Chapter 4

Nationalism in Post Independent Iraq

Baghdad Pact and the Overthrow of Monarchy

Civil Military Relation

The Kurdish Question
4.1. Baghdad Pact & Overthrow of Monarchy

Soon after independence Iraq started taking lead for the cause of Arab Unity. In the mid 1930s it had seen looked upon by many Arab nationalists as a emerging nation which would unify Arab land to create a union or federation. The military uprising in 1941, provoked by exiled Pan-Arab leaders in Baghdad was one of the attempts made to eliminate foreign influence and unify the region of the Fertile crescent. Further attempts was made by Iraq to achieve some kind of unity of the Fertile Crescent by peaceful Methods, with the help of a moderate leader friendly to the west.¹

After the establishment of the Arab league in 1945, Egypt took more interest in Arab affairs. Simultaneously Iraq's influence in inter-Arab relationships was gradually reduced. The position of the Iraqi rulers became more insecure when Syria began to fall under Egypt's influence².

During the years of the 1950s Iraq's political forces were divided into two major camps to capture power, the ruling conservative group, led by Nuri-al-said derived most of its strength from the land-owning elements. The Nationalists and Socialists opposition relied on support of the Urban Population. The relatively peaceful period was unmarked by violence as evidenced by an abortive coup by army in February 1950 (attempted by the Baghdad Chief of Police) who was promptly arrested by the government.
Official circles in Iraq under the leadership of Nuri al-Said, either in or out of office a premier, were staunch pro-West during the early 1950s.

In late 1953, the West Asian Defence Organization by the advice of U.S. Secretary of State John Foster had taken into consideration of the concept of Northern Tier. The aim of this concept was to work primarily with Turkey and Pakistan to safeguard its interest from the Soviet threat. The initiative was taken by Turkey and military assistance pact was signed with Pakistan on 2nd April 1954.

In the same year General Nuri al-Said embarked on a policy of military alliance and began to cultivate the company of prominent officers in order to enlist their support. In 1953 he gave a lecture to a group of leading officers, including military generals in which he expounded his views on the international situation and stressed the role which Iraq might play in defence of the West Asia. Nuri’s interest in the reorganization and enlargement of the army, especially after the formation of the Baghdad pact in 1955, appealed to Senior Officers, but the younger officers, though outwardly supporting him, showed no enthusiasm for his policy. Nuri was unaware of the widespread dissatisfaction with Western policy towards the Arab world among the young officers, but he paid no attention to it.
The Government of Iraq in 1954 was faced with two basic problems as a result of above arrangement which was backed by the U.S.

- First whether Government should join or not to join the Northern Tier defense Pacts.

- Second how to change her relationship with Great Britain, to whom it was still linked by the 1930 treaty. Prime Minister Nuri al-Said in a press interview on November 1, 1954 stated: "We are not strong enough to be able to assist others, but we are trying to find a means to correlate our foreign policy with the provision of the Turkish – Pakistani pact. All that we are can do at present to organize the defense of Iraq through cooperation with neighboring states."

Finally, Nuri al-Said, the Prime Minister was convinced that Iraq's best interest could be served by joining a Western sponsored security system. Nuri was the defence and foreign Minister during the time preceding the conclusion of the Baghdad Pact.

To achieve this objective, Nuri virtually directed the foreign policy of Iran towards closer collaboration with Turkey. Turkish Premier Adnan Menderes and Nuri al-Said consulted in Baghdad and announced that a mutual assistance pact would be signed in January 1955. Arab reaction was
immediate, especially on the part of the Egyptian premier, Jamal Abdul Nasir, who called a conference of Arab heads in Cairo to discuss the Arab League's relationships with the West. He insisted on a resolution concluded by league members which was in consistent with the league's charter. He further also condemned Iraq with her expressed desire to sign a pact with Turkey.

On February 24, 1955, Baghdad pact was signed between the President of Turkey and the king of Iraq. It was guaranteed that the two countries would cooperate for mutual security and defence and also would not interfere in each other's internal affairs. The treaty left open the possibility of participation by other states. On April 4, 1955 Great Britain and Iraq concluded a formal agreement in Baghdad through which 1) Great Britain acceded to the February 24 pact of mutual cooperation between Iraq and Turkey, 2) the 1930 Treaty of Alliance between the two countries was terminated, and 3) Britain agreed to give Iraq military aid in the event of armed attack or the threat of armed attack endangering the security of Iraq.

Pakistan and Iran joined the pact in the end of the year and with this the Northern Tier defence concept became a reality in a very short period. Thus the member states could proceed to set up the required machinery for the operation of the pact. An Iraqi, Awni Khalidi became the
first Secretary General and a permanent secretariat was established in Baghdad. This was the remarkable achievement for Nuri al-Said, who had maintained a pro-western position in the face of serious opposition from Egypt.

