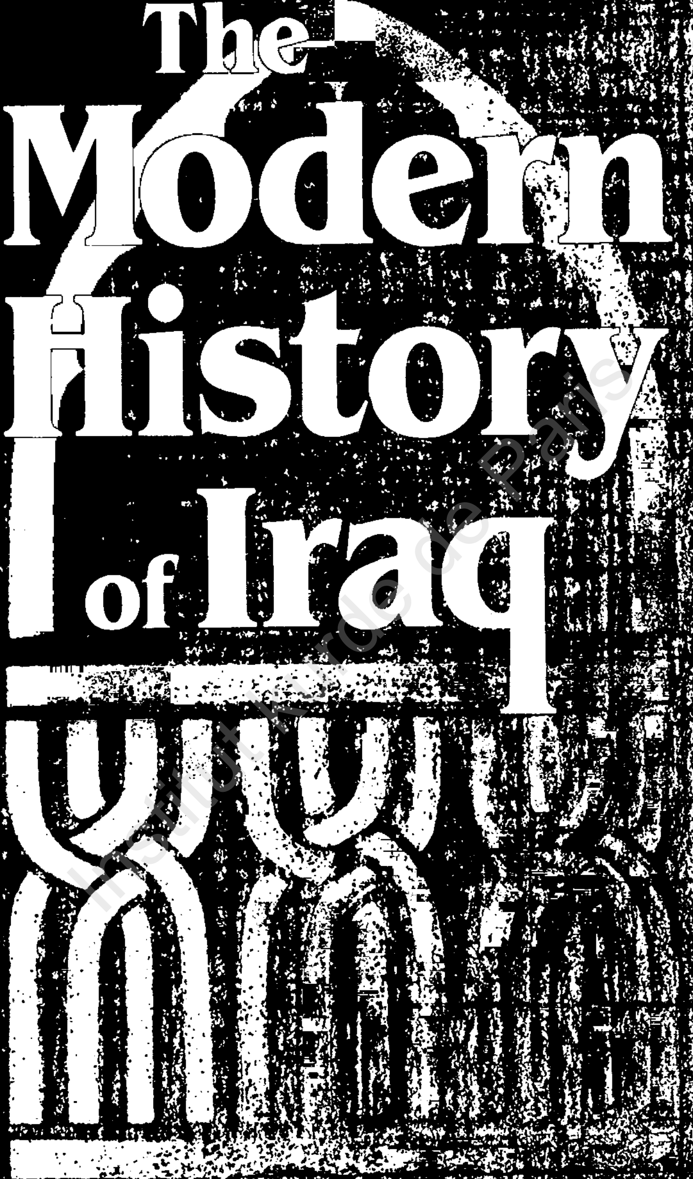
The Modern History of Iraq



PHEBE MARR

The Modern History of Iraq

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Iraq is a nation in search of cultural identity, a modern state that is attempting to accommodate the traditions of a very old society while coping with the rapid political and economic changes of the twentieth century. In this up-to-date study, Dr. Marr examines the political, economic, and social transformations that have created modern Iraq, beginning with its inception in 1920 and continuing through the 1958 revolution to today's Ba'th regime. Her sympathetic but not uncritical look at Iraq's problems and prospects, its political life, and its changing social and economic structure affords a clear picture of the country's current political dynamics and its distinctive character as an Arab state in transition.

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Phebe Marr is associate professor in the Department of History at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She lived in Iraq for several years while studying the nationalist movement there and has conducted extensive interviews with Iraqi politicians, educators, and scholars. In addition to Iraqi publications and British archives, Dr. Marr has drawn upon information obtained from these interviews as source material for this book and other studies on Iraq.

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The Modern History of Iraq

Phebe Marr

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Preface

Although Iraq is a comparatively new state and a relatively small country, it has had a remarkably rich and varied history. I cannot hope to do justice to the full complexity of Iraq's modern history, even for the short time span of 1920 to 1984. Indeed, the most difficult task in writing this book was deciding what to include and what to leave out. It seems relevant, therefore, to state my purpose in writing the book and the criteria I used in selecting which areas to cover.

This book is not meant to be an exhaustive and detailed history of modern Iraq; rather my aim has been to present a clear, readable, one-volume account of the emergence of modern Iraq and the forces that created it. I have drawn extensively on the many good monographs that have recently appeared on modern Iraq, and on the standard works of 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī on the pre-1958 period and Hanna Batatu, Majid Khadduri, and Edith Penrose and E. F. Penrose on the post-1958 period. It is my hope that the book will be of use both to the lay reader and to students of the Middle East. I have tried to include enough general interpretation of events to make the country and its people understandable, and enough detail to give depth and color to the events described. Above all I have tried to be evenhanded in depicting the course of events and to avoid oversimplifying complex situations. Although the book is directed at the general reader, I hope that scholars of the Middle East will also find it useful, both in providing a synthesis of a critical period of Iraqi history and in shedding new light on aspects of the subject not already covered elsewhere.

The material has been grouped around two main themes that, in my view, have dominated Iraq's history from 1920 to the present day. The first theme is the creation and construction of a modern state within the boundaries bequeathed to Iraq by the British in 1920 and the search by its leaders for a cultural and national identity capable of knitting together its various ethnic and religious groups within the context of the broader Arab world. The second is the process of economic and social development, a process that began at the end of the nineteenth century but that reached breathtaking proportions since the mid-1970s. It is too soon to draw conclusions about these two processes because both are ongoing; I have tried to indicate the direction they are taking and the achievements made thus far.

I gathered the source material for this book over a period of many years of study and work in the Middle East, including several years spent in Iraq both before and after the revolution of 1958. I have drawn whenever possible on works written by Iraqis, and I have also used statistical data published by the Iraqi government and by various international organizations. Although such data are more available and accurate in recent years, readers should treat all statistics with some caution. Census taking in a developing country like Iraq is difficult, and accurate figures are rare. Often data are based on estimates. Nevertheless, the figures used in this book do illustrate economic and social realities; the reader should concentrate on the broad trends that the figures indicate, and not on specific numbers.

I have made extensive use of interviews with Iraqi educators, writers, political figures, and ordinary men and women in various walks of life. I would like to acknowledge the help of these Iraqis, who gave so generously of their time in answering my questions, in reminiscing about their experiences, and in criticizing and clarifying my ideas. The book could not have been written without their help and unfailing courtesy, and they bear a large responsibility for my continuing fascination with their country and its development. Most of these men and women have preferred to remain anonymous and I have respected their requests for privacy. Hence, the names mentioned below in no way exhaust the list of those to whom I am indebted.

I would, however, like to thank Yaḥyā Qāsim, whose help on the politics of the old regime was invaluable; Khaldūn al-Ḥuṣrī, whose continuing criticism of the ongoing work was essential; Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb, who read and criticized the chapters on the Qāsim and ‘Ārif periods; and above all ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, who kindly made his library and his vast store of knowledge available to me while I was working on my thesis in Iraq. I would also like to thank Edith Penrose and E. F. Penrose for clarifying many of my thoughts on Iraqi history and politics in a number of stimulating conversations. I am indebted to Joseph Chamie for providing access to a wealth of material in the Beirut offices of the UN Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) and to Reeva Simon for unfailing help in ferreting out new source material. For encouraging my interests in the Middle East, for seeing me through my initial research on Iraq, and for sustaining me through the vicissitudes of my career, I owe more than I can express here to Sir Hamilton Gibb. I am also indebted to the Harvard Middle East Center and in particular to its former director, Derwood Lockard, for providing funds for residence and research in Iraq on several occasions and for a grant as research fellow at Harvard to work on Iraq. Finally, I would like to thank the history department of the University of Tennessee—particularly LeRoy Graf, its former head—and Robert Landen, dean of liberal arts, for providing funding and time off to write the manuscript. The interpretations as well as any errors in the manuscript are of course my own.

Phebe Marr

Note on Transliteration

A standard Arabic transliteration system, indicated below, has been used for all Arabic words and most proper names and place names. Words of Persian, Turkish, or Kurdish origin, which have become arabized through usage in Iraq, have been rendered according to their Arabic spelling and not the local pronunciation. Exceptions have been made for Persian place names where Persian spelling differs from Arabic. A few proper names are spelled according to their common English usage.

Transliteration

ء	ʼ[1]	ط	ṭ
ب	b	ظ	ẓ
ت	t	ع	ʻ
ث	th	غ	gh
ج	j	ف	f
ح	ḥ	ق	q
خ	kh	ك	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	dh	م	m
ر	r	ن	n
ز	z	و	w
س	s	ي	y
ش	sh	ه	h
ص	ṣ	ة	h[2]
ض	ḍ	ال	al[3]
		پ	p[4]

short vowels

ـَ	a
ـُ	u
ـِ	i

Long vowels

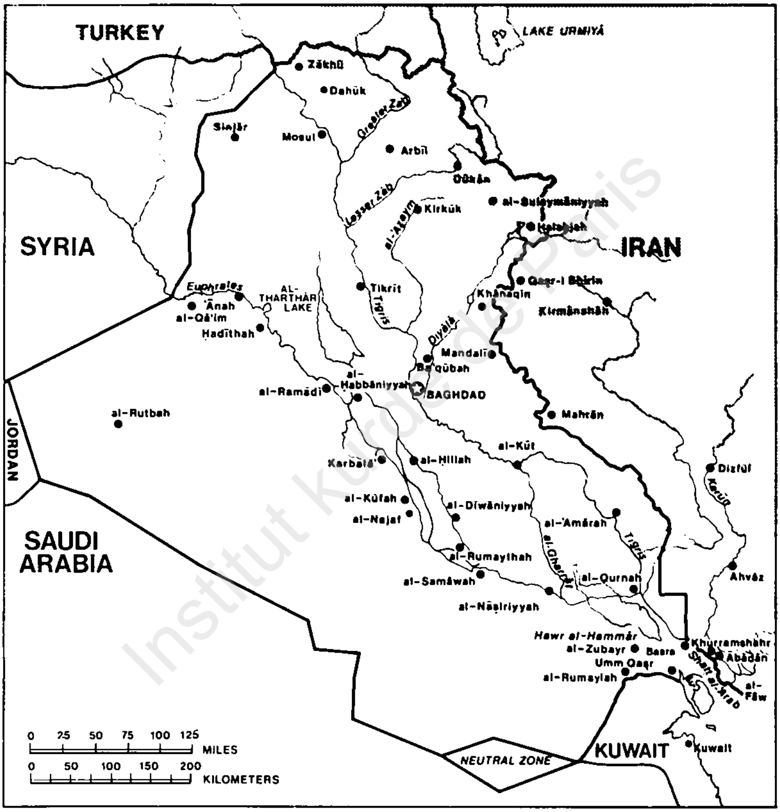
ا ى	ā
و	ū
ي	ī

Diphthongs

ـَوْ	aw
ـَيْ	ay
ـِيّ	iyy[5]
ـُوّ	uww[6]

---

1. Not represented at the beginning of a word.
2. Represented as "t" when in a construct state.
3. Al, the definite article, is represented as –l, when the preceding word ends in a vowel. The "al" in proper names may be replaced by "the" in translation.
4. The "p" appears only in Persian words.
5. ī at the end of words.
6. ū at the end of words.


TURKEY
LAKE URMIYĀ
Zākhū
Dahūk
Greater Zab
Sinjār
Mosul
Arbīl
Dūkān
Lesser Zab
al-'Uzaym
Kirkūk
al-Sulaymāniyyah
Halabjah
SYRIA
IRAN
Euphrates
'Ānah
al-Qā'im
AL-THARTHĀR LAKE
Tikrīt
Tigris
Qasr-i Shīrīn
Khānaqīn
Kirmānshāh
Hadīthah
Diyālā
Mandalī
Ba'qūbah
al-Habbāniyyah
al-Ramādī
BAGHDAD
al-Rutbah
Mahrān
JORDAN
al-Kūt
Karbalā'
al-Hillah
Dizfūl
Karun
al-Kūfah
al-Najaf
al-Dīwāniyyah
al-'Amārah
SAUDI ARABIA
al-Rumaythah
al-Gharraf
Tigris
al-Samāwah
al-Qurnah
Ahvāz
al-Nāsiriyyah
Hawr al-Hammār
al-Zubayr
Basra
Khurramshahr
Ābādān
Umm Qasr
al-Rumaylah
Shatt al-Arab
al-Fāw
KUWAIT
Kuwait
NEUTRAL ZONE
0 25 50 75 100 125 MILES
0 50 100 150 200 KILOMETERS

Iraq: Physical Features and Major Cities

1

The Legacy of the Past

THE LAND

The state of Iraq has existed only since 1920, when it was created under British aegis as a mandate; however, the area now incorporated within its borders has been the home of several of humankind's earliest civilizations.[1] With a land area of 170,000 square miles (440,300 sq km) and a population of over 14 million in 1984, Iraq is the largest of the Fertile Crescent countries rimming the northern edge of the Arabian peninsula.[2] Lying between the plateau of northern Arabia and the mountain ridge of southwest Iran and Turkey, Iraq forms a lowland corridor between Syria and the Persian/Arabian Gulf.[3] From its earliest history Iraq has been a passageway between East and West. Its borders are for the most part artificial, reflecting the interests of the great powers during the First World War rather than the wishes of the local population. As a result, Iraq's present borders have been continuously challenged by peoples living inside and outside of the country. Much of the eastern border is still in dispute, as illustrated by the Iran-Iraq war that began in 1980.

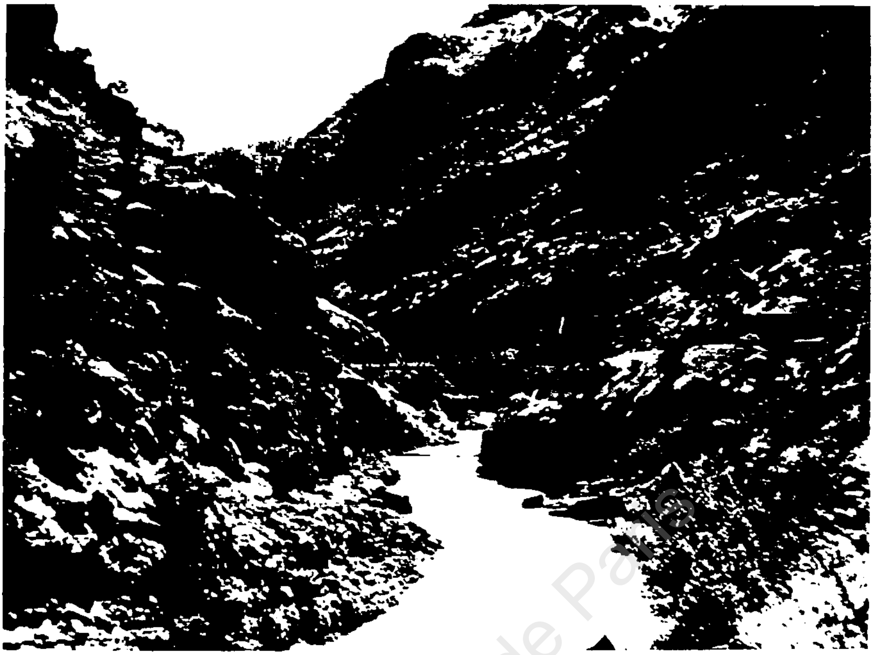
The southeastern portion of the country lies at the head of the Gulf. Iraq controls a 26-mile (42-km) strip of Gulf territory, just sufficient to provide it with an outlet to the sea. From the Gulf, Iraq's border with Iran follows the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab north, then skirts the Persian foothills as far north as the valley of the Diyālā River, the first major tributary of the Tigris north of Baghdad. From here, the frontier thrusts deep into the high Kurdish mountain ranges following the Diyālā River valley. Near Ḥalabjah it turns northward along the high mountain watersheds—incorporating within Iraq most of the headwaters of the major Tigris tributaries—until it reaches the Turkish border west of Lake Urmiyā. The mountainous boundary with Turkey ends at the Syrian border just west of Zākhū, Iraq's northernmost town. This northeastern region incorporates difficult and unmanageable mountain terrain and a substantial Kurdish population.

In the northwest, the frontier separates Iraq from Syria, meandering south across the Syrian desert from the Turkish border until it reaches the Euphrates near al-Qā'im. Here the borders make little pretense of following geography, jutting out into the adjacent desert and incorporating large areas of steppe. At the Euphrates, the border turns west until it reaches Jordan, also a former British mandate, and then south a short distance to the Saudi frontier. From this point the border follows a line of water wells separating Iraq from Saudi Arabia and then forms the northern portion of a diamond-shaped neutral territory shared by Iraqi and Saudi tribes. At the eastern tip of the neutral zone, the border turns north again, forming a common frontier with Kuwait, until it reaches the Gulf near Umm Qaṣr.[4]

The terrain included within these boundaries is remarkably diverse, making Iraq a country of extreme contrasts. The Shaṭṭ al-'Arab is a broad waterway lined with miles of lush date groves more reminiscent of an oasis than a river bank. To the north of the Shaṭṭ lies swampland, inhabited along the Tigris by marsh dwellers who live in reed houses built on stilts and raise water buffalo, and along the Euphrates by rice-growing villagers. Between the marshlands and Baghdad is the delta, the most densely populated area of Iraq, once inhabited by the Sumerians and Babylonians of ancient Mesopotamia. It is a dry, flat area consisting almost entirely of irrigated farmland, with large mud-hut villages hugging the river banks. North of Baghdad the two rivers diverge widely to form the Jazīrah (island), the territory between the two. Although some irrigation farming is practiced here, it is mainly rainfed territory—a land of gentle uplands sprinkled with smaller villages. Mosul, near the site of Nineveh, is the Jazīrah's major city and the center of its commercial life. To the north and east of the Jazīrah, the plains give way to foothills filled with settled villages and prosperous towns (often inhabited by Turkish-speaking people) and then to the high mountains, the home of the Kurds. Iraqi Kurdistan, as this territory has frequently been called, is an isolated and inaccessible area of deep gorges and rugged, snow-capped mountains rising to 12,000 feet (over 3,600 meters), broken only by the fertile valleys of the Tigris tributaries.

Within this diversity of territory, the unifying feature of Iraq's geography is its twin river system. From the dawn of civilization, the rivers have provided the irrigation that made life possible for those inhabiting the flat, dry plains through which they flow, uniting the populations of the north and south and giving them a common interest in controlling the rivers and their tributaries. The rivers have also provided the arteries for trade and communication without which the cities for which Mesopotamia is famous could not have flourished. Whatever else may divide them, the people who live along the riverbanks are conscious of their dependence on the Tigris and Euphrates.

The rivers are not an unmixed blessing. The Tigris has often delivered torrential floods in the spring, too late for the winter crop and too early for the summer. The south of the country has a poor natural drainage system, causing progressive salinization of the soil if irrigation is not controlled or the soil flushed. Without dams, barrages, and artificial



Rāwandūz Gorge, northern Iraq. Courtesy Iraq Petroleum Company.

Northern Iraq near Zākhū, 1956. Courtesy Iraq Petroleum Company.

The Gharrāf River near al-Kūt, Southern Iraq. Photo by Phebe Marr.

drainage systems, the rivers cannot support continuous agriculture. Whenever such an organized system has existed, Iraq has flourished; when it has not, the country between the two rivers has ceased to exist as a unified entity.

Iraq today is a country rich in resources. With proper management, the river system can provide substantial agricultural production to feed a population whose average density does not exceed seventy-five inhabitants per square mile. Its oil reserves, estimated in 1980 to be at least 31 billion barrels, are as yet not extensively explored; they may prove to be among the largest in the Middle East.[5] With a national income of ID15.3 billion ($51 billion) in 1980 (revenues have since declined owing to the war with Iran), Iraq has ample capital for development, if properly used and husbanded.[6] After half a century of modern education and development, Iraq's population has acquired much of the technical capacity to manage a complex economy. Yet Iraq's problems in the twentieth century resemble those of its past history. The challenge is to organize the social and political environment in a way that will bring Iraq's considerable potential to fruition, unify its people, and put an end to the factionalism and mismanagement that have often led to discontinuity, disunity, and decay.

THE PEOPLE

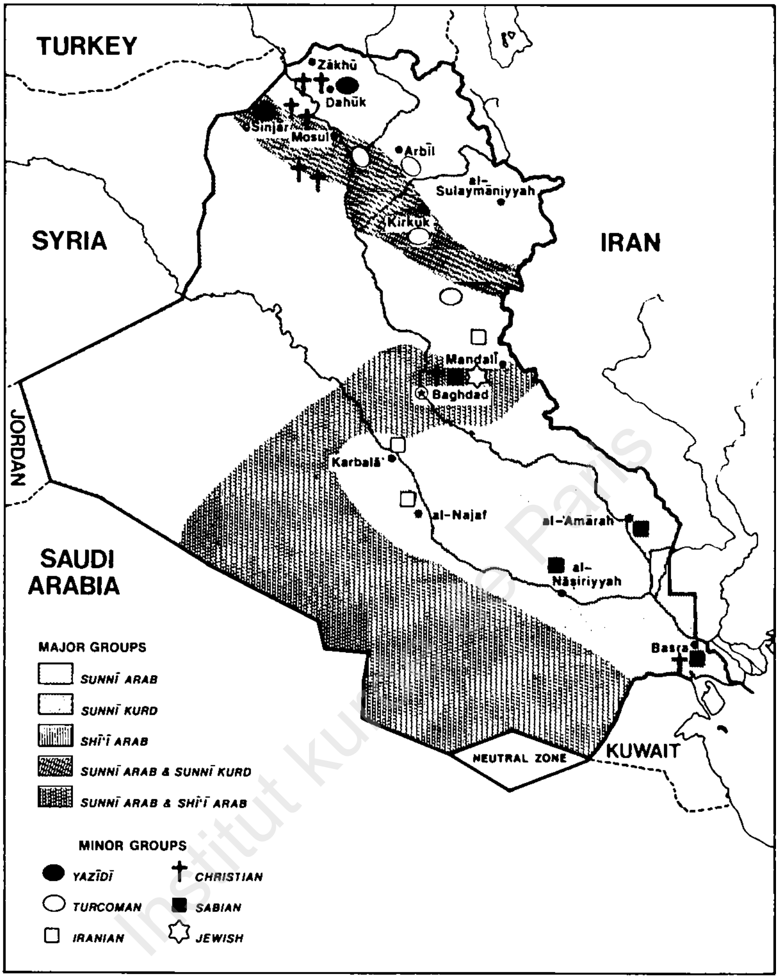
If one can speak of an Iraqi state, it is not yet possible to speak of an Iraqi nation. Iraq's present borders incorporate a diverse medley of peoples who have not yet been welded into a single political community with a common sense of identity. The process of integration and assimilation has gone on steadily since the inception of the mandate, but it is by no means complete.

The first and most serious demographic division is ethnic—or more properly speaking, linguistic. The Arabic-speaking majority comprises about 75 to 80 percent of the population, and the Kurdish-speaking minority is estimated at 15 to 20 percent.[7] The Arabs dominate the western steppe and the Tigris and Euphrates Valley from Basra to the Mosul plain; the Kurds have their stronghold in the rugged mountain terrain of the north and east. However, the Iraqi Kurds are only a portion of a larger Kurdish population with whom they identify on linguistic, cultural, and nationalistic grounds. In 1973, it was estimated that there were 1.8 million Kurds in northwestern Iran (about as many as in Iraq), 3.2 million in eastern Turkey, and 320,000 in Syria.[8]

A second major division splits the population along religious lines between the two great sects of Islam, the *shīʿī* and the *sunnī*. Since the overwhelming majority of the Kurds are *sunnī*, this division affects mainly the Arabs, but the outcome has been to segment Iraqi society into three distinct communities: the Arab *shīʿah*, the Arab *sunnī*s, and the Kurds.

Arab *Shīʿah*

The division of the Muslim community originated shortly after the Prophet's death in a political dispute over who should be selected caliph or successor. The *sunnīs*, the majority, have accepted all caliphs who had held office regardless of the method of selection, so long as they were able to make their claims effective. The *shīʿah*, the minority, took the side of the fourth caliph, ʿAlī, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, claiming that the leadership of the community should have been his from the first and that only his heirs were legitimate successors. Eventually, they also claimed that ʿAlī had been preserved by God from sin and that both his esoteric knowledge and infallibility had been passed on to those of his descendents recognized as leaders, or *imāms*, by the *shīʿī* community. After the disappearance of the twelfth imām in the ninth century, the hereditary line of imāms lapsed, and leadership of the *shīʿī* community devolved on religious scholars, called *mujtahid*s. Although these scholars did not inherit the infallibility of the imāms, they do have the authority to interpret Quranic scripture. The fact that each individual *shīʿī* is expected to follow a leading mujtahid gives the *shīʿī* community stronger leadership and a greater sense of cohesion than its *sunnī* counterpart.


