cooperate with Western powers and paid lip service to Arab unity while the Ba’th leaders were opposed to cooperation with Nasir and demanded a neutralist foreign policy. As a result, an atmosphere of suspicion surrounded the relationships between the Ba’th and the Nayif-Da’ud group and a struggle for power between them ensued.30

The Ba’th leaders were not happy with the attitudes and policies of the young officers who brought them back to power. They now used the same unscrupulous maneuvers that the Ba’thist had employed elsewhere in order to oust Nayif and Da’ud because they stood in the way of complete Ba’th control in Iraq. In Syria, the Ba’thists had succeeded in July 1963 in ousting General Zaid Hariri who

executed the coup of March 8, 1963 that brought them to power and in purging out the non-Ba’thist elements that took part in the coup. The Iraqi Ba’thist did not wait four months or even four weeks to remove these who made the coup against Aref. On July 30, 1968, two weeks after the coup, Col. Nayif and General Da’ud were dismissed from their posts and sent to exile by their Ba’thist partners. The twelve-day-old cabinet was dismissed. Col. Nayif was arrested at noon in his residence in Baghdad and was later sent to Morocco, while the minister of defence, General Da’ud was purged out while he was performing a duty of his office outside the country. It was blood-less Revolution. Some have called it the White Revolution.

In September, the new Ba’thist regime headed by Bakr issued its first provisional constitution, which declared Islam to be the religion of the State, ‘Socialism’ as the foundation of the economy, and RCC (and by extension, its Chairman) as the supreme legislative and executive authority, to which the cabinet and the (projected) National Assembly were to be subordinate. The third of these provisions, stressing the supremacy of the RCC, is evidently the one that has been most assiduously respected since 1968. The RCC is accountable to no one, except to the Ba’th Party; even this degree of accountability is no more than formal.

As far as the two other institutions are concerned, the Cabinet has never exercised more than technocratic authority, and the National Assembly, which eventually came into being in 1980, has deliberative rather than legislative power.

In the second temporary constitution of 16 July 1970 nationalist and socialist principles (derived essentially from Ba‘thist teachings) were more strongly emphasized than in the 21 September 1968 first temporary constitution. Thus in the second constitution, Society as envisioned to be ultimately composed of equal and responsible individuals, presumably to classless society maintained by social solidarity. The function of the State was to help establish this society structured on the findings of science and achieved through a revolutionary process. The State undertook to achieve these objectives by continuous planning and regulating the social and economic system. The country’s natural resources and the instruments of production were declared to be owned collectively by the nation — the State undertakes to exploit them for the benefit of the people as a whole. Private ownership, however, was named recognised and private sectors allowed to operate.


33. Khadduri, Majid, 1978, op, cit, p. 34.
When the Ba‘th came to power in 1968 a section within the party felt that it was necessary to make some sorts of accommodation with its former enemies after giving up its total political isolation. Furthermore it needed to produce positive economic policies on the lines of newly framed constitution of 1968 which would be both popular and effective. Thus in 1969 and 1970 the Ba‘th began to make official overtures to the Communist Party and Kurdistan Democratic Party along with other ‘Progressive forces’, calling upon them to participate with it in the ‘national struggle’ against Imperialism and Zionism, and in the construction of an Independent Iraq and a free and prosperous Arab nation. Thus the Ba‘th Party alternately cajoled and pressurized the Communists and the Kurds to join them in a National Front early in 1972. This coalition, which came into being in 1973, enabled them to broaden their power base very substantially. For their part, the KDP and Communists were permitted a certain degree of political freedom, and in particular were allowed to publish their own newspaper and magazines. At the same time, the Ba‘th began to make overtures to the Socialist Countries, which bore fruit in the Iraq-Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1972. Naturally the Friendship Treaty was another important reason for the Communists joining the National Front. But by the

34. CARDRI Saddam’s Iraq, op, cit, pp. 100-1. See also F.M.A. Card, Arab World File, Progressive National and Nationalist Front, Iraq - 1104/1, 20 January 1982.
end of 1978, there developed a steady deterioration in the relation between the Ba'ath and its main partner the Communist Party. It ended with the Communist decision to take up arms against the regime. They joined the Kurds who too broke alliances with regime and waged an open war.

In their pursuit of popularity, the Ba'hist rulers also adopted a bold line on the question of Palestine and the conflict in the West Asia in January 1969, they rejected the U.N. Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967, in July 1970 they denounced the proposal of American Secretary of State William P. Rogers for a ceasefire at least three months and for peace negotiations through special U.N. envoy Gunnar V. Jarring; in September 1970 they openly pledged to commit their troops in Jordan on the side of the Palestinian Resistance in the event of a show down with King Husain's army. But the boldness was more in their words than in their deeds. Their failure to live up to their pledge to the Fedayeen not only cost them dearly in prestige, but also produced a serious rift between them and a section of the Ba'ath Pan-Arab command led by Michael Aflaq. More than that, it heightend the infighting between the military and civilian wings of the Party.

35. Sluglett, Marion Farouk, op. cit, pp. 158-170.
However, the decline in the prestige of Ba'thi regime that ensured from its weakness in the Jordan showdown was more than compensated by the popular approval to nationalizing the Iraq Petroleum Company. Before it came to power in 1968, the Ba'th party had called for nationalization of the oil industry, epitomized in the slogan "Arab Oil for the Arabs". Once in the saddle, the Ba'th began to appreciate the difficulties involved in nationalization and decided to proceed step by step toward the ultimate goal of nationalization. On June 1, 1972 the R.C.C. passed a resolution to nationalize the IPC operations and a degree 69 was issued to compensate the company for its assets as redefined under law 80 (1961). A national company called the Iraq Company for Oil Operations was established to operate the fields taken over from the IPC which would be responsible for the rights and assets transferred to it in accordance with degree 69.37

Similarly, Ba'thism, although not directly identified with Sunni Islam, also has definite aspirations towards Arab Unity, an ideal for which the majority of Iraqi Shi'i have never expressed much positive enthusiasm. Thus, while not wishing to suggest that all politically articulate Shi'is were attracted to communism, it is safe to say that

37. Khadduri, Majid, op, cit; 1979, pp. 123-129. See also Berindranath Dewan, Iraq the Land of Arab Resurgence, PAI Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, 1979, pp. 111-129.
few of them were positively attracted either to Arab nationalism or to Ba‘thism. The only major exception to this was the group around the Faud al-Rikabi, the Shi‘i founder of the Ba‘th Party in Iraq in 1952. As he recruited primarily among his friends and relatives, many of the first Iraqi Ba‘thists were Shi‘is. However, it must be emphasised that they were al-Rikabi’s family and associates before anything else, so that when he left the Ba‘th in 1959 almost all of them left with him. Furthermore, when control of the Ba‘th passed into the hands of the Tikriti after 1968, there were no Shi‘i at all in the higher echelons of the party, a state of affairs that did not change until the appointment of four Shi‘i to RCC in September 1977.

Although Shi‘is did join the Ba‘th Party after it had established itself in power, and a number rose to important positions in the course of time, it can safely be asserted that the majority of the Shi‘i population remained indifferent to Ba‘thism. After the success of Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, a considerable Shi‘i challenge to the regime came into existence.

38. Sluglett, Marion Farouk, op. cit, p. 194.


Apart from the issue of Arab Unity, which was particularly prominent in the first few years after 1968, the overall ideological framework of the party in Iraq has essentially remained within the original mystical notion of the Arab nation, the Arab homeland, al-watan al-‘arabi, and the Arab masses al-jamahir - who wage a fierce and bold struggle against the Imperialist and Zionist enemy and its local reactionary hirelings. Thus the political strategy of the party aims, in a scientific and practical way, at developing Arab trends and tendencies towards the higher national aspirations of the Arab nation in its present stage of historical development. Hence the advancement and development of this nation possibly on all fronts became prominent during the Saddam Ba’thist regime starting from the time when he assumed the post of Vice-President of this republic. But at the same time he may be charged of creating factionalism and Bathization and Tikritization of all the institutions of the state including the army of Iraq. Thus it is desirable to look into the life of Saddam Hussain who is not only responsible for a considerable progress on economic and social spheres but is also beign charged for waging a war with Iran in 1979, which claimed to have taken more than 2,00,000 lifes on the Iraqi side.

Saddam Hussain was born in Tikrit on April

41. CARDRI Saddam’s Iraq; op, cit, pp. 102-105.
28, 1937 in a poor peasant family. Saddam Hussein was nearly eight years old when Michael Aflaq’s Arab Ba’th movement was evolving into a party in Damascus. He had not yet had any formal education, as his relatives wanted him to become a farmer like the rest of the family. But a cousin on his mother’s side Adnan Khairallah helped and encouraged him to join the school. After completing his first year at school, he moved to Baghdad with his maternal uncle Khairallah Talfah, who looked after him because his father had died before he was born.

From the time when he was still in Tikrit, a number of significant events seem to have had an indelible impact on his future career. Khayr-Allah Talfah, who was then an officer in the army, participated in the ill-fated Rashid Ali uprising and took part in the military operations against Britain in 1941. After the fall of the Rashid Ali, Talfah was expelled from service. His detention, along with other officers grieved all member of his family. The impact of the Rashid Ali affair, was one of the principal reason that prompted him to participate in nationalist activities which have as their goal the elimination of foreign influence not only from his country but also from all Arab

42. F.M.A. Card, Arab World File: Iraq No, 1903/1, 16 Nov. 1983.

The Second important event in Saddam's life was his decision to continue his studies in Baghdad. After he finished primary education in Tikrit, and while he was still in the second year in high school, he began to follow student activities in Baghdad and aspired to be in the midst of those events. He left Tikrit in the fall of 1955 and entered the secondary school of al-Karkh. While still in school, he became involved in the activities of the Ba'th Party and participated in the abortive coup of 1956. That event was then considered as a significant land mark in nationalist activities and the Ba'th Party played an important role in enlisting students to take part in it. In the following year, Saddam became a member of the Ba'th Party.

The third important event was Saddam’s participation in the attempt on Abd al-Karim Qasim’s life in 1959. He was one of the ten young men selected to assassinate Qasim in accordance with a plan laid down by Ba’thist leaders. Though he was wounded and sentenced to death in absentia, he fled the country via his native town in disguise to Syria. A year later he made his way to Cairo.

44. Khadduri, Majid, 1978, op, cit, p. 72.
45. Ibid, p. 72. See also Matar, Faud, op, cit, pp. 32-34.
where he completed high school in 1961. Meanwhile, he was drawn into nationalist activities during 1961-62 and became the leader in the Cairo unit of the Ba'th Party. After completing high school, he enrolled in the Cairo University law college in the fall of the 1962 but before he could finish the first year he returned to Baghdad after the Ba'th Party seized power in February 1963. As an activist he became fully involved in the Ba'th Party and was arrested and thrown into prison in November 1964, after the fall of the Ba'th from power. He again consolidated his position when he and other Ba'th members supported Bakr in his drive to control the Regional command leadership. He worked closely with Bakr after the Ba'th seized power in 1968.46.

At the end of 1969, and indeed for some time afterwards, there were substantial pockets of opposition to al-Bakr and Saddam Husain within both the armed forces and the party leadership. One civilian member of the RCC, 'Abd-ullah Sallum al-Samarrai the Minister of culture and information, was demoted to Minister of State in December 1969, then dismissed from the RCC and put out to grass as Iraq's ambassador in India in 1970.

In November 1969, it was announced that the Deputy Premiership had been abolished, a move directed

46. Ibid, p. 73. See Batatu Hanna, op, cit, pp. 1084-87.
against the two holders of the post, Salih Mahdi Ammash and Hardan al-Takriti; as result neither could chair cabinet meetings in Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr’s absence. Their power were further reduced in April 1970, when both were relieved of their ministeries (and replaced by Sadum Ghaidan at Interior and Hammad al-Shihab al-Takriti at Defence), and appointed ‘Deputy President’. A series of high level military transfers and promotions accompanied this reshuffle.

All in all, it proved rather harder to get rid of Ammash and Hardah al-Takriti than Saddam Husain had perhaps envisaged, but eventually the events in Jordan in September 1970 provided Husain and al-Bakr with the excuse they needed to remove Hardan al-Takriti and purge his leading supporters from the armed forces. The non-intervention of the Iraqi Army on the side of the Palestine Resistance could be laid fairly and squarely at the door of Haidan al-Takriti as Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and it was also widely believed that Saddam Husain had favoured intervention but that Hardan had insisted on thwarting his wishes. Hardan was exiled to Algeria in October 1970, and later took refuge in Kuwait, where he was assassinated in 1971.


48. Ibid., p. 135.
Though Ammash as Vice-President almost a year after Hardan's fall, began to feel that there was curtailment on his powers comparing to his Predecessors. Dissatisfied with a position in which he had become virtually a figure head, he often made unwarranted critical remarks about other party members which aroused antagonism and tarnished his image. For these and other reasons, personal and otherwise, the Civilian leaders demanded his removal from the Vice-Presidency. He was appointed Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. in 1971; three years later, he was transferred in the Same capacity, first to France and then two years later to Finland.49.

There were some distinguished party members like Abd al-Khaliq al-Samarrai, Abd al-Karim al-Shaykhli and Salah Umar al-Ali who had distinguished themselves in public affairs. With this pace of time Samarrai as member of both the National and Regional Commands, won a reputation as a dedicated and hardworking leader and became very popular in party congresses and always stood high in the list of Party Candidates for elected positions. But he seems to have become very critical of party leaders in higher echelons. Very soon opposition grew against him; he was finally involved in Kazzar uprising and thrown into prison on the

instruction of Hassan al-Bakr. Similarly, Shaykhli and Salah ‘Umar al-Ali, the first holding the portfolio of Foreign Minister and the other information, were dropped from membership of the RCC and appointed to diplomatic posts abroad. Shaykhli was sent to the United Nations as his country’s head of mission in 1971 and Ali as Ambassador to Sweden in 1972.\(^50\).

Saddam Husain, who quietly worked up his way in the party’s echelons, proved capable of surrounding himself with a number of young men who gave him almost unlimited support to rise to the higher position in the State, next to President Bakr. Championing the cause of civil leadership, he was able to mobilize the growing civilian power against military ascendancy.\(^51\).

In his drive for leadership, Saddam Husain encountered a number of opponents who were prepared to challenge him but none proved more determined, by force if necessary, to oppose him than Nazim Kazzar, Chief of the Security Police. He took an active part in the massacre of Communists following the first Ba’thist coup in 1963 and was appointed Chief of the Security Police at Saddam’s insistence in 1969.

\(^{50}\) Ibid, p. 62. See also Batatu Hanna, op. cit, p. 1097.

\(^{51}\) Ibid, p. 63.
Though he agreed in principle on major issues, Kazzar came into conflict with other Ba'ath leaders on the method of dealing with the Kurdish question and communists. Because his harsh measures proved decisive in silencing opponents, Kazzar advocated settlement of the Kurdish question by force and was responsible for the initial clashes between Kurds and security forces and for two unsuccessful attempts on Mulla Mustafa's life a prominent Kurd leader in 1971 and 1972.52

Believing that his services to the party were not sufficiently recognized, Kazzar tried to realize his ambition by force. Thus Kazzar devised a plan that had the attraction of enabling him to dispose of almost all his rivals more or less simultaneously. Taking advantage of one of al-Bakr's relatively rare visits abroad, and realising that protocol would demand that most of the party leadership would be on hand at Baghdad Airport to greet the President on his return on 30 June, 1971, Kazzar invited the two key military members of the RCC, Lt. General Hammad Shihab, the Minister of Defence and Lt. General Sa'dun Ghaidan, the Minister of Interior (who were in charge of the armed forces and the police) to a 'banquet', or, according to Ghaidan, to visit his headquarters to inspect some newly installed

52. Ibid, p. 63.
surveillance equipment. On their arrival, the two ministers were bundled down to the cellars, while a special detachment of Kassar's own men was despatched to the airport to assassinate both the President and his reception committee on the former's return from Poland. Fortunately for most of the RCC, the airoplane was delayed and the would-be assassins left the airport, presumably under the impression that the President had somehow got wind of the plot. Meanwhile, Kassar, having watched al-Bakr's arrival on television and thus having seen for himself that the plot had misfired, left Baghdad by road, taking the two ministers with him as hostages, threatening (over the radio) to kill them if he was not given safe conduct out of the country. Unfortunately for Abd al-Khaliq al-Samarrai, Kassar apparently offered to meet al-Bakr at the former's house to discuss his differences with the regime, thus implicating al-Samarrai in the plot. There is no other evidence linking Kassar with al-Samarrai, who, unlike Kassar, had good standing in the Ba'th Party and was an important rival of the al-Bakr/Saddam Husain group. In the end Kassar decided that his safest course of action was to try to reach Iran with his two hostages. When the Party was sighted by Iraqi forces near the Iranian border Kassar killed Shihab and seriously wounded Ghaidan before being captured himself.53.