Iraqi's opposition criticized the pact—and labeled that it was nothing but the instrument of British control over Arab. In the meantime, President Jamal Abdul Nasir took the unprecedented step of purchasing arms from the Soviet Bloc, showing that Egypt was no longer dependent on western arms suppliers, which had previously received inadequate supply from the West. Nasir's position rose high in Arab eyes because he had challenged Western power and obviously became the leader of Arab cause for unity and complete independence. After nationalization of the Suez Canal the tripartite attack took place. Due to this attack, Pan-Arab leaders conducted a campaign against the western power and were almost successful in raising an uprising against the regime in Iraq and Syria. Syria threatened the Iraqi regime to blow up the oil pipeline of the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), crossing through Syrian territory in favour of Pan-Arab support. Further, the dramatic development in West Asia during the period 1955-56 exposed Iraq to further attack from Arab States hostile to the pact which were now rallying around Nasir as a result of the ill fated invasion in Suez in 1956.
This Suez crisis created the fear in Iraq that Egyptian Israeli hostilities might expand beyond Sinai. This pressurized Iraq to send troops to Jordan at the latter's request. In November 1956 Baghdad broke off diplomatic relations with France and decided to boycott Baghdad pact. This crisis gave opportunity to the Pan-Arab leaders to shame the Nuri government internally and public opinion aroused against western Imperialism. This led to protest demonstrations and serious riots in Mosul, Najef and Irbid. The government responded by arresting time of the main opposition leaders and on December 1, it proclaimed martial law in Iraq.

At this explosive situation the United States issued an official statement in support of the Baghdad Pact. Even then, Nuri's opposition gained momentum despite the strong measure taken by his government to curbs the internal uprisings. Further Pan-Arab feelings was strengthened when president Nasir of Egypt - turned military defeat into political victory. Due to public opinion, the Iraqi Government had no choice but to fight the Cairo inspired Pan-Arabism, and allies were sought in this struggle from among the monarchical regimes remaining in the Arab world. To this, efforts was made and monarchical regime issued joint - communiques to condemn Communism, Imperialism and Zionism. Further steps were taken that the federation between Iraq and Jordan came into existence. During this
entire period. Nuri al-Said remained in power and was appointed premier of the federation on March 3, 1958. Nuri al-Said, on the other hand, was considered the “strong man” of the regime of Iraq. He always took keen interest to keep the army well equipped with the latest and best tool. Until 1958 the army leadership refrained from political maneuvering and was considered a strong supporter of the crown. However, the intensive issues concerning Arab Nationalism, which showed anti-Israeli and anti-British feelings were not isolated from its officers, since they shared the opinions and emotions of the civilian population from which the sentiments originated. A sizable number of officers, tried to overthrow the Monarchical regime, made a National pact which was based upon the fundamental principles and aims of the revolution. First of all, the fourteen officers decided to adopt a republican form of government based on parliamentary democracy. The unpopularity of the ruling dynasty and the corruption associated with the old regime made inevitable the decision to replace the monarchy by a republic. Divergent views were expressed on the fate of King Faisal II, crown Prince Abdullah, and General Nuri al-Said, the bulwark of the ruling oligarchy. The officers seem to have agreed that the crown Prince and General Nuri must be liquidated, whether by trial or outright execution, but the majority held that the king’s life should be spared since he was so young. No final
decision seems to have been taken about his fate, but Qasim and Arif must have decided, shortly before the revolution that all three should be put to death in order to avoid any possible foreign intervention that might be provoked by them or a future uprising in favour of restoring the monarchy.  

In the second plane the fourteen officers decided to establish a genuine form of parliamentary democracy, based on a representative government only this type of government would ensure liberty and safeguard the national interest of the country. However, the officers maintained that in the interim between the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of a parliamentary democracy a transitional period would be necessary under a temporary civilian government supported by the fourteen Officers. The head of the government, to be selected by the fourteen Officers, should be a civilian. With the advice of these officers, he would choose the other civilian members of his government, presumably from among the leaders of opposition parties. A Council of Sovereignty, consisting of three members, was agreed upon to replace the post of head of state until the question of nature of that post would be decided in a National Assembly during the interim period.  

The actual events proceeded where the 20th Army Brigade which was considered safe, had been ordered to move because of events in Jordan and Lebanon. Under the command of
Brigadier General Abdul Harim Qasim, it moved to Baghdad during the early morning hours of July 14, 1958 and took control of the City. Within a short period of time all members of the royal family in Baghdad, including King Faisal and the Crown Prince, were put to death. Cabinet ministers and key government officials were all apprehended and arrested, with the exception of General Nuri. He was discovered a few days later disguised as a woman and killed.

New revolutionary authority was then established by a Council of Sovereignty. It had three members and a Cabinet headed by General Qasim, who also retained supreme command of the armed forces. On the day following the coup, General Qasim issued a public statement in which he 1) Proclaimed the liberation of the "Country from the domination of a corrupt group which was installed by imperialism". 2) About the formation of "an Iraqi republic which will preserve Iraqi Unity" and 3) brotherly ties with the other Arab countries.

4.2. Civil Military Relation:

The conflict between Abdul Kareem Qasim and Abdul Salam Arif led to a friction between Bathists and communists. While Abdus Salam Arif demanded for Arab Union i.e. Iraq with Arab Republic of Egypt, Qasim was opposed to the idea.
and sought the support of groups likely to oppose Bathists. Due to sharp differences between these two groups, the communists extended their support to Qasim. Initially Qasim tried to enlist the support of the other moderate groups in order to counter the Bathists plan of Arab Unity. He talked about the Iraqi Unity and cooperation, apparently recognized the divisive forces in operation and was conscious of the fact that Iraq was not a solid, nationally aware which would relegate individual or group interest for the sake of so-called national interests.