TURKEY
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Dahūk
Sinjār
Mosul
Arbīl
al-Sulaymāniyyah
Kirkuk
SYRIA
IRAN
Mandalī
Baghdad
JORDAN
Karbalā'
al-Najaf
al-'Amārah
al-Nāṣiriyyah
SAUDI ARABIA
Basra
NEUTRAL ZONE
KUWAIT
MAJOR GROUPS
SUNNĪ ARAB
SUNNĪ KURD
SHĪ'Ī ARAB
SUNNĪ ARAB & SUNNĪ KURD
SUNNĪ ARAB & SHĪ'Ī ARAB
MINOR GROUPS
YAZĪDĪ
CHRISTIAN
TURCOMAN
SABIAN
IRANIAN
JEWISH

Ethnic and Religious Distribution of Iraq's Population

The *shī'ah* began as a political party, gradually became an underground opposition movement, and finally evolved into a distinct religious sect. In addition to their political doctrines, they also developed a somewhat different interpretation of Islamic law and several distinctive rituals and ceremonies, all of which set them apart from the far more numerous *sunnī*s. As successive *shī'ī* leaders unsuccessfully attempted to wrest the caliphate from the *sunnī*s, they suffered the government repression that is usually the fate of such movements. Eventually, the *shī'ah* acquired many of the characteristics of a persecuted minority—alienation from the larger society, an intense feeling of cohesion, and a pervasive sense of oppression and injustice—that remain the hallmark of the community today.

From the first, southern Iraq has been the stronghold of *shīʿī* Islam. It was in al-Kūfah that ʿAlī made his capital, and near Karbalāʾ that Ḥusayn, the grandson of the Prophet and a *shīʿī* martyr, was slain. Their tombs in al-Najaf and Karbalāʾ are now the focus of the *shīʿī* pilgrimage. Various *shīʿī* movements either originated or found a firm reception in southern Iraqi cities, where *shīʿī* Islam eventually established a foothold so firm it could not be dislodged by the *sunnī*s.

It was to the *sunnī* Ottoman administration of Iraq, beginning in the sixteenth century, that the *shīʿah* owed their position at the start of the mandate. Under the Ottomans, the Iraqi *shīʿah* were largely excluded from administrative positions, from the military, and from secular education institutions, and the *shīʿī*, or Jaʿfarite, school of law was neither recognized in the Ottoman code nor accorded a place within the *sharīʿah* (Islamic law) courts. This process of exclusion was admittedly encouraged by the *shīʿah* themselves. Since none but *sunnī*s were recognized as teachers in Ottoman schools, the *shīʿah* refused to attend them, and since only *sunnī* judges were appointed to the courts, the *shīʿah* declined to take their cases before them.[9] As a result, the *shīʿah*, largely cut off from the few thin currents of progress and reform flowing into *sunnī* Arab cities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, were the more isolated and inbred of the two Iraqi communities. It was these factors, more than differences of doctrine or law, that separated the *shīʿah* in Iraq from the *sunnī*s at the start of the twentieth century. Not surprisingly, the *shīʿah*, so long excluded from government, came to be deeply alienated from it.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the *shīʿah* are the largest single religious community in Iraq today, outnumbering the Arab *sunnī*s and constituting a slight majority of the total population.[10] The area from the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab in the south to the Diyālā River and the canal system between al-Ḥabbāniyyah and Baghdad in the north—the most populated section of the country—is almost solidly *shīʿī* except for a few *sunnī* enclaves in some cities. In the twentieth century, migrations of the *shīʿah* from the south have expanded their numbers in the north, and it is estimated that they now form a majority in Baghdad and along the left bank of the Tigris as far north as its confluence with the al-ʿAẓaym River.

Arab *Sunnī*s

In contrast to the *shīʿah*, the Arab *sunnī*s in Iraq tend to be more cosmopolitan and, with the exception of some recently settled tribes, more urban in composition. As a result, their communal cohesiveness has been less developed. Unlike the *shīʿah*, the *sunnī*s do not accord special religious authority to their leaders—the scholars, jurists, and judges, collectively known as *ʿulamāʾ*, who define and uphold the rules that guide the commmunity. Rather they follow the *sunnah*, or customs of the Prophet (from which they take their name), and the *sharīʿah,* the body of Islamic doctrine, law, and ritual derived from the Quran and the *sunnah.* It is to the *sharīʿah,* rather than to any particular leader, that the *sunnī* community owes adherence, a factor that has made it far more loosely structured than the *shīʿī* community.

Despite their minority status, the Arab *sunnī*s have traditionally dominated the political and social life of Iraq, originally due to Ottoman support. Although no census has been taken that distinguishes among various Muslim groups, the Arab *sunnī*s probably represent about 20 percent of the population.[11] Geographically, they are concentrated in the northern part of the country, including the Arab tribal groups of the western steppe and the Arab villages of the northern Tigris and Euphrates areas. The remainder of the Arab *sunnī* community is almost wholly urban, situated in the cities and towns of the central and northern provinces. Substantial numbers of *sunnī*s also live in some cities of the south, especially Basra.

Although the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War removed the Ottoman support for *sunnī* supremacy, it did not end *sunnī* dominance. So deeply entrenched were the *sunnī*s that they have held their commanding position up to the present day. This political dominance and resulting enjoyment of most of society's benefits have given the *sunnī* community greater social mobility and a closer association with—and vested interest in—the emerging Iraqi state. Because *sunnī*s are a majority in the Arab world as a whole, the Arab *sunnī*s of Iraq have also had a greater affinity for the secular philosophies of Arab nationalism.

The Kurds

The third major group, the Kurds, has proved the most difficult to assimilate. Language has been a major stumbling block. The Kurds speak an Indo-European language closely akin to Persian, while Arabic remains the official language of the central government and of the higher educational institutions in Iraq. Even more important has been the sense of ethnic—even national—identity that the Kurds have developed, especially in the twentieth century.

The origin of the Kurds is still a matter of some historical dispute, with most Kurdish scholars claiming descent from the ancient Medes. However, because there was no written Kurdish literature until the tenth century, it is difficult to substantiate this identification. Whatever their origins, the Kurds were almost completely converted to Islam. They became orthodox *sunnī*s, part of a vast Muslim empire and often its staunchest defenders. From time to time, particularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Kurdish dynasties have arisen, but these have lacked cohesion and were unable to maintain their autonomy. In the twentieth century, a sense of Kurdish identity based on language, close tribal ties, customs, and a shared history has inspired Kurdish nationalist movements. Like their predecessors, however, these political groups have lacked sufficient cohesion and coordination to achieve lasting results.

The majority of Iraq's Kurdish population today is to be found in the mountains of the northeast, with al-Sulaymāniyyah as their center and stronghold. In recent history, Kurds have been migrating from the mountains into the foothills and plains, many settling in and around Mosul in the north and in the cities and towns along the Diyālā River in the south, but most Kurds still live along the lower mountain slopes, where they practice agriculture and raise livestock. Traditionally, they have been under the control of *aghā*s (tribal leaders) drawn from the leading tribal families, but the position of this landholding group has been greatly eroded in the last decade by modernization and land reforms. Like all mountain people, the mountain Kurds are tough, hardy warriors with a tight-knit, semifeudal organization. The Kurds who migrated to the plains, however, are detribalized, and until recently they have often fallen under the control of absentee landlords. A smaller but growing proportion of the Kurds is urban. They have settled mainly in al-Sulaymāniyyah and Ḥalabjah, wholly Kurdish cities, and in Arbīl and Kirkūk. In Arbīl, they constitute a definite majority; in Kirkūk, the percentage is open to question.[12]

Of all Iraqi minority groups, the Kurds have been the most difficult to assimilate because of their numbers, their geographic concentration, their mountain inaccessibility, and their cultural and linguistic identity. However, many bilingual Kurds have assimilated into Iraqi society sufficiently to enable them to play an active role in state and society.

Other Minorities

Aside from these three major demographic groups there are several smaller ethnic and religious communities in Iraq. In northern towns and villages along the old trade route that led from Anatolia along the foothills of the Zagros to Baghdad live members of a Turkish-speaking group known locally as the Turcoman. Comprising between 2 and 3 percent of the population,[13] and most numerous in the cities of Kirkūk and Arbīl, they are probably remnants of the Turcoman tribal dynasties of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, later augmented by urban Turks settled in these frontier towns by successive Ottoman sultans. The Turcoman, mainly *sunnī* and middle class, have for decades produced a disproportionate number of bureaucrats and have integrated rather well into modern Iraq.

In the south is a group of *shīʿī* Persian speakers with strong ties to Persia that have never been severed. Until recently, they constituted 1.5 to 2 percent of the population, but in the wake of the Iraq-Iran war, this community has largely been expelled from Iraq.[14] Their stronghold lay in the holy cities of Karbalā', al-Najaf, and al-Kāẓimiyyah (now part

A Kurd from ʻAqrah, Northern Iraq, 1956. Courtesy Iraq Petroleum Company.

of Baghdad), with smaller numbers in Basra and other southern towns. The Iraqi Persian speakers have frequently looked to Persian rulers to support their interests, causing them to be regarded with suspicion by the Ottoman Turks and more recently by Arab nationalist governments. Another Persian-speaking group distinct from these town dwellers is the Lurs, less than 1 percent of all Iraqis. Often called *faylī* or *shīʿī* Kurds, they are almost all tribally organized villagers concentrated near the eastern frontiers of Iraq.[15]

Iraq also has a number of non-Muslim minorities—Christians, Jews, and a few other communities that predate Islam. Up until 1951 non-Muslims comprised about 6 percent of the Iraqi people,[16] and the Jews were the oldest and largest of these communities, tracing their origin to the Babylonian capitivity of the sixth century B.C.E. The 1947 census calculated their numbers at 118,000, though the true figure may have been as high as 150,000, then about 2 percent of the population. By the 1980s the figure had dwindled to a few thousand.[17] Overwhelmingly urban, the bulk of the Jewish community lived in Baghdad, where Jews were often prosperous and influential merchants. The position of the community was radically changed by the impact of Zionism. With the establishment of Israel in 1948, the situation of Iraqi Jews became untenable, and their exodus in 1951 left only a handful, whose position today is unenviable.

Various Christian sects comprise about 3 percent of the population. The largest denomination is the Chaldean Church, founded in the fifth century by the followers of the theologian Nestorius and originally constituting part of the Nestorian Church. In the sixteenth century they unified with Rome, thus becoming a Uniate church. Centered in Mosul and the surrounding plains areas, most Chaldeans speak Arabic, although some use a modified version of Syriac as a vernacular.[18]

Second in importance are the Assyrians, those Nestorians who did not unite with Rome. Prior to 1914, most Assyrians were mountain villagers living in the Ḥakkārī province of the Ottoman Empire, now in Turkey. Only about 1,000 families were then settled in territory eventually to be incorporated into Iraq. In 1918 the British encouraged the Assyrians to rise against the Turks, whom the British were fighting in the war. The rebellion was unsuccessful, and a number of Assyrians were massacred by the Turks; others were forced into Persia, where they were taken under British protection. The Turks refused to allow the Assyrians to return to their native valleys, and the British then settled about 20,000 of them in the northern areas of Iraq around Zākhū and Dahūk. The Assyrians, so called because they claim descent from the ancient Assyrians, proved to be one of the most unsettling elements in Iraq's modern history prior to the Second World War. Their uninvited intrusion into the country through the intervention of a foreign power was deeply resented by the Muslims, and especially by the Kurds in whose areas they were settled.

Other Christian groups include the Armenian community, settled in cities and towns where they total possibly 20,000, and the Jacobites, a Monophysite group dating back to the sixth century. Village dwellers on the Mosul plains as well as urban merchants and professionals, the Jacobites number about 10,000 to 15,000.[19] In the major cities of Iraq are Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, and Latin Catholic communities, but their numbers are small in comparison to other Christians. A small number of Protestants, almost wholly the result of the nineteenth-century Baptist and Congregational missions, live mainly in Baghdad and Basra.

Two other religious communities of obscure origin deserve mention. One is the Yazīdīs. Racially and linguistically related to the Kurds,[20] they are village dwellers located in the Jabal Sinjār and al-Shaykhān districts near Mosul. Their religion is a compound of several ancient and living religions, and its most notable element is a dualism most likely derived from Zoroastrianism. The Yazīdīs, like many neighboring Christians, traditionally considered themselves to be a self-governing community. They have resisted attempts to integrate them into the larger society. The second group, the Sabians, is a sect of ancient origin and diverse elements inhabiting portions of the southern delta, particularly around al-'Amārah and Sūq al-Shuyūkh. Their faith stresses baptism and contains elements of Manicheanism, but not Islam. They have no religious structure and no special language. They are famous as silversmiths and boatbuilders.

Town and Tribe

To these ethnic and sectarian divisions, somewhat blurred since mandate days, must be added a third social dichotomy that has played a profound role in Iraq's modern history—the division between town and tribe. Though greatly softened in recent years by the growth of cities and the spread of education to the countryside, the legacy of tribalism is subtle but pervasive in Iraq.

The historical importance of the tribes in Iraq can scarcely be exaggerated. Nomadic, seminomadic, or settled, at the time of the mandate they surrounded the handful of cities and larger towns, controlled the country's communications system, and held nine-tenths of its land.[21] In 1933, a year after Iraqi independence, it was estimated that there were 100,000 rifles in tribal hands, and 15,000 in the possession of the government.[22] Although only a few of these tribes were nomadic, the bulk of the settled population of the country, whether Arab or Kurd, was tribally organized and retained tribal mores and customs.

The extension of tribal organization and institutions to rural Iraq has meant that much of the rural population has not yet put down deep roots in the soil. The settled village community with its attachment to the land—the backbone of the social structure throughout most of the Middle East—has been a missing link in Iraq's social fabric. Settled agricultural communities completely divorced from tribal structure have emerged in only two areas, the carefully tended date gardens of the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab and the rainfed, grain-producing plains of Mosul.[23] Instead of love of the land, loyalty to family and tribe has dominated Iraq's social and political life. Intense concern with family, clan, and tribe; devotion to personal honor; factionalism; and above all, intense individualism—which does not easily brook interference from central authority—are among the legacies of tribalism in Iraq.

The only significant counterbalance to tribalism has been the economic and political power of the cities, but until recently these have been few in number and economically and culturally unintegrated with the rural hinterland. Aside from Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul, there were few cities worthy of the name at the end of the Ottoman era. Most were simply caravan stops like al-Zubayr; fueling stations like al-Kūt; or religious shrines like Karbalā' and al-Najaf, in which the benefits of law and order, trade and manufacture, were noticeable only against the background of poverty in the countryside. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, about a quarter of a population of a little over 2 million were urban; a quarter of these were concentrated in Baghdad.[24]

Traditionally, cities were unable to extend their civilizing influence into the countryside because they themselves were fragmented among various quarters and groups. Struggles among urban factions often replicated rural tribal feuds and were sometimes connected to them. In 1915, for example, the Banū Ḥasan, a neighboring tribe with whom

Karbalā' residents had a long-standing feud, attacked Karbalā' and burned down the government headquarters. Similar incidents took place in other towns.[25]

Rapid urbanization and the spread of education in the last few decades has greatly eroded tribalism and shifted the balance of power to the cities, a process that has brought new and different problems. Nevertheless, although tribal organization is rapidly disappearing in the countryside, tribal customs and attitudes have left tangible influences. In political life, family, clan, and local ties often take precedence over national loyalties and broader ideologies.

CIVILIZATIONS OF THE PAST

Iraq's strategic position at the crossroads of three continents and its peculiar geographic features have played an overwhelming role in its history. A rich lowland area surrounded by mountain people to the north and east and by desert nomads to the south and west, Iraq has been subject to continuous invasion. When the local society has had a strong central government, capable of controlling its irrigation system and containing or absorbing its conquerors, it has produced a high civilization; when it has not, disruption and discontinuity have resulted.

Ancient Mesopotamia

Two of the greatest advances in humankind's evolution have originated on Iraqi soil. The first was the practice of agriculture, a development Iraq shares with other areas of the Middle East. In the foothills of Kurdistan in northern Iraq, where cereal grains grew wild, agriculture and the domestication of animals were practiced well over 6,000 years ago. Jarmo, an agricultural site east of modern Kirkūk, dates back to 6500 B.C.E.[26]

Agriculture began in the rainfed areas of the north; the second advance—the development of urban life—began in the south. Here, where the rivers provided the potential to support a much larger population if the challenge of irrigation could be met, civilization first emerged. The reason is clear. Harnessing the rivers required enormous human effort and coordination, which in turn led to greater political and social organization. The result was the early city-state organization of Sumeria.

Although the origin of the ancient Sumerians is still unclear, by the fourth millennium B.C.E. they had developed a complex of thirteen city-states stretching from the area near Baghdad to the Gulf, each with a political hierarchy headed by a king, clear social stratification undoubtedly based on control of the irrigation system, extensive trade with surrounding areas, and a religion organized around a local god and temple.[27] It is interesting that Sumerian religion, which was mainly a fertility cult based on a pantheon of gods, was intensely pessimistic in outlook, indicating the precariousness of civilization in the river valleys. It is also significant that the layout and the organization of these cities would be familiar to any Middle Easterner today. The compact settlements had narrow winding streets; small markets selling food, clothes, spices, and delicacies in a colorful array; and two-storied houses closed to the street but with airy courtyards inside.

Ancient Mesopotamia's contributions to civilization were many and varied. The development of writing—based originally on pictographs, which evolved into a standardized script known as cuneiform; the use of the wheel; metal working; and monumental temple architecture, symbolized by the famous ziggurat: all were well established by the third millennium B.C.E. Cultural contributions extended to literature and science as well. Sumerians and their successors wrote poetry, mythology, and the world's first epic, the story of Gilgamesh. The epic of Gilgamesh contains the first written account of the great flood; a later version appeared in the Old Testament. Sumerian mathematics had square roots and cubes, quadratic equations, and serial, exponential, and logarithmic relations. Through their observation of celestial bodies the Sumerians created the first accurate calendars based on the twelve-month lunar year and the cycle of sixty minutes and twelve hours that we still use to tell time.[28]

Not the least of their contributions was the concept and structure of empire. As the city-states expanded in the river valleys, encroaching on one another's territory, and the need to fend off desert and mountain invasions increased, the political structure of the city-state, originally organized around the need to control the irrigation system, increased in scope and complexity. A centralized administration developed, with mechanisms for accommodating peoples of different languages, faiths, and backgrounds.

Empire was born in Mesopotamia shortly after 2400 B.C.E. when a semitic group, the Akkadians, settled in central Iraq. They subdued all the Sumerian city-states to the south, the entire Tigris and Euphrates Valley, and parts of adjacent areas as well. The Akkadian Empire survived for about 200 years before collapsing, but its example, of unifying Mesopotamia under a single government, was never forgotten. The rise and fall of the Akkadian Empire followed a pattern that was to persist in the river valleys right up to modern times. Rapid expansion was followed by incomplete assimilation of diverse peoples; internal rebellions and palace revolutions broke out; and wars on the frontiers and invasions by highlanders finally destroyed the empire. The ancient and medieval civilizations of Iraq, based on agriculture in a flat plains area, required two conditions to survive. The first was cooperation at the center between various ethnic and sociopolitical units; the second was friendly or neutral neighbors. Neither situation ever lasted for long.[29]

The Akkadian Empire was followed by the Babylonian (c. 1900–1600 B.C.E.), the Kassite (c. 1600–1150 B.C.E.), and the Assyrian (c. 953–605

B.C.E.) empires. The latter was the most developed. The Assyrians had a highly efficient (though ruthless) administration; a centralized and autocratic monarchy; a large bureaucracy; and a well-developed system of provincial government held together by a network of communications. They fought a constant series of frontier wars and also faced numerous internal rebellions by repressed subjects. Wars and rebellions were eventually the empire's undoing. Much of the Assyrian model was followed by the later Persian Achaemenian Empire (537–330 B.C.E.).

Throughout most of these ancient Mesopotamian empires, the basic pattern of Sumerian civilization persisted. Although trade and urban life increased, governments continued to be based on an agrarian economy and centralized control over the river valleys, and all followed the religious and cultural patterns of ancient Sumeria, with some modifications. In the fourth century B.C.E., a break occurred in this tradition with the conquest of Mesopotamia by a civilization that originated outside the area in a totally different cultural and intellectual environment.

Alexander's conquest of the Middle East marked a new era of history in Mesopotamia. The new civilization brought by Hellenism was above all urban and cosmopolitan. Alexander and his successors established new cities—indeed, metropolises, everywhere. These were based not on the organization of irrigation and agriculture, but on trade and commerce; they breathed the spirit not of the temple and its gods, but of the Greek polis and the new scientific rationalism that it produced.[30] The spread of cities and Hellenistic ideas was hastened by the development of a new Middle Eastern lingua franca, Aramaic, which replaced earlier Mesopotamian languages and virtually eclipsed Sumerian in the river valleys; in the mountain areas, Indo-European languages came to predominate, a pattern that persists today.

These new influences put an end to ancient Mesopotamian civilization and prepared the way for a new Islamic era. Indeed, knowledge of this ancient civilization was scant until the nineteenth century, when its remains were unearthed by archaeologists. Nor surprisingly, this ancient heritage has played little role in shaping the conscious identity of either the Kurdish or Arab population. Only recently have artists and poets begun to draw upon this heritage in paintings and literature, while the government has turned its attention to propagating the notion of a Mesopotamian heritage as part of the Arab tradition.

The new Hellenistic civilization also brought a change in irrigation and settlement patterns in the river valleys. The shift to urban life and the growth of large cities necessitated greater centralization and the expansion of the irrigation system to support the growing urban population. This process reached its peak during the Sassanian Empire (226–651). No longer local, irrigation came to depend on waterways such as the famous Naharawān Canal to carry water over great distances. The new, comprehensive approach to irrigation promoted increased prosperity, but it also had dangerous implications. It left the agricultural population dependent on a central government that might be unstable. Centralized control over the river system meant that henceforth even small changes in irrigation patterns or neglect of canals by the government could have far-reaching effects on agriculture and thus on urban civilization itself.[31] By Sassanian times Iraq was already urbanized and had a centralized irrigation system. The stage was set for the Islamic era, during which these trends intensified.

The Islamic Empires

The Arab-Islamic conquest of the seventh century, although in some ways reminiscent of previous incursions, was a decisive event in modern Iraqi history. Arabic eventually became the predominant language of Mesopotamia, while Islam became the religion of almost all of the region's inhabitants. These changes occurred over several centuries, and conversion has never been complete. However brilliant ancient civilizations may have been, it is to the Islamic conquest that most Iraqis look for the source of their identity and the roots of their culture.

The conquest began modestly in 633, when a group of tribes on the Iraqi frontier, recently converted to Islam, persuaded Muslim general Khālid ibn al-Walīd to attack al-Ḥīrah, an Arab outpost of the Sassanian Empire on the Euphrates. The rapid capitulation of al-Ḥīrah and the decisive battle of al-Qādisiyyah in 637 opened the rich territory of Mesopotamia to the invading forces. The Arab conquest of Iraq did not initially disrupt its settlement patterns. From the first, the caliphs of Medina recognized the importance of maintaining agricultural production and trade in the areas they overtook in order to profit from the revenue. They kept the nomadic tribal population separate from the local inhabitants by confining the nomads to tribal cantonments (*amṣār*). Basra, established in 638, and al-Kūfah, established in 639, began as *amṣār*, but soon grew into major Iraqi cities.