The successful foiling of the plot was immediately announced on Baghdad radio, and a special court under the Presidency of 'Izzat al-Duri was set up to 'try' the conspirators. On 7 July, it was announced that the court had found Kazzar and twenty-one other guilty, and that they had been executed immediately afterwards. A further fourteen were executed the next day, including Muhammad Fadhil, head of the Ba'th military bureau Abd al-Khaliq al-Samarrai, apparently saved from the firing squad by the personal intervention of Michael Aflaq and was given 36 years imprisonment.54.

After the dismissal of Hardan al-Takriti and Ammash and the foiling of Kazzar's plot in July 1973, there were no serious challenges to the leadership of al-Bakr and Saddam Husain; at least on the surface, apart from a few purges and dismissals, the two seemed firmly in control. In January 1976, Saddam Husain, who had no military background, had himself 'promoted' to the rank of general, retrospectively from 1 July 1973.55. Later on it was announced that the complement of the people's Militia, the Ba'th Party's own military force under the command of Taha Yasin Ramadan would be doubled, over the next few years, its equipment was gradually built up sufficiently for it to be

54. Ibid, p. 162.
able to act if necessary as a counterweight to the regular armed forces. 56.

On 4 September 1977, for the second time since beginning of Ba’th rule in Iraq, all R.L. members joined the R.C.C. Between March and September 1977, the R.C.C. consisted of Bakr, Husain, Ghaydan, Izzat al-Duri, and Ramadan. When the R.L. members joined the R.C.C. it swelled from 5 to 22 members. One reason for this sweeping change may have been Saddam Husain’s wish to strengthen his position – 2 of the 17 new R.C. members were his staunch supporters 57. At the same time Saddam Husain began his first major foray into enter-Arab politics with the Baghdad Summit and the ensuing ‘reconciliation’ with Syria. It was only with al-Bakr’s resignation in 1979 that the latent rebelliousness of Saddam Husain’s colleagues broke out into the open 58.

On 16 July 1979, the eve of the eleventh anniversary of the Ba’th takeover, al-Bakr appeared on television to announce his resignation, and Saddam Husain

56. In October 1977, al-Bakr handed over the Portfolio of Defence to his son-in-law, Colonel (Adnan Khairallah, who is also the brother of Saddam Husain’s Wife.


58. Marion Farouk Sluglett, op, cit, p. 208.
was 'sworn in' immediately as President, a transfer of power that had been as meticulously prepared as it had been long expected. Izzat al-Duri, a long-standing and loyal Lieutenant of Saddam Husain, was appointed Vice-President. However, a few days before al-Bakr's resignation, there were already indications that something else was afoot, with the announcement that the R.C.C. secretary, Muhi Abd al-Husain Mashhadi, was to be replaced by Tariq Hamad al-Abdullah. The full significance of this emerged a fortnight later, on 28 July, when it was declared that a plot to overthrow the regime, masterminded by Syria, had been uncovered; a special party court of seven R.C.C. members was immediately set up under Naim Haddad, and within a few days twenty two people had been executed, including Mashhadi along with his four colleagues who were assigned membership of R.C.C. namely Muhammad 'Ayish, Muhammad Mahjub, and Ghanim 'Abd al-Jalil respectively.59.

Saddam Husain since, then, has managed to crystallise the Ba'hist theory of action, through meticulous work; a precise and deep supervision of the development of the revolutionary process with all difficulties, complexes and ensuing new facts involved; a

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live contact with the party members and the people; a creative ideological effort; and a high preparedness for dialogue and interaction with views and facts. This theory has guided the party in the political, economic, social and organizational fields as well as its relation with the people and in its Arab and International relations in all past phases. It is today the prime source of guidance for the party’s activity in all such fields. In this, Saddam Husain has made a valuable achievement in the history of the Party and Revolution, and even in the course of the movements of the Arab and Third World Revolutions.

CHAPTER 4
The Kurdish issue has constituted a central problem confronting Iraqi governments ever since the State of Iraq was established in 1920. This problem has comprised both internal and external aspects. In the domestic political context the Kurds, on the basis of their ethnic and linguistic difference from the Arab majority, have justifiably pressed for a special status within the Iraqi State. Yet on many occasions that genuine desire has been exploited by external powers with an interest in keeping the contemporary State of Iraq disunited and weak.1

Kurdistan, the land of the Kurds, is situated, in the Western part of Asia, in West Asia. It does not constitute a State, and the territory known as Kurdistan is shared by four countries namely Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The Kurds of Iraq hoped that in a country under British influence they might enjoy greater freedom and their national life would develop into maturity. The Iraqi Government agreed to recognize the Kurds as a people having their own cultural identity and granted them full status as Iraqi citizens. Upon the termination of British tutelage, it was hoped that in time the Kurds would be integrated with

Arabs and other entho-cultural groups to form the Iraqi nation.

But after independence neither the Kurds nor the Arabs in true sense were prepared to form a national identity and failure to create a new national identity for Iraq was the root cause of Kurdish reluctance to give up their Kurdish identity. As the Arabs always asserted the Arab character of the country and the new generation identified itself with Pan-Arabism, the Kurds feared that their dependence on an Iraqi identity might be merely a step toward their ultimate assimilation by the advocates of Arab nationalism. The Kurdish nationalism that had been in the making before independence began to grow and was given impetus by the corresponding growth of Arab nationalism after World War-II. Without a serious attempt to discourage either trend or to impress on both Kurds and Arabs about the necessity of stressing the supremacy of the Iraqi national identity.

Since Kurdish nationalism took the form of tribal uprisings led by tribal chiefs - Mulla Mustafa and


others it was suppressed by force on the ground that they were rebellions challenging the authority of the Central Government. Nothing constructive was done to win the confidence of the Kurds and the root cause of dissatisfaction, remained virtually untouched. Long before it came to power, the Ba‘th Party was perhaps the first political party to tackle the Kurdish question with a positive and constructive approach.\(^5\)

The Kurdish issue was one of the questions mentioned in the National Revolutionary Command Council’s (NRCC) statement on the morning of February 8, 1963, when the Ba‘th came to power in a coup. This statement declared that one of the goals new governments’ was to achieve national unity by “manner that would guarantee the national interest, strengthen the common struggle against Imperialism, and (express) respect for the rights of minorities by allowing them to participate in the national life.”\(^6\)

However, negotiations between the Kurdish leaders and the new ‘Iraqi Government did not lead to a satisfactory agreement. When Jalal Talibani, personal representative of Mulla Mustafa, arrived in Baghdad on 19 February 1963 and met Tahir Yahya, Chief of Staff, he was

\(^5\) Ibid, p. 102.

told with reservations that Kurdish autonomy was to be declared soon. It was at that time that Bakr and 'Ammash, the Premier and the Defence Minister, declared in broad terms 'Kurdish rights' rather than autonomy. They seem to have feared that an immediate declaration of autonomy might arouse Pan-Arab criticism of the Ba'thi Government, although Ba'th leaders had agreed on Kurdish autonomy in principle. They told Kurdish leaders that the Kurdish problem should be discussed with the broader scheme of Arab unity.

An announcement of the 'Iraqi Government that guaranteed 'the rights of the Kurds', on March 1, 1963, the two Kurdish members of the 'Iraqi Government, viz. Baba Ali and Fuad Arif, accompanied by Tahir Yahya and Ali Hayder Sulayman, to negotiate with Mulla Mustafa. The basic Kurdish demands were discussed and Mulla Mustafa insisted that as a first step the principle of autonomy should be recognized, but the details would be subjected to future negotiations. The principal Kurdish demands were:

1. Equal rights for Arabs and Kurds within a unified State,

2. The Post of Vice-President and Assistant Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Republic should go to Kurds;

3. Kurdistan to comprise the provinces of Sulaymania, Kirkuk, Arabil, and the Kurdish districts of Mosul and Diyala provinces, with its own executive and legislative council, the authority of the Kurdish administration to include justice, internal affairs, education, health, agriculture. Appointments of Kurds to all official posts, Kurdish language should be given the status of the second official language.

4. Kurds to belong to the N.C.R.C. in proportion to their percentage in Iraqi population.

5. Oil revenues and customs due to be shared on the same proportion basis.

6. Military movement in Kurdistan by the Iraqi army to be made only with the consent of the Kurdish administration.

The Ba‘th leaders, though accepting autonomy in principle, hesitated to make a formal declaration because they feared that if it might constitute a step towards an ultimate independence. They, therefore, formed a ‘popular delegation’ (not officially to represent the government) to negotiate with Mulla Mustafa to substitute the word ‘decentralization’ for ‘autonomy’8. The Government issued a statement on March 9, 1963.

8. Ibid, p. 270.
Since one of the main aims of the Revolution of Ramadhan 14 (Feb. 8) 1963 is to establish a modern system based on the best administrative and governmental methods, and since the methods of decentralization has proved to be beneficial, therefore, the Revolution, acting on the basis of revolutionary principals announced in its first communique providing for strengthening of Arab-Kurdish brotherhood and for respect of the rights of Kurds and other minorities, approves the national rights of the Kurdish people on the basis of decentralization. This should be entered in the provisional and the permanent constitutions when they are enacted. A committee will be formed to lay down the broad lines of decentralization.

During the latter part of March, 1963, Kurdish leaders met to establish an atmosphere of solidarity to back up the Kurdish delegation that was going to try to negotiate for a special status for the Kurds with the Baghdad Government. After a month of much waiting and some meetings, including one with Deputy Prime Minister Sadi, the Kurdish delegation presented on April 24, 1963 a formal version of their familiar proposals for autonomy to the Baghdad Government. In sum by these proposals pointed out asked that Iraq should make a unified state comprising two

nationalities, Arabs and Kurds, with each enjoying equal rights; that the Kurds would be allowed to exercise legislation in a defined area including the northern provinces of Sulaymaniyyah, Kirkuk and Arbil, and domain districts populated by Kurdish majority in of Mosul and Diyalah provinces, that this region have a share in all revenues and be represented on the twenty-man NCRC in proportion to its representation in the population at large; and that the military forces in Kurdistan be exclusively Kurdish, except in time of national emergency. The proposals were not formally rejected, and the Government took pains to deny them in early May, 1963 when that the talks for negotiations came to an end. More alarming was the news that the Government began to reimpose restrictions in the north, especially the economic blockade, which was taken as sign that it was preparing for a resumption of the fighting. On 10 June, 1963 it arrested the Kurdish representatives, demanded the surrender of Mulla Mustafa and his forces within twenty four hours, and launched an offensive with a savagery for exceeding Qasim's. The fighting continued till February 1964.

After the fall of the Ba'ath government, it was now Tahir Yahya, the new Premier, who had been in


contact with Kurdish leaders to reopen negotiations. No agreement seems to have been reached, but two communiques were issued simultaneously by President Arif and Mulla Mustafa on 10 February 1964, declaring a cease fire. Negotiations were conducted between Kurdish and Iraqi leaders but no agreement was reached, despite exchange of letters to resolve specific issue between Abd al-Salam Arif and Mulla Mustafa. Hence fighting again broke out in March with no marked success for either side.\(^{12}\)

Settlement of Kurdish question devolved upon Bazzaz, the civilian Premier, who realized that the internal social and economic conditions could not be improved until the Kurdish question was brought to an end. On 15 June 1966 al Bazzaz appeared on radio and television and declared himself ready to recognize Kurdish nationalism and the Kurds 'national rights'. 'After twelve days of negotiations he announced the Declaration of 29 June, which recognized clearly and unequivocably the 'binational character of the Iraqi State. Before it had opportunity to implement this programme, the Bazzaz government was replaced by an army officer who was not in favour of such a settlement.\(^{13}\) After Party's return to power in July 1968, the Ba'ath Party leaders saw a fresh in the Kurdish problem a major threat to

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the existence of the Iraqi State and a dangerous opportunity for foreign elements to interfere in the internal affairs of Iraq. The Party declared its intention to find a fundamental solution to the Kurdish problem. This intention, however, met with the same old obstacles. First there was the increasing confidence of the Kurdish leadership under the Mulla Mustafa. He was determined not to come to term with the central government before obtaining all his demands. Second, there was the problem of convincing the party members and the Iraqi and Arab public opinion that autonomy was not equivalent to separation. Finally, there was the continuing opposition by the military to a peaceful settlement.

Desperate to resolve the issue, the new Ba’thist regime launched the war in Kurdistan in April 1969. In the Kirkuk plain the Kurdish peasant were expelled from their lands or massacred.

While these struggles were taking place, General Al-Bakr, anxious as ever to appear in the role of ‘father of the nation’, made overtures to the left and sent an emissary, Aziz Sharif, to negotiate with General Barzani.

These secret talks led eventually to an agreement on 11 March 1970\textsuperscript{16}.

Following the signing of an agreement between Saddam Husain and Mulla Mustafa al-Barzani, President al-Bakr in his message to the nation on March 11, 1970, announced that the Revolutionary Command Council had solved the Kurdish problem in accordance with the resolution of the Ba‘th Party’s Seventh Regional Congress. The programme included the following measures:

1. Recognition of Kurdish as the official language in those areas where Kurds constitute a majority. Kurdish and Arabic would be taught together in all schools.

2. Participation of Kurds in government, including the appointment of Kurds to key posts in the state.

3. Furtherance of Kurdish education and culture.

4. Requirement that officials in the Kurdish area speak Kurdish.

5. Right to establish Kurdish student, youth, women’s and teacher’s organizations.

6. Economic development of the Kurdish area.

7. Return of Kurds to their villages or financial compensation.

8. Agrarian reform.

9. Amendment of the Constitution to read "the Iraq People consist of two main nationalities: the Arab and the Kurdish nationalities.

10. Return of the Clandestine radio stations and heavy weapons to the government.

11. Appointment of Kurdish Vice-President.

12. Amendment of provincial laws in accordance with this declaration.


The implementation of the March Manifesto was expected to lead eventually to "self-rule" in the Kurdish area within the framework of the new provincial law in which the principle of administrative decentralization was enshrined. It was a compromise between the Mulla's demand for autonomy and direct control of the Kurdish area by the central authority. In the new provincial law, self-rule for the Kurdish area was a form of decentralization which the

17. Ghareeb Edmund, op. cit, p. 87.
law has provided for the rest of the provinces in order to preserve the country's unity within the new decentralized system. The Ba’th leaders naturally took it for granted that under the new administrative system the central authority was supreme while Mulla Mustafa contended that certain residuary powers to be exercised by him through the mechanism of self-rule.\(^\text{18}\).

However important differences arose in the interpretation of the principle of "self-rule" as envisioned in the March Manifesto. First Mulla Mustafa demanded that four of the provinces specified in the new provincial law – Sulaymaniya, Kirkuk, Arbil, Sinjar and Duhok – should be considered Kurdish even though some of the towns and localities within them may not be inhabited by a majority of Kurds, like the cities of Kirkuk and Khanaqin. Second, he demanded the retention of certain powers to conduct Kurdish foreign relations which he had exercised during the defacto regime when he was at war with the central government. Third, he demanded the retention of control over the Pesh Merga – the Kurdish militia – though he agreed that this force should become part of the national army. The Ba’th leaders rejected the Mulla’s three demands.\(^\text{19}\).


\(^{19}\) Ibid, p. 106.
Despite initial optimism that the March Manifesto would provide the basis for a permanent understanding, by September 1972, the agreement was showing signs of breakdown. The factor leading towards breakdown are clearly stated in the memorandum exchanged between the Ba‘th Party and the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) at this time20.

The Ba‘th Party’s memorandum, of September, 1972, although admitted some mistakes committed by government officials, placed the major share of balance for the worsening situation on the leadership of Mulla Mustafa al-Barzani. KDP policy was criticised in three fields. First, in its external relations the KDP was accused of maintaining and strengthening its relation with Iran. Second, in the field of internal policy the memorandum accused the KDP of working to establishing its own undisputed authority in Iraqi Kurdistan through bypassing and some times defying the authority of the central government. Third, the KDP was accused of plotting directly and indirectly against the Iraqi regime21.