On August 5, 1958 he declared: "People, I am the son of the people. I pledge before God that I will sacrifice myself for your sake. I shall offer my life in defense of the Iraqi people." He was also a practical West Asian politician who realistically recognized that his basis of strength was the army. It was Qasim's aim to establish a modern state based on the Sovereignty and independence of Iraq. He did not want that Iraq would be dependent on Western support, nor under the political union with UAR.

In his desire to strengthen Iraq, Qasim not only found the communists ready to counter Pan-Arab propaganda, but also that they had greater influence over the masses, and they more often paraded the streets in support of him than did any moderate party. However, once committed to communist support, Qasim was never able to reconcile the Pan-Arab, despite his rejection of communists ideology, and his
subsequent measures to curb their activities. And hence, by February 1959, the so-called extended support of different groups to Qasim was broken up. The right wing Ba thists and nationalists were finally withdrawn, from Iran their party alliance because they were unwilling to be associated any longer with the growing communist influence.

Since colonel Arif, Deputy Premier, who was closely associated with Bathist group, was an outstanding spokesman for Pan-Arab Union he praised colonel Jamal Abdul Nasir in nearly every public statement. Confrontation among the people towards military regime became unavoidable. A month later Arif was arrested in Baghdad for plotting to overthrow and associate premier Qasim.

A special Military court was formed to punish those who disturbed the military regime headed by colonel Fadl Abbas al-Mahdawi, Cousin, of Abdul Karim Qasim, later this court was known as Mahdawi court. Many unsuccessful coups took place in his regime and involved people were trailed by the Mahdawi court.

In the meantime, premier Qasim again attempted to form a coalition cabinet representing a composite all political factions. He invited outstanding leaders of former opposition parties to join the government. Mohammad Hadid of the national Democratic Party was named Minister of Finance, Siddiq Shamshad of the Istiqlal (Independent) party was
designated as a Minister of Guidance, Fuad Rikabi of the Arab Socialists Renaissance (Ba'th) party was named head of the Minister of Development and Ibrahim Hubbah, a marxist was selected a Minister of National Economy. However, the early dismissal of col. Arif gave clear indication by the Mahdawi court that members of the party were opposed to the revolutionary regime. Qasim although aware of this threat as evidenced by his constant guard, neither share his predecessors' nor Nasir's belief that political parties were corruptible and mere tools of imperalistic forces against Arab Nationalism. "He believed that different political parties would jointly work for the overall development of the country". Consequently, on January 6, 1960, parties were allowed political freedom to function.

Qasim's cabinet, at first, represented a genuine national coalition including all shades of political opinion except the communists. It represented an equilibrium of sorts. There was no misgiving in declaring that the communist party had been wrong in its characterization of Qasim as a petty bourgeoise to the extent that he was branded as the conscious representative of the national bourgeoise. Simultaneously he (Qasim) was fearful of the increasing influence of left and the upsurge of the working class.
Dissatisfied, the Ba'hist, tried to over throw the existing left dominated military government in Iraq particularly in Mosul and Kirkuk. Qasim's regime was charged with dangerous hostility towards the UAR and he was called an anti-Arab nationalist. These allegation were broadcasted from the Mosul radio and citizens of Iraq were asked to join is the new revolt. Though the revolt was not successful, the failure of the uprising gave an opportunity to the communists, which had the support of the government to go on a rampage, attacking homes of the Mosul bourgeoisie and penetrating all sorts of atrocities.

In 1961-62 the Ba'hist became increasingly active and its unlicensed newspaper "Al-Ishtiraki" (the Socialist) was secretly circulated in ever increasing numbers. In the meantime, the Ba'hist began to devise plans to over throw the regime. Several plans were made during 1962 which were directly or indirectly passed on to Qasim through his chief of military intelligence, who kept a vigilant eye on the movements of the military. Meanwhile, the Ba'hist intensified their underground agitation in order to prepare the public for this future action plan and to justify military rebellion as the ground that it was raised in response to popular demand. Simultaneously, students strike took place owing to dissatisfaction which the Bath party exploited to create conditions favourable for the forthcoming military rebellion. Despite the strict secrecy
of Bath contacts with the military, Qasīm received intelligence reports of an impending plot against him in December 1962, but could know only the names of some conspirators and ordered for their arrest.

On February 3, 1963, Qasīm ordered the arrest of Saleh Mahdī Ammash, one of the active Bath officers. On the following day Bath leaders met to review the situation. The military regime, having received intelligence reports about the meeting, arrested Allā Salih al-Saḍī and several others members. Two weeks earlier Qasīm thereby foiled the move of rebellion by arresting Bath leaders.

As the revolutionary fever was totally against him, Qasīm began to realise that the rebellion had become serious and tried to contact the rebel leaders to arrange an understanding with them, but his attempts were of no avail. The media had already fallen to rebel hands and the radio station building became its temporary headquarters. No sooner the national council for the Revolutionary Command (NCRC) was setup by the Bath party and its allies to replace the Qasīm regime, than the council in 1963 appointed Abūd Salīm Arīf as transitional president of the Republic. The NCRC adopted no new revolutionary principles but tried to turn public opinion against Qasīm, who had betrayed the goals of the July 1958 revolution. Except Arīf, who was identified as the symbol of Pan Arabism, the Bath party of
its leaders was not on the forefront in its revolutionary upheavals which took place in 1963.  