Ultimately, the conquest and the intrusion of a large tribal population caused an infusion of tribal customs and values. Before long, the emerging feuds and divisions of the Arab-Islamic community spread to Iraq's newly created cities, where they became deeply entrenched. This situation was enhanced when Iraq became a province of the emerging Umayyad Empire, which had its capital in Damascus. The Arab population of Iraq, confined to its cities, came increasingly to resent the power of Damascus and to reject its authority. Throughout much of the first Islamic century, Iraq remained in turmoil. Al-Kūfah soon became a center for the partisans of 'Alī during his struggle with Mu'āwiyyah, the Umayyad governor of Syria. The Kharijite group, which broke from 'Alī yet continued to oppose Mu'āwiyyah, also created instability in Iraq. Ḥusayn was killed near Karbalā' in 680, and the *shī'ī* revolt inspired by Mukhtār in 687 was also centered in Iraq. Iraq acquired a reputation that it retains today, of a country difficult to govern.

Iraq did not achieve a measure of stability until the appointment of al-Ḥajjāj as governor (694–714). Al-Ḥajjāj repressed dissidence with a firm hand, and began to encourage agriculture and trade, but the inherent structural and administrative problems of Umayyad rule remained. Rather than allow the integration and assimilation of the Arabs into the local population, the Umayyads continued a policy of Arab domination. As a result, Arabs remained an urban group and never formed an agriculturalist class with roots in the soil or strong links between city and country. Ultimately, the policy resulted in the overthrow of the Umayyads and the establishment in 650 of the Abbasid Caliphate. Although this event brought an extended period of cultural efflorescence, it did not fundamentally change Iraq's social structure.

The Abbasid Caliphate was a great period in Iraqi history; indeed, one of the greatest in Islamic history. Iraq came into its own as the center of a prosperous and expanding empire and an increasingly brilliant civilization that drew on the cultural traditions of its immediate predecessors, the Greeks and Persians, in forming the emerging Arab-Islamic culture. The river valleys were now given the centralized control they needed; irrigation channels were extended, and the swamps of the south were drained. Agriculture flourished at first, although Abbasid prosperity was increasingly based on trade and on a culture that was almost entirely urban. By the tenth century, Baghdad, founded by the Caliph al-Manṣūr in 762 as his capital, had a population estimated at 1.5 million and a luxury trade reaching from the Baltic to China.[32] Baghdad had a vigorous scientific and intellectual life as well. The famous Bayt al-Ḥikmah academy, established in 830, became a center for translations from Greek works. Scientific experiments—especially in astronomy—were also carried out. Learning spread among the middle class through numerous salons, bookstores, and public libraries.

Despite this economic and cultural awakening, however, economic weaknesses persisted. Abbasid prosperity was concentrated among the urban upper class; little filtered down to the lower classes in the cities or the countryside. The period was punctuated with revolts from the urban and rural poor. As time went on, the government in the capital, thoroughly urban in outlook and character, drained off more and more of the rural surplus and provided less and less of the urban services that justified these revenues. Gradually both rural settlement and revenues fell off.[33] Eventually, it was overemphasis on the capital city and the instability of the government that led to Iraq's greatest period of decline, which lasted for almost a millennium. Although the onset of deterioration is often dated to the Mongol invasions of the mid-thirteenth and early fifteenth centuries, in fact the decline began much earlier, in the middle of the ninth century. The causes were internal rather than external.

An imported army of Turkish slaves, used for military and administrative purposes, gradually came to dominate the caliph's court in Baghdad. By the 860s, they had reduced the caliph to a figurehead and created chaos in the capital. Meanwhile, the provinces at the geographic extremes of the empire gradually broke away, restricting the control of the Baghdad government to the territory between the two rivers. In 945 a nomadic group from the Caspian highlands, the Buwayhids, captured Baghdad and established a *shīʿī* dynasty in the shadow of the caliphate. Their indifferent rule lasted until 1055, when they were replaced by the *sunnī* Saljūq Turks, also of nomadic background. Although the Saljūqs brought a temporary period of Islamic revival, as well as some much-needed unity and stability to Iraq, they were unable to prevent further political fragmentation or to control their Turcoman tribal contingents.

In Iraq, one of the first results of these incursions was the deterioration of the once great irrigation system. The Buwayhid and Saljūq chronicles already indicated severe malfunctioning of the network. By the fifteenth century, after further decimation by the Mongols, the Tigris and Euphrates had deserted the high lands they used to irrigate, creating swamps and marshes at the edge of the delta and dry, uncultivated steppe in the middle. Another effect was the progressive nomadization of Iraq. The Buwayhid and Saljūq invasions were followed by the Mongol attack on Baghdad in 1258 by Hulagu and another, even more devastating attack by Timur the Lame in 1401. Baghdad never recuperated. The Il-Khān and Turcoman dynasties that followed Hulagu and Timur the Lame established governments based on an occupying foreign army of tribal contingents. Iraq once again became an outlying province of empires with their capitals elsewhere. Urban life declined, as the dominant way of life in the countryside became increasingly nomadic.

A gradual eclipse of trade followed the decline of the cities. In the fifteenth century the Portuguese discovered the route around the Cape of Good Hope, and their monopoly of Eastern trade effectively sealed off most of Iraq's seaborne commerce. By the opening of the sixteenth century, Iraq's prosperity was gone. Baghdad's population had been reduced to about 150,000,[34] agriculture was hopelessly wasted, and trade and industries were dying. Although nomads had not completely replaced the settled river folk, nomadization set the stage for the great migrations of later centuries. This decline and its heritage of poverty, backwardness, and intellectual stagnation is the central fact of Iraq's modern history—not the brilliant and variegated civilization of the Abbasids or their predecessors. Although the Abbasid Empire is remembered as a glorious past, it is the centuries of stagnation that have done most to shape the environment and character of twentieth-century Iraq.

The Ottoman Empire

The sixteenth century was to mark a new era in Iraq, although this was not apparent immediately. To the north a new Muslim power had emerged, one that was to absorb Iraq and dominate it for the next four centuries. The Ottoman Empire, although it made little impression on the tribal population of Iraq, left an indelible imprint on the urban areas and the upper classes. In patterns of government, in law, and in outlook and values, the Ottomans played a role in shaping modern Iraq second only to that of the Arab tribe and family.

The Ottoman conquest of Iraq began in 1514 as an outgrowth of a religious war between the *sunnī* Ottoman sultan and the *shīʿī* Safavid shah. Most of Iraq, previously under the Safavid dynasty (1503–1722), was incorporated into the Ottoman domain, but it did not remain there. As the wars continued, parts of Iraqi territory reverted to Persian hands and had to be retaken. It was not until 1634 that the territory making up most of contemporary Iraq came under permanent Ottoman rule. In the early sixteenth century, when it first conquered Iraq, the Ottoman Empire was at the peak of its power. The Ottomans were able to briefly reverse the cycle of ephemeral nomad empires and to give the ravaged country its first experience of stable government in centuries. Taxation was light, though uneven, and the country was given a regular and uniform administration. Although sunnism was established as the dominant sect of Islam, the early Ottoman administators were tolerant of the *shīʿī* community.

Unfortunately, these benefits were not to last, for two essential reasons. The first was the Ottoman-Persian wars, which continued until 1818. Partly dynastic, partly religious, the ongoing conflict created insecurity and retarded the institution of reforms in the Iraqi provinces. The wars also put an end to the policy of toleration. In the minds of the Ottomans, the *shīʿah* of Iraq, often prone to side with the Persians, were seen as a potential fifth column that might at any moment throw in their lot with the enemy. Indeed, their fears were realized on several occasions. Soon the Ottomans came to rely on the only element in the country they felt would support them—the urban *sunnī*s. During these long wars, the seeds of *sunnī* dominance were sown, while the traditional dichotomy between town and tribe intensified. As the *sunnī*s tightened their grip on the reins of power, the *shīʿah*, resentful and sullen, became ever more alienated and withdrawn.

The second and more important reason for Ottoman failure in Iraq was the weakness of the empire's own central government and its deteriorating control over its provinces. Faced with the decline of its central administrative system, the Ottoman Empire was in no position to give remote provinces like Baghdad and Basra the benefits of firm and benevolent rule. As the sixteenth century gave way to the seventeenth, direct administration in the river valleys ceased, and Iraq faced another long period of stagnation and neglect.

The seventeenth century in Iraq was a century of localism par excellence. Petty dynasties and tribal chiefs held sway over most of the countryside while even in the larger cities and towns the Ottomans eventually lost control. In the south, the province of Basra loosened its ties with the central government, and the Arab tribe of the Kaʿb gained control of considerable territory on the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab. Further in the interior, the great tribal confederation of al-Muntafiq took shape under the leadership of the *sunnī* Saʿdūn family of Mecca, while in the north new Kurdish dynasties were established by valley lords or *derebeys*. The powerful Kurdish family of Bābān occupied the territory between the Diyālā and the lesser Zāb rivers; the Bahdinān family of al-ʿAmādiyyah and the Surāns of Kuy carved out principalities in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Of all these events, none was of greater significance for Iraq than the great tribal migrations of the seventeenth century. In 1640, the Shammar, one of the largest tribal confederations of the Arabian peninsula, entered the Syrian desert, where they clashed with the confederation of the ʿAnayzah. Their tribal battles not only disrupted trade routes, but determined future settlement patterns in the river valleys. Eventually the ʿAnayzah prevailed and thrust the Shammar across the Euphrates into the Jazīrah. One Shammar branch crossed the Tigris and settled from the Diyālā to al-Kūt. Meanwhile the Banī Lām, a new tribal confederation, took the lands around al-ʿAmārah on the lower Tigris. In the north, too, many of the Kurdish tribes of Persia migrated to Iraq, including the large, powerful nomadic tribe of the Jāf, who made their home at Ḥalabjah.[35]

These migrations marked the final breakdown of settled civilization in the Iraqi provinces and reinforced tribalism. Fragmentation of political control ended any hope of coordinating irrigation schemes, and the settled riverine tribes were often reduced to mixed livestock raising and subsistence farming. The struggle for water became as acute as the struggle for land. Tribal feuds kept the area in continual turmoil. So powerful were the tribes that they were able to prey upon and sometimes dominate the cities. Long tribal domination of the countryside implanted tribal ways and tribal values in much of the rural and even the urban population.

The Mamlūk Interregnum

This long cycle of progressive decline was finally halted with the rise of Mamlūk rule in Baghdad. The system, unique to Islam, whereby *mamlūks* (slaves) were bought or captured from among non-Muslims, converted, and trained to be officers or administrators, was well established in both Istanbul and Cairo by the sixteenth century, but it had yet to be introduced into Ottoman Iraq. Though members of the emerging Mamlūk group were of alien tongue and stock, they conveyed certain advantages on the ravaged country. Their interests were centered entirely on the Iraqi provinces, and as a result they gave the country a considerable period of stability and firm rule for the first time in centuries. As trained soldiers and administrators, they were able to extend their rule over even-greater portions of the Tigris and Euphrates Valley, and an economic and cultural revival began.

The Mamlūk era may be said to have begun in 1704 with the appointment of Ḥasan Pasha, a graduate of the sultan's Palace School in Istanbul, to the governorship of Baghdad.[36] It was Ḥasan who first introduced Circassian slaves, purchased mainly in Georgia, into Iraq. Ḥasan pursued peace and security of trade in his domain. Recognizing the virtue of his firm hand in these remote areas, Istanbul took the significant step of placing the province of Basra under his control. At about the same time, Ḥasan extended his overlordship to Shaharizūr as well, giving him control of the Tigris and Euphrates Valley from the Gulf to the Kurdish foothills.

At his death in 1723 Ḥasan was succeeded by his son Aḥmad, an able leader who continued his father's policies. Most of the provincial revenue now remained within Iraq, rather than flowing to Istanbul. An attempt by Ottoman authorities to regain control over Baghdad after Aḥmad's death in 1747 failed, and the Ottomans were forced instead to acquiesce in the selection of a Mamlūk as governor. With Sulaymān, a freed Georgian slave married to Aḥmad's daughter, true Mamlūk rule began.

Although the Mamlūk era was punctuated by periods of instability, in general the Mamlūks produced a number of able leaders, whose long individual rule contrasts sharply with the rapid turnover of governors under the Ottomans. Several deserve mention. Sulaymān II (1780–1802), greatest of the Mamlūks, went far toward improving the government: He abolished executions unless decreed by the religious courts; outlawed confiscation; and raised the level of justice. Dā'ūd, who governed from 1816 to 1831, was the last and perhaps most interesting of the Mamlūks. A man learned in Islam and Middle Eastern languages, Dā'ūd took the first steps toward modernizing Iraq—clearing canals, establishing nascent industries, and starting a printing press. He also brought in a Frenchman to train his 20,000-man army. Despite these advantages, Mamlūk rule had a number of drawbacks. The alien military bureaucracy allowed little participation in government by native Iraqis, and it was thoroughly autocratic, with the Mamlūk governors possessing decisive military and administrative power over the populace.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the long era of pacification and relative stability had begun to have its effects. Most apparent was the increase in population. Baghdad, which numbered less than 20,000 in the seventeenth century, was estimated to have grown to 100,000 by 1800 and about 150,000 by 1831.[37] Commercial prosperity was somewhat restored; travelers of the time reported Baghdad as "a grand mart for the produce of India, Persia, Constantinople, Aleppo, and Damascus."[38] Western influence, along with the beginnings of Western political control, was also apparent. In 1766, after considerable success with their factory in Basra, the British established a residency in Baghdad, and by the first decade of the nineteenth century, Resident Claudius James Rich had become the second most important individual in the country. Western education arrived in the major cities in the form of French mission schools. However, neither Mamlūk rule, nor the promising stability it had brought, was destined to last. Its death knell was sounded by new and more powerful forces emanating from Istanbul.

Iraq Under the Tanẓīmāt

The history of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century was one of herculean efforts at administrative reform. Above all, the Ottomans attempted to reestablish direct administration over provinces previously lost to local rulers. In Iraq this process began in 1831, when Dā'ūd, the last Mamlūk pasha, was summoned by Sultan Maḥmūd II to step down as governor of Baghdad in favor of an Ottoman appointee. When he refused, an army was dispatched from Istanbul. Dā'ūd might have triumphed over the sultan—as had Muḥammad 'Alī of Egypt—had it not been for two natural catastrophes, a plague that took over 30,000 lives and a flood that breached part of the city wall, devastated much of the city, and caused the collapse of a portion of the citadel itself.[39] By the time the sultan's army reached Baghdad, there was no one left to defend the city nor much of a city left to defend. Dā'ūd left quietly, and with his departure Mamlūk rule collapsed.

During the remainder of the nineteenth century the Iraqi provinces were gradually reincorporated into the Ottoman Empire. The initial effects were destablizing, as the Ottomans lacked the personnel, knowledge, and interest to give the Iraqi provinces the kind of informal justice and stability previously extended by the Mamlūks. Between 1831 and 1869 Baghdad had no less then twelve governors, with an average tenure of a little over three years. In the cities considerable corruption developed as the governors used their short tenure to exploit the local population. The temporary resurgence of tribalism in the countryside was exacerbated by Ottoman tribal policy. If not as equals, the Mamlūks had dealt with tribal leaders at least as feudal vassals, permitting them to govern in their areas provided they maintained peace and were loyal to the central government. The Ottomans reversed this policy, attempting to break up the tribes by playing one against another and by all means to weaken tribal structure as a prelude to its replacement by centralized government. This policy did ultimately succeed in weakening the tribes, but it also created tribal hostility to the government and chaos in areas where relative order had hitherto prevailed.

Notwithstanding these defects, the policy of centralization did achieve some notable results. In the south, the *shī'ī* cities of Karbalā' and al-Najaf were brought under the authority of the Baghdad government. In Mosul, the local rule of the Jalīlī family was replaced by an Ottoman governor. In the Kurdish countryside the local dynasties were broken up one by one and made to accept Turkish rule. The same process was applied in the Sinjār, where the autonomous Yazīdīs were likewise brought under the authority of the Turkish governor in Mosul.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century Ottoman rule was firmly established in the major cities of Iraq from the Kurdish mountains to the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab. This accomplishment in the urban centers had yet to be extended to the countryside, where weakened but factious tribes still held the balance of military power and created continual difficulties for Istanbul. It remained for the Ottoman administration to extend its authority to the rural areas and to address some of Iraq's long-standing problems. The first Ottoman to confront this task was reforming statesman Midḥat Pasha, appointed to the governorship of Baghdad in 1869. His short tenure (1869–1872) marks the first concerted effort to build for the future.

Midḥat's reforms fell into three general areas: administrative reorganization, the establishment of secular education, and the settlement of the tribes. His first aim was to introduce a new, centralized administrative system into the Iraqi provinces. He also created a representative *wilāyah* (provincial) council to assist the governor. Although the council consisted of notables only, this was the first Ottoman attempt to associate the local populace with the government and provide Iraqis with some administrative experience. The same purpose was behind the creation of elected municipal councils in the major cities. The extension of a uniform administration into the countryside helped strengthen urban influence, a process carried on after Midḥat. In rural areas the multiplication of *qaḍā*'s and *nāḥiyyah*s (local government units) forged a link, however tenuous, between the provincial towns and the central government. Dozens of settlements spread throughout tribal areas during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, gradually tilting the rural balance in favor of the urban areas. Indicative of the stability achieved in Iraq was that part of the Baghdad wall was destroyed to enable the city to expand, a relaxation of security impossible to imagine in Mamlūk days.

The second area of reform was education. Midḥat laid the groundwork for a secular education system in Iraq by founding a technical school, a middle-level (*rushdiyyah*) school, and two secondary (*iʿdādī*) schools, one for the military and one for the civil service. Heretofore, the only education available to most Muslim children had been that of the elementary Quran school (*maktab*) and the more advanced *madrasah*. The former taught the Quran, Arabic, and possibly some arithmetic; the latter was devoted largely to theology and law, with additional training at the higher levels in Middle Eastern languages and logic. A few secular schools, which taught Western subjects, had been founded by foreign missions, but these reached only non-Muslim children. Midḥat's new schools brought striking innovations in two directions. First, they were public and free, and hence offered a channel of mobility to children of all classes and religious backgrounds. Second, they introduced a variety of new subjects, such as Western languages, math, and science, hitherto unavailable in religious schools.

The education movement started by Midḥat continued far beyond his tenure. By 1915 there were 160 schools, including 4 *iʿdādī*. Two of the schools were twelve-year lycées patterned on the French model.[40] The three-year Law College was founded in 1908, providing the only higher education in the country. These schools, though often ill-staffed and handicapped by the disadvantage of teaching in a foreign language—Turkish—nevertheless represented the first and most important beachhead of modernization in the country.

The third and most controversial of Midḥat's policies was his attempt to settle the tribes and to provide a regular system of land tenure. Midḥat's policy was an attempt to apply to Iraq the Ottoman Land Law of 1858, a law designed to replace the older Ottoman institutions—feudal holdings and tax farms—with legally confirmed rights of tenure. Possession and rights of usufruct were to be secured by virtue of a deed, the TAPU (named after the initials of the government office issuing it). As applied in Iraq with its tribal population, the reform was intended as a lure to induce the tribes to settle and the shaykhs to develop a vested interest in the preservation of the existing political order. But like much of Turkish administration in these remote provinces, the TAPU system was much less effective in practice than on paper. In many cases, the tribal populace, fearful that a land survey was a prelude to taxation and conscription, refused to register the lands in their names. Urban speculators and merchants, however, entertained no such scruples; they frequently bought up land at the expense of the peasants. In the Mosul provinces, for example, where much of the land had been held in fiefs, the urban magnates of Mosul took advantage of the TAPU deed to buy up wide areas of the plains, dispossessing the peasants through pressure, fraud, or force.[41] In al-Muntafiq, some 5,000 to 7,000 members of the Sa'dūn family gained title to the land, although they were unable to enforce their rights.

Despite these reverses, the policy did enjoy some success. As a result of various cadastral surveys and land commissions activated by Midḥat, about one-fifth of the cultivable area of Iraq was alienated by TAPU deed.[42] The salutary intent of the land reform had been to replace vaguely defined customary rights with tenure secured through due process of law, thus providing security and encouraging settlement, extension of agriculture, and above all, capital investment in the land. In a few areas the land policy achieved this. Elsewhere, however, it had resulted in two less positive developments. The first was the creation of a new class of owners, frequently absentee (the *mallāks*), interested in the land not as an investment but as a sinecure, and in agriculture not as a means of production but as a source of assured income. Second, it tended to alter traditional relations between the shaykh and his tribe. Formerly a warrior and tribal leader, the shaykh now became a landlord with a title to lands previously held in common with the tribesmen. The tribesman rapidly sank from the position of a freeman to that of a sharecropping peasant. In time this new class of landlord was to grow, providing modern Iraq with one of its severest social and economic problems.

Despite their drawbacks, the Tanẓīmāt reforms, together with the growth of security, helped create the conditions for economic revival. One manifestation of this revival—as well as a chief spur—was the introduction of more modern communications. The telegraph was introduced into Iraq in the 1860s, and by 1900 it had spread throughout the major towns.[43] Foreign consuls had instituted a mail service across the desert. Water travel began with a steamship line on the Tigris in 1841 and was expanded by the establishment of a regular steamboat service between Basra and Bombay in 1862. In addition to providing important links between Baghdad and the outside world, these lines of transportation had important side effects on agriculture. The tribal leaders of the Tigris, just settling down and often bolstered with a TAPU deed, now had the means of reaching outside markets with their grain. Cash cropping was introduced for the first time, as Iraq slowly began to move away from subsistence farming. An even greater incentive to economic development came with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. With shorter and cheaper routes to Europe, Iraq's trade grew rapidly, creating new opportunities and a new class of merchants and middlemen to take advantage of them. Even in irrigation, the Ottomans made some attempts at improvement. In 1913 a new barrage at al-Hindiyyah was completed, and pump irrigation got a tentative start. By 1921, a total of 143 pumps in the country were helping to expand agricultural production.[44]

By 1914 Iraq had made substantial progress. Imports and exports had shown a fifteenfold increase since 1870. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Iraq had been a net importer of grain; by the end of the century, it was exporting over 100,000 metric tons a year.[45] Meanwhile, the population had risen from 1.2 million in 1867 to 2.2 million in 1905.[46] The most striking change took place in the balance between the nomadic and settled populace. In the mid-nineteenth century, 35 percent of the population had been nomadic and only 40 percent rural. By 1905 the nomads had declined to 17 percent, while the rural population had more than doubled, constituting 60 percent of the total. The urban population grew more slowly, from about 300,000 to 500,000.[47]

Contacts with the outside world also produced a revival of local learning and letters and in some areas, an entirely new spirit of inquiry. Traditional Islamic studies underwent a renaissance under the impact of the thought of Muslim reformers such as Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muḥammad ʿAbduh. This can perhaps best be seen in the writings of Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Ālūsī (1857–1924). Author of over fifty works on history, Islamic law, biography, and lexicography, al-Ālūsī was a leading exponent in Iraq of the Salafiyyah movement, designed to purify Islam from ***bidʿah*** (innovation) and restore it to the more pristine form it had at the time of Muḥammad.[48] In the field of Arabic language and letters, the lead was taken by Carmelite scholar Père Anastase (1866–1947), whose main work was in lexicography and Arabic language. Anastase helped to popularize Arabic instead of Turkish, and he also wrote on Arab history.

More representative of the new school of thought, anxious to introduce European ideas, was the poet Jamīl Ṣidqī-l-Zahāwī (1863–1936). Well ahead of his time, al-Zahāwī was among the first to call for the education and liberation of women, and for the spread of science, which he viewed as the greatest development of modern times. Maʿrūf al-Raṣāfī (1875–1945), another poet, also put forth advanced social and political ideas.[49]

While the scholars and poets generated new ideas, the development of the press helped spread them among the literate public. Although travelers in the time of Mamlūk pasha Dā'ūd reported a printing press in operation, the first modern press was brought into Mosul in 1860 by the Dominicans. By 1914 it had printed 130 works, mainly textbooks.[50] In 1869, the first official newspaper, *al-Zawrā'* (a nickname for Baghdad) was published by Midḥat Pasha, and by the First World War some 20 journals and 69 newspapers of one kind or another had been published in Iraq.[51]

These intellectual and educational developments produced a new urban, literate class, a native Iraqi elite. Most of this elite were the product of the secular schools established in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the higher schooling in Istanbul, now available to Iraqis. Although few Iraqis graduated from the colleges of law, medicine, and engineering in Istanbul, many went through the military academies, which were the chief vehicles of mobility for the lower-middle- and middle-class families of Iraq. By 1914, the military schools in Baghdad were sending over 100 cadets a year to Istanbul.