In answer to the Ba‘th Party the KDP sent a yet longer memorandum to the Ba‘th leadership. The latter

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20. Niblock, Tim, op. cit, p. 50.
21. Ibid, p. 51
memorandum failed to deny the accusation which had been made, but sought to exonerate the KDP from blame by citing the KDP's own complaints and observations, that were the real reasons behind the deteriorating situation. The government was blamed for 'its failure to honour its obligations in the March Manifesto. Three major undertakings of the manifesto had not been implemented, according to the memorandum, first, the KDP had neither been given due representation in the legislature and executive, nor a Kurdish Vice-President for the republic had been appointed, Second, the demarcation of the proposed autonomous Kurdish region had not been carried out, and finally, the Kurdish area had not been allocated a special share in the economic plan.  

Besides its major complaints, the KDP had other reasons also for adopting an intransigent stand. First, there was the role of Shah of Iran and the CIA who furnish Mulla Mustafa with a great deal of material and moral support thus enabling him to persist in his defiance of the Iraqi government. Second, the Kurdish leaders were alarmed by some abortive attempts on the lives of their leaders, especially on Mulla Mustafa.

22. Ibid-52- See for detail Ghareeb, Edmund, pp. 115-123.
23. Niblock Tim, op, cit, p. 53.
However, between March 1974 and March 1975 the Kurdish Peshmarga took arms again, despite the fact that the government had declared, in March 1974, the Kurdish area as an autonomous region. Differences over the interpretation of the Manifesto for autonomy were the main reasons behind the eruption of fighting. Other reasons were the Kurdish continuing claim for the oil-rich province of Kirkuk to be included in the autonomous region, over the extent of powers to be given to autonomous region, and over the Kurds participation in the central government.  

Due to the sophistication of the weapons used, the new war was tough and intensive. Both sides were better equipped and organized, but the Iraqi army retained upper hand. After the initial success of the peshmarga, the Iraqi army staged its counter-offensive and in a few months managed to remove the peshmarga's threat to Zakho and Mosul, together with clearing the routes leading from and to the plain. In July and August the Peshmarga were forced into the mountains along the Turkish and Iranian borders after an extensive offense launched by the Iraqi Military Command. From this time the Peshmarga had to rely on Iranian reinforcements without which they could not resist the heavy Iraqi offensive, including the bombing of Kurdish town and

villages. But the agreement between Iraq and Iran on the frontier dispute in March, 1975, left the Peshmarga at the mercy of the Iraqi army bombing.

With no support from outside within days of the Iraqi-Iranian understanding, the Kurdish revolt collapsed. The Iraqi government declared a general one-month amnesty to all Kurds and asked the peshmarga to lay down their arms. Most Kurds feared reprisals and crossed the border into Iran rather than submit to the Iraqi government. Mulla Mustafa, his family and prominent members of the KDP were among the first to cross. At the end of the amnesty period the Iraqi army moved almost unharassed into the hearland of KDP, gaining control of all Iraqi Kurdistan. By May, 1975 armed activity in Iraqi Kurdistan had come to an end.

Telibani, however, remained active in the Kurdish national movement, and when Barzani’s rebellion collapsed in 1975, Telebani set up its headquarters in Damascus, where the regime of Hafiz Assad, inimical to the Iraqi Ba’thists, provided him a base from which to continue the Kurdish resistance. Telebani’s group, the Patriotic union of Kurdistan (PUK), conducted Fedayeen-type raids into

27. Niblock, Tim, op, cit, p. 57.
Iraq when the war between Iran and Iraq broke out in September 1980. The Telebani's PUK established bases in Iraq as - Sulaymaniyah's region of Southern Kurdistan for example28.

The Iran-Iraq war made allies out of erstwhile enemies; Iraq aided the Iranian Kurdish guerrillas, particularly the Ghassemloou forces. An Telebani, too found himself cooperating with Baghdad, howbeit indirectly. In the summer of 1983 Iran invaded Iraqi Kurdistan in a drive spearheaded by guerrillas of the Iraqi Kurdish Democratic Party, Barzani's old party, now headed by his sons, Massoud and Idris. The Iranian thrust into northern Iraq presented Telebani with a crucial dilemma. Over the years the enmity between himself and Barzani's had ripened until there was little hope of reconciliation. Telebani felt that he could not ally with Iranian because to do so he would have had to join forces with his hated enemies, the Barzani's29

Saddam Husan at this stage took advantage of Telebani's predicament by offering to declare a truce with the PUK. Saddam asked Telebani to incorporate his guerrillas into the Iraqi army, where they would form a border guard and defend northern Iraq against the Iranian and the

29. Ibid.
Barzanis. Saddam in return was ready to make a significant grant of autonomy to the Kurds.\(^{30}\)

The Ba'thist leadership from the very start realized that solution had to be found to the Kurdish problem which weakened Iraq both internally and externally. The proposals to the Kurds, as expressed in the Manifesto of March 11, 1970, and in the Autonomy law of March 11, 1974, acknowledged the existence of the Kurdish people as a distinct national group within Iraq possessing their own language and culture. It further recognized the existence of a "Kurdish area", which by virtue of the majority of its population gave it the designation of Iraqi Kurdistan. The Autonomy Law also granted a number of national rights to the Kurds and offered them the opportunity to run their own affairs locally through autonomous government organs.\(^{31}\) At the same time, however, this Autonomy Law limited Kurdish control over natural resources and placed the security apparatus of the autonomous area under central government. The law made it clear that the Iraqi government considered the Kurdistan area and its people to be an indivisible part of Iraq.  

At the same time, aware that the solution to

\(^{30}\) Ibid, p. 186. See also Saddam Husain, On Current Affairs Al-Thawra Publication, Iraq. pp. 31,64.

\(^{31}\) Ghareeb Edmund, op, cit, p. 189.
the Kurdish problem lies beyond the achievement of military and political victory, the Ba’thist leadership has tried to win the support and loyalty of the Kurds through a peaceful process of social and economic reconstruction. The Ba’th government has implemented major economic development programs designed to appease the Kurds by transforming the economic structure of the Kurdish area and improving their conditions.\textsuperscript{32}

Saddam Husain has continued his efforts to rally Kurdish support for the autonomous process in Kurdish area. During several tours of the Kurdish area in March and August 1979 he said that the Ba’th Party was open to all Iraqis without discrimination.

The fall of Mulla Mustafa has ended the costliest war in Iraq's modern history. The government now felt free to pursue its objective at home and abroad. Externally the end of the war meant that Iraq is able to play a more effective role in regional affairs, especially in the Gulf region and in the nonaligned movement. Iraq has also embarked on major programs for industrial and agricultural development and for improving the standard of living of its people. Iraq's policy of cooperation with Arabs neighbors and the expansion of relations with the

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
Third World and with European and Latin American countries has revealed its growing role as a regional power and active member of the nonaligned movement. This is demonstrated in Iraq's decision to host the Baghdad Summit Conference, using it as a forum to explain its Arab and regional policies and in the decision to hold the non-aligned summit conference in Baghdad in 1982\textsuperscript{33}.

The granting of autonomy to the Kurds and ambitious development schemes have strengthened Iraq's hand in its confront action with the new regime in Iran. The conflict over the shatt-al Arab and the land border area was sharpened by ideological differences between the Arab nationalist and socialist regime in Baghdad and fundamentalist regime in Tehran. The Iranian leadership made no secret of its intention to export its Islamic revolution to Iraq and has supported some Kurdish and religious opponents to the Iraq regime.

Broadly speaking, Iraq has proved in practice to recognise Kurdish national rights to a greater extent than either Turkey or Iran. However, the Iraqi resort to force to resolve the Kurdish question has aroused suspicion in Kurdish nationalist circles.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid, p. 191.
CHAPTER 5
After World War II, when almost all Arab countries achieved independence, Iraq appeared to lag behind them in exercising full freedom because of her pre-war commitments to Great Britain. When General Nuri moved to rid his country of the objectionable treaty obligations to Britain in 1955 he entered into a new regional defence arrangement -- the Baghdad Pact -- in which Britain rejoined as a partner, keeping Iraq not only committed to her former ally, but also to the Western block as a whole against alleged Soviet threats to the West Asia. This was done at a time when Arab public opinion had reached a high pitch of nationalist excitement and was calling for Arab solidarity against Western support for Israel's claims to Arab lands. Consequently Arab leaders urged their countrymen to remain uncommitted in the cold war and the ideological cry for neutralism was spreading fast in the Arab world -- indeed the whole Arab-Asian block -- in which Iraq remained the committed oasis in a vast neutralist desert. Thus Nuri's principal miscalculation was in overstressing Iraq's common interests with her non-Arab neighbours at the expense of Arab solidarity on the one hand, and in entering into an alliance with the West which, by its support for Israel presented in Arab eyes a greater danger in Arab interests than the Soviet threat on the other.

Iraq's foreign policy after the Revolution of 1958, though seemingly oriented by ideological influences, was governed essentially by the same forces that shaped the foreign policy of the Old Regime. The revolutionary leaders tried to change certain foreign policy objectives but could not effect a radical departure from Iraq's traditional foreign policy. Under the Old Regime, the opposition leaders demanded Arab solidarity and neutralism in the cold war, but after the fall of the monarchy the cause of Arab solidarity was not much better off—indeed, there were occasions, when the relations between Iraq and Egypt were almost reached to the breaking point. Even today, despite the fact that Iraq and Syria are governed by branches of the same party, the relations between the two countries are highly strained. As to neutralism which was the reason given for opposition to General Nuri's policy, it was but momentarily upheld, as the revolutionary leaders learned very soon that an alliance with a Great Power has always been indispensable if Iraq's independence were to be adequately protected. They also realized that cooperation—indeed, even friendly relationship— with Iraq's non-Arab neighbours was necessary if the stability of the country and its internal unity be maintained. Some form of unity with one or more Arab countries, though a cherished aspiration of the revolutionary leaders, remained a mirage and often invited interference in Iraq's internal affairs whenever
attempts were made to bring the country into close relationship with one Arab country or another.\(^2\)

Although Iraq’s tentative attempts to disassociate itself from its leftist stance in the middle 1970’s were welcomed by most of its neighbours. Their continuing distrust and the regime’s own unpredictable and erratic behaviour meant that the process of Iraq’s reintegration into the ‘higher counsels’ of West Asian politics was somewhat uneven. However, the changing political circumstances in the region after 1973 Arab-Israeli war produced an atmosphere that put growing pressure upon Iraq to put an end to its ‘radicalism’ and to its strident extremism. In this situation the gradual weakening of ties with the Soviet Union, the new oil wealth, and the agreement concluded with Iran meant that Iraq was now in a better position to improve its relations with its neighbours and also to play a more vigorous part in the politics of the region.\(^3\)

Iraq’s relation with other Arab Gulf States have not always been smooth and friendly, owing partly to dynastic rivalries but mainly to Iraq’s territorial ambitions, particularly in Kuwait, which has alarmed other

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2. Ibid, pp. 142-43.

Gulf countries. Following the fall of the monarchy in 1958, the establishment of the republican regime in Iraq and the recurring military coups did not in themselves pose a threat, but the subsequent adoption of socialism and other radical doctrines by the Ba’th Party let alone its alliance with the Soviet Union, have aroused concern in high Gulf circles. The alarm deepened in recent years as the Ba’th regime, stressing Pan-Arab goals have shown greater interest in Gulf affairs than ever before.4

In an attempt to mollify their Arab Gulf neighbours, the Ba’th leaders assured Gulf rulers that they have no intention of interfering in their domestic affairs, least of all of undermining the ruling dynasties. They tried in vain to impress on them the need to follow an Arab Gulf policy aimed at fostering harmony and cooperation, to oppose foreign intervention and to limit immigration non-Arabs to the Arabian coast of the Gulf, which had the effect of de-Arabizing the character of the Gulf. While the Arab States shared Iraq’s concern in principle, they were suspicious of Iraq’s ambition to play the role of leader in Gulf security affairs. For this reason, it was suggested that an understanding between Iraq and Saudi Arabia was deemed necessary before embarking on an Arab Gulf policy.

The Iraqi leaders seem to have been confident that their policy would eventually meet with approval as it would promote general Arab interests and not only Iraq's own special interests. They must have also realized that such a policy could evolve only slowly and cautiously by means of direct negotiations, and it should not be imposed as a "grand design" embodying ideological goals. At the same time, Prince Fahd's visit to Baghdad in June 1975 marked the beginning of improved relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and the two countries came to an agreement on the delimitation of the neutral zone on the borders between them later in the year. In the course of his speech on the seventh anniversary of the Ba'ath seizure of power, on 17 July, 1975 al Bakr declared that 'in accordance with our clear Pan-Arab outlook we have sought to deepen understanding with the Arab countries of the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia, and to solve the issue pending with them.'

Although it was easy for the Iraqi regime to make the case that the claims of Arab brotherhood and solidarity made it imperative for it to pursue good relations with its Arab neighbours, it was both less inclined and less able to extend such cordiality to its

5. Ibid.
6. Sluglett, Marion Farouk, op., cit., p. 201.
Ba'th brothers in Syria. In order to maintain some degree of credibility it had to continue to phrase its policies in nationalist and unionist terms and appear to be more militant and more Arab than the Syrians, notably, of course, on Palestine. In this and other ways it tried to uphold its claim to the leadership of Arab radicalism throughout the latter part of the 1970’s, while simultaneously maintaining that the achievement of Arab unity was constantly being frustrated by ill-will or intransigence on the Syrian side, a charge that the Syrians were equally ready to level at Iraq. Apart from a brief explosion of ecstatic good neighbourliness, which lasted from the autumn of 1978 to July 1979. Iraq-Syrian relations between 1968 to 1980 were never particularly cordial and were in fact more often downright hostile.

However, the situation in the West Asia as a whole was greatly altered by Sadat’s decision to go to Jerusalem in November 1977, since this marked such a major departure from the previous norms of inter-Arab politics as to require a fundamental change in the ground rules; even though states that had never enjoyed particularly cordial relations with each other were obliged at least to make public profession of some form of solidarity against Sadat. These circumstances also combined to bring about a situation in which Saddam Hussain was increasingly tempted to assert

his own and Iraq’s pretentions to fill the leadership vacuum, for which, given Saudi Arabia’s more circumscribed political style, Syria was the only other serious contender. Thus readers of al-Thawra were informed in the run-up to the Baghdad Summit that ‘The eyes of the Arabs everywhere have been turned towards your great revolution in this country and to your brave party which has shouldered the trust and responsibility of the Pan-Arab struggle for over thirty [Sic] years’. Iraq’s role at the Baghdad Summit meeting and its announcement of the Arab National Declaration, aiming at achieving greater solidarity and cooperation among other countries, enhanced its position in inter-Arab affairs.

The boundary dispute between Iraq and Iran, a legacy which Iraq had inherited from the Ottoman Empire, has become more complicated by political conflicts ever since Iraq achieved independence. The Iraqi–Persian Treaty of 1937 fixed the frontier between the two countries at the low-water mark on the eastern side of Shatt al-Arab. It gave Iraq control of the waterway except the area near the Abadan and Khurram shahr where the frontier was fixed at the median line in mid-channel or the thalweg. Iran’s participation in the Baghdad Pact (1955), in which Iraq

9. Khadduri, Majid, 1988, op, cit., p. 120.
played a leading role, induced both countries to subordinate the frontier dispute to large defence plans because these were then considered necessary to oppose an impending Soviet threats to the two Royal Houses of Iraq and Iran\textsuperscript{10}.

After the fall of the Monarchy in 1958, Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact and relations between Iran and Iraq began to deteriorate. These disputes were intensified after the Ba'th party came to power in 1968 as Iraq's new rulers have shown deeper difference with Iran both in regional and international affairs. The Ba'th leaders, stressing Arab ideological goals, were determined to assert Iraqi rights and referred to the Shatt as the eastern border of the Arab homeland. Iran's hostility to Iraq's new regime was reflected in her support to opposition leaders envolved in a power struggle with Ba'thist leaders. Complaints from one side to the other were not heeded, Iran demanded that the frontier issues should be considered as a whole and Iraq insisted that these should be settled in accordance with the judicial process specified in the treaty of 1937. Since a settlement in accordance with that treaty was considered unsatisfactory to Iran, the treaty was denounced on April 19, 1969, on the ground that its provision had been violated by Iraq for many years\textsuperscript{11}.