President Abdul Salam Arif, as the result of the coup of November 18, 1963 and of the support given him by the army, emerged as Iraq's strong man. The communiqué that announced the coup said that the national council of revolution, "in response to the people's appeal and to the demands of the army" elected Arif as a President of the council, appointed him commander in Chief of the armed forces, and gave him full powers for a year that could be extended automatically.  

Arif's military regime abandoned the idea of collective leadership in favour of the new president's personal rule based on support of the army. Through the regime there was a revolutionary turmoil. The period was demarcated by: the creation of a one party system dedicated to the concept of Arab Socialism, 2) attempted rapprochement with the UAR, 3) formation of an Iraqi Republic with a new constitution, and 4) development of plans for economic reform.  

Arif had to follow the trend of announcing new provisional constitution that seemed to be in vogue in the spring of 1964 under the revolutionary military regimes. It declared that the Iraqi republic was a socialist and democratic state "during its democracy and socialism from
Islam. In the new Ministry Arif appointed General Tahir the as premier of the Iraqi republic.

On various occasions, the new regime promised elections and the civilian government, but exactly on the line of the previous regime but did nothing honour its promises in this regard. On the question of Arab unity, pro-Nasivist and Ba'thist came into conflict, and in July 1965, a nuclear of minister resigned. As far as the economic reform was concerned which could produce the derived results only under a stable government. Before Arif's death in April 1966, he entered the premier to civilian politician presumably in an attempt to take the army out of politics. This incited some of the army officers to rebellion which was quickly suppressed by the army chief of staff. Who was the Presidents' brother and his subsequent successor. The army continued, however, to be a force in the struggle for power in Iraq. Kurdish problem gave the opportunity to erupt armed clashes in northern Iraq. The army became dissatisfied with the civilian premier, and pressured for his resignation.

After Arif's death, his brother, Abdur Rehman Arif was succeeded and the new cabinet again score of plans for parliamentary election. On thereby parliament introduced certain measures for electoral reform on Jan. 28, 1967. In the meantime, a new phase began after the Six Days War of June 1967 when the educated elites no longer satisfied with
the government began to press for the restoration of parliamentary democracy. Until the end of Arif’s regime and the coup of July, 17, 1968, the establishment of a constitutional democratic regime remained as one of the main issues in Iraq’s public life.²⁸

On July 17, 1968, the Arif regime was overthrown for the fourth time by the military which shows that the revolutionary process had not yet reached its full development. The reasons given for the change were due to premier yahya’s corruption, Kurdish protests and dissatisfaction, submission to foreign pressures but still the root cause was that regime had neither been sufficiently consolidated nor attained legitimacy by popular consent. The regime was not prepared to tolerate the opposition. Therefore, depended on the loyalty of the Army. The army on its part became disloyal to the existing regime due to its own opportunistic views.

Taking lessons from the past after the July coup, when Hasan al-Bakr and his supporters came into power, they asserted in public and private pronouncements to have derived their mandate to govern the country from the people. Further they sought popular support to achieve their objectives on the ground that these objectives serve not only Iraq interests but the interest of the Arab World as a whole.²⁹
However, the Bath's leaders continued to invoke military intervention when ever the opposition challenged their rule. But their ultimate objective was to establish a popular regime and to legitimize it through democratic process. To achieve this objective, they had approached young men who responded more readily to their appeal than older people.

At the same time, the Ba'th hold its control over the central leadership council, more firmly and through participation of the armed forces according to the Ba'thist ideology.

The war of words over Palestine waged on Baghdad radio in the mid of 1970s accompanied, and to some extent concealed, the bitter struggle for supremacy within the higher echelons of the Ba’th that had been continuing intermittently since July 1968. This struggle centred primarily around Saddam Hussain the then President for Iraq Ba’th Party to the extent that those who disagreed with him or who posed a threat, actual or potential to his position were either summarily dismissed, or, if they had a major power base of their own gradually eased out.

In view of these highly personalised politics, it is of course absurd to analyse the struggles that accompanied the rise of Saddam Hussain in ideological terms. However, although Saddam Hussain had evidently managed to establish
himself as the strong man of the regime well before September 1971 when Ammash and Sishalli were dropped. Neither the degree to which he had succeeded in doing so nor the means that he had employed to this end were entirely obvious to the majority of Iraqis, including most members of the Bath party. This was because al-Ba'th, Hussain and their immediate circle always contrived to present their rule as the rule of the bath party as a whole, and to foster the image of the RCC as a collegiate body in which collective decisions were arrived at in a democratic fashion. This image of party in government was further reinforced both by the systematic penetration by party members of all governmental and military institutions and all masses organisations and also in the media by the constant use of the party's ideological cadet to legitimate the various pronouncement issued by the regime. Thus it was always the party that was hailed as having brought the regime to power, and in whose name the totality of its actions were carried out of course, the leadership took great pains to build upon and improve the existing party status, with the result that by 1976, when the regime had been in power for eight years the party could claim 10,000 activist and half a million sympathizers. While the Bath was still trying to secure itself in power in the years after July 1968, fairly strict melting procedures were imposed upon aspiring members, but such restrictions had virtually ceased to be applied by the

In the subsequent years the Iraqi Communist Party continued its propaganda work inside the military establishment. The two congresses, in 1970 and 1976, discussed the issues and its incorporated policy in their final documents. Ba‘th Party organization was used as rubber stamp by its leadership of the national socialist ideology that led the ICP to adopt armed struggle as the main form of political opposition. This meant more emphasis was done to mobilize military to cope up with the ideology of ICP. In 1984, a declaration published by the ICF on the 35th anniversary of the foundation of the Iraqi army spelt out its immediate tasks: increased cadre based organization within army, and popular army. With the development of appropriate forms of organization to encourage soldiers and members of the armed forces to reject the war and establish the relations with the patriotic Democratic Front and to join the armed partisan with their arms, ammunition and other military provisions, securing contact with deserters, and destroying the Bath Party structures in the army. Further the ICP’s approach was to work inside the armed forces to unite its political and organizational activities with civilian life especially among the working class.