After 1911, the Law College of Baghdad turned out lawyers and civil servants as well. Together with the handful of students sent to Beirut and Europe, Iraq had probably produced several thousand graduates of secular college-level institutions by 1914. By this time, graduates were already staffing posts in the administration, the army, the new secular courts, and the government schools. Although tiny in number, the influence of this group was immense. From its ranks came almost every Iraqi leader of any significance in the postwar period, and a number continued to dominate Iraqi politics until the revolution of 1958.

Nevertheless, the successes of the Ottoman reformers should not disguise the weaknesses of Ottoman rule. Like the Mamlūks, the Ottomans were foreign. Their reforms were aimed at recasting the population into an Ottoman mold. The principal language taught was Turkish, and the teachers—mostly Turks—often had only scanty knowledge of Arabic. Until 1908, there were no advanced educational institutions in the country; higher education led inevitably to Istanbul. In the absence of any cultural alternatives, educated Iraqis were taught to look to the Turks as a source of inspiration and the fount of knowledge. A native elite was being trained, but they were trained in an Ottoman pattern.

Moreover, this native elite was drawn from only one segment of the population, the urban *sunnīs*. Partly as a result of past distrust, partly due to *shīʿī* isolationism, it was only the *sunnīs*, whether Arab or Kurd, who were favored with public education and given posts in the army and the bureaucracy. Not surprisingly, the *sunnīs* came to think of themselves as the country's natural elite and its only trustworthy leaders. Two important segments of the population, the rural tribal groups outside the reach of urban advantages and the *shīʿah,* were consequently excluded from participation in government. In fact, with the exception of a few urban *shīʿah*, both groups remained virtually untouched by the developments described above. Little wonder that they should form the nucleus of opposition to the government in the early decades of the twentieth century. Ottoman policy tended to exacerbate, rather than heal, the basic divisions of the country.

The ideas behind Ottoman government were duly passed on to the Iraqi officials trained in the Ottoman tradition, which was founded, above all, on the bedrock of authoritarian paternalism. In the Ottoman tradition, education existed mainly for government employ, and government employment was mainly for the educated. This encouraged elitism, the attitude that the rulers know best and need not consult the ruled. Although these ideas were modified in time, they persisted with remarkable tenacity among Iraq's ruling group right through the first half of the twentieth century.

The Young Turks in Iraq

The last stage in the development of Ottoman relations with its Arab provinces was reached with the Young Turk revolution in 1908. Although the Young Turks were a mixed group of nationalists with a range of viewpoints on the future of the Ottoman Empire, their policies differed from those of Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd in several important respects. One was their secular outlook. The first casualty of the revolution was ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd's pan-Islamic policy. In fostering Islamic political unity and in emphasizing the dynasty's role as guardian of that unity during his thirty-two-year rule, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd had succeeded in tying a substantial portion of the *sunnī* community in Iraq—especially the ʿulamāʾ, the older generation, and those with vested interests in the status quo—to Istanbul. The Young Turks, by contrast, aimed to separate religion and politics and make of the Ottoman Empire a unified nation-state based on secular Western models. Stress was placed, not on Muslim solidarity, but on the equality of all Ottoman subjects before the law, and on patriotism and loyalty to the new government. This shift was to have disruptive and ultimately fateful consequences for the empire.

Another difference lay in the Young Turks' brief introduction of the rudiments of a parliamentary system with the reinstitution of the 1876 constitution. After elections were held in 1908, the three Iraqi provinces sent seventeen delegates to Istanbul. Almost without exception, they represented the old, well-established families of the major cities.[52] Nevertheless, the parliament that met in Istanbul provided the first experience of self-government to this group. It also brought something entirely unanticipated, the stirrings of Arab nationalism. It was not long before representatives of Arab background found that in language and customs, as well as in grievances, they had more in common with each other than with the new Young Turk rulers.

The impetus for Arab nationalism was the last, and most significant, contribution of the Young Turks to Iraq. As the Young Turks attempted to consolidate their rule in the face of European threats, they began to tighten their grasp on administration, to emphasize their Turkishness, and to clamp down on political freedoms of all sorts. The reaction in Iraq was not long in coming. Opposition took root, centered primarily on three issues: decentralization of administration, the use of Arabic in schools and in the administration, and the appointment to high office of the newly educated Arabs rather than Turks. Casting about for a new ideology by which to justify their aspirations, the young, secularly educated Arabs found it not in pan-Islam, but in Arab nationalism.[53]

This new sense of nationalism took various forms. In the south of Iraq, the leading exponent of the movement was Ṭālib Pasha, son of the Naqīb of Basra. At a meeting in 1913 with a group of Arab representatives of the Gulf area of al-Muḥammarah, Ṭālib put forth a program advocating the independence of Turkish Arabia and Iraq. Of far more significance in the long run were the new secret societies springing up in the central and northern towns of Iraq. The most important of these was al-Ahd (the Covenant), originally founded in Istanbul by an Egyptian army officer, ʿAzīz ʿAlī al-Miṣrī. Its membership was almost entirely drawn from Iraqi officers in the Ottoman army. Al-Ahd spread rapidly in Mosul and Baghdad; by the outbreak of the war it was estimated to have at least 4,000 members, many of them the future ministers and prime ministers of Iraq.

However, too much should not be made of Arab nationalism among Iraqis prior to the war. All the evidence suggests that though the seeds of nationalism had been sown among a small educated group, Arab nationalism had as yet put down no deep roots among a population still wedded to tribe, clan, family, and above all, religion. Even among those committed to Arab nationalist goals, Ottoman values and ideals remained strong. Four centuries of Ottoman tradition had left their mark. The new generation of Iraqis, no matter how vociferously they might denounce the Young Turks, resembled nothing so much as an Arab version of the Young Turks themselves.

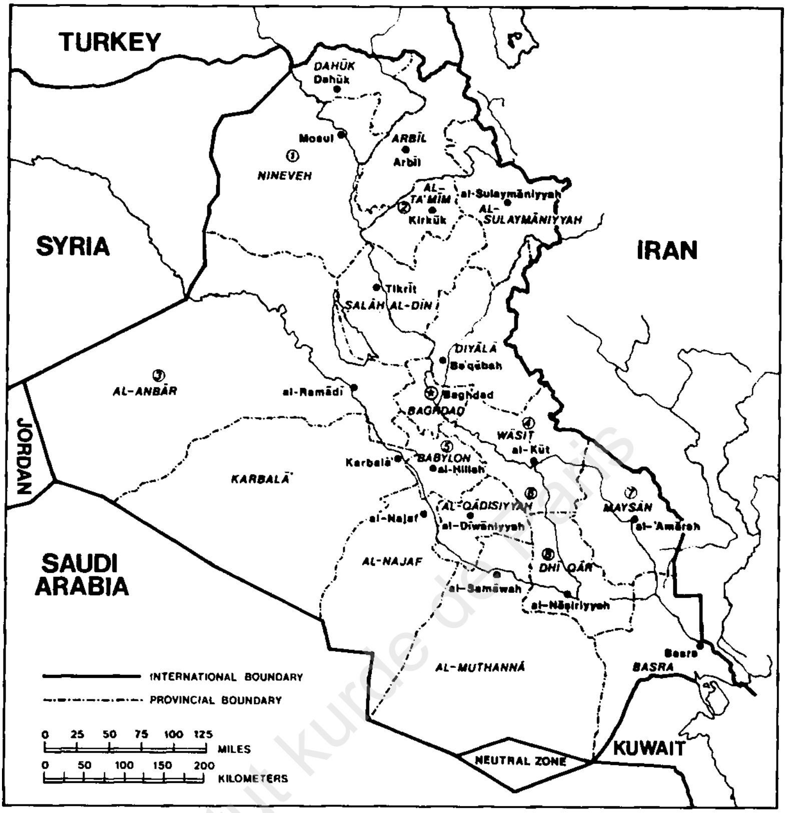
2

The British Mandate, 1920–1932

The impact of British rule has been second only to that of Ottoman rule in shaping modern Iraq. In some respects the British left remarkably little behind them; in others they made a more lasting impression. Before the British mandate there was no Iraq; after it, a new state, with the beginnings of a modern government, had come into being. Along with the creation of the state, the British bequeathed Iraq its present boundaries and as a result, potential minority problems and border problems with its neighbors.

As state builders the British created or developed an impressive array of institutions—a monarchy, a parliament, a Western-style constitution, a bureaucracy, and an army. The bureaucracy and the army—both of which predated the British—still remain, but the monarchy and the Western-style democratic institutions have since been swept away. This is perhaps not surprising. Britain's stay in Iraq was one of the shortest in its imperial career. Moreover, for much of Britain's tenure in Iraq, its policy was vacillating and indecisive. Ultimately Britain did decide on a policy, one that would establish an Arab government capable of protecting Britain's interests at the least possible cost to the British taxpayer. To this end, they designed a constitutional structure that was less a system of government than a means of control. The British created an imposing institutional facade, but put down few deep roots.

In three respects, however, the British made a lasting, if unintended, impact. The first effect was to hasten, broaden, and deepen the drive for modernization already under way, and through development of oil resources, to provide the country with the revenues to finance this drive and accelerate Iraq's economic development. The second was the arabization of the administration, and the third was the creation of a nationalist movement whose leaders, placed in power largely by the British themselves, would do more to shape modern Iraq than the British.


TURKEY
SYRIA
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SAUDI ARABIA
KUWAIT
NEUTRAL ZONE
DAHŪK
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Mosul
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ARBĪL
Arbīl
AL-TA'MĪM
② Kirkūk
al-Sulaymāniyyah
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Tikrit
SALĀH AL-DĪN
DIYĀLA
Ba'qūbah
Baghdad
BAGHDAD
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al-Ramādī
④ WĀSIT
al-Kūt
⑤ BABYLON
al-Hillah
Karbalā'
KARBALĀ'
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al-Dīwāniyyah
al-Najaf
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BASRA
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
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Iraq's Provinces, 1984

① formerly Mosul

② formerly Kirkūk

③ formerly al-Ramādī and al-Dulaym

④ formerly al-Kūt

⑤ formerly al-Ḥillah

⑥ formerly al-Dīwāniyyah

⑦ formerly al-'Amārah

⑧ formerly al-Nāṣiriyyah and al-Muntafiq

The British Occupation

The occupation that was to change the future of Mesopotamia came about less by design than by accident. Despite Britain's long-standing interests in the Gulf, the British had no intention of occupying the Tigris and Euphrates Valley at the outbreak of the First World War. However, when it became apparent late in 1914 that Turkey, Britain's traditional ally, would enter the war on the side of the Central Powers and was mobilizing at the head of the Gulf, Britain decided to occupy al-Fāw and Basra to protect its strategic interests and communications and its oil fields at the head of the Gulf. On 6 November 1914 the troops landed at al-Fāw and by 22 November they had moved up to Basra. Although British policy in Whitehall did not project beyond these defensive measures at the time, the lure of future political benefits to be gained by capturing Baghdad proved irresistible to the local commanders and the India Office; on their initiative, British troops began to move up the Tigris. In April 1916, they met with a humiliating defeat at al-Kūt, and had to retreat to the south once again.

By the end of 1916, however, the British position had changed. Not only was their military strength more secure, but secret agreements concluded with the Sharīf Husayn of Mecca and with the French had recognized Britain's right to establish special administrative arrangements in the Basra and Baghdad *wilāyahs*. They were therefore anxious to secure their position on the ground, and in March 1917 they took Baghdad. By the end of that month the British had secured the Baghdad *wilāyah* and a portion of the Mosul *wilāyah*, including Kirkūk. A British column was on its way to Mosul city when the Armistice of Mudros was announced on 31 October 1918. In fact, British troops were then 14 miles (22.5 km) from the city and did not occupy it until 7 November. This occupation was to become a cause of contention between the British and the Turks, with the latter claiming that it was not included under the terms of the armistice.

With the fall of Mosul, the British wartime conquest of most of the Iraqi provinces was complete, but several key areas had not as yet been pacified. These included all of the Kurdish highlands bordering Turkey and Iran; the Euphrates from Baghdad south to al-Nāṣiriyyah; and the two *shī'ī* cities of Karbalā' and al-Najaf. It is no accident that these were to be the most unstable areas of Iraq throughout the mandate and beyond.

While the conquest and occupation of the Iraqi provinces was taking place, the first rudiments of a British administration were being introduced. The administration imposed on Iraq was overwhelmingly the work of men seconded from the India Office and was modeled largely on Britain's imperial structure in India. The philosophy guiding this group was largely based on nineteenth-century ideas of the "white man's burden," a predilection for direct rule, and a distrust of the ability of local Arabs for self-government. This attitude deterred the appointment of local Arabs to positions of responsibility. Meanwhile, the British dismantled and supplanted the Ottoman administration as rapidly as possible. Mesopotamia was divided into political districts, each under the charge of a British officer, and administration at the highest levels was kept in British hands. A new civil and criminal code based on Anglo-Indian laws replaced the old Turkish laws; the Indian rupee became the medium of exchange; and the army and police force were increasingly staffed with Indians.

Much of this Anglo-Indian structure was later swept away, but there was one area—tribal policy—in which the India Office legacy remained intact. Reversing Turkish tribal policy, which had aimed at weakening tribal leaders and bringing the tribes under the control of the central government, the British now attempted to restore tribal cohesion, to make the paramount shaykhs responsible for law and order and the collection of revenue in their districts, and to tie them to the nascent British administration through grants and privileges. Tribal shaykhs were confirmed in their possession of tribal lands, and a special tribal disputes code, based on customary law, regulated their conflicts. Where necessary they were given arms and their obligations to the central government were sweetened by considerable cash benefits. This policy was not only applied in the Arab areas, but was rapidly extended to the Kurdish provinces as they were taken. The policy was efficient and economical, reducing the need for highly paid British staff in the countryside, but ultimately it strengthened the hold of the shaykhs over their tribesmen and their land, particularly along the Tigris, and created a powerful new political element in the country. Shaykhly influence in the councils of government, though not wholly a British invention, was certainly one of the most baneful influences of the Indian school.[1]

It was not long before the policies of the Indian school generated opposition both in Britain and Iraq. In March 1917 the British government issued a memo making it clear that an indigenous Arab government under British guidance was to be substituted for direct administration. As a response to the memo, the Anglo-Indian civil code was replaced by a return to Turkish courts and laws. However, little else was changed. New divisions and districts were created and staffed with British officers, and the number of British officials grew at the expense of Arabs. In 1917 there were 59 British officers in the civil administration; by 1920 there were 1,022. Less than 4 percent of the senior grades were occupied by Arab officials.[2] By 1920, the local British bureaucrats in Baghdad had managed to frustrate the new policy directives, strengthening their hold on the country. The Foreign Office vacillated, waiting for the decisions of the slow-moving peace conference in Europe, and did not hand down a clear decision on Iraq's future government. When it came, the decision was made not by the British, but by the Iraqis.

The 1920 Revolt

The 1920 revolt, directed above all at the India Office policy, was sparked by the announcement in April 1920 that the Conference at San Remo had assigned a mandate for Iraq to Britain. Iraqi opposition to the British had been growing for some time inside and outside the country. In June 1919, a group of Iraqi officers in Fayṣal's Syrian government had sent a memo to the Foreign Office asking for the immediate establishment of a national government in Iraq. In June 1920, an abortive revolt, led by one of these same officers, had taken place at Tal'afar, in the north of Iraq, with the aim of rousing Mosul.

Inside Iraq, rising anti-British sentiment had been fanned by the nationalists in Baghdad, the *shī'ī* religious leaders of the holy cities, and disaffected mid-Euphrates tribal leaders. Though the motives of these groups were mixed, all were united by a desire to be free of British rule. A chief feature of the movement was the unprecedented cooperation between the *sunnī* and *shī'ī* communities; in Baghdad both used the mosque for anti-British gatherings and speeches, clearly mixing religion and politics. From Baghdad, nationalist propaganda spread south, stimulated by propaganda from the Iraqi offices in Syria. It met with a receptive reaction among the religious leaders of al-Najaf and Karbalā' and the still unsubdued tribes of the middle and lower Euphrates.

It was in the mid-Euphrates that the revolt began on 2 June 1920, when a shaykh who had refused to repay an agricultural debt was placed in prison at al-Rumaythah. His incensed tribesmen rose up against the British, and they were soon joined by others. Nationalist sentiments were aroused, and the revolt spread. By August, the mid-Euphrates south of al-Dīwāniyyah and al-Muntafiq[3] had passed out of British control. The rebellion did not spread to the Tigris, where the British were firmly entrenched, nor to areas held by the Kurds, who were uninterested in Arab nationalism. But it did affect the districts north and east of Baghdad. It also spread to Kirkūk and to al-Dulaym, where Colonel Leachman, a British officer, was killed by members of the Zawba' tribe instigated by Shaykh Ḍārī. All in all, the insurgency lasted for about three months and affected about one-third of the countryside; none of the major cities and few of the urban nationalists were affected.[4]

There are two distinct views on the 1920 revolt. The British have tended to see it as little more than a localized tribal insurgency fomented by nationalist agitation from Syria. The more accurate Iraqi view is that the revolt was a genuine nationalist rebellion, the first in a series of abortive attempts to overthrow unwanted British rule. Although it has often been claimed by the British that the revolt did not change British policy, that claim is not entirely borne out by the evidence. The uprising cost the British over 400 lives and up to 40 million pounds sterling.[5] Even more important, the upheaval undid much of the work accomplished by the administrators in the previous five years and very nearly wrecked the British position entirely. Although the revolt did not achieve Iraqi independence or turn real authority over to the Iraqis, it did succeed in discrediting the India Office policy thoroughly, and it assured a much larger measure of participation by the Iraqis in their first national government. Perhaps the most significant outcome was to bring home to British taxpayers the expense of the India Office policy. It was their unwillingness to foot the bill that accounts for the indirect administration that Britain established in Iraq after the revolt.

On 1 October 1920, Sir Percy Cox landed in Basra to assume his responsibilities as high commissioner in Iraq. His new guidelines provided for the termination of military administration, the formulation of a constitution in consultation with the populace, and the establishment of a provisional government with an Arab president and council of state. For president, Cox selected the aging and venerable ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Kaylānī, Naqīb of Baghdad, whose virtues were his religious position, family background, and lack of experience in politics—which would leave ample scope for Cox to exercise real authority. The council members, drawn from the traditional upper classes, were religious leaders, landowners, and tribal shaykhs who could be expected to support the British. It was clear from the first, however, that this government was temporary. It was replaced after the Cairo Conference of 1921, at which several decisive steps were taken for Iraq's future. Among the most important was the decision to establish a monarchy in Iraq, with Fayṣal, the third son of the Sharīf Ḥusayn of Mecca, as monarch.

Britain's Indirect Rule

King Fayṣal

The man who was to found the Hāshimite dynasty in Iraq was born in Mecca in 1883, of a family tracing its lineage back to the Prophet. In traditional fashion, he had spent some of his early years among the bedouin, although he was educated by tutors at home. He was thus a man who felt equally at ease among townsmen and tribesmen. When Fayṣal was six he had accompanied his father to Istanbul, where he had spent the next two decades among the shifting sands of politics and diplomacy at the court of Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd. This period culminated in the heady events of the Young Turk rebellion. Not surprisingly, his experience in Istanbul gave Fayṣal a sense of maturity and an instinct for political survival.

After 1908, when the Young Turks sent his father back to Arabia as governor of the province of al-Ḥijāz, Fayṣal went with him and helped to establish Hāshimite hegemony over the neighboring tribes. Later he returned to Istanbul to represent his father's constituency in the Ottoman parliament. Here Fayṣal rapidly became a spokesman for Arab interests, and he later undertook the delicate mission of negotiating for his father with the secret Arab nationalist societies in Damascus. Fayṣal was firmly rooted by practice and conscience to the Arab nationalist cause, and unlike his brother ʿAbd Allah, he did not initially favor the Arab alliance with the British. He only became a supporter by necessity. Fayṣal's subsequent career as head of the short-lived Syrian kingdom between 1918 and 1920, his fruitless efforts at the European peace conference on behalf of the Arabs, and his humiliating removal from power in Syria by the French served to sharpen his sense of realism and his ability to deal with a variety of people and groups.

Evaluations of Fayṣal's personality and character vary. Some of his associates saw him as a weak figure, too prone to listen to all who

King Fayṣal I of Iraq.

gained his ear; others saw him as a subtle politician, one of the few capable of manipulating and balancing various Iraqi forces. His style was certainly not forceful, but Fayṣal's methods should not obscure the fact that his vision for Iraq was forward looking, fair, and rooted in a nationalist commitment that he was willing to push quite far, even at considerable risk, within the circumstances he had to operate under. Whatever the evaluation of his character, it is clear that Fayṣal's position was weak. As a monarch imposed on Iraq by an alien, dominant power, Fayṣal was always conscious of the need to put down roots in Iraq if the monarchy was to remain. He was equally conscious of the need to appeal to the younger generation of Iraqis, a constituency frequently ignored by his less able successors. Fayṣal's ability to appeal to various elements in Iraq stood him—and Iraq—in good stead.

These qualities were clearly recognized by the British, who were delighted at Fayṣal's unexpected availability after the Syrian fiasco. Far more important than his capabilities, however, were British calculations of their own interests. They felt that by placing Fayṣal on the throne they might redeem their earlier pledges to the Hāshimites and somewhat restore their tarnished image in the Arab world. At the same time the British believed they could use Fayṣal to help control the other Hāshimites, and through them, a substantial portion of the Middle East. Above all, Fayṣal was deemed to be a malleable monarch through whom the British could exercise their mandatory powers. This estimation was soon to be sorely tried.

Once Fayṣal had been nominated, he needed to be elected. On 11 July 1921, under Cox's persuasion, the Iraqi Council of State passed a unanimous resolution declaring Fayṣal king, provided that his government be constitutional, representative, democratic, and limited by law. There followed a well-managed plebiscite, which indicated that 96 percent of the populace favored Fayṣal. In fact, his real support was nowhere near that figure. A major local contender, Ṭālib al-Naqīb, had to be forcibly removed from the political scene before the plebiscite could take place. The Kurdish portion of the population and the pro-Turkish groups in the north wanted no part of Fayṣal, while many of the local Iraqi notables were jealous and resentful of his position. The *shīʿī* religious leaders wanted a theocratic government. Yet there is little doubt that no other candidate had his stature or could have received anywhere near the acclamation he did. On 27 August 1921, Fayṣal was installed as Iraq's first king.

With Fayṣal's accession, the Iraqi nationalists who had served with him in the war and who had formed the backbone of his short-lived government in Syria returned to Iraq. Staunchly loyal to Fayṣal, Arab nationalist in outlook, yet willing to work within the limtis of the British mandate, these repatriated Iraqis rapidly filled the high offices of state, giving Fayṣal the support he lacked elsewhere in the country. Chief among them were army officers such as Nūrī al-Saʿīd, appointed chief of staff of the newly emerging army, and Jaʿfar al-ʿAskarī, appointed minister of defense. Others were the younger sons of well-established families known for their Arab nationalist sentiments. In addition, there were two Syrian appointments of profound importance. Rustam Ḥaydar, a well educated *shīʿī* from Baalbak, became Fayṣal's chief of diwan, while Sāṭiʿ-l-Ḥuṣrī, an Aleppan who had long served in the Ottoman education establishment, became a major figure in Iraq's education system. This handful of young, Ottoman-educated Arab lawyers, officers, and civil servants soon achieved a position in Iraqi politics second only to that of the British and Fayṣal, displacing the older notables originally installed by the British.

The intrusion of these Iraqis into the administration at all levels marked a critical step in the arabization of the regime, a process intensified by the shift from Turkish to Arabic in the administration and the school system. English became the second language. Although the Ottoman civil code was retained and made the basis of its curriculum, the institution responsible for training most bureaucrats, the Law College, was also put under Arab administration.