\textsuperscript{10} Khadduri, Majid, 1978, op., cit., p. 148.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, p. 149.
A series of border clashes between Iraqi and Iranian troops took place in 1972 and 1973, especially near the Mandali area (about 60 miles north east of Baghdad), causing casualties on both sides. While direct negotiations were taking place between Iraqi and Iranian representatives, who met in Istanbul from August 13 to September 1, 1974, a new series of frontier incidents recurred which delayed the negotiations but did not interrupt them. It was, however, at a meeting of the organization of petroleum Exporting countries (OPEC) in Algiers (March 1975) that Iraq and Iran finally reached to an agreement.12

In June 1975, the foreign Ministers of Iraq and Iran met in Baghdad to sign a 'reconciliation' treaty designed to settle all outstanding differences between the two countries. The Baghdad Treaty did not merely settle border disputes, it is a landmark which ended longstanding issues between two neighbours whose cooperation was necessary for internal unity as well as for regional peace and security.13

Hardly four years had passed since Iran and Iraq had reached a peace settlement in Algiers (1975) when

12. Ibid, p. 150.
significant changes occurred in the political structure of both countries, which had an adverse effect on their newly established friendly relations. In January 1979, the Shah's regime was overthrown by Islamic Revolution; six months later, the presidency of Iraq passed from Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr to Saddam Hussain. The two regimes — the Ba'th of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran — were by their very nature prepared to engage in ideological warfare even before the hostilities commenced. Both aspired to establish new social orders, one embodying the fundamental principles and values of Islam and the other espousing modern doctrines such as nationalism, socialism and democracy.¹⁴

On a more profound level, the causes of the war stemmed from the attitudes of the two states towards the use of the force. The Iranian leadership, at that time manifestly plural or decentralized, saw the world through the eyes of their success — full revolutionary experience. They rejected the need for standing and professional military forces armed with modern, or culturally contaminating, weapons in favour of reliance on the people — their faith, their dedication and their unity. For revolutionary Iran, it was axiomatic that power came from the people against which brute military forces was useless. It was therefore, on the people of Iraq and Iran that they

¹⁴. Khadduri, Majid, 1988, op.,cit., p. 64.
relies to remove Saddam Hussain and to spread the Islamic revolution further afield.\(^\text{15}\)

The leaders of the Islamic Republic in Iran, although often speaking in the name of Islam in general, have consciously sought to promote their own particular brand of Islam into a favoured position. Iran’s stress of Shi’ism provided ample ammunition for the press and other media to engage in ideological warfare by inciting Shi’i followers in Iraq to denounce the Ba’th regime as biased against Shi’i of non-Arab descent. The extremist have gone so far as to deny the legitimacy of the Ba’th government on religious and historical grounds. The goal of Iran’s ideological warfare was and still is to enable the Shi’i community in Iraq to play a meaningful role in the country’s political system and, ultimately, to assume its leadership. To achieve this aim, the revival of Shi’i teachings and the preparation of a new generation that would undertake leadership were deemed necessary. Before the Iranian Revolution, the stress was on non-political organizations, but after the Islamic republic was established, more active organization began to work, sometimes resorting violence.\(^\text{16}\)

party) came into existence in 1965. At the outset, its goals were not political, as its activities were confined to the revival of Shi'i teachings and restricted to areas where Shi'i followers outnumbered Sunnis, such as Najaf, Karbala, Samarra, and Kazimayn. But its ultimate goal was unmistakably political, since the stress on Shi'i teachings tended to raise tensions, specially among the rank and file.¹⁷

Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr was the main spiritual leader of the Da'wa Party in 1970s. He published several books and articles on Islam covering a wide range of subjects. Outwardly, the object of his works was to reform society, irrespective of confessional differences, but the ultimate goal was obviously political and critical of the regime, by making clear that the alternative programs of reform offered by modern secular doctrines Pan-Arabism, Socialism and others - which the Ba'th have advocated, would eventually lead to the revival of confessional tensions and other forms of discrimination and injustice. At the same time, the Shi'i cleric Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, had long been seen by the regime as a focus for ideas of an alternative political order. These implicitly challenged the principles exploited by the regime to justify its hold on power, and explicitly challenged that hold when civil disorder erupted

¹⁷. Ibid.
in the Shi‘i towns of the south during the 1970s. Al-Sadr had consequently been arrested numerous times by the regime. It encouraged the belief that the disturbances in Shi‘i cities were the work of the new Iranian regime, acting through their local agents.\(^\text{18}\).

At the same time, Tehran escalated its anti-Ba‘th campaign by resuming its support for the Iraqi Kurds (which had ended in 1975), providing aid to underground Shi‘i movement (in particular the Da‘wa Party) in Iraq, and initiating attacks against prominent Iraqi officials, the most significant being the failed attempt on the life of Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi deputy premier, on April 1, 1980.

To check these pressures, Baghdad resorted to suppressing Shi‘i underground organizations, expelling Iranian citizens (as well as Iraqi citizens of Persian origin) in mass, attempting to organize a united Arab Front, and supporting Iranian separatist elements such as the Iranian Kurds and the Arabs in Khuzistan. These countermeasures failed to impress the revolutionary regime, and, responding Hussain’s pledge to take revenge for the attempt on the life of Aziz, Ayatollah Khomeini called on the Iraqi Shia on June 9, 1980 to overthrow Saddam’s government. Iran’s foreign minister, Sadegh Ghotbzadeh,

\(^{18}\) Ibid.
revealed on the same day that his government had made the decision to topple the Ba‘th regime. The same theme was reiterated two days later by the Iranian President, Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr, who also warned that Iran would go to war in the event of further deterioration in the situation on the border. In April 1980, the Iranian-Iraqi confrontation entered a new phase with clashes among the common frontier, in August these escalated into heavy fighting involving tank and artillery duels and air strikes^19.

The war has in fact evolved in a way quite other than the hoped for an desired by Saddam Hussain. Nevertheless it is remarkable that the political system upholding his leadership has been able to cope so readily, both conceptually and organizationally, with the effects of a prolonged and defensive war. However, this can largely be explained by the dual nature of that political system. On the one hand, there is a small core of ‘insiders’, relatively homogeneous even if that homogeneity has been somewhat ruthlessly created — and clustered around the figure of Saddam Hussain. These men, and the particular constituencies they in turn cultivate, are the repositories of a traditional and exclusively dispensation of power, from

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which they derive considerable benefit. On the other hand, there is the mass of ‘outsider’, who are expected to play a strictly subordinate role to the self-designated rulers. However, they are addressed by them and regimented by them in the name of a national ideal and a national struggle. The purpose of this is to create out of the mass of Iraqi’s a malleable resource for the rulers in their competition with each other or with other rulers. Though the techniques of physical elimination and role-playing on a public stage, Saddam Hussain has sought to turn the political loyalties of this very heterogeneous mass towards himself, or atleast away from any more authentic local leadership.

This was achieved against the background of the 9th, Ba’th Party Regional Congress which witnessed Saddam Hussain’s formal appropriation of the Ba’th and its ideology to serve his own ends. The process whereby his influence had become paramount within the party had, of course, been in train since 1969. There were, however, a number of longstanding members of the party who either objected to Saddam Hussain growing autocracy or who held fast to dogmatic interpretation of the proper mission of the Ba’th and its members. In neither case Saddam Hussain could tolerate these obstacles to his own absolute exercise of power. He had succeeded in disposing a number of personal...

opponents in the 1970s, at the 1982 Congress he succeeded in establishing that henceforward 'on every matter big or small [he would be] cited as the authority'. As Ofra Bengis points out:

[The more precarious Hussain's standing in the party became the more he was inclined to enforce his line of thinking and to assert this authority. This was reflected in the 'formula which the report devised as his epithet, Viz. the 'imperative leaders' --- or the leader who represents historical and national 'necessity'. Forming a dialectical relation between Hussain and the party, the report warned members that 'disregarding this necessity or deviating from its strategic line' amounted to causing intentional and direct harm to the aspirations of the party and the people and their basic interests]21.

In this respect, the myth of Iraqi nationhood and values, as well as identification of the person of Saddam Hussain himself with that 'nation, has undergone an intensification rather than a radical change under the pressure of War. At the same time, it had been noticeable that the Ba'th, especially while it came increasingly under the influence and direction of Saddam Hussain, had been encouraging Iraqis to think of themselves as the inheritors

21. Ibid., p. 90.
of a distinctive national and cultural tradition, antedating the Arab-Islamic conquests. Many of the Pan-Arabists in the Ba’th looked askance at this apparent erosion of the idea of Arab nationalism. However, for those who sought to wield power within the given territorial limits of the Iraqi State, it would be of considerable utility if the ethnically diverse inhabitants of that state could be persuaded by that they shared a common identity. Even more useful would be the belief that this common identity imposed upon them an obligation to obey the individual who claimed to embody all the qualities of the national community.  

By transforming the institutions of the State, and incidentally the Ba’th as well, into the servants of an absolute ruler, it is hoped that the dangers and contradictions of institutional autonomy in such a setting will be avoided. Having established his primacy in this sphere, the autocrat can then, on his own terms, project his own person as the embodiment of the collective ideals that define the state. These two features, of private control and public myth have been evident in Saddam Hussain’s seemingly inexorable rise to a position of primacy in Iraq.

22. Ibid., p. 94.

Although it was claimed as an historic victory, Saddam's war against Iran proved a futile and wasteful endeavour. After eight years of armed conflict, the economy was in a shambles as the cost of the war mounted, estimated at around $300 billion. The people were disillusioned and disoriented and casualties have been estimated between 250,000 and 500,000. The reconstruction bill is put at $230 billion. Moreover, Iraq's annual oil revenue had declined to $13 billion, hardly sufficient to meet the nation's budgetary requirements. Iraq had also accumulated an $80 billion-worth of foreign debts. In short, the hollowness of proud claim made at the beginning of the conflict that development and war would proceed hand in hand, began to haunt Saddam as he embarked on the construction of victory monuments in Baghdad and elsewhere in the country.  

Another dimension of the ruinous was featured prominently in Saddam's perception of his triumphant struggle against Iran. He expected the Arab World to hail him not simply as its hero but also its saviour since the war ended in the containment of Iran and the threat of its Islamic revolution. The War, so far as he was concerned, was fought on their behalf and in their defence. The moral

and material support and assistance he received from Europe and the United States during the war also convinced him that the West too owed him a debt. Arab financial aid, Soviet arms and Western technology liberally supplied to Saddam during the war allowed him to build a formidable war machine with chemical, biological and potentially nuclear weapons. However, scorned by the Arabs, rebuffed by the West, and feeling economically vulnerable to the pressures of the politics of the oil industry, its production quotas and pricing mechanism, Saddam embarked on a belligerent course to make the weight of Iraq in regional and international politics felt. Having cajoled the Arab oil producers, antagonized the West over the execution of the hapless journalist, Farzad Bazoft, the super-gun episode and the nuclear triggers affair, and with his threat to scorch half of Israel with binary chemical weapons, all in the course of a few months, he ordered the Iraqi army into Kuwait on 2 August 1990.

Ever since 'Abd al-Karim Qasim put forth Iraq's claim to the sovereignty of Kuwait after the declaration of Kuwait's independence in June 1961, relations between Iraq and Kuwait have often been strained over a variety of issues. In 1963, after Qasim's fall from power, friendly relations between Iraq and Kuwait were restored.

25. Ibid.
following a formal visit to Iraq by Shaykh Sabah Salim al-Sabah, then crown prince and Premier of Kuwait. The Crown Prince and the Prime Minister of Iraq, Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, met to affirm the existing borders between the two countries that were established in 1932.26

Upon the coming of the Ba'th Party to power in 1968, which had repudiated Qasim's territorial claims and recognized Kuwait's independence in 1963, there were high hopes in both countries that the border dispute might at last settled. Because of Iraq's conflict with Iran over the shatt al-Arab and Kuwait's readiness to support Iraq, the circumstances were considered favourable to resume negotiations over the frontiers for a final settlement.27

However, a year later a new factor entered into the situation which rendered the dispute more difficult to resolve. In 1969, it will be recalled, Iraq-Iranian relations had so deteriorated that war between the two countries was imminent. In April 1969, Iraq requested Kuwait to permit Iraqi troops to be stationed on Kuwaiti territory as part of a military force on both sides of the border to protect Umm Qasr from an impending Iranian attack. Though Kuwait was hesitant to allow the entry of Iraqi

27. Ibid., p. 155.
troops across the border, Iraq pressed her demand and both Hardan al-Takriti and Saleh Mahdi Ammash, the Iraqi Ministers of Defence and Interior, proceed to Kuwayt to request permission for the Iraqi force to be stationed on her territory.\(^\text{28}\).

Iraq rejected the validity of the agreements (in a note dated 17 May, 1973) on the ground that they have never been ratified in accordance with Iraqi constitutional procedure. Moreover, the Iraqi note stated, Kuwayt should bear in mind the radical changes of circumstances -- Iraq’s rise to full international status and the elimination of foreign influence -- and the Arab national goals to which the Ba’th and the Iraqi people have committed themselves.\(^\text{29}\).

Already before the Algiers Agreement and as early as 1973, the Ba’thist regime in Iraq had pressed Kuwayt to lease to it the uninhabited islands of Warba and Bubiyan. The acceptance of the Thalweg in 1975, and the building of a naval port in the mean time at Umm al-Qasr at the entrance of the Western estuary opposite Warba, increased Iraqis interest in this Island and in its neighbor Bubiyan. Iraqi planning envisaged the widening and extension of this Western estuary to link up north wards

\(^{28}\) Ibid.

\(^{29}\) Ibid., p. 157.
with Basra and thus provide Iraq with an alternative access to the Gulf other than Shatt-al Arab\textsuperscript{30}.

The other grievances that grew during the Iran Iraq War.

Although the grievances just mentioned remained in practical obeyance because of Iraq's preoccupation with Iran, they were, nevertheless, simultaneously being exacerbated below the surface. The issue of access to the Gulf became more acute because of the then still uncertain outcome of hostilities and the blocking of Shatt-al-Arab with the debris of war and accumulated silt. By the same token, Iraqi interest grew in a post-war alternative to Shatt-al-Arab and therefore in warba and Bubiyan. At the same time, all Kuwaiti activity along the border (for example, building of new frontier posts and oil installation) during Iraq's war with Iran was perceived by Iraq as a unilateral attempt by Kuwait to strengthen its case on the issue of the delineation of the frontier. In addition a new burgeoning grievances began to emerge based on the Iraqi perception or claim that during the hostilities with Iran, Kuwait was drawing more than its share from the common north-south Rumaila oil field, the Southern tip of

which straddled the border inland from the Gulf.\footnote{Ibid.}

The grievances that were articulated in the period between the ceasefire with Iran in August 1988 and the Jeddah Conference just prior to the invasion on 2 August.

1. **Overproduction of OPEC Quotas:** In the closed session of the head of state already referred to on the last day of the Baghdad Summit on 30 May 1990, Saddam claimed that some Gulf countries had begun early in 1990 to produce beyond their OPEC quotas to such an extent that the price in certain instances had plummeted to $7 per barrel. He claimed that every one dollar drop in the price per barrel meant a loss of one billion dollars per annum for Iraq. He explicitly stated that in Iraq's present economic state this overproduction was an "act of War". War he said, could be waged by military means by "sending armies across frontiers, by acts of sabotage, by killing people and by supporting coup detat but war can also be waged by economic means.... and what is happening is war against Iraq". He said he hoped the situation could be rectified, and hinted that the price of oil could be raised to $25 per barrel. This was the only grievance that Saddam aired at this session before his peers.
including the Emir of Kuwait. He did not mention any Arab country by name. But he made it clear that he had reached the end of his tether. "I must frankly tell you that we have reached a stage where we can no longer take any more pressure".

2. **The Iraqi Debt to Kuwait**: Aziz did not give a figure for this debt, but stated that this "assistance" from Kuwait to Iraq during its War with Iran should not be considered a "debt" and should be cancelled.

3. **The Oil Allegedly Taken from the Rumaila Field**: Aziz claimed that during 1980-1990 Kuwait pumped oil belonging to Iraq from this field, the worth of which was $2.4 billion and which Kuwait owed Iraq.

4. **Kuwait's "War" on Iraq**: Aziz claimed that Kuwait's pumping of "Iraqi" oil from Rumaila was "tantamount to an act of War". While its attempt "to effect the economic collapse" of Iraq (through overproduction) was "not less than an act of War". This was a variation on the theme propounded by Saddam on 30 May 1990.

5. **Kuwait Alleged Complicity with Foreign Powers**: Aziz claimed that the overproduction of Kuwait and UAE was synchronized with efforts of foreign powers to denigrate Iraq because of its increasing championship of the Palestinian cause and its role as a deterrent to Israel.
6. **An Arab Marshall Plan for Iraq:** Iraq claimed it was entitled to expect the Gulf countries to launch a Marshall Plan to support its recovery from the war, just as the United States had done in Europe after World War II.