On the eleventh anniversary of the Ba‘th coup, in July 1979, president al-Badr (Army man) resigned due to ill
health, behind him stood clearing way for the Vice-President, a strong ally Saddam Husain usually known as the strong man of Iraq. President Hussain found himself as the head of the state which demanded much of his constructive abilities. The economy was booming. An interesting development was the cooling of Iraqi Soviet relation, as the new regime came to power, obviously the communist party of Iraq was partly responsible because it could not come to terms with Ba th. To strengthen the Ba’th Party of Iraqi Armed forces the Strategy adopted by the Ba’th Leader Saddam Hussain thus be described as follows. Admission to military colleges and institution was restricted to members of the Ba th Party. Those accepted had to sign on a condition to work for the interest of the Ba’th Party and to accept the death penalty if they broke the condition. All military officers had to join the Ba’th organization. Those who refused were able to be removed from military service. Discrimination in recruitment and promotion on religious and national grounds was made more severe, and later all senior posts were restricted to officers related to Saddam Hussain. The military intelligence Department was expanded to include informers in ever unit, covering the military and civilian life of army personnel. A comprehensive programme of propaganda and Ba thist ideological doctrine was introduced into every sector of military life.
The process of Ba’thization of the army was aimed to build the ideological army for the protection of the regime. The officers had firm convictions about their elitist rule as the leading patriotic force in Iraqi society. It was an army inspired by 'national ideas' and carried on the historical mission.

4.3. The Kurdish Question in Iraq

By far the most critical problem that has faced modern Iraq is the Kurdish question. The Aryan Kurds because of their different ethnic origin, speak Kurdish language, inside Iraq and always wanted to have a free hand in dealing with their own affairs. They argue that in order to preserve this freedom, as well as their national identity, the Kurdish areas should be granted autonomy, the Kurdish language should be recognized as the official languages and Kurds should be given government appointments in these areas.

The Kurds had been throughout their history, subservient to the ruling class that dominated the area. This, however, did not prevent some Kurdish tribal leaders from taking advantage of the weakness of the central government to establish their own autonomous principalities. These principalities were always short lived as the central government, depending on Kurdish tribal divisions and feuds,
were able to crush them and assert direct rule. In 1920, the Kurds hope for independence was boosted by the declaration of the Treaty of Sevres, which promised them autonomy and independence. This hope again was short lived, as in 1923 the Treaty of Lousanne replaced that of Sevres. As a result of the new treaty, Kurdish region was divided between Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria and the USSR. In Turkey and Iran, where the majority of the Kurds lived, immediate measures were taken by the central government to suppress Kurdish nationalism. Only in Iraq could the Kurds claimed to have a consistent potential movement.\^\textsuperscript{36}

The inability of the Iraqi government to create anew national identity with which the majority of Iraqi Arabs and Kurds could identify contributed greatly to the emergence of the Kurdish problem, which became exceedingly difficult to resolve. The Arab Shi\~\text{is} were concerned that the Kurds, the majority of whom are Sunni, would merge with the Sunni Arabs. The rise of Arab nationalism following World War I encouraged the Sunni Arabs to seek a wider Arab Union. The failure to create a new Iraqi identity, the emphasis on Arab nationalist positions by the government following World War I, the imposition of restrictions on Kurdish political activities, and external influences as well all contributed to the growth of Kurdish nationalist activity among Iraq's Kurds. The Kurdish question remained the most serious problem confronting the Iraqi government.\^\textsuperscript{37}
The Bath party recognized the need to resolve the question of ethnic and religious minorities. Then minorities groups from a substantial percentage of the population in Iraq and they have legitimate aspirations and demands that must be taken seriously.

The Kurdish problem was one of the questions mentioned in the newly bathist programme which came into power in 1963. The new regime's goals was to achieve national unity by the strengthening of Kurdish Arab brotherhood which would safeguard the national interest, strengthen the common struggle against imperialism, and respect for the right of minorities by allowing them to participate in the national life.

Immediately after the new Bath government came into power, Mustafa Barzani prominent Kurdish leader sent a telegram to express his support to the newly appointed Government and demanding self-rule for the Kurds. He also ordered his followers to cease armed activities against government forces. On the other side, the government issued orders to the Iraqi forces to cease fire, release of Kurdish prisoners, and allowed former government officials who had joined the rebels to return to work. Two Kurdish leaders who had not taken part in the rebellion were appointed to the cabinet.

These gestures of good will on both sides contributed to
a better atmosphere for negotiations and encouraged the belief that a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question was possible. In this connection meeting was arranged just after revolution between government representative and Barzani which resolved the following points of agreement as follows: general amnesty for all Kurdish rebels, the purging of Iraqi officials guilty of misconduct in the north, the immediate lifting of the economic blockade of the Kurdish areas under Barzani's control, general amnesty for all participants in the Kurdish revolt, and withdrawal of Iraqi military units from Kurdistan. It is important to note that autonomy or self rule, was not mention at this stage, although 'decentralization was understood and accepted by both sides as the recognition of the rights of the Kurds to self administration.