It was in the educational system that arabization put down the deepest roots. The Ministry of Education, though it had a British advisor, was greatly influenced in these early years by al-Ḥuṣrī, its chief administrator. A member of a well-known Aleppan family and a former director of the Teachers' Training College in Istanbul, al-Ḥuṣrī had become a thoroughgoing Arab nationalist after World War I, and after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire had joined Fayṣal's staff in Syria. As director-general of education in Iraq between 1923 and 1927, he played a critical role in the development of Iraq's curriculum, and as a professor at the Higher Teachers' Training College, he shaped the thinking of a new generation of high school teachers. Al-Ḥuṣrī's main emphasis was on injecting a sense of Arab nationalism and patriotism into the curriculum, and in ridding it, where possible, of the effects of past and present imperialism. His nationalism was distinctly secular and progressive, and he was opposed to sectarianism and ethnic separatism. Not surprisingly, al-Ḥuṣrī often met with opposition from the British, minorities, the Kurds, and above all the *shī'ah*, who he suspected of being too pro-Persian. Eventually, clashes with the British and the *shī'ah* led to al-Ḥuṣrī's resignation as director-general of education, but not before he had installed a centralized education system with a uniform curriculum that would instill a sense of patriotism in future generations. As a result of his efforts, education in Iraq emphasized the Arabic language and Arab history, with an underlying thrust toward secularism.

What was true of the bureaucracy and the educational system was also true of the army. An important decision taken by the Cairo Conference was to establish a native Iraqi army, soon to become one of the pillars of the new state. A military agreement accompanying the treaty stipulated that Iraq be responsible for internal and external defense in four years, although British assistance and advisors were to be provided, and Iraq could not disregard their advice without sanctions. By 1921, the recruitment of officers and men was in full swing. The lower ranks were drawn from tribal elements, often *shī'ī*, but the officer corps could only come from the ranks of former Ottoman army officers. Inevitably, these officers were *sunnī*, perpetuating *sunnī* dominance of the officer corps. Officers with pro-Turkish sentiments were soon weeded out, making the army officer corps primarily Arab in composition and orientation. Some Kurdish officers were eventually brought in as well.

The Treaty and the Constitution

The third major decision taken at the Cairo Conference concerned the treaty between Britain and Iraq. The mandate awarded to Britain by the League of Nations had specified that Iraq should be prepared for self-government under British tutelage but left the means and mode to the mandatory power. The British decided to express the mandatory relationship by a treaty, deemed the most imaginative way to neutralize Iraqi opposition. Treaty negotiations with the Iraqis were begun shortly after Fayṣal was installed as king, and by February 1922 a treaty approved by the Colonial Office was placed before the Council of Ministers for discussion. It was debated, often bitterly, for eight months. Various modifications were suggested, but the main Iraqi objection was that the treaty did not abrogate the mandate. Nevertheless, in October 1922 the council ratified the treaty, but insisted that it be submitted to the Constituent Assembly for ratification—a step the British had tried to avoid.

The treaty reproduced the tutelary aspects of the mandate in a new form. It provided that the king would heed Britain's advice on all matters affecting British interests and on fiscal policy as long as Iraq was in debt to Britain. A subsequent financial agreement required Iraq to pay half the costs of the residency and other costs, which not only placed Iraq in a state of economic dependence on Britain but helped retard its development. The treaty also required Iraq to appoint British officials to specified posts in eighteen departments to act as advisors and inspectors.[6] The advisory system was the basis of Britain's indirect rule, yet the advisors were never very numerous: In 1923 they numbered only 569, and by 1931 they totalled 260.[7] The system allowed for—in fact depended upon—a high degree of Iraqi participation, but behind every Iraqi in a responsible position was a British advisor with ultimate control. It was with this network of intelligence and influence, supported by the provisions of the treaty and the option of military sanctions, that the British governed during the mandate. In return, Britain promised to provide Iraq with various kinds of aid, including military aid, and to propose Iraq for membership in the League of Nations at the earliest possible moment. The duration of the treaty was to be twenty years.

Closely intertwined with the treaty was the constitution. The constitution was meant not only to give the king and the high commissioner sufficient executive power to govern effectively and to uphold the necessary provisions of the treaty, but also to provide for the political representation of various elements of the population. Negotiations on the constitution proceeded simultaneously with the treaty negotiations. From the first, the critical issue at stake between the British and the Iraqis revolved around the powers of the king, whom the British hoped to make their instrument, and of parliament, which the Iraqi nationalists hoped to dominate. In the constitution that emerged, parliament was given sufficient power to bring down a cabinet, but this was counterbalanced by granting the king the right to confirm all laws, to call for general elections, and to prorogue parliament. Most important of all, he was permitted to issue ordinances for the fulfillment of treaty obligations without parliamentary sanctions. Ministers were responsible not to parliament but to the king, though they had to be members of one of the two chambers.[8]

An election law provided for a two-step indirect election and divided the country into three large electoral districts.[9] Primary electors (male taxpayers twenty-one and older) elected secondary electors (1 for every 250 primary voters), who had to reside in one of the three large electoral districts. Secondary electors then assembled in their district headquarters and voted for the deputies. Both the large districts and the two-step process allowed for considerable government intervention in the election process, which successive governments were not slow to implement.

Passed in all its essentials by the Constituent Assembly in 1924, this constitution became the law of the land, and with a few modifications it provided the political and legal structure of the country under the monarchy until the revolution of 1958. It was a well-designed instrument to foster Britain's indirect control. The monarch functioned partly as a symbol of unity, but mainly as a means by which the high commissioner could bring his influence to bear in cases of conflict. The cabinet provided an avenue to experience for a handful of Iraqi politicians, but also kept the reins of power in the hands of those acceptable to Whitehall. Parliament provided a device by which pro-British groups could be used to neutralize the radical opposition. However, because the mandatory regime had such a tenuous grip on the sources of political authority, it was necessary to rely on informal methods of control as well, and particularly on the support of those groups favorably disposed toward the British. To that end, cabinets were generally dominated either by conservative elements or by young Iraqis willing to work with the British. Token representatives from among the *shi'ah*, the Kurds, the Christians, and the Jews were included. Notably absent were the mid-Euphrates tribes, the younger elements of the Turkish-trained elite, and those, both *shi'i* and *sunni*, who opposed the British.

For the maintenance of security the British relied upon the RAF and the Levies, a special army contingent recruited entirely from among the Assyrians. By 1921 their numbers had increased to 5,000.[10] The Levies were not integrated into the regular army but were made responsible to the Ministry of Interior. They could be controlled from the ministry by a British inspector general.

As for parliament, it soon became a stronghold of the tribal leaders whom the British had done so much to protect and strengthen. The British insisted upon their representation in the legislative body, and all attempts by the urban nationalists to put obstacles in the way of the tribal leaders were systematically and successfully resisted. Despite these drawbacks, the constitution did bring various political and social groups into government for the first time, giving them some experience in cooperation with other communities. The constitution failed to take root, however—partly because Iraqis were never given real responsibility in the government and partly because they came to regard it as an instrument of foreign manipulation and control.

Mosul, the Kurdish Problem, and Oil

The establishment of the monarchy and the constitution fixed the form of government in Iraq for some time to come, but there remained one overriding question of utmost importance. How much territory was to come under the authority of the government? This issue focused on whether the former Mosul *wilāyah*, with its highland area, should be incorporated into the new Iraqi state. From the first, republican Turkey, under the leadership of Muṣṭafā Kamāl, laid claim to the province as Turkish territory. By the summer of 1922, Kamāl was backing up this claim by military action, forcing the British to evacuate Rāwandūz and al-Sulaymāniyyah.

The status of the province was complicated by two factors besides the Turkish claim. One was the question of oil and the concessionary rights desired by the British. The second was the issue of what to do with the Kurds who comprised the bulk of the province's population. It had originally been expected by the policymakers of Europe that the Kurds, like the Armenians, would be given national autonomy or independence under a mandate. In fact, the abortive Treaty of Sèvres, concluded in August 1920 with the Ottoman sultan, had provided for an autonomous Kurdish state and had stipulated that the Kurds of Turkey and Iraq could apply for admission to the League of Nations within a year. The Treaty of Sèvres was made obsolete by the emergence in Turkey of a successful nationalist movement, led by Muṣṭafā Kamāl, which established effective control over Kurdish areas in eastern Turkey. This situation made the position of the Kurds in the Mosul province problematic. The British considered establishing autonomous provinces in the Kurdish areas of the Mosul *wilāyah* that could be loosely attached to their Arab administration in the plains. The problem lay in finding suitable Kurdish leaders to assume responsibility for such an administration.

The one experiment the British had attempted in this direction had failed. In 1918, they had appointed Shaykh Maḥmūd al-Barzinjah, a descendant of a famous family of Kurdish religious leaders from the village of Barzinjah, as governor of al-Sulaymāniyyah. Maḥmūd and his ancestors had built up a political position in the area through alliances with neighboring tribal leaders, through extensive land ownership (often exploitative of the local populace), and through the prestige of their association with holiness in the popular mind. However, Maḥmūd had limited education and contact with Europeans and even less experience in secular government. His main drawback for the British was apparently his attempt to become a genuinely independent ruler and to extend his authority beyond the territorial limits set by the British. In May 1920 he was removed.

The Kurdish problem remained and was exacerbated by the Turkish activity on the frontier in 1922.[11] As the British public seemed unlikely to countenance British troops being sent to the north to quell Turkish military forays, the foreign policy–makers in Whitehall decided to recall Maḥmūd to al-Sulaymāniyyah. It was an expedient decision. Shaykh Maḥmūd was expected to rescue the British position in the north by establishing a viable Kurdish entity there, yet remain compliant toward British influence. To aid him in the task, the British allowed a number of Ottoman-trained Kurdish army officers and administrators to join him. In many ways, these were the Kurdish counterparts of the young Arab nationalists attaching themselves to Fayṣal in the south. The hope was that they could infuse a sense of nationalism into an essentially tribal environment.

The second experiment proved no more successful than the first. In November 1922, Maḥmūd again attempted to carve out an independent principality, but he had sacrificed the loyalty of his Kurdish officers in appointing his relatives to high positions. He was also in touch with the Turks. These actions alienated any British support Maḥmūd might otherwise have acquired, and in February 1923 the British forced him out of power for the second time. By the summer of 1923, when the elections for the Constituent Assembly were finally held, the Kurds were no longer offered a choice of joining the new Iraqi state or holding aloof. The government issued an announcement guaranteeing that Kurds would be appointed in Kurdish areas and that the Kurdish language would be employed in Kurdish territory, and it instructed its officials to proceed with the elections in all Kurdish areas under their control. The Kurds were thus brought under the sovereignty of the new Iraqi state by fiat. By March 1924, the Kurds had elected their share of delegates to the Constituent Assembly. One of the delegates was Maḥmūd's brother.[12]

It is interesting to speculate whether a viable Kurdish state could have been created in 1923. There is no doubt that tribal loyalties were far stronger than Kurdish nationalism; that there were too few educated Kurds to support Maḥmūd; and that in Maḥmūd farsighted leadership was lacking. Moreover, a Kurdish state would have received no support from Persia or Turkey; both countries brutally crushed Kurdish movements within their own territories in the 1920s. It is also true that the British did much less to support Maḥmūd than they had done for Fayṣal. Their attempt at Kurdish autonomy was halfhearted, opposed at bottom by the state makers in Baghdad and inspired mainly by the Turkish danger. When the Treaty of Lausanne was signed by Turkey and the Allies in July 1925, ending the Turkish military menace on the frontier, the major impetus behind the experiment disappeared.

Although the Kurdish problem had been temporarily solved, the oil question remained. The oil concession and the revenues it eventually brought Iraq are among the most important legacies of the British mandate. Despite official disclaimers, British policymakers were fairly certain of substantial oil deposits in the Mosul *wilāyah*, and this was a prime motive behind their desire to attach Mosul to the newly emerging Iraqi state.[13] In fact, the British-controlled Turkish Petroleum Company (TPC) had held a concession for the area from the Ottomans, a concession invalidated by the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. The French were compensated for having given up the Mosul *wilāyah* (part of their sphere of influence under the Sykes-Picot Agreement) with 25 percent of the shares of TPC in the Long-Berenger Agreement, signed in April 1919.

Negotiations for a new TPC concession from the Iraqi government began late in 1923, and continued during the period of the Mosul crisis. The protracted and often acrimonious negotiations generated a bitterness on the Iraqi side second only to that left by the treaty. Although a number of issues were at stake—the right of Iraq to dispose of plots outside those selected by the company; a sliding scale of royalties to rise with production; and a gold, rather than a sterling, basis for royalties—the main sticking point was Iraq's demand for 20 percent equity participation in the company. This provision had been included in the original TPC concession for the Turks and agreed upon at San Remo for the Iraqis. This equity would have given the Iraqis a voice in the company management and some control over production levels, but the company negotiators refused, compromising instead on other issues.[14]

There is little doubt that fear of losing the Mosul *wilāyah* to Turkey and the need for British support on this issue played a major role in the cabinet's decision to sign the concession in March 1925.[15] Through manipulating the Mosul issue, the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), as the company was renamed, undoubtedly got more favorable terms than would have otherwise been the case. Concluded for a period of seventy-five years, the concession made room for U.S. interests in the company in 1928 and eventually included all of Iraq except for Basra, which was given to a subsidiary company, Basra Petroleum Company.[16] Exploitation and production, delayed until settlement of the Mosul issue, did not begin until 1927.

On 15 October 1927, IPC's first substantial well was brought in at Bābā Gurgur north of Kirkūk. Tons of oil inundated the countryside before the well could be capped.[17] In 1934 IPC completed a twelve-inch pipeline going to Haifa and Tripoli with the capacity to deliver 4 million tons a year to the Mediterranean. By the end of the year, Iraq was exporting 1 million tons a year, and payments to the government totaled ID 1.5 million.[18] This was still a modest sum for development, however. It was not until the 1950s that substantial revenues from oil began to accrue to Iraq. During the entire mandate period, Iraq lacked the funds for development.

With the oil concession out of the way, the British and the Iraqis could turn to the Mosul question itself. The issue was submitted to the League of Nations for settlement, and between January and March

1925, an international commission conducted an investigation in the area. The pro-Turkish population of the area opposed incorporation into an Arab state, but in the solidly Kurdish areas opinion was decisively anti-Turkish and pro-British, although not pro-Arab. In March 1925, convinced that most of the population preferred British to Turkish rule, the commission recommended that the Mosul *wilāyah* be attached to Iraq, retaining the Brussels line (an interim border fixed by the League of Nations in October 1924, and corresponding mainly to the boundaries of the old Ottoman *wilāyah*) as the frontier. They stipulated, however, that Kurdish rights should be protected by placing Kurds in administrative and educational positions in their territory, and that Kurdish should be the official language in that area.[19]

Emergence of the Nationalist Movement

The early 1920s, which brought the creation of the state and its instrumentalities, also marked the beginnings of strident opposition to foreign control. Nationalist opposition was to dominate the political scene right up to the revolution of 1958. The singleminded struggle against the treaty, often marked by violence and insurrection, finally achieved nominal independence in 1932, but foreign influence and the struggle against it exacted a price. The treaty conflict distracted the leadership from pressing internal problems and stood in the way of cooperation with the West that might have been beneficial to Iraq. Moreover, dislike of the foreign connection spread, in the minds of the opposition, to the parliamentary institutions established by the British and the groups they placed in power, contributing to the removal of both in 1958. The opposition campaign also taught a new generation of Iraqis, reared during the mandate, a dislike of foreign influence that endured well after independence was achieved in 1958.

Despite its spasmodic and spontaneous nature, the period of opposition can be divided into three overlapping waves. The first wave was the 1920 revolt already discussed. Basically a tribal rebellion, it was the first and only armed confrontation with the mandatory regime. Aside from its effects on British policy, the revolt's impact on Iraqis was profound. The decisiveness with which the tribes were defeated convinced the urban leadership that recourse to armed revolt would be futile while British troops remained on Iraqi soil and were not counterbalanced by an Iraqi force. They promptly turned their attention to the development of a regular army, which would replace the tribes as a military force and could ultimately be used as an instrument against the British. As for the tribal leaders, their power to influence events was greatly diminished after 1920, although not entirely eliminated.

The second wave of opposition accompanied the treaty discussions by the cabinet in 1922 and the subsequent election of the Constituent Assembly that was to ratify the treaty. Opposition was led primarily by urban nationalists and expressed through political parties and the press. The movement relied for much of its support on the *shīʿah*. In April 1922, Shaykh Mahdī-l-Khāliṣī, a *shīʿī* mujtahid, called a conference of 200 *shīʿī* notables and tribal leaders in Karbalā' to rally mid-Euphrates opposition to the treaty. Meanwhile, three political parties were licensed in Baghdad. The first was moderate; the other two, both led by *shīʿī*s, were militantly antitreaty.

Agitation against the treaty caused sufficient unrest to bring the election process to a halt in June 1922. Soon it became apparent that Fayṣal was encouraging—perhaps even directing—these activities. This finally generated a major clash between the throne and the high commissioner.[20] For a time it appeared that the king's position hung in the balance, for while Fayṣal was hospitalized with appendicitis, Cox took advantage of his absence to suppress the militant parties, close the more vocal newspapers, and arrest or exile the most outspoken leaders. However, these measures failed to crush the opposition, and in June 1923 a series of *fatwā*s (religious decrees) against the election were issued at the instigation of *shīʿī* religious leaders. When the British-backed government decided shortly thereafter to arrest the offenders, a number of *shīʿī* mujtahids withdrew in protest to Persia, expecting this act to generate pressure on the cabinet from disaffected *shīʿah* and from the Persian government. It did not. When the mujtahids were allowed to return much later, it was only on the condition that they formally renounce their political activities.

A look at the main protagonists in these events reveals that much of the opposition was *shīʿī* oriented and *shīʿī* led. From the first, *shīʿī* leaders had been identified with a staunch anti-British position, but in the early stages of opposition some had been willing to cooperate with the more moderate *sunnī*s. Even as late as April 1922, Jaʿfar Abū-l-Timman, a *shīʿī* businessman and politician of Baghdad known for his strong nationalist views, had been willing to participate in a predominantly *sunnī* cabinet. Abū-l-Timman resigned rather than sign the treaty, and after his resignation the rift between the *shīʿī* militants and the *sunnī* moderates, who were willing to cooperate with the British, widened. The two *shīʿī* parties became more unrestrained in their criticism of the mandate, and they demanded the appointment of a *shīʿī* as prime minister. These events indicate that the opposition of the *shīʿī* leadership was initially less sectarian than antiforeign, and that some *shīʿī* leaders would have been willing to participate with *sunnī*s in a genuinely nationalist government. It was only when it became apparent that foreign rule was irrevocable that they withdrew and took a firm position of noncollaboration.

In any event, the open break between the *shīʿah* and the central government and the appeal of the mujtahids to a foreign power—Persia—finally alienated not only the British but the king and the Arab *sunnī* politicians as well. The militant *shīʿah*, like the tribal leaders before them, ultimately lost out politically. Gradually many of their leaders turned inward, elevating nonparticipation in government to the level of an ideological principle. If the militant *shīʿah* failed in the competition for political influence, they gained much credibility for their anti-British position among the populace. However, the *sunnī* (or *sunnī* leaders), though they shared the antiforeign sentiments of the *shīʿah*, disliked *shīʿī* concepts of government even more. Many feared that *shīʿī* leadership of government would open the door to sectarianism. To many *sunnī*s, the creation of a secular state based on Arabism, even under temporary British control, seemed preferable. In any event, the suppression of the *shīʿī* militants left the leadership of the nationalist movement in the hands of Arab *sunnī* nationalists. In 1920, the first Council of State virtually turned the administration over to the *sunnī*s, appointing no *shīʿah* among 10 *mutaṣarrifs* (governors), 35 *qāʾimaqāms* (district administrators), and 85 *mudīrs* (local officials) except in the holy cities.[21]

Sunnī nationalists led the third wave of opposition to the treaty, which began at the Constituent Assembly in 1924 and continued until the end of the mandate. The Constituent Assembly that met on 26 March 1924 had been called to ratify three instruments: the Anglo-Iraq Treaty of 1922, the constitution, and the election law. Of the 100 delegates in Baghdad, only about 15 were known to be opposed to the treaty; the majority of the delegates were tribal shaykhs and Kurdish leaders on whom the British felt they could depend for support. It was not long, however, before various currents of opposition to the treaty and the subsidiary agreements surfaced.

The three objectives of the opposition were: to remove the financial burdens placed on the new state as a result of the financial agreement with Britain, to develop a national army through conscription as a means of instilling patriotism in the populace, and to eliminate the dual system of responsibility embodied in the advisory provisions of the treaty.[22] The opposition was unsuccessful in having any of their suggested modifications incorporated into the treaty or the agreements, yet their impact was still considerable. The prime minister was only able to assemble a quorum of 69 out of 100 delegates by the deadline set by the British (the other 31 didn't show up for the vote). In the final vote, only 37 of the 69 voted for the treaty, with 24 opposed and eight abstaining. Even this vote was achieved largely due to an ultimatum by the British.

With respect to the constitution and the election law, the opposition attempted to strengthen the Chamber of Deputies at the expense of the cabinet and the king, and to tighten the election law to reduce government interference in the election process.[23] The nationalists also introduced an amendment requiring literacy as a prerequisite for parliamentary delegates, a provision that would have drastically reduced tribal representation in the chamber in favor of the urbanites.[24] This struggle for control of parliament would continue to the end of the monarchy.

Despite their antipathy to tribal representation in parliament, however, the opposition was not adverse to working with tribal leaders to achieve their political goals. In general, tribal groups joined the opposition in return for compensation in two areas: confirmation of their rights to land and a guarantee that their disputes would be settled according to tribal custom embodied in a separate code. On both counts, they were successful. These compromises ultimately helped to bolster the position of the emerging tribal landlord class and to forge an alliance between the urban *sunnī* politicians and the *shīʿī* tribal leaders of the south, an alliance subsequently supported by legislation granting the shaykhs tax immunities and benefits.

Political Dynamics Under the Mandate

The struggle over the treaty, however, was only one dimension of political life in the new state. Internal political dynamics soon took on a character that persisted right up to the revolution of 1958. Political life came to revolve around a tripartite balance of power. One part consisted of the king, a foreign monarch dependent on the British for his position but anxious to develop a more permanent power base among the local politicians. Another part comprised the British, always fearful of a rebellious parliament and anxious to see their supporters in office as prime ministers and ministers of interior. To this end they continued to insist on substantial tribal representation in parliament.

Between these two elements was a shifting group of Arab *sunnī* politicians, some more anti-British than others, but all willing to assume office. Some were strong and capable personalities. Indeed, one feature of the period was political pluralism and sometimes intense competition for power at the top. Unused to political parties, the politicians formed parliamentary blocs, based mainly on personal ties and shifting political alliances. Few had roots in any large constituencies outside the halls of parliament, except for their links with tribal leaders. The failure to build broadly based political institutions or to reach out to groups beyond their personal or familial circles was a critical weakness of the nationalist movement. It allowed for manipulation by the British and the monarchy, and it prevented any one group from establishing sufficient power to move the country along in a particular direction. The politicians focused almost exclusively on the treaty, and failed to develop programs on social issues, although economic issues came to be more important in the early 1930s.

Instead, politics ran mainly on personal lines. Family relations played a large role. Many politicians were related through marriage; others put several generations of family members in cabinets. Birth and social status were also important. One group of Arab *sunnī* politicians came from wealthy, prestigious families who had long played a role in Iraqi society and politics. A number had impeccable Arab nationalist credentials as members of the prewar secret societies, or had been representatives of the Iraqi provinces in the Ottoman parliament. Usually they were among the few who had attained higher education in Europe or in Ottoman civilian institutions. These men resented the supporters brought by Fayṣal from Syria, in some cases because these supporters were of Syrian origin; in other cases because of their low social standing.[25]

The other dominant group was composed of the Ottoman-trained army officers and bureaucrats who had used the free education system established by the Ottomans as a route of social mobility. Most came from undistinguished family origins, and had risen through merit. More important, attachment to the Arab cause and to Fayṣal's movement in Syria now gave them an advantage. Both groups, however, were urban and secularly educated, and both regarded sectarianism and tribalism with distaste and suspicion.