There was deep shock in the Arab world when a number of Arab armies joined the U.S.-led coalition against their "Iraqi Brothers" in the Gulf War. The bitter realisation that Arabs could not solve their own problems without outside help kindled the discussion over a better Arab future.

A year later disillusionment has set in. Inter-Arab rivalry seems as strong as ever.

It seems that the Arabs have learned nothing from the Gulf War, said one expert.

Iraq and those countries that sympathised with President Saddam Hussein during the Kuwait conflict remain isolated. Yemen, Sudan, Tunisia, Algeria and the Palestinians are still being given the cold shoulder by the ambittered Gulf States.

32. Ibid., p. 11.
"Egypt and Syria are trying to perform a bridging function but have not been successful so far", said Walid el Kassiha, political science professor at the American University here.

Even the new Arab petrodollars for security system agreed by Egypt and Syria with the six Gulf States last March has flopped.

Damascus and Cairo decided to withdraw from the Gulf their 50,000 soldiers who were intended to form the core of a peace keeping.

Kuwait drew up a new security pact with United States.

"The Gulf States have increasingly withdrawn from the Arab World". There are some signs that they now wish to resuscitate the "Damascus Declaration".

The Six heads of the rich oil producing states agreed last year to create an Arab Development Fund amounting to $10 billion.

Yet a new regional security system is not now in sight. There is disagreement among the "Damascus States" over which non-Arab regional powers such as Iran, should be
brought into the process.

There are many in the Gulf who feel the feared Islamic state could be appeased by financial support. But Egypt, fearing the loss of its required leadership role, has rejected this.\textsuperscript{33}

Given the record of the violent and unexpected ends of most Iraqi regimes since the overthrow of the monarchy, it would be unwise to make any predictions about the length of time Saddam Hussein yet to rule. Such was the resilience of Hussein’s inner circle of kinmen and associates that even in the aftermath of the defeat in Kuwait, he was able to keep hold of the main sinews of power in Iraq: the intelligence services, the internal security forces and key divisions of the armed forces. Consequently, by early April 1992, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) could boast of having crushed ‘the acts of sedition, sabotage and rioting in all towns of Iraq of having defeated the plotting of the ‘US-Atlantic Zionist aggression’ or ‘30-state aggression’ that had ‘sought to turn this unified, secure and lofty country into another Lebanon, to be enmeshed and crushed by Sectarian religious and racial conflicts.’\textsuperscript{34}


It is quite conceivable that many Iraqis, despite their misgivings about the competence, let alone the legitimacy of Saddam Hussain's regime, are ready to believe their government's thesis that Iraq had been singled out for severe treatment. It was certainly a theme that the Iraqi authorities and media have returned to again and again in the year following the defeat in Kuwait, harking back not only to the 'Mother of all Battles' but also pointing to the continued disabilities under which Iraq suffered: the UN-imposed economic blockade; the UN-supervised destruction of Iraq's nuclear, chemicals and biological weapons facilities, as well as its missiles; and the effective autonomy of much of Kurdistan under allied supervision. Regardless of Whether Iraq's cared much about the last two aspects of Iraq's predicament, all were affected by its economic plight and were as likely to blame the international community as the force that had provoked these measures in the first place.35.

However, even in the cases in which the Iraqis identified the regime as the main culprit, there did not seem to be a great deal they could do about it. Saddam Hussain had reestablished the security and intelligence network that has always constituted the final underpinning of his regime, ensuring that his kinsmen play a prominent

35. Ibid.
and vital part therein. By the end of 1991, one half brother, wathban Ibrahim al-Hassan, had been appointed minister of the interior, whilst another, Sabawji Ibrahim, was given over all responsibility for the domestic intelligence services. Reportedly one of the Saddam Hussain’s sons, Qusay, was placed in charge of a newly created-tribally based special force, trained to counter the growing number of attacks on police and army posts in the towns of the southern provinces.36

It appears therefore, that Saddam Hussain’s strategies of consolidating the centre, reestablishing the networks of patronage and kinship control and challenging the international community but not risking open defiance, have largely succeeded. It is in the nature of such strategies, of course, that they do not guarantee long term survival, but Hussain has always acted upon the principle that if he can make the necessary dispositions to survive in the short term, the long term will look after itself. The issue that must concern Iraq’s neighbours, however is whether this preoccupation with the political survival of his regime will lead him, as in the past, to turn his attention to those in the region who appear to threaten that survival and, furthermore, if that should happen, whether he will have the where withal to do anything about it.37

36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
The fears for the immediate future must revolve around the intentions of Saddam Hussain and the regime he has constructed in Iraq. However, in the medium to long term, Iraq's neighbours have reason to be fearful of the developments that might occur in Iraqi politics after the demise of Hussain himself. When contemplating the shape of Iraqi politics after the fall of the present regime, two possibilities seem to emerge in the debate.

The first might be called the sceptical or pessimistic views. It suggests that, whatever the circumstances of Saddam Hussain's fall, there will eventually emerge a regime not dissimilar to that of Hussain. That is, it will be a neo-patrimonial system, relying on kinship ties and patronage networks, led either by a military strongman or by a group of powerful figures who can command loyalty within the armed forces and within those sections of Iraqi society that have hitherto supported the Saddam Hussein regime. It may not be as brutal as the regime of Saddam Hussein, it may even initially adopt a facade of openness but the principle of authoritarian, personalised and unrepresentative government will lie at its heart. This view is founded on the belief that the regime of Saddam Hussein and his Kinsmen is no more than the product of the forces that characterize Iraqi society, and Hussain himself has ensured that the same forces will
continue to be the sole foundation for the successful exercise of power in Iraq. Whatever principles may be adhered to in public, to neglect the powerful clannishners and the patron-client networks of Iraqi society is to commit political suicide.

This leads to the second, more hopeful and optimistic vision of Iraq's political future. Basing itself largely on the public declarations of the many Iraqi opposition parties, this view assert that all opposition members, of whatever ideological have now committed themselves to the establishment of a liberal democratic government in Iraq. The argument is founded on two central beliefs. First, that the Iraqis, as a whole, are sick of dictatorship and long for a more open and representative government; second, that the opposition parties themselves have realized that a representative system is not only the most desirable, but also the most practical means of governing Iraq. Encouraged by recent experiences in Kurdistan, the suggestion is that there exists a capacity among Iraqi to set aside ethnic, sectarian and tribal division of society and to escape from the effects of divisive strategies pursued by all previous Iraqi regime.38

There are many ways of trying to assess the global impact of Iraq's defeat at the hands of the U.S. in

38. Ibid.
the recent Gulf conflict. One can attempt the most comprehensive of surveys focusing in turn, on the implication of the war for each of the major actors, whether regional or extra-regional, whether state or non-state and then seeking to leave together these intersecting relationship into an overall tapestry of the world political scene.

In respect of the U.S. objective, the outcome of the war carries much more mixed consequences challenges to pro-U.S. intermediaries come from Arab nationalism in both its secular and non-secular forms and from the rise of any potential regional rival to Israil. It is necessary to clarify the issue and to dispose of some of the arguments against attaching due weight to Arab nationalism. It is indubitably the case that Arab nationalism is itself vitiated by the specific nationalisms of different nations. Thus, despite widespread popular sympathy for Mr. Saddam Hussain in his confrontation with the U.S. even those Arab countries most opposed to the behaviour of the U.S. led coalition did little beyond verbal protest. Time and again efforts at forging a large Arab nation have fallen through it also can not be denied that Anwar Sadat's peace initiative with Israel, although it represented an enormous setback to Palestinian aspirations, was widely welcomed by the Egyptian public for the territories it restored to the nation. There has not been one Arab Government including
Mr. Saddam Hussein's which has not been cynical in its manipulation of the Palestine issue\textsuperscript{39}.

Nevertheless, Arab nationalism exists and Palestine continues to represent its cutting edge. The importance of Arab nationalism and its discomfort for the U.S. and Israel lies not so much in its potential for generating wider Arab unity as in its capacity to disturb the existing patterns of Western, especially U.S. Control in the region, it is changing manifestation and its periodic exuberances threaten to alter the existing, established on therefore, stable arrangements or regional patterns through which the West/U.S. must operate in order to secure its control on influence\textsuperscript{40}.

It is not an argument to say that ultimately these periodic expressions -- Iraqi posture as champion of Arab nationalism or Iran as the vanguard of an Islamic nationalism are ultimately amenable to cooperation with the U.S. or incorporation in an eventual Western dominated arrangement. The point is precisely the instability created in the period (often prolonged) from initial challenge to the U.S. and ultimate institutionalisation of accommodation to it. This institutionalization is adversely effected by

\textsuperscript{39} Achin Vanaik, Global Impact of Iraqi defeat, The Hindu, 30 April 1991.

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
periodic outbursts of anti-Israeli and 'temporary' anti-Western fervour of the kind associated for example, with the rise of Islamic fundamentalism.

American success in the war has achieved little. The internal arrangements of its client Arab nations have been badly shaken and they will not re-establish themselves easily. The Palestine question continues to fester and an increasingly embittered Palestinian diaspora and West Bank populace will continue to make its presence felt in uncomfortable way for the West, Israel and the U.S.\textsuperscript{41}.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.
CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION

The present study tries to outline the aims of the revolutionary changes in Iraq since its inception and when the Ba'th Party came to power for a few months and the emerging trends that might ultimately lead to the establishment of a progressive and enduring political system which would command the greatest public appeal. That political system, it was suggested, should be based on a set of principles that have become overriding political thinking, such as nationalism and socialism -- presumably along secular lines -- and a measure of individual freedom. A new form of representation by virtue of which the public can participate in political processes is deemed necessary to provide legitimacy and inspire public confidence. These were the trends of thought in Iraq when the Ba'th Party fully achieved power in 1968 and its leaders promised to give them practical expression and provide the country with a stable regime capable of achieving cherished national goal.

Has the Ba'th Party accomplished any of these goals during the decade since it achieved power? To begin with, Iraq has experienced a series of military revolutions since 1958 which introduced violence as a method of political change and it had become exceedingly difficult to maintain public order and establish an enduring regime. Upon achieving power, the Ba'th leaders were determined to
put an end to violent changes and erect a regime immune to military intervention. In the past despite several attempts to overthrow the regime (i.e. the abortive coups of 1970 and 1973) the Ba’th leaders have not only been able to discourage military intervention but have also succeeded in relieving the political process from military pressures. The Ba’th Party endeavors to bring if it has not already brought — the Army under its control and hopes that its tenure of office will depend on civil rather than military support. The army seemed to have accommodated to party discipline by the recruitment of an increasing number of young Ba’th members into its ranks. Moreover, a number of Army officers have been induced to join the Ba’th Party and a growing fraternization between military institutions and top Ba’th leaders has become noticeable. Today even strikes and popular demonstrations that often recurred and disturbed public order are no longer feasible. For this reason even political opponents, though they often voice certain grievances against restrictions of political opinion, have paid a high tribute to the Ba’th Party’s ability to thwart military interventions and maintain stability and public order.

The first step in the right direction toward political participation was the establishment of the progressive National Front, composed first of two parties — the Ba’th and the Communist Parties — and then of other
"Progressive" parties and groups. Though in theory the prograssive National Front of 1972 claimed to have a much wider popular base than the constituency of the Ba’th Party — indeed, it could only marginally claim the loyalty of all elements represented in the Front, in reality, however, the Ba’th Party alone was held responsible for political decisions.

Today perhaps a more important instrument to enlist popular participation would be a functional National Assembly in which various shades of opinion be allowed to represent. The temporary constitution indeed has provided for such an Assembly but the relevant articles of the constitution (Articles 46-55) have not yet been implemented. Leaders of various groups and national organizations prepared to cooperate within the framework of the regime seem to be awaiting the opportunity to express their views through an elected organ but plans for holding of elections have not yet been laid down.

The Ba’th leaders have shown a greater enthusiasm in emphasizing "reconstruction" by planning and economic development than in the granting of freedom and political participation on the ground that no real progress and stability in the country can be achieved before poverty and other forms of deprivation were wiped out. Ba’th socialism, it is held, is designed to improve social and
economic conditions as a prerequisite to other ultimate objectives — democracy, freedom and Arab Unity."

The 1991 war and its aftermath brought to the surface an emotional unity Wihdathal (Unity of situation) among the Arabs. The sympathy expressed by many Arabs for Saddam and for his invasion and occupation of Kuwait, indicates that many Arabs do not take for granted the boundaries between Arab states because they do not consider the divisions of the Arab world to be permanent. In the Arab public eye, some borders are less popular than others. the borders that insulate the Gulf royal families and their fortunes are very unpopular and the elimination of the Gulf political orders and elites is desirable in the eyes of many Arabs.

Arab nationalism now consists of two major ideas; first, the notion that the Arabs share common sentiments and cultural and linguistic heritage and for some, a religious heritage, second the idea that some of the borders between Arabs state are not only artificial but also undesirable. There are various arguments that Arabs promote regarding the efficacy of Arab nationalism. For Faysal Darraj the well known Palestinian writer, the crises in Arab contemporary history do not underscore the divisions between the Arab people, rather they underline the schism between "the people" and "the regimes". The repurcussion of the
Gulf war, according to Darraj, sharpened the divisions between the people and the regimes but not among the Arab people themselves.

For Darraj and many Arab nationalist writers, the division of the Arab world into separate states has only served the interests of those Western powers who feared Arab unification and power. Furthermore, some modern Arab nation—states are seen as being closely associated with the interests of both Western powers and Arab ruling families and groups and are regarded as subservient to those interests. The response of many Arab officials to the attempt by the Iraqi regime to eliminate the Kuwaiti political entity was strikingly different from the enthusiasms expressed among the Arab masses to the disaster that befell Kuwait. Arab public dissatisfaction with oppressive system in most if not all—Arab countries lead many Arabs to link oppressiveness with the regional (iqlimi) fragmentation of the Arab world.

The current intellectual debate about Arab nationalism entails no illusions and obstacles in the path of Arab—Partial or full—unification. The opposition by Western powers and Israel to the goal of Arab unity appears to increase, not decrease, the popularity of the idea. In an unusual communique circulated in Syria in January 1991, noted Arab intellectuals expressed their opposition to the
Gulf war and affirmed their faith in collective Arab action and in the necessity of "Arab Power". To many Arabs, the United States fixation with Iraqi military capabilities is indicative of Western fears of Arab military and political power. In other words the sympathy that many Arabs expressed for Saddam was not so much directed toward his person but toward his military apparatus, of which many Arabs in the epoch of defeat and despair were proud.

Unlike the nostalgic Arab nationalism harking back to the Baghdad of Harun al-Rashid, Arab nationalism today does not aspire to achieve glory and greatness, two words that appeared frequently in the Arab nationalist literature of the first part of this century. Many Arabs simply took for greater ease of population movement within the Arab world without worrying about the watchful cruel eyes of the mukhabarats (intelligence networks).

In the present phase invariably Arabs are united by the concept of wihdat al-masa'ib (Unity of disasters). Unity is expressed in various ways and in different degrees because of the varied oppressive conditions in the Arab world. The Gulf Governments for example, were and still are intolerant of expression of dissent, as are Egyptian, Syrian and Iraqi Governments. Iraqis who strongly expressed their staunch opposition to the tyranny of Saddam Hussain were later oppressed by Iraqi
troops, to the indifference of the world community.

In a society where kinship, communal, tribal and other primordial loyalties prevail, the Ba’th has attached considerable value to the mystique of being an Arab. The self-assertion of his Arab identity would awaken the nationalist consciousness that lay dormant and trigger off automatic processes for self realization as an Arab nationalist. It is clear that Ba’thists are not prepared to distinguish between the individual being a national of the state and a nationalist.

However, the over-emphasis on people rather than territory, and nationality rather than citizenship, makes Ba’thist doctrine repressive as its strives for the assimilation of heterogeneous communities so that everyone conforms to its militant nationalist requirements. It is a recipe for the establishment of authoritarian rule under the control of a totalitarian party.

The present Ba’thist regime is more intensely ideological and Arab nationalist, and has an over projected ambition of transforming Iraq into a modern and secular state as a part of the Arab world. The reality is in fact, far from it. In the final analysis it can be said that devis the process of nation - building in Iraq already in precarious and uncertain condition. The task for Arab
intellectuals and many among the masses is to link the goal of Arab unity with the crucial issues of democratization and Islam. This affirms the point that the political and social process in Iraq are not autonomous but are effected by the movements and ambitions of the countries both inside and outside the region.