These declaration, however, failed to satisfy some Kurdish leaders who were critical of the government's decision to negotiate with Barzani, claiming that Barzani did not represent all of the Kurds. Barzani responded to this criticism by holding a Kurdish Democratic party conference on March 17-19, 1963 in Koisangaq in order to consult with Kurdish representatives on the agreement reached with the government delegation. The conference was attended by about 2,000 people, of whom 168 were official delegates, including leftist faction of the KDP, representatives of the Kurdish armed forces, and
representatives of Kurdish tribe and minorities.

A committee of 35 members was formed to prepare a new set of demands. Another committee, formed of fourteen Kurdish figures among them seven were selected to continue negotiations with the government as adviser headed by Jalal Talibani.

Apart from regime's general reluctance to grant the Kurds self-rule, successive military governments made use of the Kurds ambiguous concept for autonomy and accused them of seeking separation. The Kurdish demands to maintain the peshmarga forces, the demarcation of the Kurdish areas and the inclusion of the oil-rich province of Kirkuk in the autonomous regions were the issues, the military relied on to justify their point of view. On the other hand, the Kurdish leadership justified their excessive demands as guarantees against the increasing military desire to crush their movement. The failure to find a peaceful settlement to the question, of which the two sides shared responsibility, complicated the issues and increased the lack of trust between the two sides.

As a result, Kurdish revolt progressed, Mustafa's leadership over whole of the Kurdish national movement became undisputed. Only challenge to his position came from the politbureau of the KDP headed by Ibrahim Ahmad and
Jalal Talbani. In 1964, however, taking advantage of the conflict with the government, Barzani expelled the Ahmad Talbani faction from the party and from Iraqi Kurdistan. He replaced them by the people loyal to him. Despite the subsequent cooperation of the Ahmad Talbani faction with the central government against Barzani, the latter’s domination over the movement remained unaffected.\(^{44}\)

Negotiation between president Arif and Barzani were continued within the frame work of the existing constitution. However, when Dr. Bassaz assumed the premiership in that year, an amendment to article 19 of the constitution confirmed the national rights of Kurds within the frame work of the national unity of the Iraqi people.\(^e\) Hence forth on June 29, 1966 Dr. Bassaz announced a twelve point peace plan to end civil war which was going on in northern Iraq.\(^{45}\)

Despite these concessions, the Kurdish war continued in intermittently in Iraq. Four temporary cease fire were announced. The Kurds sought full autonomy as their primary objective. Iraq governments, while accepting some measure of self rule, regulated the idea of an expanded autonomy regarding this as a step towards separation. In this connection, two points of view developed within governing circles as to how the Kurdish problem could be solved: a group favoured a military solution maintained largely by
army officers, the other favoured a peaceful approach involving granting the Kurds basic rights. Civilian people argued that the problem could be peacefully settled by giving the Kurds a degree of self-rule to enable them to deal with their own local affairs. These views were already represented by Dr. Bazaz when he came into power in 1960. But before Dr. Bazaz could put the agreed 12-point programme into practice, he was forced by the military officers to tender his resignation. Dr. Bazaz's experience had failed because he had neither organised a popular base nor the power needed to enforce his position. Moreover, Dr. Bazaz's views antagonised and in the end deprived him from the support of the other radical political groups in the country.

When President Abdur Rehman Arif came to power, he said initial steps must include "releasing democratic freedom, ending the extraordinary situation and holding free democratic election". He appealed particularly for general amnesty for political prisoners and to detainees who had not yet been released. The Iraqi Government was granting amnesty, but on a limited basis, first for four months, then for one year. These views of Bazaz were made public in the newly authorized Kurdish newspapers, al-Taakhi, which was issued on April 29, 1967 for the first time. Although secessionist demands are often expressed by various Kurdish factions, it seemed certain that the predominant demand here
was for an Iraqi unity which held that the "Republic is a partnership, the integrity of which can be safeguarded only if it spells out and guarantees full equality for and the existence of the Kurds as another distinct nationality in that Republic." 48

In July 1968 the Arab Bath Socialist party again came to power. With a young leadership and a new vision, the Bath party leaders saw in the Kurdish problem a major threat to the existence of the Iraqi state and a threat for outside elements to interfere in the internal affairs of Iraq. Conflict with Kurds would keep the new government weak and unable to check the further military coup against the Ba'th Party (as had occurred in 1963), so that the Bath 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 Barzani. He was determined not to come to terms 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. With the good intention, the Ba'th government began to implement the outstanding twelve point programme of Dr. Barzai. The other positive steps was to open the issues for public and open discussion.
by publishing in the official newspaper a series of articles about the Kurdish question its developments and the ways to settle it. An important change was taking place that the official attitude towards the Kurdish question was the gradual replacement of the military by civilian influence, and the continuing outside power attempt to take advantage of this issue to weaken Iraq. Therefore, the need of the time led the new government to conduct a series of negotiations with Kurdish people, resulting in the issuing of the Manifesto of 11 March 1970. This manifesto gave a considerable boost to the Kurdish national movement, it accepted fundamental Kurdish demands which previous governments had rejected. The Manifesto began by declaring that the Kurds of Iraq were part of the divided Kurdish people, and that Kurdish national movement promised the Kurds full recognition of their nationality and autonomy within four years. The Kurds were permitted to form their own political organization, and a certain number of the Kurdish armed men were allowed into the Iraqi armed forces as border guards. More important was the government's declaration that the Kurds were part of the divided Kurdish people and Kurdistan, and that the Kurdish national movement was part of the general Iraqi national movement. One of the important issue which was not solved satisfactorily was that of Kirkuk.
However, between 1974-75 the Kurdish Peshmarga took to arms again, despite the fact that the government had declared, in March 1974, the Kurdish areas as an autonomous region. Differences over the interpretation of the Manifesto and the Kurdish claims that the plan for autonomy did get their approval 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, and over the Kurds participation in the central government.