'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Sa'dūn, who clearly represented the first group, rapidly became the outstanding leader of the period. The Sa'dūns, originally a family of notables from al-Ḥijāz, had migrated to the south of Iraq, where they had settled in Basra, in al-Kūt, and in al-Muntafiq. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century they used the TAPU deeds to acquire legal title to large stretches of land in al-Muntafiq, although many of their claims were challenged by tribal leaders. 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Sa'dūn had been trained in the Ottoman school for the sons of tribal leaders, and had served as an officer and aide de camp to the sultan before the Young Turk revolution. He had supported the Young Turks initially, and had been an Arab representative in the same Ottoman parliament in which Fayṣal had sat. His wealth, experience, and social standing in Iraq gave al-Sa'dūn a degree of independence possessed by few other politicians.

Appointed to cabinet positions at the behest of the British during 1922 and 1923, al-Sa'dūn had emerged as a strongman willing to take action against the *shī'ī* 'ulamā' and the tribal leaders, against the wishes of a king who feared them. His strength and support for the treaty, as well as his patrician background, commended him to the British, who attempted to place him in authority whenever the treaty issue was afoot. These same qualities aroused the suspicion and animosity of Fayṣal, who just as often intrigued to remove him.[26]

Fayṣal came in turn to rely increasingly upon supporters among the former Ottoman army officers who had served with him in Syria, especially Nūrī al-Sa'īd and Ja'far al'Askarī. These men, unlike al-Sa'dūn, had no personal wealth or family prestige and hence were more dependent upon Fayṣal for their power. They were also, conveniently, supporters of the treaty. Typical of this group was Nūrī, born in Baghdad in 1888 of a family with a modest position in the Ottoman bureaucracy. Educated at the Ottoman military academy and later at the Staff College in Istanbul, Nūrī was the only Iraqi army officer to desert the Ottoman army in favor of the Arab national movement on the eve of World War I. He had joined Ṭālib al-Naqīb's movement in Basra for a time, had been a British prisoner of war in India for a year, and then joined the Arab revolt against the Turks. He became one of Fayṣal's staunchest supporters during the Arab revolt, and continued to support him in the trying days of the Syrian kingdom and during Fayṣal's unsuccessful mission to Europe.[27] Nūrī was appointed chief of staff of the new Iraqi army, and later minister of defense. The officer corps formed Nūrī's base of support from the first, yet he had ties with tribal leaders as well. Although Nūrī's Arab nationalist sentiments were not in doubt, he was also an early British supporter, although this was less true of his early days than is commonly thought. Of nervous temperament, Nūrī worked tenaciously for policies he believed in. A man of considerable personal charm, Nūrī also proved to be a politician of strong will, political courage, and consummate shrewdness in manipulating his political colleagues.

The establishment of these urban Arab *sunnī*s in the political sphere was accompanied by developments in the economic sphere that tended to bolster their position. The growth of a new landed class, due largely to the acquisition by private individuals of prescriptive rights over large tracts of land, was one. Many of these investors were resident tribal shaykhs anxious to gain legal title to the land inhabited by their tribes, but most were urban investors and speculators who, profiting from the security introduced by the mandate, borrowed capital and bought up land. The 1920s was also marked by a striking growth in private ownership of irrigation pumps in the riverine tracts of Iraq. In 1921 there were only 143 pumps in the country, irrigating about 75 sq miles (190 sq km) of cultivable land. By 1929 there were 2,031 pumps, irrigating 2,850 sq miles (7,380 sq km).[28]

The politicians of the period encouraged these trends through tax remissions and benefits to land and pump owners. In 1926, for example, they passed a law enabling those who continued to irrigate the land by pumps to acquire title to the land. Many politicians were already landowners themselves; others became landowners, gaining title to land through this and other laws. Although this practice had negative consequences, it is often forgotten that one motive for encouraging land ownership was to stabilize the tribal situation in the countryside. The sooner the tribal shaykhs could acquire a vested interest in the land and its agricultural profits, the sooner they would cease to worry about the extension of government authority into their areas. There is little doubt, however, that the policy of land grants and tax remissions was a valuable way for the urban politicians to build up a coterie of supporters. By 1930, the growth of a new oligarchy of landlords, urban entrepreneurs, and politicians was well under way.

Meanwhile, the army and the security system were built up under British aegis. The British wartime communications facilities were converted to commercial use, although the shortage of funds all through the 1920s and 1930s prohibited any large-scale building program. In July 1927 the first group of forty-seven army cadets graduated from the Royal Military Academy; thirteen more finished their studies in England.

By 1932, the Iraqi police had grown to a well-trained force of 8,000. The majority of army recruits came from the *shīʿī* south—the area the nationalists most desired to penetrate. The army continued to be the focus of nationalist hopes. Nationalists attempted several times to introduce a conscription bill, but this was opposed by the British and the tribes, and the bill was withdrawn.

Meanwhile, the reach of the central government was extended, slowly but surely, into the countryside. One indication of this was the increased effectiveness of tax collecting, which now reached groups and individuals who previously were only marginally involved. By the end of the mandate virtually all citizens of every class were liable for taxes, which included an income tax, land revenue taxes, rent on *mīrī* (state land), an animal tax, a property tax, and finally, a municipal tax on artisans and workmen. Attempts to collect taxes from both rural and urban groups caused problems, even rebellions and strikes. The tax laws were imperfectly enforced, with the burden falling mainly on those who were salaried rather than on the wealthy and influential, who largely avoided taxation.

On other fronts, developments were slow. Penury was widespread, and continuing budget deficits were exacerbated by Iraq's obligation to pay its share of the Ottoman debt (finally bought out in 1927) and to pay for the public facilities constructed by Britain during the war. Toward the end of the 1920s Iraq, like other countries, suffered from the depression. By 1930, bankruptcies had increased, the prices for cotton goods had fallen over 40 percent, and urban unemployment had increased in key industries such as the railroad.[29] As a result, little was accomplished under the mandate in the way of economic or social development. The Hilton Young report of 1930 summed up Iraq's economic situation. It found a substantial increase in agricultural produce (due to pumps), but no improvement in the quality or variety of products. In 1930, Iraq's resources were still underdeveloped, and a large proportion of its population remained illiterate.[30] The education situation under the mandate was abysmal, partly owing to lack of funds and partly owing to the small numbers trained by the British, who were afraid of producing more graduates than the bureaucracy could absorb. In the year 1930, for example, only 1,440 elementary students, 136 intermediate students, and 159 secondary students passed the public examination.[31] A small number went abroad for an education. Little was done to create a modern economy. At the end of the mandate, much of Iraq's countryside—where 70 percent of the population lived—was still virtually untouched by modernization, and modern industry had scarcely begun.

Meanwhile, new social classes were taking shape. At the upper reaches were the new oligarchy of tribal and urban landowners, investors in pumps, and urban entrepreneurs and merchants, able to profit from the security brought by the mandate. A small middle class of civil servants, retail merchants, and professionals had begun to emerge as well. However, the bulk of the population—urban and rural—remained at or near the poverty level. Urban migration, although not as severe as in the 1930s, produced a group of uprooted people inhabiting urban slums. A small number of workers benefited from the start of the oil industry and the development of the port and the railroad system, but the lack of funds slowed the growth of industry and infrastructure. Meanwhile, local artisans and craftsmen were gradually undermined by foreign imports. Iraqi society remained strongly conservative. Family ties were still paramount. Religious communalism was strengthened by the British, who insisted on support for various Christian and Jewish minorities through separate school systems and special representation in parliament.

The 1930 Treaty and the End of the Mandate

Although the nationalist contingent had tried throughout the 1920s to eliminate or modify the treaty, their only success had been some cosmetic changes in 1927. By 1929, matters had reached a crisis point. Even ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Saʿdūn, a staunch supporter of the British, was worn down and frustrated. In January 1929, Prime Minister al-Saʿdūn and his entire cabinet resigned, and for three months Iraq was without an official government. In April, a government was finally formed under Tawfīq al-Suwaydī, but it accomplished nothing with respect to the treaty.

The crisis was resolved in June 1929 when a newly elected Labor government in Britain announced its intention to support Iraq's admission to the League of Nations in 1932 and negotiate a new treaty recognizing Iraq's independence. Al-Saʿdūn formed a new cabinet and began negotiations, but they soon bogged down. Shortly after resuming office al-Saʿdūn had been attacked in parliament for his position on the treaty, and on November 13 he committed suicide, evidently depressed over attempts to reconcile the Iraqi position with that of the British. In his suicide note he stated: "The nation expects service, but the British do not agree to our demands. . . . The Iraqi people, who are demanding independence, are, in fact, weak . . . yet they have been unable to appreciate advice given by men of honour like myself."[32] Although he was not always appreciated by the anti-British contingent, al-Saʿdūn's services to the nation as a mediator between the British and the Iraqis had been considerable. His death was a signal that the period of conciliation was over and that some British concessions had to be forthcoming.

Fayṣal took this opportunity to bring in the man he had desired all along, Nūrī al-Saʿīd. Although the British had some doubts about Nūrī's ability to handle the situation, they were soon disabused of this idea. Nūrī's firm hand was needed, for the government was faced with a more broadly based and vocal opposition movement than ever before. For the first time, Nūrī was to use the tactics for which he later became famous. The opposition was silenced, the press muzzled, and parliament prorogued. Nūrī's successful handling of the treaty issue and the internal opposition raised him to the position of Iraq's first politician in the eyes of the British, a position he was to hold thereafter. The untimely death of al-Sa'dūn paved the way for Iraq's new strongman.

In April 1930, treaty negotiations were resumed. In June 1930, they culminated in the long-awaited treaty that would take Iraq into the League of Nations. In the autumn, Nūrī held a strictly controlled election, and on 16 November 1930 the parliament ratified the treaty 69 to 12. The Anglo-Iraq Treaty of 1930 promised Iraq's nomination for League membership in 1932 and retained a close Anglo-Iraqi alliance. It provided for mutual help in wartime, required close consultation on foreign affairs, and permitted the British to lease two air bases, to be guarded by Iraqis at British expense. Iraq's military forces were to receive aid, equipment, and training from Britain, and in return, British forces were to enjoy Iraqi assistance and access to all Iraqi facilities, including railways, ports, and airports, in time of war. The RAF was to remain at the Iraqi air bases. Any foreign advisors and experts needed by Iraq were to be British and the conditions of those in service were to remain unaffected. The high commissioner was to be replaced by an ambassador, who would take precedence over other ambassadors.[33]

Iraqi reaction to the treaty was mixed. The nationalists bitterly opposed the twenty-five-year duration, British leasing of the two air bases, the provisions requiring consultation on foreign policy, and the continued employment of British advisors. Although suppressed by Nūrī and tempered by subsequent events, opposition to the treaty and the foreign tie continued to surface in subsequent years, and even during periods of calm, suspicions of Britain's hidden hand behind the scenes remained. It is only in the light of this continued opposition to the treaty that the revolution of 1958 and anti-Western sentiment since that date can be understood.

While the nationalists opposed the treaty because it did not sever the British tie, Iraqi minorities—in particular the Christians and the Kurds—opposed the treaty because it weakened the tie. Fearful for their status, they began the agitation that was to plague the new state in the decade after independence. The Kurds in particular demanded specific safeguards from the League of Nations. Several uprisings in the north, one led by Shaykh Maḥmūd and another by Aḥmad al-Bārzānī, had to be put down by armed force with the help of the RAF. Through all of this, however, the king and Nūrī stood firm, and in October 1932 Iraq was admitted to the League of Nations, the first mandated state to receive its independence.

The New Nationalist Opposition

The signing of the treaty and the annulment of the mandate signaled a delicate shift in the balance of power inside Iraq. Some power remained in British hands, but most was transferred to Iraqis. By 1930 Fayṣal and his supporters, especially the Ottoman-trained army officers such as Nūrī al-Sa'īd, were moving to fill the power vacuum. They were firmly backed by the British. The tightening grip of Fayṣal and his pro-British cohorts spawned a new opposition, which attacked the new treaty and the British connection. This movement was far more broadly based and ably led than the opposition movements of the 1920s.

The main weakness of the mandate and the mandatory institutions was their narrow scope. They reached only the upper elements of the urban strata, scarcely affecting the rural areas and the lower urban classes. The new opposition managed, at least for a time, to reach deeper into the social structure, uniting urban and rural elements, *shī'ī* and *sunnī*, and even incorporating some of the urban lower class. It drew mainly on an appeal to broad pan-Arab sentiments and emphasized Iraq's Arab identity. Although this movement did not survive intact past the mid-1930s, it foreshadowed some of the groupings that would shape events later in the decade.

Like the members of the government, the opposition leaders were mainly Ottoman-trained Arab *sunnī* army officers or lawyers, but because of their opposition to the British and the treaty they had remained at the margins of power. In the fall of 1930, they began to build a broader base of forces with which to challenge Fayṣal and his cohorts, and in November they formed a new political party, al-Ikhā'-l-Waṭanī, the National Brotherhood Party, which was anti-British and antitreaty. Among those attracted to the party were Kāmil al-Jādirjī, a liberal, left-wing reformer from a well-known Baghdad family; the staunchly anti-British Ja'far Abū-l-Timman, leader of the Waṭanī Party; and a group of mid-Euphrates tribal leaders who had opposed the British in 1920 and during the Constituent Assembly. In 1931, during a widespread strike of artisans and lower-middle-class workers in Baghdad, the party joined forces with the workers. Although the alliance was short-lived, it illustrates the emerging social and political forces in the country.

The strike was the first large-scale rebellion of the lower classes against a myriad of social ills—the depression, poor distribution of wages and income, and above all, new taxes. Sporadic strikes of artisans and workers, particularly railroad workers, had occurred before, but none had been particularly effective. The strike of 1931 originated among the artisans, merchants, and industrial workers of Baghdad, and gradually spread from the capital to the mid-Euphrates and to Basra, which was eventually incapacitated by the strike. It was precipitated by the announcement, on 2 June 1931, of a municipal revenues law fixing rates of taxes to be levied in trades and crafts. Three times higher than any leveled before,[34] the new tax was the last straw for groups that had already been overtaxed. The depression had taken its toll among the urban working class, and unemployment had reached serious proportions, especially among railroad workers. Many railroad workers who still had jobs had been placed on half pay.[35]

Opposition to the tax was spearheaded by Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz, head of the Iraqi Artisans' Association, who turned to the new opposition party, the Ikhā', for leadership. About 8,000 workers and artisans and 3,000 petroleum workers participated.[36] Clashes with the police followed, as the strike spread to the towns of the mid-Euphrates—including al-Ḥillah, al-Kūfah, Karbalā', and al-Najaf—and to the tribes of al-Muntafiq, where chaos reigned for two weeks. In both places the strike was clearly organized by the Ikhā' Party. On 15 July, the strike spread to Basra, where it had to be dispelled by government action.

The demands of the strikers indicated the disparate aims of the participants. The workers demanded nullification of the municipal taxes and unemployment compensation. The Ikhā' leaders asked for the resignation of the cabinet and an election to replace it. The government of Nūrī al-Sa'īd decided to deal with the strike by separating its two component elements. Nūrī mollified the workers by rescinding taxes on nineteen different classes of workers, but the cabinet did not resign. The main losers were al-Qazzāz and his syndicate, which was disbanded by Nūrī in August 1931.

Shortly after the strike the Ikhā' leaders approached al-Qazzāz with the suggestion of a permanent association, which would have brought a whole new strata of society into political collaboration with the Ikhā'. The association would have put the labor movement under the control of the opposition leaders. The incompatibility of a party uniting urban establishment politicians and landlord shaykhs with a growing urban labor movement did not escape al-Qazzāz. He declined the offer.

It was not long before other elements of the coalition dropped out as well. Recognizing the strength of the anti-British forces, in March 1933 Fayṣal invited the Ikhā' leaders to form a cabinet, but he insisted they accept the treaty. After a certain amount of soul-seaching, the Ikhā' leaders accepted Fayṣal's terms. This about-face on the critical issue that had hitherto united the various groups resulted in a stinging attack on the Ikhā' Party from the Waṭanī leaders, who withdrew from the coalition. As a result the Ikhā' lost some of its *shī'ī* support. Not long after, Kāmil al-Jādirjī drifted away as well.

The reasons for the collapse are obvious. The coalition was a collection of diverse interests and support groups with little to unite them aside from opposition to the treaty and British influence. The willingness of the Ikhā' leaders to compromise with the British destroyed their legitimacy in the eyes of traditional opposition forces, while their alliance with the landlord shaykhs of the south alienated the younger liberals and the emerging working class.

As British advisors departed from Baghdad, their place was taken by just the constellation of forces the British had envisaged. The throne inherited most of their power, and cabinets continued to be controlled by pro-British former army officers and lawyers, led by Nūrī al-Sa'īd. The opposition, led by the Ikhā' group, was briefly allowed into the citadels of power, but the movement was compromised by al-Ikhā' collaboration with the British and acceptance of the treaty. In the countryside, tribal leaders, well contented with the privileges they had received for their support, remained for the moment quiescent. Although the *shīʿah* and the Kurds were mainly excluded from the emerging structure of power, their opposition had been neutralized by a few seats in the cabinet and by representation of their more moderate elements in parliament.

3

An Era of Instability, 1932–1945

The end of the mandate ushered in a period of transition and of troubles for the new state and its leaders. The gradual withdrawal of the British advisors and the transfer of responsibility to Iraqis tested the institutions of state constructed by the British and brought Iraqi politicians face to face with a variety of internal problems they had thus far avoided. The first and most obvious was the breakdown of Iraq's fragile unity. A number of religious and ethnic groups reasserted their claims to autonomy or a greater share of power in the central government. The most troublesome were the Christian Assyrians, previously protected by the British, but the Yazīdīs and the *shī‘ah* also caused problems. These problems were minor, however, compared with the resurgence of tribalism in the south, now mixed with new economic motives. The partial erosion of tribal authority and the new interest in agriculture increased tribal competition for land and water, while *shī‘ī* disaffection with their share of national wealth and benefits continued to fester beneath the surface. These dissatisfactions, fomented by ambitious politicians in Baghdad, finally culminated in a series of tribal revolts that shook the foundations of the state and gave the new central government its severest challenge thus far.

The withdrawal of the British and the diminution of their influence also led to a noticeable disillusion with the constitutional system and a search for new principles of social and political organization. The search was impelled by pressures for faster economic development and greater social justice in the distribution of wealth and privilege. Reinforcing these trends were new currents of thought from abroad. These foreign ideas eventually crystallized into two schools of political thought, which were henceforth to divide the Iraqi intelligentsia between them.

On the one hand were the Arab nationalists, interested in building up the institutions of state and expanding Iraq's influence in the Arab world. Their political orientation was given momentum by the growth of the Palestine problem and the concomitant rise of anti-British feelings in Iraq, expressed with increased frequency in demonstrations and street violence. On the other hand were the social reformers, moved by growing awareness of social discontent and of discrepancies in wealth and opportunities. They espoused a variety of left-wing ideologies, from Marxism, as yet articulated by few, to moderate liberalism.

Most of the Arab politicians, who had just come into their own, espoused the first school of thought, but as the example of the Ikhā' Party illustrates, they failed to broaden their power base or to build the political institutions necessary to underpin their policies. Instead they concentrated on building up the bureaucracy and the army, and solicited tribal and sectarian support to bolster their position in the capital. This latter tactic eventually led to the tribal revolts of the early 1930s. The need to restore security in the wake of these disturbances gave the new army its first opportunity. In 1936 Iraq underwent its first military coup. The coup very nearly brought about the collapse of the constitutional regime established by the British. Its leaders attempted to replace the establishment with a new political group willing to work for social reform and to concentrate more on Iraq than on the Arab world, but the attempt did not succeed. Instead, the military—and more specifically, the sector of the military with strong Arab nationalist sentiments—came increasingly to dominate the political system.

Between 1937 and 1941, changes of government were accomplished by means of military pressure, but the shifts in cabinet personnel did not put army men in control. The military operated behind the scenes and only gradually crept into power, encouraged by civilian politicians anxious to further their own aims. Meanwhile, the worsening Palestine problem and British pressures to involve Iraq more deeply in the Second World War increased anti-British sentiments and polarized Iraq's politicians, who were unprepared to deal with such weighty foreign policy problems. These events led in 1941 to a temporary unseating of the pro-British politicians, a counterinvasion of British forces, and the second British occupation of Iraq.

This occupation was a decisive turning point in Iraq's history. The British restored the politicians removed by the 1941 coup. With British cooperation, these men proceeded to eliminate the anti-British nationalists and to weaken their hold over the army and the bureaucracy with unprecedented thoroughness. The British restored the former pillars of the regime to a position from which they could not be dislodged except by revolution. Their intervention created considerable resentment, not only of the occupation, but also of the ruling group and its association with a foreign power. These sentiments were tightly controlled during the war, but they did not disappear.

The war created economic conditions favorable to the ruling group, and caused an economic and social polarization of society. Wartime inflation generated wealth among some groups and economic hardship among others, on a scale hitherto unknown in Iraq. The poor became increasingly alienated from the regime for economic reasons. By the end of the war, the stage was set for the social tensions and political alienation that were to be a marked feature of the postwar period.

Erosion of National Unity, 1932–1936

With end of the mandate and the withdrawal of the British, Iraq attempted to create a strong government of national unity. As previously mentioned, Fayṣal moved to propitiate the nationalist opposition by bringing some of its members into the government. In November 1932, he dismissed Nūrī's cabinet and appointed a neutral prime minister to hold a parliamentary election; in March 1933, he appointed a new cabinet containing a majority of al-Ikhā' members. The fortunes of this cabinet and its reluctant acceptance of the treaty have already been detailed, but the treaty question was only the first of a series of problems to face the Ikhā' government. In the summer of 1933, tensions long brewing between the central government and the newly settled Assyrian community exploded in a serious crisis.

The Assyrian Affair

To many outsiders, including a number of British officials, the Assyrian affair signified Iraq's inability to deal fairly and firmly with a dissident minority. Iraqi nationalists interpreted the matter differently, for they saw the Assyrians as a threat to Iraq's national unity. British reports at the time tended to dismiss the potential danger of the Assyrians, but a recent study has shown that their disruptive capacity was probably greater than the British realized.[1]

The mistake of the Assyrian community, and more particularly of its inexperienced leadership under the young Mār Sham'ūn, was in making a claim to autonomy without the means to sustain it, in the face of a rising tide of Iraqi nationalism. The settlement of the Assyrians in Iraq after the First World War and continued British protection of the group had long been resented by the Muslim population. British reliance on the Levies (almost wholly recruited from Assyrians) was feared by the fledgling Iraqi army, which was sensitive to its own weakness and resented the Levies as a force controlled by a foreign power.[2] Iraqi independence and the shift in responsibility for internal defense to the Iraqi army worried the Assyrian community. Their patriarch, the Mār Sham'ūn, attempted to regain the communal autonomy the Assyrians had enjoyed under the Ottoman millet system. In the latter part of 1932, he journeyed to Geneva to plead his case to the League of Nations, without success. In the meantime, the Levies threatened to resign en bloc and to regroup in the north, with a view to forming an Assyrian enclave there.

Once home, the Mār Sham'ūn stubbornly refused to cooperate with the government to settle the rest of the Assyrians on their own land, demanding temporal as well as spiritual power. Finally, in June 1933, the Assyrian patriarch was detained in Baghdad, despite Fayṣal's pleas from Europe that he be released. The situation came to a head in mid-July when a party of Assyrians, supporters of the Mār Sham'ūn, crossed the Tigris into Syria and demanded permission to settle there. They were joined by some 1,000 Assyrian men who had left their villages and families unprotected. The French refused to accept them, and on 4 August, bands of Assyrians began to recross the frontier into Iraq, many of them with their arms restored by the French. The Iraqi troops were preparing to disarm them when shots were fired. Who fired first has not been clearly established, but serious fighting began. At the end of a day of battle 30 Iraqi soldiers were dead and about half as many Assyrians. A few managed to reach their villages; about 500 crossed to Syria; and the rest were rounded up and shot by the army.

Tragic as these events were, worse was yet to follow. Anti-Assyrian and anti-British sentiment among the Iraqi population had reached an unprecedented pitch. By the beginning of August something close to panic had gripped the government. Soon after the affray at the border, armed Kurdish irregulars massacred about 100 villagers at Dahūk and Zākhū. The worst act, however, occurred on 11 August in Sumayyil. Unarmed villagers, clustered at the police station for protection, were killed by an army company under the command of Ismā'īl Tūḥallah, an aide of Bakr Ṣidqī, the general in charge of the forces in the Mosul area. Dispute has subsequently arisen as to whether the killing was ordered by Bakr. No conclusive evidence exists either way, but it would have been entirely in keeping with Bakr's character.