Recent developments in the Arab world have caused many people to switch their focus from secular ideologies such as Arab nationalism, Ba’thism and socialism to Islamic oriented thinking. Arab nationalism has been associated with political failure and defeat. The climax of this failure occurred in the war against Israel and the recent Iraqi invasion of Kuwait further more, Islamic revivalist movements have de-emphasized Arab nationalism in favour of Islamic nationalism in their socio-political activities. Islam has provided Arabs with a sense of distinctive identity. Due to the failure of other ideologies, most Arabs consider Islam to be the only viable ideology that can strengthen the Arab world.
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APPENDIX—A
APPENDIX-A

THE INTERIM CONSTITUTION

PART ONE

THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

ARTICLE-1

Iraq is a Sovereign People’s Democratic Republic: its principal aim is to achieve the United Arab State and establish the Socialist system.

ARTICLE-2

The People is the source of authority and its legitimacy.

ARTICLE-3

(a). Sovereignty of Iraq is an indivisible unit.

(b). The land of Iraq is an indivisible unit and no part of it shall be relinquished.

ARTICLE-4

Islam is the religion of the State.

ARTICLE-5

(a) Iraq is part of the Arab Nation.

(b) The People of Iraq is formed of two principal nationalities, the Arab nationality and the Kurdish nationality. This Constitution shall recognize the national rights of the Kurdish People and the legitimate rights of all minorities within the
unity of Iraq.

ARTICLE-6

The Iraqi nationality and its rulings shall be determined by the law.

ARTICLE-7

(a) Arabic is the official language.

(b) The Kurdish language, in addition to the Arabic language, shall be the official language in the Kurdish Region.

ARTICLE-8

(a). Baghdad is the Capital of the Republic of Iraq, and it may be shifted by a law.

(b). The Republic of Iraq shall be divided into administrative units which shall be organised on the basis of decentralization.

(c). The area whose majority of population is from Kurds shall enjoy autonomy in accordance with what is defined by the law.

ARTICLE-9

The Flag and the Emblem of the Republic of Iraq and the rules pertaining to them shall be specified by a law.
PART TWO

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BASES OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

ARTICLE-10

Social solidarity is the foremost foundation for society. Its implication is that every citizen shall perform fully his duty towards society and that society shall ensure to the citizen his full rights and freedoms.

ARTICLE-11

The family is the nucleus of society. The State shall guarantee its protection and support, and shall foster maternity and childhood.

ARTICLE-12

The State shall undertake planning, directing and guiding the national economy in accordance with the following aims:

(a). Establishing the socialist system on scientific and revolutionary principles.

(b). Achieving Arab economic unit.

ARTICLE-13

National resources and fundamental instruments of production are the property of the People, and the central authority of the Republic of Iraq shall employ them directly in accordance with the requirements of the general planning of the national economy.
ARTICLE-14

The State shall ensure, promote and support all kinds of cooperation in production, distribution and consumption.

ARTICLE-15

Public properties and the properties of the public sector shall have special inviolability, which the State and all citizens have to maintain and guarantee their security and protection. Any subversion or attack on it shall be regarded as an attack on the structure of society and a violence to it.

ARTICLE-16

(a). Ownership is a social function which shall be exercised within the limits of society's aims and the State's programmes in accordance with the provisions of the law.

(b). Private ownership and individual economic freedom shall be guaranteed within the limits of the law provided that individual ownership will not contradict or be detrimental to general economic planning.

(c). Private property shall not be expropriated except for the public interest and in accordance with just compensation in accordance with the provisions of the law.
(d). The maximum agricultural ownership shall be defined by the law and the excess shall be regarded as the property of the People.

**ARTICLE-17**

Inheritance is a recognized right regulated by a law.

**ARTICLE-18**

Real estate ownership is forbidden to non-Iraqis except in cases specified by a law.
ARTICLE-19

(a). All citizens are equal before the law, without distinction on the basis of race, origin, language, class or religion.

(b). Equal opportunities for all citizens shall be guaranteed within the limits of the law.

ARTICLE-20

(a). The accused is innocent until he is declared guilty by judicial procedure.

(b). The right to defense is sacred in all processes of investigation and trial in accordance with the provisions of the law.

(c). All trials shall be open to the public unless declared in Camera.

ARTICLE-21

(a). Penalty is personal.

(b). There shall be no offence or penalty except as defined by a law. No penalty shall be imposed except on an act deemed by the law as an offence at the time of its commission. No more severe penalty than the penalty enforced at the time of committing the offence shall be applied.
ARTICLE-22

(a). The dignity of Man is guaranteed. Any kind of physical or psychological torture shall be prohibited.

(b). No one may be arrested, detained, imprisoned or searched except in accordance with the provisions of the law.

(c). Homes are inviolable. They may not be entered or searched except as specified by the law.

ARTICLE-23

Privacy of mail, telegraphic and telephone correspondence shall be guaranteed, and it shall not be violated except for reasons of public security in accordance with the limits and the rules provided by the law.

ARTICLE-24

No citizen shall be prevented from travel outside the country or from returning thereto and no restriction shall be imposed on his moving and residence inside the country except in the cases defined by the law.

ARTICLE-25

Freedom of religion, beliefs and exercise of religious ceremonies shall be guaranteed, provided that this freedom shall neither contradict the provisions of the Constitution and the law nor violate morality and public order.
ARTICLE-26

The Constitution shall guarantee freedom of opinion, publication, meeting, demonstration, forming of political parties, unions and societies in accordance with the aims of the Constitution and within the limits of the law. The State shall endeavour to provide the means required for exercising these freedoms, which run in line with the nationalist and progressive line of the Revolution.

ARTICLE-27

(a). The State shall undertake to eliminate illiteracy and ensure the right of free-of-charge education in various elementary, secondary and university levels to all citizens.

(b). The State shall endeavour to make elementary education compulsory, expand vocational and technical education in all towns and villages and particularly promote evening education which enables the popular masses to correlate knowledge between science and labour.

(c). The State shall guarantee freedom of scientific research, promote and reward distinction and creativity in all intellectual, scientific and technical activities and all kinds of popular genius.
ARTICLE-28

Education shall aim at raising and developing the general cultural level, developing the scientific thinking, encouraging the spirit of research, fulfilling the requirements of economic and social development programmes, creating a free nationalist and progressive generation solid in structure and character, which takes pride in its people, its homeland and its legacy, sympathises with the rights of all its nationalities and opposes the doctrines of capitalism, exploitation, reaction, Zionism and colonialism in order to achieve Arab unit, freedom and socialism.

ARTICLE-29

The State shall endeavour to provide the means of enjoying the achievements of modern civilization for the masses of the people and generalize the progressive outputs of modern civilization to all citizens.

ARTICLE-30

(a). Public office is a sacred trust and a social service, whose principal attribute is a loyal obligation to protect the interests of the masses, their rights and freedoms in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the law.

(b). Equality of employment in public office shall be guaranteed by the law.
ARTICLE-31

(a). Defence of the homeland is a sacred duty and an honour bestowed to the citizen. Service to the Flag is compulsory and the law shall organize the manner of its performance.

(b). The Armed Forces are the property of the people, and they are the People's tool for preserving its security, defending its independence, protecting the people's and the homeland's safety and unity and achieving its national and patriotic aims and aspirations.

(c). The State alone shall undertake to establish Armed Forces, and no body or group shall be entitled to establish military or para-military formations.

ARTICLE-32

(a). Work is a right which the State shall undertake to provide to every citizen capable of it.

(b). Work is an honour and a sacred duty imposed on every capable citizen. It is required by the necessity of participation in building society and its protection, development and prosperity.

(c). The State shall undertake to improve conditions of work and promote standards of living, expertise and culture for all working citizens.
(d). The State shall undertake to provide wider social
ensurances for all citizens in case of sickness,
disability, unemployment and old age.

(e). The State shall edeavour to organize the programme
and ensure the necessary means which enable
working citizens to spend their leaves in an
atmosphere that helps them to improve their health
standards and develop their cultural and
techniacaql gifts.

ARTICLE-33

The State shall undertake to protect public health
through continuous expansion of free-of-charge medical
services, whether by prevention, treatment or medicine, in
all cities, towns and villages.

ARTICLE-34

(a). The Republic of Iraq shall grant political asylum
to all persons persecuted in their countries
because of their struggle in the defense of human
liberation principles, which the Iraqi People has
accepted under this Constitution.

(b). Political refugees shall not be delivered.

ARTICLE-35

Payment of taxes is a duty imposed on all citizens.
Taxes may not be imposed, amended or levied except by a law.
ARTICLE-36

An activity which contradicts the aims of the people defined in this Constitution and any act of conduct aiming at undermining the national unity of the masses of the people, provoking racial or sectarian or regional bigotry among their ranks, or violating their progressive gains and achievements, shall be prohibited.
ARTICLE-37

The Revolutionary Command Council is the supreme body in the State, which has undertaken since the 17th. of July, 1968, the responsibility of achieving the people's public will by stripping power from the reactionary, distatorial, corrupt system and restoring it to the people.

ARTICLE-38

The Revolutionary Command Council shall exercise, by a majority of two thirds of its members, the following powers:

(a). Elect the Chairman from among its members who shall be designated as the Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council and President of the Republic.

(b). Elect the Vice-Chairman from among its members who shall be designated as Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council and take the place of the Chairman in case of his official absence or his exercise of his constitutional powers becomes difficult or impossible for any legal reason.
(c). Select new members to the Council from among the Regional Command of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, provided that its members shall not exceed twelve.

(d). Accept the resignation of the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman or any of the Council's members.

(e). Release any of its members from membership of the Council.

(f). Charge and send to trial any members of the Revolutionary Command Council, or any deputy of the President of the Republic or any Ministers.

**ARTICLE-39**

The Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Members of the Revolutionary Command Council shall take the following oath before the Council:

"I swear by Almighty God, by my honour and belief to preserve the Republican Regime and abide by its Constitution and laws, protect the people's interests, safeguard the homeland's independence and safety and integrity of its lands and endeavor with full sacrifice and loyalty to fulfil the Arab Nation's aims of unity, freedom and socialism".
ARTICLE-40

The Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Members of the Revolutionary Command Council shall enjoy full immunity and no measure may be taken against anyone of them except by prior permission from the Council.

ARTICLE-41

(a). The Revolutionary Command Council shall convene at the invitation of its Chairman or Vice-Chairman or one third of its members. Its sessions shall be convened under the presidency of the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman and the presence of the majority of its members.

(b). Meetings and discussions of the Revolutionary Commands Council are in camera; their disclosure shall be subject to constitutional inquiry before the Council. Announcement, publication and notification of the decisions of the Council shall be performed by the manners provided in this Constitution.

(c). Laws and resolutions shall be approved in the Council by the majority of its members, except in the cases otherwise provided in this Constitution.

ARTICLE-42

The Revolutionary Command Council shall exercise the following powers:
(a). Promulgate laws and decrees which have the power of the law.

(b). Issue decrees required by the necessities of applying the provisions of the enforced laws.

ARTICLE-43

The Revolutionary Command Council shall exercise, by the majority of its members, the following powers:

(a). Approve recommendations of the Ministry of Defence and public security, initiate laws and adopt resolutions concerning them in respect to organization and jurisdictions.

(b). Declare general mobilization partially or fully, declare war accept armistice and conclude peace.

(c). Approve the draft of general budget of the State and the independent and investment budgets annexed thereto and the credit of the final accounts.

(d). Ratify international treaties and agreement.

(e). Provide the internal regulations of the Council, define its cadre, approve its budget, appoint its officials and specify remunerations and allowances of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the members and the officials.
(f). Lay down the rules for the trial of its members and setting up the court and the procedures which must be followed.

(g). Authorize its Chairman or the Vice-Chairman to exercise some of its powers provided in this Constitution except legislative powers.

ARTICLE-44

The Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council shall undertake the following:

(a). Preside over the meetings of the Council, represent it, conduct its sessions and order expenditure therein.

(b). Sign all laws and resolutions promulgated by the Council and their publication in the Official Gazette.

(c). Supervise the works of the Ministers and Institutions of the State, call the Ministers for conferring on the affairs of their Ministries, interrogate them when necessary and inform the Revolutionary Command Council thereof.

ARTICLE-45

Each of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and Members of the Revolutionary Command Council shall be responsible before the Council for violating the Constitution, for
violating the obligations of the Constitutional oath or for any act or conduct which the Council deems as detrimental to the honour of responsibility which he exercises.

ARTICLE-46

A Higher Financial Comptrolling Authority shall be established and attached to the Revolutionary Command Council. Its head and the rules of its functions shall be regulated by a law.
CHAPTER TWO

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The National Assembly shall consist of the representatives of the people in all its political, economic and social sectors. Its formation, manner of membership, process of work in it and its powers shall be defined by a special law, namely, the National Assembly Law.

ARTICLE-48

The National Assembly must meet in two ordinary sessions each year. The Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council is entitled to call the Assembly for an extra-ordinary meeting whenever required, and the meeting shall be confined to the subjects for which it is called. Sessions of the National Assembly shall be convened and concluded by a resolution issued by the Revolutionary Command Council.

ARTICLE-49

Sessions of the Assembly shall be conducted publicly unless it is decided to convene some of them in camera in accordance with the provisions of its law.

ARTICLE-50

(a). Members of the National Assembly may not be questioned over the opinions and suggestions they introduce during their exercise of the tasks of their posts.
(b). None of the members of the Assembly may be pursued or arrested for an offence committed during the meetings without obtaining the Assembly's permission, except in case of being held in the act of crime.

ARTICLE-51
The National Assembly shall undertake to:
(a). Lay down its internal regulations, specify its cadre, approve its budget and appoint its personnel. Remunerations and allowances of its President and Members shall be defined by a law.

(b). Provide the rules for charging and trying its members in case of their committing one of the acts provided in Article 56 of this Constitution.

ARTICLE-52
The National Assembly shall consider the draft laws proposed by the Revolutionary Command Council within a period of fifteen days from the date of their arrival to the bureau of the National Assembly's Presidency. If the Assembly approves the draft, it shall be submitted to the President of the Republic, to promulgate it. But if the National Assembly rejected or amended it, it shall be returned to the Revolutionary Command Council. If the amendment were approved by the Revolutionary Command Council, it shall be submitted to the President to
promulgate it. But if the Revolutionary Command Council insists on its opinion in the second reading, the draft shall be returned to the National Assembly to be presented in a joint sitting of the Council and the Assembly. The decision issued by the majority of two thirds shall be considered as final.

ARTICLE-53

The National Assembly shall consider, within a period of fifteen days, the draft Laws forwarded to it by the President of the Republic. If the Assembly rejects the draft, it shall be returned to the President of the Republic with the statement of the reasons of rejection. But if the Revolutionary Command Council and if it approves the draft, then it shall be liable for promulgation. But if the National Assembly amends the draft, then it shall be submitted to the Revolutionary Command Council, and if it approves the draft, it shall be liable for promulgation. But if the Revolutionary Command Council rejects the amendment or makes another amendment, it shall be returned again to the National Assembly within one week. If the National Assembly adopts the opinion of the Revolutionary Command Council, the draft shall be submitted to the President of the Republic for promulgation. But if the National Assembly insists, in the second reading, on its opinion, then a joint sitting of the Council and the Assembly shall be held, and the draft adopted by the majority of two
thirds shall be considered as final, and it shall be submitted to the President of the Republic for promulgation.

ARTICLE 54

The National Assembly shall consider draft laws presented by one quarter of its members in affairs other than military matters and public security affairs.

If the Assembly approves the draft law, it shall be submitted to the Revolutionary Command Council to consider it within fifteen days from the date of its arrival to the Council’s Bureau.

If it is approved by the Revolutionary Command Council, it shall be submitted to the President of the Republic for promulgation.

But if the Revolutionary Command Council rejects or amends it, the draft shall be returned to the National Assembly. If the latter insists on its opinion, in the second reading, a joint session of the Council and the Assembly shall be convened under the presidency of the Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council or his Deputy. The draft issued by the majority of two thirds shall be considered as final and shall be submitted to the President of the Republic for promulgation.

ARTICLE 55

(a). Deputies of the President of the Republic and the Ministers and those who are in ranks similar to
them shall be entitled to attend the meetings of the National Assembly and participate in discussions.

(b). The National Assembly may, after the approval of the President of the Republic, call the Ministers in order to make an enquiry or explanation.

ARTICLE-56

The President of the National Assembly and every member in it are held responsible before the Assembly for violating the Constitution, perjuring the obligations of the Constitutional oath or for any act or conduct the National Assembly deems as detrimental to the honour of responsibility he exercises.
CHAPTER THREE

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

ARTICLE-57

(a). The President of the Republic is the President of the State and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He shall undertake the executive power directly or through the Council of Ministers.