On 11 March 1974 the government announced the autonomy law for Iraqi Kurdistan. The PDP rejected this as incomplete and lacking the PDP's prior consent. On the following day Barzani ordered his peshmarga to occupy border ports and strategic points. This four years of peace were ended and war raged again over Iraqi Kurdistan.

Due to the sophistication of the weapons used, the new war was tough and intensive. Both sides were better equipped and organised, but the Iraqi army retained the 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 plan. In August 1974 the army launched its main offensive with a view to concerning the peshmarga forces and pushing
them towards the Iranian border. But the continuous supply of the arms to the Kurds from Iranian side made situation worst. Gradually it became evident that it was only the Iranian support which was enabling the Kurds to hold out. To maintain the Iraqi sovereignty, Iraqi Government secretly talked to the Shah on the Iranian aid to Kurds.

After a series of secrets contacts, the Iraqi vice President, Saddam Hussein and Shah of Iran met in Algiers in March 1975, during an OPEC summit. The two officials agreed to solve the problems between their countries peacefully and promised that their states would refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs.

As a result of this agreement Iran immediately stopped all aid to the Peshmarga and withdrew its troops from Iraqi Kurdistan. Within days of the Iraq-Iran 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. Barzani, his family and prominent members of the KDP were among the first to cross. At the end of the amnesting period the Iraqi army moved almost unharassed into the heart land of the KDP, gaining control of all Iraqi Kurdistan. By May 1975, armed activity in Iraqi Kurds had come to an end.
Following the collapse of the Kurdish insurgency the Iraqi government followed a policy combining leniency with toughness in dealing with the Kurds. The most controversial aspect of the government's policies involved the deportation and resettlement of thousands of Kurds in areas other than their original places of residence.

The number of people involved in the resettlement scheme were hard to count but they range from as lower 40,000 to a high of 100,000, depending on the sources. And while pro-govt. Kurdish leaders had supported the establishment of strategic areas and the transfer of some of the former hard core insurgents to the south, they had, nevertheless, opposed the resettlement of large numbers of Kurds in the south. ICP leader Mu'arram Talbani, rDP leader Aziz Aqrawi, had opposed the resettlement policies and finally succeeded, with the help of Saddam Husain, in putting an end to the resettlement policies.

Hence in a statement published in the Kurdish newspaper, al-Iraqi, on July 5, 1976, Saddam Husain admitted that the authorities had taken several measures such as changing the residence of Kurdish people to other villages and strategic areas, as well as changing the residence of some individuals such as civil servants, workers, and others. But Husain declared that the government had decided "to stop such measures completely", because "national unity, stability,
and security had been established in the area". Furthermore, Iraqi leaders and foreign observers said that the policy had been reversed and that most of the resettled Kurds had been allowed to return to new areas in the Kurdish region. The only large groups that remained in southern Iraq were several thousand Barzanis (5,000 to 7,000) who had been resettled in Diwaniya. In September 1979, the Barzanis were allowed to return to the Kurdish region.

In 1979, a unique chapter in Kurdish history was closed when Mullah Mustafa Barzani died. Barzani's last years revealed the tragic end of a man who became a myth in his own lifetime. However, according to Barzani, the Kurdish nationalist movement "does not die because I am finished" he further added that one's actions are determined by what appears to be the right thing at a certain time and place. 55.

Barzani's departure and the extent of the defeat created a vacuum among the Kurdish opponents of the Iraqi government. The rDP broke into several factions. One faction headed by Habib Muhammad Kareem and Dare Tawfiq returned to Baghdad. Another faction led by Mahmood Uthman had broken with Barzani and formed the rDP preparatory committee which criticized both the Bath and the Barzani leadership. A third faction remained loyal to Barzani's sons Idris and Massud, who were surrounded by a small number of intellectuals led by Muhammad Abd al-Rehman. A fourth
group, the patriotic union of Kurdistan (PUK), was backed by Ali al-Askari who was widely respected as one of the Peshmargas and most able commanders.56.