Bakr, a man in his later forties at the time, was a striking but enigmatic figure. Born in Kirkūk of a Kurdish father, he had been educated in the Ottoman military academy, had fought with the Turks in the First World War, and had joined Fayṣal's forces briefly in Syria. In 1921 he transferred to the Iraqi army, where he rose rapidly through the ranks. A graduate of the British Staff College in Camberley, Bakr had traveled in Europe and knew several foreign languages. He was recognized as a brilliant tactician and one of the most competent officers yet produced by the Iraqi army, yet he also had a ruthless streak. The Assyrian affair may have been the first of many demonstrations of this trait. Whether or not Bakr was responsible, 315 Assyrians perished at Sumayyil and at least 40 or 50 villages were looted and partially destroyed.[3]

Apart from the human tragedy, the consequences of these acts were far-reaching. Iraq's capacity for self-government, and particularly its treatment of minorities—so recently questioned by the League of Nations—was challenged inside and outside the country. Distrust between minorities and the government would poison the political atmosphere for some time to come. At the same time, a torrent of anti-British nationalism was unleashed, foreshadowing the events of 1941. The affair damaged Fayṣal's prestige and discredited the policy of moderation he had urged on the government. There were popular demands for Fayṣal's abdication, while his son Ghāzī, who had openly supported the army and the Ikhā' cabinet, was widely cheered.[4] In September 1933, Fayṣal left for Europe in ill health and ill spirits.

A less spectacular but more significant outcome of the affair was that it brought the army into national prominence and showed its future political potential for the first time. The Assyrian affair elevated Bakr Ṣidqī to the position of a national hero overnight, and the sudden popularity of the army made possible the introduction of the conscription bill long desired by the nationalists. Offers to serve in the army now poured in from tribesmen and Kurds who had shortly before declared their opposition to the bill. The Ikhā' cabinet formulated a national defense bill forthwith, and the bill was subsequently passed by parliament.

The Death of Fayṣal

Having survived the Assyrian affair, Iraq soon suffered yet another blow. On 7 September 1933, Fayṣal died suddenly in Geneva, of a heart attack partly induced by the strain of the previous weeks. Although a succession crisis was mercifully avoided, Fayṣal's death removed the one man capable of moderating the differences among Iraq's diverse elements. It destroyed the promising start he had made in incorporating opposition elements into a coalition government.

Even among his closest advisors, some considered Fayṣal weak, an assessment that probably reflects the desire for a traditional strongman at the helm of Iraqi politics. Others saw Fayṣal's hopes and visions for Iraq, his thorough identification with the country, and his ability to stand above party and personal politics as setting him far above his colleagues and contemporaries. Although Fayṣal never went as far as the anti-British party desired, his willingness to work with opposition elements to establish a government based on a broader foundation than the British embassy was a far sounder basis for future stability than any solution hitherto perceived.

Upon Fayṣal's death, his son Ghāzī assumed the throne. At twenty-one, Ghāzī was as yet too young and inexperienced to fill his father's role of political balancer; moreover, neither his training nor his temperament were suited to the task. The youngest child and only son of Fayṣal, Ghāzī was born in Mecca and spent his first eleven years there. In 1923 he came to Baghdad with his mother and sisters. Educated at first by an English governess, Ghāzī later attended Harrow in England. He was an indifferent student. On his return to Iraq he went through the normal course of training at the Military College, where he identified with the young army officers who were becoming increasingly nationalist in ideology and outlook.

In most respects Ghāzī stood in contrast to his father. As a member of the younger generation with a Western education, he was much less tuned to the mentality and interests of the tribal and religious leaders or to the older Ottoman-trained politicians. His father had been at home among the townsmen and tribesmen and had taken to the interpersonal

King Ghāzī with His Son, Fayṣal II.

style of politics in Baghdad with zest, but Ghāzī cared little for the intricacies of Baghdad politics and often neglected his royal duties. During his first tour of the country as king, he canceled appointments, revised his schedule, and returned home early, leaving a residue of resentment behind him.[5] On the positive side, however, his youth, his genuine nationalist feelings, and his proclivity for the army put him in tune with the emerging educated classes.[6] His links with the young officers and the emerging opposition, although resented by the British and the establishment politicians, provided an element at the center of the political structure that was sorely missed after his death in 1939. Had he tempered his personal life with some moderation, Ghāzī might have matured to fill the widening gap between the throne and the middle class.

Struggle for Power

Whatever its long-term implications, the most immediate result of Fayṣal's death was the dissolution of the Ikhā' cabinet. Upon the king's death, the cabinet made several statements announcing that the previous policy, including support for the treaty, would be upheld. Although issued mainly for foreign consumption, these pronouncements provoked a devastating attack on the Ikhā' leaders by Ja'far Abū-l-Timman, who announced his retirement from politics.[7] Abū-l-Timman's withdrawal intensified urban *shī'ī* disaffection and severely undermined the credibility of the Ikhā' as a nationalist party, demonstrating once again the depth of antitreaty feeling in the country.

Under the circumstances, the Ikhā' leaders asked permission to dissolve parliament and hold a new election, which they would undoubtedly have used to fill the chamber with their supporters. This would have reversed the previous situation, in which all cabinets and acts of parliament were dictated by the king and behind him the British. With a new, young king, a greatly weakened British presence, and a parliament of their supporters, the Ikhā' would have a chance to reduce the king to a figurehead and begin to assert real power. Not surprisingly, the king and his advisors had misgivings, and the request was refused. The cabinet resigned on 18 October 1933, leaving the Ikhā' politicians and their tribal supporters bitterly resentful of their exclusion from office and waiting for an opportunity to return.

The resignation of the Ikhā' cabinet inaugurated a new struggle for power within governing circles, characterized by a rapid and relatively meaningless succession of cabinets—four within a year and a half. This time, however, the struggle had several new and unsettling features. One was the political void at the palace. Control of, or influence over, the monarch through the office of chief of the diwan became a main aim of politicians seeking positions. At the same time, British influence declined, for much of their control had been exercised through Fayṣal. As events were to show, Ghāzī would prove much less amenable to British suggestions.

Other potentially destabilizing elements were the collapse of the opposition coalition and the attempt to establish a link between a more broadly based national movement and the government. Henceforth, politics within the establishment was organized almost wholly on a personal basis, and opposition elements took a much more negative and intransigent position toward governments. Meanwhile, politicians in Baghdad continued to jockey for position, ignoring real problems. As cabinets succeeded one another, the fabric of state and the constitutional structure began to erode.

The cycle began in 1933 with al-Midfa'ī's cabinet, which replaced the Ikhā' coalition cabinet. Like Nūrī and al-Hāshimī, al-Midfa'ī was a former army officer and an early supporter of Fayṣal's movement, but he lacked the persistence and political fortitude of either of his contemporaries. From the first, he renounced party politics and formed a cabinet based on personal rather than party affiliations. The cabinet lasted only three months; it was destroyed by the personal factions that developed. The causes of dissension are not important in themselves, but they illustrate only too well the underlying motives behind the politics of this period. Most of the controversy centered on Rustam Ḥaydar, minister of economics and for years Fayṣal's chief advisor and mentor. Ḥaydar had been attacked in the press for his foreign (Syrian) origin and his contacts with some of the *shīʿah* of the south. These contacts were magnified by Minister of Interior Nājī Shawkat, a *sunnī*, who claimed to see in them dangerous intrigues and a rousing of *shīʿī* feeling. This situation was complicated by another issue, indicating how the continuing *shīʿī-sunnī* conflict became intertwined with Baghdad politics and with the constituencies built up by Baghdad politicians.

The new issue was the Gharrāf project, a large dam to be built at al-Kūt to irrigate wide tracts of tribal land in the *liwā'*s of al-Kūt and al-Muntafiq. Funds had already been appropriated for the dam when the conscription issue arose, requiring a greater outlay of money. The *sunnī* nationalists in the cabinet favored the army, not only because they believed in building up the instruments of state, but because they stood to gain from the growth of any army dominated in its upper reaches by *sunnī* officers. The *shīʿī* cabinet members favored the dam because it would bring agricultural benefits to the *shīʿī* south and help increase their patronage among the tribal leaders. The *sunnī*s in the cabinet outnumbered the *shīʿah*, and the army project won. This precipitated the resignation of the two *shīʿī* ministers, and the cabinet resigned in February 1934.[8]

The subsequent cabinet did not last the year; in August 1934 a third cabinet was formed. This time, the prime minister, ʿAlī Jawdat, previously head of the Royal Diwan, decided to hold a new election. The king agreed, alienating many of the Ikhā' leaders whose election request had been denied the previous year. They and their powerful mid-Euphrates tribal supporters now began to consider extraconstitutional measures to regain power.[9]

These political machinations would have been less serious had they not come on top of tribal dissatisfactions that, like *shīʿī* grievances, had been smoldering for some time. Though not caused by the actions—or inaction—of cabinets in Baghdad, these grievances provided the raw material for disruptions that politicians could manipulate. It was not long before the disgruntled Ikhā' leaders began to do just that with dire consequences for the young and as yet unsettled state.

The First Tribal Revolt

The complex causes of tribal unrest in the mid-Euphrates area must be understood in order to grasp the significance of the tribal revolts that dominated the political scene for the next two years. Tribal disruption had always posed a problem for the central government in Baghdad, particularly in the south, where it was reinforced by *shīʿī* hostility, but now tribal rebelliousness was mixed with something new. At the root of tribal unrest was the transition from a society based on tribal organization and values to one based on settled agriculture. A striking manifestation of this transition was the erosion of the power and authority of the shaykh within the tribe. Originally the shaykh's main function had been military: He protected the tribe from its neighbors and from a predatory central government. Now the shaykh had become the agent of that government and often its chief representative, while the government had long since assumed responsibility for internal defense.

The conscription law passed in January 1934 added fuel to the fire by depriving the shaykh of able-bodied tribesmen and at the same time building up the force ultimately capable of subduing him. The shaykh's administrative position was also increasingly eroded by the inexorable growth of bureaucracy and its extension into the countryside. This was evident in a host of measures, passed in the 1930s, designed to place local authority in the hands of educated townsmen and reduce tribal autonomy. The shaykh was himself becoming increasingly dependent upon the central government for favors and benefits that had hitherto been his to bestow. Gradually, the balance of power was shifting from the tribe to the government. With the election of 1934, which reduced tribal influence in parliament still further, it is perhaps not surprising that tribal leaders decided the time was ripe to reclaim their old power and prestige.

More important in generating tribal feuding, however, was the struggle for land and water, particularly on the part of the shaykhs. This struggle was bound up with the complex agricultural difficulties involved in the shift from raising livestock to an agrarian economy and from subsistence agriculture to cash cropping. Throughout the 1930s, attention was focused on fixing rights of land ownership and tenure to encourage investment in agriculture and expansion of cultivated land. Essentially the problem was that the land inhabited by the tribe—the *dīrah*—had been communally owned by the tribe, with each tribesman having vested rights in the whole. Yet the practice of modern agriculture and the need to encourage investment required fixed titles over specified territorial plots. This need was heightened by the proliferation of pumps and the concomitant desire of investors to establish title to land.[10]

By the 1930s the welter of claims and counterclaims to land was so complex that some solution had to be found. In 1929 the government asked Sir Ernest Dowson, a British expert, to investigate the problem. His report, issued in 1932, gave rise to the Land Settlement Law of 1932. Under this law, a new form of tenure—*lazmah*—was recognized along with TAPU. *Lazmah* tenure could be granted by the settlement authorities to anyone who had enjoyed usufruct of the land for a period of over fifteen years, but land so granted could not be sold outside of the tribe without the approval of the government.[11] The intent of the law had been to safeguard the tribesman against alienation of the land, but except in a few areas, it was in fact used by urban investors and tribal shaykhs to secure legal title and to reduce the tribesmen to the status of sharecropping tenants. Far from ameliorating the problem, the law spurred intense competition for land titles, which played a major role in stirring up tribal insurgence.

The scramble for the land was accompanied by the gradual dispossession of the peasant. In 1923 it was estimated that only about one-tenth of the peasants could claim traditional personal rights in the land. The remainder were at the mercy of the newly established landlord-shaykhs. By 1930, the reduction in the tribesman's status had resulted in widespread migration to the cities. Writing in 1932, for example, a British official in al-ʿAmārah claimed that over 300 tents drawn from various tribal groups had moved into the Basra area alone.[12] The situation, which had not gone unnoticed in Baghdad, brought an outcry from some elements in the parliament and the press, who blamed the government's land policy and its alienation of land to private owners.

It was this state of affairs that gave rise to the notorious Law for the Rights and Duties of Cultivators, passed in 1933. Its main purpose was to stop the stream of migration to the cities and tie the peasant to the land. The law contained a provision stipulating that no peasant could be employed unless he were free from debt.[13] Since almost all peasants were indebted to their landlords, their legal mobility was virtually eliminated. Despite the law, however, the tide of migration continued, creating problems of instability in the cities as well as the countryside.

Bad as they were, these difficulties were further compounded by *shīʿī* grievances. Although peasants made up the bulk of the *shīʿī* population of the south, their leaders were still largely tribal chiefs and religious leaders. The interests of these three groups were by no means compatible, but their grievances against the central government overlapped sufficiently to allow for collaborative opposition. The main *shīʿī* grievances, of course, were the paucity of *shīʿī* representation in the central government and an inadequate share of the national resources. Cultivators complained that they needed irrigation works; urbanites complained that schools were insufficient; and religious leaders complained that the Jaʿfarite school of law was excluded from the courts and the law college. A number of religious *shīʿah* further believed that the government in Baghdad was illegitimate because it was secular, *sunnī,* and foreign dominated, and that participation in the government was both unlawful and sinful.

Attempts by Arab *sunnī* politicians to dissolve *shīʿī* particularism in a philosophy of secular Arab nationalism also created animosity. The *sunnī* sentiments were expressed in *al-ʿUrūbah fi-l-Mizān* (Arabism in the Balance), published in June 1933. Although not extremist, the book was overtly critical of *shīʿī* unwillingness to give their loyalty to the state and to pan-Arabism. Authored by an Iraqi, ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ḥaṣṣān, it aroused *shīʿī* hostility, which was expressed in the press. A number of demonstrations occurred in al-Najaf, Karbalāʾ, al-Kūfah, al-Dīwāniyyah, and al-Kāẓimiyyah, where the book was popularly attributed to the government. The author was brought to trial and briefly imprisoned, but *shīʿī* hostility had already been aroused and turned against the government.[14]

These underlying factors would not in themselves have been sufficient to cause a tribal revolt. The final ingredient was provided by personal rivalries among Baghdad politcians and by al-Ikhā' opposition to the government. Feeling the road to power by constitutional means blocked, al-Ikhā' leaders in parliament began to organize a conspiracy aimed at overthrowing the cabinet by threat of force. In December 1934 these politicians, joined by key tribal leaders, presented a petition to the king asking for the removal of the cabinet on grounds of its illegality.[15] Although the use of armed force was not mentioned, it was apparent that the threat of a tribal uprising was to be the final resort if constitutional measures failed.[16] After considerable indecision, another cabinet reshuffle, and the outbreak of tribal rebellion in al-Dagharah on 15 March, the king decided in favor of the Ikhā', and a new cabinet was installed.

The Ikhā' Cabinet

Although this time the Ikhā' formed the dominant group in the cabinet, in many respects their government was a revival of the coalition cabinet of 1933. As in 1933, cabinet members were drawn almost exclusively from among the strongest and most experienced of the inner circle of Arab *sunnī* nationalists that Fayṣal had originally brought to power. The cabinet's policies epitomized the outlook of this group. It was headed by Yāsīn al-Hāshimī, an Ottoman-educated army officer who had fought with the Turks in World War I, although he had been an early adherent of Arab nationalism and a member of al-Ahd. Unlike Nūrī, however, the new prime minister had not been a supporter of Fayṣal and the British. A strong yet realistic politician, he had earlier led opposition to the treaty and the British connection, yet had also participated in cabinets during the 1920s. Al-Hāshimī's leadership of the Ikhā' Party, his organization of the opposition coalition of 1930, and his role in helping to mobilize the 1931 strike had brought him to the first rank of politicians.

In forming his cabinet, al-Hāshimī made a tactical error that was later to prove fatal: He excluded Ḥikmat Sulaymān, who had taken so much of the initiative in organizing the conspiracy. Ḥikmat had asked for the key post of minister of interior, but he had recently become a marginal member of the Ahālī group, a left-wing reformist association, and al-Hāshimī feared that his appointment would ease the way to public office for left-wing intellectuals and radical reformers. So al-Hāshimī appointed Rashīd 'Ālī al-Kaylānī to the post instead. A relative of Iraq's first prime minister, Rashīd 'Ālī was a lawyer, an energetic politician, and a strong supporter of the Arab nationalist cause. He had also established ties with the Ikhā' tribal supporters in the south. Al-Hāshimī's choice showed clearly that he preferred to rely, like previous governments, on the support of tribal leaders and a pan-Arab nationalist policy, rather than venture into any social reform.

Ḥikmat and the Ahālī group were not the only ones disturbed by the Ikhā' success. Members of the previous government and their tribal supporters were furious. Worse, the *shī'ah* took the opportunity to set forth even more stringent demands. In a fascinating document entitled *Mīthāq al-Shaʿb* (The People's Pact), submitted to the government in March 1935, the *shīʿah* indicated the full range of their grievances—religious, social, economic, and political. They demanded more religion in the school curriculum; equal representation in the chamber, the cabinets, and the civil service; a direct one-stage election; *shīʿī* judges in *shīʿī* areas; and the curtailing of the salaries and pensions of (Baghdad) officials, whose ranks were "continually increasing beyond the capacity of the country."[17] Although the cabinet promised reforms for the future and held a new election to the chamber (enlarged to 108 seats to give the *shīʿī* shaykhs of the south greater representation), these steps were not sufficient to prevent a resurgence of tribal rebellions. Unlike previous disturbances, the revolts of 1935 and 1936 were firmly put down, finally establishing the predominance of the central government over the tribes of the south.

The Tribal Rebellions of 1935–1936

There is little need to chronicle the various revolts here, which, with the exception of the Yazīdī revolt, took place sporadically in the south. The disturbances began in May 1935, in the perennial trouble spot of al-Rumaythah. Local politics and a land dispute were involved. From al-Rumaythah rebellion spread to Sūq al-Shuyūkh, prompted by long-standing land tenure problems and the attempt by the cabinet to apply the new conscription law. This was followed by the Yazīdī revolt in Sinjār, also directed against conscription. Although it seemed by the end of 1935 that the revolts were over, a second rash of outbreaks began in al-Nāṣiriyyah in 1936, this time in opposition to the government ban on certain ritual practices during the *shīʿī* mourning procession commemorating the death of Ḥusayn, the grandson of the prophet. The revolt in al-Nāṣiriyyah was followed by others in al-Rumaythah and al-Ḍaghārah. Greed, tangled land claims, religious sentiment, and the weakening of tribal authority—especially symbolized by conscription—contributed in differing degrees.[18]

Whatever the motives involved, the cabinet acted with unexpected firmness. The suppression of these revolts marked the beginning of the end of a chapter in Iraqi history. The initial rebellions were put down by Bakr Ṣidqī through a combination of carrot and stick, and except for the hapless Yazīdī minority, punishment was applied with considerable leniency. When the rash of revolts continued in 1936, however, Ṣidqī became more ruthless, and retribution came swifter and surer. Military forces were sent to rebellious areas, and air force bombing took a heavy toll in lives. Summary executions were carried out under martial law. These measures were sufficient to bring peace to the tribal areas of the south, but they also helped turn the tribal population against the cabinet and once again brought Ṣidqī and the army to the fore. The army's role in quelling the rebellions, which had often been stirred up by politicians in Baghdad, gave rise to the notion in military circles that the army was being used as a tool of civilian politicians and that politics might be better served by direct military intervention.

What proved the government's undoing, however, was not the problems of the tribes or the palace, but the increasingly authoritarian posture of the cabinet and the prime minister. More and more, al-Hāshimī began to exhibit the features of the benevolent autocrat, feeding opposition fears of a dictatorship. These fears were not entirely misguided. Newspapers supporting the prime minister began to suggest that Iraq was facing a crisis of national identity that was undermining the country's ability to act in unison to solve its problems. They advocated a national consensus based on Arab and Islamic traditions, which, they claimed, must come before "social reform," an obvious reference to left-wing ideologies. Unity would require discipline, not only of individuals but also of parliament and the press.

Al-Hāshimī began clamping down on open political activity and concentrating power in his own hands. A first step in this direction was to dissolve the Ikhā' Party and then the opposition Waḥdah (Unity) Party. Al-Hāshimī's repression of the press made Nūrī's previous treatment seem mild. A few opposition papers, including Ḥikmat's *al-Bayān* (the Communiqué), were suppressed after a single issue. Freedom of association was curtailed, and the intelligence network seemed to grow with the passing months. The network's efforts were directed mainly at the left-wing Ahālī group, which constituted the major remaining opposition to the government.

At the same time al-Hāshimī fortified and expanded the army and the bureaucracy. By the end of his administration the number of men in the armed services had risen to about 23,000, double the figure for 1933, and the Royal Iraqi Air Force grew from a few planes to three squadrons in the same period.[19] A paramilitary training program with a nationalist orientation, known as al-Futuwwah (named after a medieval brotherhood devoted to chivalry) was introduced into the school system.[20] These policies were accompanied by a strong Arab nationalist campaign in the press. Al-Hāshimī was referred to as the Bismarck of the Arabs, intimating his possible leadership of a greater Arab unity scheme.[21]

Meanwhile, the Ikhā' cabinet passed legislation establishing a capital works budget, using the first oil revenues, received in 1932. The bulk of these expenditures went to the armed forces and to facilities directly or indirectly related to public security, such as roads, bridges, and communications, although some funds were spent on irrigation schemes, hospitals, schools, housing, and potable water in villages. A series of laws was passed to encourage industry, but these measures mainly benefited the entrepreneurial class and kept control of the economy in government hands.

By the fall of 1936, al-Hāshimī was apparently contemplating a prolonged tenure. In October 1936, in an ambiguous public speech, he hinted that he hoped to be given the next ten years of his life to realize the aims desired by the country.[22] The pronouncement caused immediate controversy. Whatever al-Hāshimī's motives may have been, the wish was soon to be dispelled. A conspiracy far more carefully planned than that of the Ikhā' leaders had been afoot for some time. It involved not the unruly tribes, but the instrument on which nationalist politicians had lavished so much attention—the army.

The subsequent military coup was the first of its kind in Iraq but not the last. It inaugurated a period of instability by overthrowing one of the strongest national governments Iraq had ever had. Despite its faults, al-Hāshimī's cabinet had brought Iraq's most able leaders together and kept them together for over a year and a half; it had attained a degree of independence from both the palace and the British that, though not complete, would be unsurpassed until 1958; it had maintained the new state and its government intact in the face of a series of trying rebellions; and it had strengthened the army and the bureaucracy—important measures if Iraq was to maintain its independence and avoid disintegration.

If al-Hāshimī's government had been strong in the arena of nationalist politics, it was liable to criticism on both social and political grounds. Its economic measures had benefited the newly emerging oligarchy, while the government failed to undertake any basic social reforms. This was particularly true in the agrarian sector. In the countryside, the Land Settlement Committees continued to award *lazmah* titles free of charge to tribal shaykhs rather than to peasant cultivators. In parliament, the cabinet was charged with fostering a new feudalism. Cabinet members and their friends were heavily involved in land transactions themselves. The cabinet ignored the issue of greater representation of Kurds and *shīʿah* in government. Of the fifty-seven men who held cabinet posts between 1920 and 1936, no more than three or four were *shīʿī* or Kurd respectively. Only two Kurds and two *shīʿah* had ever held a top post.[23]

Politically, control of the army by the prime minister's brother, Chief of Staff Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī, alienated the ambitious Bakr Ṣidqī. The use of the army for political purposes turned other officers against the cabinet and the entire establishment. Meanwhile, no alternative base of support was built up. Instead, al-Hāshimī increased his control over the reins of power in traditional fashion. The cabinet stifled the press, dissolved political parties, and tightened its control over parliament. The situation seemed to offer no opportunity for anyone—whether genuine reformer or disgruntled politician—to achieve redress within the constitutional system. Before the situation could worsen, one alienated member of the establishment, Ḥikmat Sulaymān, in collusion with Bakr Ṣidqī and a new group of left-wing reformers, decided to act.