(b). The President of the Republic shall promulgate the necessary ordinances for exercising his powers as prescribed in this Constitution.

ARTICLE-58

The President of the Republic shall directly exercise the following powers:

(a). Preserve the independence of the country and integrity of its lands, protect its interior and exterior security and protect the rights and freedom of citizens.

(b). Supervise the application of the Constitution, laws, resolutions, judicial decisions and development projects in all parts of the Republic of Iraq.

(c). Appoint Deputies for the President of the Republic and release them from their posts.
(d). Appoint the Ministers and release them from their posts.

(e). Appoint civil and religious judges and civil and military officials of the State, and terminate their services in accordance with the law.

(f). Appoint and accredit Iraqi diplomatic representatives in the Arab and foreign countries, and in international conferences and organizations.

(g). Grant military ranks and medals in accordance with the law.

(h). Hold negotiations and conclude international agreements and treaties.

(i). Accept diplomatic and international representatives and demand their withdrawal.

(j). Approve capital punishments and issue special amnesty.

(k). Direct the control of the work of the Ministries and general institutions and coordinate them.

ARTICLE-59

Deputies of the President of the Republic and the Ministers shall be held responsible before the President of the Republic for their works, and he is entitled to refer
any one of them to trial, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, for functional errors committed, for taking advantage of, or abusive use of, his powers.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

ARTICLE-60

(a). The Council of Ministers shall consist of the Ministers and be presided over by the President of the Republic.

(b). The President of the Republic shall call the Council of Ministers to meet and conduct its meetings.

ARTICLE-61

The Council of Ministers shall exercise the following powers:

(a). Initiate draft laws and refer them to the proper legislative authority.

(b). Issue administrative regulations and decisions in accordance with the law.

(c). Appoint civil officials of the State and promote them, in accordance with the law.

(d). Submit the general plan of the State.

(e). Submit the general budget of the State and the budgets annexed to it.

(f). Conclude and grant loans, and supervise organizing and administering currency.
(g). Declare a full or partial emergency and terminate it in accordance with the law.

(h). Supervise general utilities and official and semi-official institutions.
CHAPTER FIVE
THE JUDICIARY

ARTICLE-62

(a). The Judiciary is independent and no power shall be exercised over it except the law.

(b). The right to litigation shall be guaranteed to all citizens.

(c). The law shall define the manner of courts formation, their grades, jurisdictions, stipulations for appointing civil and religious judges, transferring and promoting them, litigating and retiring them.

ARTICLE-63

The law shall define the posts of the Public Prosecution, its stipulations for appointing Public Prosecutors and their deputies and the rules for transferring and promoting them, litigating and retiring them.
PART FIVE

GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE-64

(a). No one shall be member of the Revolutionary Command Council and no one shall be deputy to the President of the Republic or Minister except whoever is Iraqi by birth and from Iraqi parents by birth also.

(b). Members of the Revolutionary Command Council, deputies to the President of the Republic and the Ministers shall not exercise a free profession or a commercial business, or purchase from the state properties, sell to the State some of their properties, or barter for them while holding their posts.

ARTICLE-65

(a). The provisions of this Constitution shall remain in force until the Permanent Constitution is promulgated.

(b). This Constitution shall not be amended except by the Revolutionary Command Council by a majority of two thirds of its members.

ARTICLE-66

(a). Laws shall be published in the Official Gazette
and shall come into force from the date of their publication except otherwise provided therein.

(b). Laws shall have no retroactive effect except if otherwise provided therein and this exclusion shall not include Criminal Laws and laws of taxes and financial dues.

ARTICLE-67

This interim Constitution, the laws and judicial decisions shall be promulgated and executed in the name of the people.

ARTICLE-68

All laws and resolutions of the Revolutionary Command Council enforced prior to the promulgation of this Constitution shall remain in force and they may not be amended or abrogated except through the manner provided in this Constitution.

ARTICLE-69

The Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council shall undertake the promulgation of this constitution and its publication in the Official Gazette.
INTRODUCTION:

Following are the general decisions of the Sixth National Convention of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party:

The struggle of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party has been continuous for approximately twenty years. During this period the people, led by the party, have offered many martyrs at the altar of the struggle for Arab national unity, liberty, and socialism. The Arab Ba'th Socialist party was able to outline the course of the Arab struggle with precision and understanding. It was able to crystallize the desires and goals of the Arab peoples in two spheres: the national sphere and the Socialist sphere. Furthermore, the party was able, during the negative aspects of the struggle, to incarnate the Arab people's ambitions and their revulsion toward the underdeveloped, exploited, and dismembered Arab present.

During twenty years of struggle the party has been able to incorporate itself truthfully in the struggle of the Arab peoples. It was able to lead successfully such struggles in Syria and Iraq; to deprive aristocracy, reactionaries, and the bourgeoisie of the leadership of Arab
nationalism, to convert the nationalist movement into the momentum of the struggle of the millions. This party promises the Arab masses to walk side by side with them unhesitatingly and untiringly in their nationalist struggle for Arab unity.

The party has been able to bring into the Arab nationalist movement the spirit of the modern age. It has accomplished this by tying its interests to those of the struggling masses and by linking together the nationalist and socialist revolutions. Today, the party promises the masses that it will continue to march with fortitude with the struggling masses to achieve the Socialist revolution and to renew the slogans which it has carried and fought for since its inception.

The party contributed toward creation of the first national revolutionary cadre for the Arabs in their modern history when it helped bring about the union of 1958 and sacrificed itself at the altar of that union. After the destruction of that union, the party was able to reorganize itself, lead the masses, and face courageously the separatist regime that was an enemy of Arab nationalism and unity. This facilitated the downfall of the separatist reactionary regime in Damascus which had been exhausted by the attacks made by the Ba’th. On the morning of March 8, the vanguard of the Arab Ba’th Socialist Party were leading forces to bury the black separatist regime.
New circumstances have arisen that will facilitate great victories in the spheres of nationalism and socialism. The Cairo Convenant of April 17, 1963 was the product of the new circumstances brought about by the people's struggle led by the party. The Cairo authorities were not able to understand the new atmosphere of the Arab struggle, thus they refused to cooperate with the party and declared their withdrawal from the Convenant.

Under these new circumstances the Sixth National Convention of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party was convened. On the threshold to positive struggle, the constructive struggle, the Sixth National Convention meets. It meets full of hope and determination to lead the new battle. It meets with the same faith in the Arab people and with cognizance of the historical responsibility placed upon it.

The Convention commenced its meeting on October 5, 1963, and terminated on October 23, 1963. The Convention discussed the party organization and direction of the authorities in the two Regions and studied some theoretical problems facing the Arab struggle; appropriate decisions were made.

The Convention also discussed the political union of the two Regions - the Syrian and Iraqi - and the application of Socialist measures. It made appropriate
decisions.

The Convention discussed Arab international political problems and made appropriate decisions.

What follows are the principal decisions of the Convention. Full explanations of these decisions will be issued later.
ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE PARTY AND THE

PARTY'S RELATION TO THE MASSES AND

TO THE AUTHORITIES

1. The Convention studied, in a general way, the organizational problems of the party and reaffirmed its principle of collective leadership in party activity; this, to reflect the democracy of the party at the top.

The Convention concluded that the party's experience has confirmed the principle of democratic centralism in which it believes. The establishment of a balance between centralism on the one hand and democracy on the other permits the free and responsible exercise of the party's struggle, and also preserves party unity while on the other hand realizing democracy.

2. In a serious study of the party's situation in Syria and Iraq, the Convention paid particular attention to the forthcoming Socialist revolution. The Convention agreed that the social composition of the party would influence the Socialist revolution. Therefore, the Convention decided that the party's Socialist goals must be a reflection of its social composition since the Socialist revolution would rest on workers and
peasants who must be at the base of the revolution and the party at the same time.

3. In these circumstances where the party is in authority in both the Syrian and Iraqi Regions, the Convention warns against the infiltration of the party by opportunists, or the succumbing of some party elements to the temptations of power that will cause them to look down on the non-party masses.

The Convention affirmed that membership in the party could only mean a tremendous responsibility to be borne by the member. Members should confine themselves to carrying out their responsibilities. Their rights are the same as those accorded to any citizen without the addition of any privileges.

The convention agreed that the nonparty masses have the right to criticize and oversee party members. The Convention considers this supervision by the nonparty masses a natural right of the people that guarantees that process of rapport between the people and the party and between the party and the authorities.

This popular supervision was considered a means to check against the temptations of power.
and a means to check against the rise of bourgeois tendencies within the party.

The Convention emphasized that careful attention be paid to the behaviour of prospective party members, that requirements for membership be made more stringent, and that the period of party training be lengthened to make certain of the prospective member's characteristics and readiness to struggle.

4. Regarding the relation between the party and the state, the Convention decided upon the necessity of complete separation between the state and the party. It cautioned against the possibility of party involvement in the routine of day-to-day government. The Convention considers the party as leader and director of the basic political problems of the state.

The Convention recognized the necessity of having a larger proportion of party leadership devoted to the direction of party activity.
The Convention discussed a number of problems of the Arab struggle. It discussed some of the theoretical problems dealing with Arab unity, socialism, popular democracy, and the party's stand vis-a-vis international Socialist thought. The Convention recognized the two basic characteristics of the party's ideology, pragmatism and revolutionism, within the national framework.

The Convention then criticized some of the outdated opinions and thoughts left behind as the party ideology advanced. Such criticism allows the ideological evolution of the party to meet future needs while maintaining continuity with the party's heritage, in a manner that guarantees the ideological and organizational unity of the party and provides for revolutionary and scientific solutions to the problems of the Arab national struggle.
6. The Convention discussed the problems of conversion to a Socialist regime in the Regions of Syria and Iraq and decided to proceed with it on a democratic basis and with popular participation. Following a scientific discussion of the sociopolitical and class composition in the two Regions of Syria and Iraq, the Convention reiterated that the party should be based in the masses in preparation for the establishment of a revolutionary and democratic experiment in the two Regions that will influence the course of events in the entire Arab fatherland and provide the objective circumstances for interaction with other movements in the Arab fatherland.

7. On the basis of a scientific analysis of economic and political conditions in the two Regions, the Convention concluded that the bourgeoisie is unable to carry out any positive task in the economic sphere. Furthermore, the opportunism of the bourgeoisie qualifies it for the role of ally to the new colonialism. The workers, peasants, revolutionary civil and military intelligentsia, and the petit bourgeoisie were considered the proper forces for achievement of the Socialist revolution in its initial stage.
8. In an attempt to visualize the extent of Socialist evolution in the two Regions, and guided by Socialist experiments elsewhere in the world, the Convention asserted the necessity of democratic worker's participation in administration in the two Regions during the stage of state capitalism.

The Convention cautioned against bureaucratic tendencies and stressed the necessity for a continual curbing and eventual liquidation of such tendencies.

9. The Convention paid particular attention to the growth of governmental agencies and the relation of these to the party and the masses.

The Convention approved a detailed policy of a revolutionary and democratic development of these agencies in a manner that would permit them to participate fully in the process of conversion to socialism. The Convention asserted that the principal task would be proper evolution rather than mutation. Evolution should be the basis, mutation the exception. Such a plan is necessitated by humane considerations and by a faith in the citizen's consciousness.
As for the land problem, the Convention concluded with revolutionary and Socialist decisions. The Convention agreed on the necessity of take-off from a revolutionary basis, and considered the agricultural revolution as a necessary step toward a quick economic development in the industrial sector. Thus the goal of establishing collective farms, administered by the peasants themselves, in those lands covered by agricultural reform, was considered the proper Socialist take-off point for the oncoming change in social relationships. Such a revolutionary goal, coupled with peasant participation in the agricultural sphere, is a necessary element in the success of the Socialist revolution.

10. The Convention also asserted the importance of Socialist planning in the regional and Arab spheres. Planning was considered the practical method by which all the national material, human, and natural resources could be scientifically and practically utilized. The Convention also emphasized industrialization and industrial development. Investments should be centered in those more important spheres that guarantee real national economic development, rather than in those ostentatious accomplishments that do not increase real production.
11. The Convention laid out a Socialist policy in the field of social services. It drew attention to the apparent paradox between ostentatious and unnecessary spending in government and the low standard of living of the masses. Austerity should be practiced by the well-to-do and the government agencies as well.

The Convention considered the problems of education and the establishment of compulsory education. It stressed the need to eradicate illiteracy and to give the education of youth a scientific and national coloring that would go hand in hand with human knowledge. The education plan should correspond with the requirements of development and should stress higher specialization. It should look to an expansion of the scientific fields in the universities and to raising their standards.

The Convention agreed on the necessity of expanding services in the rural areas and the poor and distant districts. Free and socialized medicine was considered the most basic aspect of Socialist thought. The Convention put forth the policy to execute this program beginning with expansion of medical school facilities and
expansion of present government medical services until the eventual liquidation of private medicine.

12. The Convention studied the National Guard program. Despite some of the shortcomings and mistakes of this program it was considered a safeguard of the revolution. The Guard should be expanded and developed to become capable of fulfilling revolutionary tasks and educating the masses. Any mistakes committed by members of the National Guard should be dealt with firmly.

The Convention affirmed the right of popular organizations for workers, students, professionals, and women that are within the national Socialist line. It affirmed the association's relative autonomy with regard to the state as long as the latter is in the process of achieving its Socialist program. The existence of such associations was considered a necessity dictated by the interests of groups and classes. The Convention affirmed the right of the working class to have political parties.

13. The Convention paid particular attention to ideological education in the Armed Forces and affirmed the right of its members to practice their full political rights. The Convention
considered the organic incorporation of the revolutionary civilian and military vanguard as the only way to create an ideological interaction between the two groups. This would mean a practical unity of action and thought and would incorporate the popular and armed forces in a combined Socialist effort. Ideological education for the armed forces would create a new and revolutionary understanding between the officers and the men.

The Convention affirmed the necessity of compulsory military service in an underdeveloped country where such service could become a school for peasant soldiers, thus sharing in the eradication of illiteracy in the rural areas.
14. Following Cairo’s withdrawal from the Triparite Unity Agreement, the party finds itself compelled to establish unity between Syria and Iraq. Thus the Convention agreed on the principle of establishing a federal union between the Syrian and Iraqi Regions. The Convention regarded the new union as a step toward complete Arab unity and as capable of fusing the revolutionary energies in the two Regions. The new state was considered as a stage in the struggle for complete unity, and open for others to join.

The Convention affirmed that the biggest unionist stride is that which brings Egypt to the new nation on the basis of democracy, regional equality, and collective leadership.

15. The Convention considered the reactionary aggression by the maghrib on the Algerian revolution. The essence of the problem was not a mere border dispute; rather, the Convention considered the aggression only as another aspect of the struggle between progressivism and reaction in the African part of the Arab fatherland. The Convention insisted that the support of the Algerian revolution, with all its national, socialist, revolutionary, and Arab
characteristics, is a guarantee of the success of the unionist Socialist revolution in the entire Arab fatherland.

Therefore, the party stands unhesitatingly with the Algerian revolution against the Maghrib reactionary aggression supported by the new and old colonialism. It calls on the governments of Syria and Iraq to offer the Algerian revolution any assistance it may require.

16. The first aspect of the resistance of Arab reaction is portrayed in its aggression on the Algerian revolution. The second aspect is its conspicuous and frank subservience to colonialism - a subservience that compels it to betray the Arab national cause daily. Thus the repressive measure utilized by the reactionary Maghrib authorities against Al-Ittihad al-Watani Li al-Quwah al-Sha’biyyah [The National Union of Popular Forces] are an aspect of subservience to imperialism and a defense of the imperialist spheres of influence in the Maghrib. The Convention decided to condemn the repressive measures taken against Al-Ittihad al-Watani Li al-Quwah al-Sha’biyyah and declare its support of the
latter against the forces of reaction and imperialism.

17. The Convention carefully considered the problem of diversion or pumping of the waters of the River Jordan and considered such a scheme a supreme military danger to the Arab fatherland. Thus the party calls on all the Arab peoples and their governments to resist this danger by force. The governments of Syria and Iraq in particular must resist this danger. It also calls on the United Arab government to resist this scheme even by the use of force and to cooperate in this endeavor with Syria and Iraq.

18. The Convention considered the Yemenite revolution and saw in it another aspect of the struggle between the Arab reactionary forces and the Arab peoples. The Convention saw in the Yemenite revolution a revolutionary take-off point to save the Arab south and the Arabian peninsula from the reactionaries and imperialist stooges. The Convention calls on all the progressive Arab forces to rally around the Yemenite revolution and support it against the reactionaries. In particular, the Convention calls on the revolutionary authorities in Syria and Iraq to aid and support the Yemenite revolution. Such support
should be viewed as a duty imposed by Arab destiny and an element in the defeat of reaction.