The turmoil in Iran and the collapse of the Shah's regime provided a new opportunity for the Iraq Kurdish leadership, particularly as relations between the secular Arab nationalist government in Baghdad and the Islamic government in Tehran deteriorated sharply. The quarrel between the two regimes was deep and complex and had its roots in historic, territorial, ideological, strategic and political difference.57

Syria and Iran, while united in their opposition to Iraq, disagreed on the issue of support to rival factions in Iraq. Syria appeared to be backing a loose coalition of Talibani's PUK, Nisirite elements, Pro-Syrian Ba'thnists and the ICP, while Tehran backed al-Wawah party led by Hajjatul Islam. Muhammad al-Halier, an Iraqi Shi'i religious leader who was Thomanis choice for leadership in Iraq and Barzani led KDPPC. Tehran was reported to have intercepted arms shipments sent by Syria to Talibani.58

Within this scheme of internal and external the regional enemies of the Iraqi Government became useful allies, regardless of the lack of any other points of common interest. Actually, the apparent distraction or weakening of
the government in Baghdad, causing it to relax its military control of Kurdistan, was seen as an opportunity to reassert the Kurdish demands which the Iraqi military presence was designed to suppress. Consequently following the Iranian revolution in 1979 and the subsequent deterioration of relation with Iraq, both the main Kurdish parties the Kurdish Democratic party (KDP) and the patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) saw a chance for the revival of their fortunes. The KDP consolidated itself successfully in cultivating the new regime in Tehran, partly by offering its services in Tehran's campaign to eradicate the Iranian Kurdish autonomous movement. The PUK, whose origin was due partly to communal and ideological difference among the Kurds and partly to a bitter feud between its leader, Jalal Talabani, and the Barzains who lead the KDP, could not bring itself to collaborate with Tehran in this respect. When war broke out between Iraq and Iran in 1980, the situation in Kurdistan was sufficiently confused to allow the Iraqi Government to feel freely relaxed about its position there. Indeed this confusion lasted for the first two years of the war promoting Saddam Hussain to speak much that the Kurdish organisations would never be able to achieve anything since they were hopelessly divided against each other and subservient to foreign powers. As a result he claimed, the government was reducing its military presence in the region and putting Kurdish units of the people's Army
In charge of Kurdistan's security.

In the year 1983, Kurdish guerrilla organization became active and also attached on other Kurdish organization. In the Kurdish context these constitute a double threat not only did they significantly weaken the Iraqi armed forces capacity to resist Iranian offensives in the area, they also had an alternative political and military organisation to join, in the shape of the Kurdish guerrilla movement.

For the PUK, which was negotiating with Baghdad during 1983-84, it was cleared that even the pressure of war and their own threat to resume guerrilla operations would not win substantive concessions from Saddam Hussein. The latter firmly resisted PUK demands that fixed percentage of oil revenues should go to Kurdish developments projects, that the Kurdish militia under the government control should be disbanded, that the area of Kurdistan should be extended, or that there should be any meaningful political autonomy. Political power was clearly indivisible for Saddam Hussein and this had been the rock on which any negotiation with the Kurds had foundered. As a result, the PUK was to join the KDP in armed operation against Iraqi government targets in 1985.

The aim of Kurdish guerrilla was nothing but the campaign of harassment against Iraqi forces, equally important had been the intention displayed by both the KDP
and the PUK to create areas in which they could be free of Iraqi governments interference, thereby establishing a form of defacto autonomy. When the activities of the Kurdish groups strategically approached vital resources such as the highway and pipeline to Turkey, the Iraqi government displayed considerable ruthlessness and tenacity in thwarting the aims of the Kurds.

This was, indeed, a problem for the Kurds and had given them some difficulties in the definition of their political aims. Nevertheless, as the PUK seemed to recognise in 1987, the call for an independent Kurdistan was the more inspiring rallying cry, an attempt to reconcile the various ideas on the desirability and practically of independence, while not alienating their Iranian hosts, was evident in September 1987, when all the Kurdish parties united in a front which called for a future separate Kurdish state, confederated with a future democratic Iraq. Politically, Kurds tend to be excluded from consideration by those who were closer to the centre of Iraq and might, therefore, to able to affect its future. Towards the end of 1987, it was noticeable that the leaders of both major Kurdish guerrilla organisations attempted to remedy this, by urging all patriotic Iraqis to overthrow the regime. Masuo Barzani stated that the responsibility for the liberation of the Iraqi nation... falls on the shoulders of every patriotic Iraqi. Jalal
Talabani, meanwhile addressing himself directly to the Iraqi officer corps, warned them against believing Saddam Hussain’s slogan that they are defending the country. On the contrary, he stated, they were merely defending the regime and defence of Saddam’s regime, this is treachery against the aspirations of the Iraqi nation and treason against the country.

The Kurds, however, believed that by gaining territory they can achieve a number of aims: they can gain time and freedom from government control, they can establish themselves in a strong bargaining position vis-a-vis the government, it may be their success, contribute towards the weakening and eventual overthrow of that government. These are in many respects the traditional goals of all Kurdish political movements. The war had given them the opportunity to pursue them with greater vigour than before, but it had not caused them to see themselves or their relationship to Baghdad, or the modalities of that relationship, in a radically different light. Much the same can be said of the government of Saddam Hussain. War with Iran might have placed constrains on the available resources with which to confront the perennial problem of the Kurds. However, it had not changed his perspective on that problem, nor his belief about the intolerable nature of the Kurdish groups aspirations to political power. Equally, it has left unaltered Saddam Hussain’s views on the utility of the means
by which central government had sought to address the problem. Force, bribery, intimidation, the exploitation of inter-Kurdish rivalries, and the appeal to a range of self-interested motives would continue to be the major instruments in the hands of the government. These seem likely to remain more effective ways for the government to enlist the support of Kurds against their fellow Kurds and against the letters Iranian allies, than any of Saddam Hussain's attempts to inculcate a sense of specifically Iraqi nationalism among the inhabitant of Kurdistan°

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