19. The Convention discussed the positive and negative aspects of Abdel Nasser's regime and reiterated the importance of the presence of the United Arab Republic, quantitatively and qualitatively, in any union.

The positive aspects of Abdel Nasser's regime prompt the party to accept a union with it. The negative aspects, however, compel the party to accept Abdel Nasser's regime only as a partner but not as the basis of the union. The party considers this a condition that permits the process of correction and interaction of the revolutionary Arab movements. The Convention affirmed that Abdel Nasser's autocratic regime had imposed on the party an unnecessary struggle with it.

The Convention agreed on the necessity of halting this struggle and finding mutual points of understanding among the libertarian Arab movements.

20. The Convention studied carefully the development of the contemporary Arab problem in Palestine and concluded the necessity of recruiting the
Palestinian Arabs as the first tool in the liberation of Palestine.

The Convention recommends the establishment of a Palestine Liberation Front and calls on all Arab governments, and on Syria and Iraq in particular, to offer all available resources to the establishment of this Front. All the necessary tools and revolutionary leadership should be provided. The Front must be kept out of disputes among Arab states.

21. From its deep faith in the unity of the entire Arab world, the Convention stresses the necessity of establishing a Progressive Arab Front to include the entire Arab fatherland.

22. The Convention reaffirmed the basic revolutionary policy that has been pursued by the party since its establishment and that endeavours to support all national liberation movements against imperialism. The Convention exposed the recent methods of cooperation between the bourgeoisie and neoimperialism in defining the party’s stand vis-a-vis imperialism by explaining its role as a Socialist party belonging to a persecuted and colonized people. Therefore, the Convention cautioned against the belief that the construction of a Socialist society that places the people’s
interest first cannot be completed without entailing a struggle against imperialism, and against every aspect of the exploitation of man.

23. The Convention affirmed the policy of nonalignment with international power blocs, and neutrality in the daily disputes of the blocs.

24. But nonalignment should not be construed as a bar against closer and friendlier relations with the people of the Socialist camp.

25. The Convention affirmed the necessity of strengthening the ties with the nations of the Third World, to which we belong and which pursues the policy of positive neutrality. Closer ties will mean strengthening the Front against imperialism.

26. The Convention decided to fight all types of racial discrimination in the world and to consider such a phenomenon as another characteristic of colonial capitalism. The Convention views South Africa as a new kind of Israel in Africa. The party stands against racial discrimination in this nation and extends its helping hand to all peoples struggling against the new and old imperialism.
APPENDIX - C
APPENDIX-C

CONSTITUTION OF THE

ARAB BA‘TH SOCIALIST PARTY

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

First Principle: Unity and Freedom of the Arab Nation

The Arabs form one nation. This nation has the natural right to live in a single state and to be free to direct its own destiny.

The Party of the Arab Ba‘th therefore believes that:

1). The Arab fatherland constitutes an indivisible political and economic unity. No Arab country can live apart from the others.

2). The Arab nation constitutes a cultural unity. Any differences existing among its sons are accidental and unimportant. They will all disappear with the awakening of the Arab consciousness.

3). The Arab fatherland belongs to the Arabs. They alone have the right to administer its affairs, to dispose of its wealth, and to direct its destinies.
Second Principle: Personality of the Arab Nation

The Arab nation is characterized by virtues which are the result of its successive rebirths. These virtues are characterized by vitality and creativeness and by an ability for transformation and renewal. Its renewal is always linked to growth in personal freedom, and harmony between its evolution and the national interest.

The Party of the Arab Ba'th therefore believes that:

1). Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of belief, as well as artistic freedom, are sacred. No authority can diminish them.

2). The value of citizens is measured — once all opportunities have been given them — by the action they take to further the progress and prosperity of the Arab nation, without regard to any other criterion.

Third Principle: The Mission of the Arab Nation

The Arab nation has an eternal mission. This mission reveals itself in ever new and related forms through the different stages of history. It aims at the renewal of human values, at the quickening of human progress, at increasing harmony and mutual help among the nations.
The Party of the Arab Ba'th therefore believes that:

1). Colonialism and all that goes with it is a criminal enterprise. The Arabs must fight it with all possible means, just as they must take it on themselves to help, according to their physical and moral abilities, all peoples fighting for their freedom.

2). Humanity constitutes a whole, the interests of which are solidarity and the values and civilization of which are common to all. The Arabs are enriched by world civilization and enrich it in their turn. They stretch a fraternal hand to other nations and collaborate with them for the establishment of just institutions which will ensure for all the peoples prosperity and peace, as well as moral and spiritual advance.
GENERAL PRINCIPLES

ARTICLE-1.

The Party of the Arab Ba’th is a universal Arab party. It has branches in all the Arab countries. It does not concern itself with regional politics except in relation to the higher interests of the Arab cause.

ARTICLE-2.

The headquarters of the party is for the time being located in Damascus. It can be transferred to any other Arab city if the national interest should require it.

ARTICLE-3.

The Party of the Arab Ba’th is a national party. It believes that nationalism is a living and eternal reality. It believes that the feeling of national awakening which intimately unites the individual to his nation is a sacred feeling. This feeling has within itself a potential of creative power; it binds itself to sacrifice, it seeks the exercise of responsibilities, and it directs the individual personality in a concrete and active manner.

The national idea to which the party appeals is the will of the Arab people to free themselves and to unite. It demands that the opportunity be given to it to realize in history its Arab personality, and to collaborate with all the nations in all the fields which will ensure the march of humanity toward welfare and progress.
ARTICLE-4.

The Party of the Arab Ba'th is a Socialist party. It believes that socialism is a necessity which emanates from the depth of Arab nationalism itself. Socialism constitutes, in fact, the ideal social order which will allow the Arab people to realize its possibilities and to enable its genius to flourish, and which will ensure for the nation constant progress in its material and moral output. It makes possible a trustful brotherhood among its members.

ARTICLE-5.

The Party of the Arab Ba'th is a popular party. It believes that sovereignty is the property of the people, who alone is the source of all authority. It believes that the value of the state is the outcome of the will of the masses from which it issues and that this value is sacred only to the extent that the masses have exercised their choice freely. That is why, in the accomplishment of its mission, the party relies on the people with whom it seeks to establish intricate contact, the spiritual, moral, material, and physical level of whom it is trying to raise, in order that the people may become conscious of its personality and that it may become able to exercise its right in private and public life.

ARTICLE-6.

The Party of the Arab Ba'th is revolutionary. It believes that its main objectives for the realization of the
renaissance of Arab nationalism or for the establishment of socialism cannot be achieved except by means of revolution and struggle. To rely on slow evolution and to be satisfied with a partial and superficial reform is to threaten these aims and to conduce to their failure and their loss.

This is why the party decides in favour of:

1). The struggle against foreign colonialism, in order to liberate the Arab fatherland completely and finally.

2). The struggle to gather all the Arabs in a single independent state.

3). The overthrow of the present faulty structure — an overthrow which will include all the sectors of intellectual, economic, social, and political life.

ARTICLE-7.

The Arab fatherland is that part of the globe inhabited by the Arab nation which stretches from the Tauru Mountain, The Pocht-i-Kouh Mountains, the Gulf of Basra, the Arab Ocean, the Ethiopian Mountains, the Sahara, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Mediterranean.

ARTICLE-8.

The official language of the state, as well as that of all the citizens, is Arabic. It alone is recognized in correspondence and in teaching.
ARTICLE-9.

The emblem of the Arab state is that of the Arab revolution begun in 1916 to liberate and unify the Arab nation.

ARTICLE-10.

An Arab is he whose language is Arabic, who has lived on Arab soil, or who, after having been assimilated to Arab life, has faith in his belonging to the Arab nation.

ARTICLE-11.

To be excluded from the Arab fatherland: whoever has fought for or has belonged to a factious anti-Arab association, whoever has lent himself inside the Arab fatherland to colonial ends.

ARTICLE-12.

The Arab woman enjoys all the rights of citizenship. The party struggles to raise up woman's level in order to make her fit to exercise these rights.

ARTICLE-13.

The party strives to give all the citizens the same opportunities in the field of schooling and livelihood in order that, in the various aspects of human activity, everyone should be equally able to show his real abilities and to develop them to the maximum.
ARTICLE-14.

The regime of the Arab state will be a constitutional parliamentary regime. Executive power is responsible before the legislative, which is directly elected by the people.

ARTICLE-15.

The national tie is the only tie that may exist in the Arab state. It ensures harmony among all the citizens by melting them in the crucible of a single nation and counteracts all religious, communal, tribal, racial or regional factions.

ARTICLE-16.

The administrative system of the Arab state is a system of decentralization.

ARTICLE-17.

The party strives to make popular feeling universal and to make the power of the people a living reality in the life of the individual. It undertakes to give the state a constitution guaranteeing to all Arab citizens absolute equality before the law, the right to express their opinions in absolute freedom, and a true choice of their representatives, thus ensuring for them a free life within the framework of the law.
ARTICLE-18.

A single code of laws is to be established freely for the whole of the Arab nation. This code will be in conformity with the spirit of the times and will take into account the past experiences of the Arab nation.

ARTICLE-19.

The judicial power will be independent. It will be free from interference by other powers and enjoy total immunity.

ARTICLE-20.

The rights of citizenship are granted in their totality to every citizen living on Arab soil who is devoted to the Arab fatherland and who has no connection with any factious association.

ARTICLE-21.

Military service is compulsory in the Arab fatherland.
FOREIGN POLICY OF THE PARTY

ARTICLE-22.

The foreign policy of the Arab state will be guided by the interests of Arab nationalism and of the eternal mission of the Arabs which seeks to establish in cooperation with other nations a free, harmonious, and secure world, continuously advancing in progress.

ARTICLE-23.

The Arabs will struggle with all their power to destroy the foundations of colonialism and of foreign occupation and to suppress all foreign political or economic influence in their country.

ARTICLE-24.

Since the Arab people is the sole source of power, all treaties, pacts, and documents concluded by governments which detract from the total sovereignty of the Arabs will be abrogated.

ARTICLE-25.

Arab foreign policy seeks to give a true picture of the will of the Arabs to live in freedom, and of their sincere desire to see all other nations enjoy the same liberty.
ECONOMIC POLICY OF THE PARTY

ARTICLE-26.

The party of the Arab Ba‘th is a Socialist party. It believes that the economic wealth of the fatherland belongs to the nation.

ARTICLE-27.

The present distribution of wealth in the Arab fatherland is unjust. Therefore a review and a just redistribution will become necessary.

ARTICLE-28.

The equality of all the citizens is founded on human values. This is why the party forbids the exploitation of the work of others.

ARTICLE-29.

Public utilities, extensive natural resources, big industry, and the means of transport are the property of the nation. The state will manage them directly and will abolish private companies and foreign concessions.

ARTICLE-30.

Ownership of agricultural land will be so limited as to be in proportion to the means of the proprietor to exploit all his lands without exploitation of the efforts of others. This will be under the control of the state and in conformity with its over-all economic plan.
ARTICLE-31.
Small industrial ownership will be so limited as to be related to the standard of living of the citizens of the state as a whole.

ARTICLE-32.
Workers will participate in the management of their factory. In addition to their wages — fixed by the state — they will receive a proportion of the profits, also fixed by the state.

ARTICLE-33.
Ownership of immovable property is allowed to all the citizens so long as they do not exploit it to harm of others, and so long as the state ensures for all citizens a minimum of immovable property.

ARTICLE-34.
Property and inheritance are two natural rights. They are protected within the limits of the national interest.

ARTICLE-35.
Usurious loans are prohibited between citizens. One state bank is to be founded to issue currency, which the national output will back. This bank will finance the vital agricultural and industrial plans of the nation.
ARTICLE-36.

The state will control directly internal and external trade in order to abolish the exploitation of the consumer by the producer. The state will protect them both, as it will protect the national output against the competition of foreign foods and will ensure equilibrium between exports and imports.

ARTICLE-37.

General planning, inspired by the most modern economic ideas, will be organized so that the Arab fatherland will be industrialized, national production developed, new outlets opened for it, and the industrial economy of each region directed according to its potential and to the raw material it contains.
SOCIAL POLICY OF THE PARTY

ARTICLE-38.

Family, Procreation, Marriage.

1). The family is the basic cell of the nation. It is for the state to protect, to develop, and to help it.

2). Procreation is a trust given in the first place to the family and then to the state. Both must ensure its increase, and look to the health and education of the descendants.

3). Marriage is a national duty. The state must encourage it, facilitate it, and control it.

ARTICLE-39.

Public Health. The state will build, at its expense, institutions of preventive medicine, dispensaries, and hospitals which will meet the needs of all citizens, for whom the state ensures free medical treatment.

ARTICLE-40 LABOUR:

1). Labour is an obligation for all those who are capable of it. It is for the state to ensure that work is available to every citizen, whether intellectual or manual.

2). The employer must ensure at the least a decent standard of living for his employee.
3). The state sees to the maintenance of all persons incapable of work.

4). Just laws will be promulgated to limit the workman's daily hours of work, to give him the right to paid weekly and annual holidays, to protect his rights, to ensure social security for him in old age, and to indemnify him for any cessation of work, whether partial or total.

5). Free workmen's and peasant's unions will be established and encouraged, so that they may constitute an instrument efficient in the defense of their rights, in raising their standard of living, in developing their abilities, in increasing the opportunities offered to them, in creating among them a spirit of solidarity, and in representing them in joint works councils.

6). Joint works councils will be created in which the state and the unions of workmen and peasants will be represented. These councils will have power to decide the issues arising among the unions, the works managers, and the representatives of the state.
ARTICLE-41. CULTURE AND SOCIETY.

1). The party seeks to develop a general national culture for the whole Arab fatherland which shall be Arab, liberal, progressive, extensive, profound, and humanist; it attempts to disseminate it in all sections of the population.

2). The state is responsible for the protection of the liberty of speech, of publication, of assembly, of protest, and of the press, within the limits of the higher Arab national interest. It is for the state to facilitate all the means and the modalities which tend to realize this liberty.

3). Intellectual work is one of the most sacred kinds. It is the state's concern to protect and encourage intellectuals and scientists.

4). Within the limits of the Arab national idea, every freedom will be given for the foundation of clubs, associations, parties, youth groupings, and tourist organizations, as well as for obtaining profit from the cinema, radio, television, and all the other facilities of modern civilization in order to spread generally the national culture, and to contribute to the entertainment of the people.
ARTICLE-42.

Separation of the classes and differentiation among them are abolished. The separation of the classes is the consequence of a faulty social order. Therefore, the party carries on its struggle among the laboring and oppressed classes of society so that such separation and differentiation will come to an end and the citizens will recover the whole of their human dignity and will be enabled to live in the shadow of a just social order in which nothing will distinguish one citizen from another except intellectual capacity and manual skill.

ARTICLE-43 NOMADISM

Nomadism is a primitive social state. It decreases the national output and makes an important part of the nation a paralyzed member and an obstacle to its development and progress. The party struggles for the sedentarization of nomads by grant of lands to them, for the abolition of tribal customs, and for the application to the nomads of the laws of the state.
POLICY OF THE PARTY IN EDUCATION AND TEACHING

The educational policy of the party aims at the creation of a new Arab generation which believes in the unity of the nation, and in the eternity of its mission. This policy, based on scientific reasoning, will be freed from the shackles of superstitions and reactionary traditions; it will be imbued with the spirit of optimism, of struggle, and of solidarity among all citizens in the carrying out of a total Arab revolution, and in the cause of human progress.

Therefore the party decides as follows:

ARTICLE-44.

A national Arab stamp will mark all the aspects of intellectual, economic, political, architectural, and artistic life. The party establishes once again the links of the Arab nation with its glorious history and urges it toward a future even more glorious and more exemplary.

ARTICLE-45.

Teaching is one of the exclusive functions of the state. Therefore, all foreign and private educational institutions are abolished.

ARTICLE-46.

Education at all stages shall be free for all citizens. Primary and secondary education shall be compulsory.
ARTICLE-47

Professional schools with the most modern equipment shall be established, where education shall be free.

ARTICLE-48.

Teaching careers and all that relates to education are set aside for Arab citizens. An exception to this rule is made in the instance of higher education.
AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

SINGLE ARTICLE.

The fundamental and general principles of the Constitution cannot be amended. Other articles may, however, be amended, provided that two-thirds of the General Council of the party agree thereto, on a motion put by the Executive Council, or by a quarter of the members of the General Council, or by ten members of the Party Organization.