The Bakr Ṣidqī Coup

The coup known by Bakr Ṣidqī's name was not initially the work of the general but of Ḥikmat Sulaymān, who clearly took the initiative.

Ḥikmat's motives were partly personal and partly idealistic. A member of a well-known Ottoman family and brother of General Maḥmūd Shawkat Pasha, whose march on Istanbul in 1909 had saved the Young Turk regime from extinction, Ḥikmat's fortunes had risen in 1933, when as a leading member of al-Ikhā' he had been made minister of interior and had distinguished himself in the popular mind by his handling of the Assyrian affair. Because of this, and because of his role in the conspiracy that had put the Ikhā' leaders in power, Ḥikmat regarded the Ministry of Interior as his by right. Had al-Hāshimī offered him this ministry, it is likely that no coup would have taken place. But Ḥikmat was also interested in reform and in more rapid economic and social development. He had criticized the nepotism of al-Hāshimī's government, its provocative display of wealth, and the abuses in the distribution of state lands. However, Ḥikmat's model for reform was not Fabian socialism, but the paternalistic authoritarianism of Muṣṭafā Kamāl. His admiration for the Turkish leader had increased after his visit to Turkey in 1935, after which he wrote several articles advocating a thoroughgoing secularism and modernization on Turkish lines. This attitude brought him into close communion with Bakr and the army.

Bakr's motives, like Ḥikmat's, were mixed. Certainly ambition played a part. He had reached the highest position open to him in the army and now found the way to advancement blocked, with the chief of staff post he coveted occupied by the prime minister's brother. There seemed little chance of his own appointment while al-Hāshimī remained in office. Bakr was also interested in reform of the army, with whose interests he wholeheartedly identified. He wanted the army expanded and modernized, and he resented that Ṭaha's efforts as chief of staff had gone into political rather than military affairs. Bakr's hopes for the army could not be translated into action without removing the prime minister and his cabinet. Thus, when Ḥikmat first broached the idea of a coup to Ṣidqī some time in the autumn of 1936, the suggestion fell on fertile ground.

The Political and Intellectual Climate

To understand the coup, however, one must also grasp the political and intellectual climate that enabled Bakr and Ḥikmat to mobilize enough support to carry their conspiracy through. New ideas were permeating Iraq during the 1930s, influencing Iraq's intelligentsia. These ideas were drawn from two different sources, and substantial elements of both schools of thought have continued to influence Iraqi political life to the present day.

The first school of thought, as the thinking of the Ikhā' leaders has already indicated, was drawn from the rising dictatorships of Europe in the interwar period. As educated Iraqis traveled through Germany and Italy or read of these countries' spectacular economic and social advances, they began to identify progress and efficiency with authoritarian governments and social mobilization. A monolithic, totalitarian form of government seemed to offer a more effective means of unifying fragmented countries and modernizing backward societies than did constitutional democracy and the free enterprise system. More rapid development, political unity, and greater social discipline were the desiderata of this school of thought.

The first of the European dictatorships to make an impact on Iraq was that of Fascist Italy. Between 1922 and 1932, Iraqis watched while Mussolini reduced parliament to an advisory body, restructured the economic system of the country, and reformed the educational system along militaristic lines. They were particularly impressed by the manner in which Italian nationalism was fostered by stimulating pride in past achievements. Germany in the early days of Hitler also influenced Iraqi thinking. The Nazi program that caught the Iraqi imagination most vividly was the Nazi youth movement, initiated in 1933, just when Iraqis were turning their attention to similar problems.[24] The Futuwwah system was partly modeled on Germany's youth movement.

The authoritarian regime that exerted the most powerful influence on Iraqis, however—especially on the older generation of nationalists—was that of Muṣṭafā Kamāl. Many of the army officers and Ottoman-educated civilians could easily imagine themselves in the Turkish president's role. As an Islamic country with a background of similar traditions and problems, Turkey offered a more attainable example than European regimes. Although Turkey's secularization found few advocates among older Iraqis, the use of the state to encourage the development of industry, agriculture, and education did have wide appeal. Above all, Kamāl's masterful handling of parliament and its fractious politicians seemed—particularly to the military—to set an example worth following.

The second school of thought to stir the Iraqi imagination was democratic socialism. Iraqis were inspired less by the example of the Soviet Union than by the British Labor movement. The need for social rather than mere political reform, an appreciation of the economic basis of power, and dissatisfaction with the policy of the ruling oligarchy of politicians and landowners were keenly felt by the younger generation of Iraqis, the first to receive a Western-style education. This school of thought emphasized social justice, a more equitable distribution of political power, and genuine economic reform rather than increased authoritarianism. In the early 1930s, young reformers began to coalesce in a loosely knit organization known as al-Ahālī after the name of their newspaper. Outstanding among them were Muḥammad Ḥadīd, a member of a wealthy and conservative Mosul family who had become a moderate socialist while studying at the London School of Economics; and 'Abd al-Qādir Ismā'īl, a Marxist who eventually became a leader of the Iraqi Communist Party. The best-known reformer, however, was Kāmil al-Jādirjī, who resigned from the Ikhā' Party in 1933 to join the Ahālī group.

Initially, al-Ahālī advocated the individualistic ideas of the French Revolution and called for a strengthening of the parliamentary system.

It was not long, however, before the movement fell under the influence of the socialists. In 1934 the ideas of the group, collectively labeled Shaʿbiyyah (populism)—a term employed to avoid charges of communism—were formally and coherently articulated in a two-volume work by ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Ibrāhīm, a member of the group who had become a left-wing socialist while studying at Columbia University. Although his ideas were Marxist, Ibrāhīm emphasized the welfare of all people without distinctions between classes and made no overt attack on the hallowed institutions of family and Islam.[25]

By 1935 al-Ahālī had attracted several older and respected politicians, especially those who were anti-British. Chief among them were Jaʿfar Abū-l-Timman, a *shīʿī* who joined the group soon after his split with the Ikhā' leaders in 1933; and Ḥikmat Sulaymān, who was in contact with them prior to the formation of al-Hāshimī's cabinet. With the addition of these politicians, the emphasis of the group shifted from intellectual matters to achieving political power. In March 1935, an executive committee was formed, and the doctrine of Shaʿbiyyah was replaced by a more generalized demand for reform, designed to appeal to a broader base. But al-Ahālī did not become a political party; it continued to work through individuals, and herein lay its weakness. Lacking structure and organization, and with no grass-roots support as yet, it was prone to exploitation.

The Coup Unfolds

The actual steps leading up to the Bakr Ṣidqī coup were kept completely secret, and al-Ahālī was not consulted until the very last stage. About a week before the coup, Bakr approached the commander of the First Division and secured his cooperation. When all appeared to be ready in the army, Ḥikmat appealed to the Ahālī group for support. They evidently hesitated before committing themselves to a military coup. A few refused, but most were finally convinced that the army did not intend to intervene in politics and that the group would have an unprecedented opportunity to put their ideas into practice.[26] Thus they joined the conspiracy.

Events then marched to a swift conclusion that took all but a few by surprise.[27] At 8:39 A.M. on 29 October 1936, planes dropped leaflets over Baghdad. The leaflets demanded al-Hāshimī's resignation and the appointment of Ḥikmat as prime minister and explained the reasons for the coup. Meanwhile, the army, now reorganized as the National Forces of Reform, began a march to Baghdad under Bakr's leadership. Reactions from the government were mixed. The king was anxious about his own future and the action he should take. Once it was clear that the coup was designed to replace the cabinet and not the king, Ghāzī began to contemplate the possible advantages of removing al-Hāshimī's cabinet. As for the British, their documents make clear that they were surprised and played little part in the resolution of the conflict, except to advise the cabinet to prevent a march of the army on the capital.[28]

At first, members of the cabinet contemplated some sort of resistance. Minister of Defense Ja'far al-'Askarī sent a number of cables to senior officers urging them to hold off any action until he could meet with them, while two battalions were ordered to proceed from al-Dīwāniyyah to the capital. This action might have forestalled the coup, but Ja'far insisted against the advice of his colleagues that he be allowed to meet with Bakr and his forces. Armed only with his own revolver, Ja'far set out to meet the general and the advancing army. Upon reaching the advancing guard, he was driven into the desert, shot dead, and buried on the spot. Five officers were involved, among them Ismā'īl Tūḥallah of Assyrian notoriety, but there is little doubt that they were acting on Bakr's orders.[29] Bakr had intercepted the messages sent by Ja'far and undoubtedly feared he might stop the coup.

Back in Baghdad, bombs were dropped near the Council of Ministers' building, killing one person and wounding six. Shortly thereafter, al-Hāshimī resigned and Ḥikmat was appointed prime minister. The following day, al-Hāshimī, Nūrī, and Rashīd 'Ālī were informed that the new government would be unable to guarantee their safety if they remained in the country. Nūrī left for Egypt and Rashīd 'Ālī and al-Hāshimī for Beirut, followed by a number of supporters. Al-Hāshimī died of a heart attack in 1937; but Nūrī and Rashīd 'Ālī returned later to play a pivotal role in their country's political life.

The coup was a major turning point in Iraqi history. It made a critical breach in the constitution, already weakened by the Ikhā' leaders, and opened the door to military involvement in politics. The army had tasted power, and it gradually came to control political affairs. The military coup was the first step toward the events of May 1941. The murder of Ja'far, although unintended by Ḥikmat, established a personal vendetta between Nūrī and Ḥikmat that was to poison Iraqi politics for the next four years. However, the most important effect of the coup was to remove the leading figures of the previous government from Iraq. It made a clean, if temporary, sweep of the old ruling group that had governed the country since it was founded. Only one veteran politician, Ḥikmat, found his way into the new government.

The change seemed to spell the gradual demise of the establishment. It also raised the possibility of a new direction in domestic politics. Much depended, however, on whether the various components of this hastily constructed coup could cooperate, and this depended in turn on the talents and skills of the man who had brought them together—Ḥikmat Sulaymān. He was now faced with the unenviable task of keeping the army out of politics, restoring constitutional procedure, and moving ahead on some basic reforms.

The Government of the Coup

The cabinet Ḥikmat appointed after the coup necessarily represented a mixture of coup participants. Ḥikmat became minister of interior and prime minister, Bakr became chief of staff, and the Ahālī group received the lion's share of the economic and social ministries. The new government represented a striking contrast with its predecessors in several ways. It brought new people to power for the first time in more than a decade, many of whom had been educated under the British rather than the Ottomans. Liberal, leftist reformers acquired power for the first time, and initially they seemed to have the prime minister leaning in their direction. The cabinet included Ja'far Abū-l-Timman, the most consistent anti-British politician in the country; and Kāmil al-Jādirjī, who represented a group of people ranging from Fabian socialist to Marxist. Their ideas were to prove too advanced for the country at the time. Had their reforms gone through, Iraq's subsequent history might have been very different.

A less noticeable but more significant change in the long run was that the new government contained few Arab *sunnīs* and not a single advocate of the pan-Arab cause on which all previous governments had been founded. Ṣidqī was of Kurdish stock; Ḥikmat was mainly Turkish in origin and orientation. Two of the cabinet's members were *shī'ī*, and the Ahālī ministers were interested in internal reform, not Arab nationalism. This configuration resulted in a foreign policy oriented toward Turkey and Iran instead of the Arab countries. In 1937, the Sa'dābād Pact was concluded between Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Iraq also reached an agreement with Iran (mediated by Britain) attempting to settle the boundary between Iran and Iraq on the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab. It gave freedom of navigation on the Shaṭṭ to Iran and increased the territory under Iran's jurisdiction, concessions which greatly roused public opinion against the government.[30] Ḥikmat's cabinet gave birth to the "Iraq First" policy of Iraq for the Iraqis, but its neglect of the Arab nationalist cause was soon to cause it considerable trouble.

The new government began its work amidst considerable popular support, but popular support could not for long mask the ultimate incompatibility of its two major componets. Authoritarian by training and outlook, Bakr was determined to make the army the main vehicle of power within the state; the liberal democratic reformers were bent on changing the social structure of the country. These differences, papered over in the common desire to overthrow the previous regime and temporarily reconciled through the personality of Ḥikmat, soon generated conflict.

Initially, the reformers appeared to be strong. On 5 November, Abū-l-Timman made a speech condemning despotism, promising an end to the suppression of liberty, and advocating reforms in the educational system and the distribution of state lands. Shortly thereafter, the reformers organized a society called the Popular Reform League. Its executive committee included four ministers, 'Abd al-Qādir Ismā'īl, and Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz, leader of the 1931 workers' strike. Its program called for the annulment of laws against the peasants, the encouragement of trade unions, and the spread of culture among the masses. Hardly radical by contemporary standards, the league clearly intended to redistribute wealth, to erode the economic power of the landlord class, and to spread education widely. It was, in short, a bold attack on privilege.[31]

However, it was not long before opposition to the league and its program began to surface from a number of sources. Chief among these were the landlord-shaykhs, who felt their authority to be threatened, and the Arab nationalists, who were unhappy over the Turkish orientation of the cabinet and its lack of interest in Arab affairs. Most important of all was opposition from Bakr and his supporters in the army. On 17 March, Bakr publicly denounced communism in a scarcely veiled repudiation of the entire Ahālī group, and this sealed their fate.

From the first, Bakr had pursued an entirely different line from al-Ahālī. He had expanded the army and strengthed his position within it. Plans to double the air force were announced; the Military College was enlarged to take another 150 students in a crash program, and a long shopping list of armaments and equipment was submitted to Britain.[32] Britain was unable to accommodate the Iraqis, so Bakr began to cast about for an alternative supplier. He soon found it in Germany. Fritz Grobba, German minister to Iraq, arranged for the purchase of some planes and equipment from Italy and Germany. Some of this material was delivered, but the orders were subsequently canceled by successive Iraqi cabinets. This episode marked the first rift in the alliance with Britain, and clearly foreshadowed the events of 1941. British refusals of Iraqi military requests generated much resentment in the army, resentment that was to grow in succeeding years.

The issue that brought the conflict between Bakr and the Ahālī group to a head was incidental—a rebellion by the tribal supporters of the previous Ikhā' cabinet, which Bakr and Ḥikmat decided to crush by force. Ḥikmat's manner of dealing with the situation caused an irrevocable split with the reformers in the cabinet. His decision was taken without consulting the cabinet, and when the three reform ministers heard of it, they decided to resign. Their resignation came on 6 June 1937, along with that of Ṣāliḥ Jabr, a *shīʿī* politician from the south.[33] The episode signaled a clear victory for Bakr and the nationalist contingent. Shortly thereafter, they started a campaign against the left. ʿAbd al-Qādir Ismāʿīl and his brother were deprived of Iraqi nationality and forced to leave the country.[34] The Popular Reform League was abolished, and Ḥikmat promised the dissolution of the newly elected parliament. The second election was designed to remove leftist influence. Thus ended any attempt to tamper with Iraq's social structure until after the revolution of 1958.

These moves came too late to save the regime. Opposition to Bakr and the policy of the cabinet had been growing, chiefly among the Arab nationalist politicians, who were already in contact with a group of Arab nationalist army officers. Among the officers were Muḥammad Fahmī Saʿīd and Maḥmūd Salmān, later to figure in the 1941 coup.[35] The Arab nationalist officers resented Bakr as a Kurd who had encouraged the Kurds in the army, and they felt that the policy of Ḥikmat's government had been too pro-Turkish. These officers feared a renewal of Turkish aggression toward Iraq, especially around Mosul. Muḥammad Fahmī Sa'īd's wife was related to the wife of the murdered Ja'far al-'Askarī, and hence Sa'īd also had personal feelings against Bakr. The nationalists in the army could count on the support of other groups. The *shī'ah* detested Bakr for his brutal suppression of the tribes and were disgruntled by the resignation of two strong *shī'ī* ministers. Above all, the opposition was aided and abetted by the members of the previous cabinet. Nūrī al-Sa'īd, motivated partly by revenge and partly by opposition to the cabinet's policy, waged an incessant campaign from Egypt against Ḥikmat and Bakr, first urging the British to take a stand against the cabinet, then writing anonymous articles in the Egyptian press against the regime, and finally instigating civilian and army politicians to take action.[36]

Once again the army, or a portion of it, intervened. On 11 August 1937, as Bakr and Muḥammad 'Alī Jawād, commander of the air force, were resting at Mosul Airport on their way to Turkey, both were shot at point-blank range by a soldier under orders from the Arab nationalist officers. Bakr's assassination put Ḥikmat and his regime in a critical position. With the withdrawal of the reformers from the cabinet, and with the general discontent of the Arab nationalists, Ḥikmat's main support had been reduced to Bakr and his contingent in the army. With Bakr's assassination, this prop abruptly collapsed.

Ḥikmat immediately initiated an investigation, which identified the assassin and uncovered the plot behind the attack. The conspirators, including Muḥammad Fahmī Sa'īd, were arrested. Commander of the Mosul District Amīn al-'Umarī was ordered to send them to Baghdad for trial, but al-'Umarī was unable to comply, as the bulk of his officer corps in Mosul sided with the plotters. Submitting the culprits to Baghdad would probably have meant mutiny in the army or civil war. By now, the Mosul military units were clearly under the control of the younger Arab nationalist officers.[37] Before long, the commander of the army camp at al-Washshāsh on the outskirts of Baghdad also came out in favor of the Mosul faction. If civil war was to be avoided, Ḥikmat had no alternative but to resign, which he did on 17 August 1937. The new regime, which had come to power with such great expectations of reform, had fallen within ten months.

The Bakr Ṣidqī coup, the collapse of the coalition government, and Ḥikmat's fall from power had far-reaching results. One was to remove the left from power. The attempt to introduce social reform by an alliance with the army had failed. The ascent of the left to power was premature: They were too few in number to command public support, and their ideas were too new to have put down roots in Iraqi society. The rhetoric of some leftists caused the Ahālī group to be regarded as extremist by moderates who might otherwise have acquiesced in their platform, which included needed educational and land reforms. Had these measures been implemented, they would have provided a corrective to Iraq's social structure early in its development, thus helping to prevent later revolutions and instability. In any event, the reformers were unprepared for their task in terms of organization, ideological cohesion, and political experience, and they were in no way a match for the army. Their lack of contact with the army officers left them in complete ignorance of that group's very different motives and aims. Moreover, Ḥikmat and the left grossly underestimated the strength of two other political forces in the country—the Arab nationalists and the conservative landowners.

With the weakening of the left, power gravitated into the hands of the conservative and nationalist elements at a critical time. Their position was strengthened by the seeming success of totalitarian regimes in Europe, by the propaganda emanating from the German representatives in Baghdad, and by the rising tide of anti-British feeling in the wake of the Palestine resistance movement of the late 1930s. All these forces contributed to the events of 1941 and the second British occupation of Iraq. Most important of all, the coup opened the door to the misuse of power by the military. The coup of 1936 was followed by a series of less spectacular military interventions, which became the most marked feature of political life in the years between 1936 and 1941.

The Army in Politics, 1937–1941

In the years immediately following the assassination of Bakr Ṣidqī, three distinct strands developed in Iraqi politics. One was the increased intrusion of the army in politics and the continued erosion of the constitutional system established by the British. Parliament had unquestionably been manipulated by the politicians and the British, but military dominance in politics was to prove even more damaging. Another strand was the tendency of the politicians—especially Nūrī—to conduct business as usual, pursuing their own power struggles and neglecting pressing social issues. Politics as usual continued in the face of the threatening international situation brought about by the onset of World War II. Most important of the three developments was the reemergence of the Palestine problem and the resulting intensification of anti-British and Arab nationalist sentiment, especially among key groups such as the students, the intelligentsia, and the officer corps. The intertwining of these three stands gradually drew the young officers further into politics, intensified their pan-Arab feelings, isolated the pro-British politicians, and eventually precipitated the crisis of 1941.

The Return of the Establishment

During the two years following the downfall of Ḥikmat's cabinet, the men and the policies that had previously governed Iraq gradually returned, but not without a protracted struggle. The most immediate result of Ḥikmat's resignation was the appointment of Jamīl al-Midfaʿī as prime minister. Al-Midfaʿī's conciliatory policies were well known. To heal old wounds, he adopted a policy of "dropping the curtain" on the past. This policy, backed by the moderates and the king, did not satisfy Nūrī, who began to agitate for the removal of al-Midfaʿī's cabinet and for punishment of Ḥikmat and his supporters. On this issue, Nūrī found common ground with the Arab nationalist officers, who opposed Ḥikmat and the policy he represented and also feared retribution for Bakr's assassination, should Ḥikmat ever return to power. When al-Midfaʿī consistently refused to take action, Nūrī, now joined by Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī, secretly collaborated with the Arab nationalist officers to end al-Midfaʿī's cabinet and seize power.

Matters came to a head in December 1938, when al-Midfaʿī's minister of defense took steps to retire or transfer the Arab nationalist officers and thus end their influence in politics. On 24 December, the officers insisted on the resignation of the cabinet on the grounds that the army no longer had confidence in it. When al-Midfaʿī called Nūrī, the latter made it clear that he fully supported the officers. Al-Midfaʿī's resignation followed the same day, and Nūrī became prime minister for the first time since 1932.[38]

Nūrī retired al-Midfaʿī's supporters in the army and held an election, filling parliament with his own supporters. He then attempted to deal with Ḥikmat Sulaymān and his collaborators in the coup. Since he was unable to bring them to trial for the coup because of an amnesty law previously passed by Ḥikmat's government, a new charge had to be found. An alleged plot against the life of the king was "discovered" in March 1939, and Ḥikmat and a number of his group were implicated, brought to trial, and convicted. The evidence convinced no one. Only the intervention of the British ambassador got the sentences reduced and saved Ḥikmat's life.[39] This indicates the extent to which Nūrī was willing to go for retribution and the degree to which personal feelings were allowed to dominate politics.

The Death of Ghāzī

No sooner had the trial been settled than the cabinet was faced with a serious crisis at the palace. On 4 April 1939, under the influence of alcohol, the king drove his car at high speed into a power pole. He died of a fractured skull shortly thereafter. This official version of the king's death has always been suspected by Iraqis and particularly by the nationalists, who have claimed that Nūrī and the British had a hand in it.[40] There is no hard evidence to support this conclusion, but there is little doubt that Ghāzī's death came as a relief to Nūrī and the British. Always in tune with the younger army officers, the young king had become an outspoken advocate of anti-British and nationalist sentiment. In 1937 he had begun broadcasting from a private radio station in his palace, denouncing French rule in Syria and Zionist claims in Palestine, and attacking British influence in the Gulf. He even advocated the absorption of Kuwait by Iraq (the first time this claim was made), depicting the shaykh of Kuwait as an outdated feudal monarch supported by the British.

Under the circumstances, the king's sudden death inspired accusations by the nationalists of British complicity. Suspicion spread like wildfire and finally resulted in a second tragedy: the murder of the British consul in Mosul on 5 April 1939. The consul was attacked from behind by a man with a pickax as he appeared on his balcony to placate an angry crowd. The government apologized for the episode, but the event indicated the extent to which Arab nationalist and anti-British sentiment was sweeping Iraq.

Ghāzī's death created a serious political vacuum at the center of power, providing an opportunity for the establishment to recoup some of its losses by installing one of its supporters. Ghāzī left an infant son, Fayṣal II, as eventual successor to the throne, but no clear-cut provisions had been made for the regency. This was a delicate matter, for the regent would exercise the power of the throne for the next fourteen years. There were two main contenders. One was Zayd, the half brother of Fayṣal I, an older man with some experience who was married to a Turkish woman. He was rejected, according to some, because of his liberal social behavior and because his Turkish leanings were viewed with suspicion by the Arab politicians.[41] According to others, he was rejected as too independent to be malleable.[42] The second alternative was 'Abd al-Ilāh, Ghāzī's cousin and brother of Queen 'Āliyah, Ghāzī's wife. At the time of Ghāzī's death, 'Abd al-Ilāh was something of a cipher. He had not yet had an opportunity to show what he could do, but he was known to be pro-British, and he had good relations with Nūrī, Ṭaha, and the officers who supported him. He was also young—twenty-six—and for that reason, the politicians probably felt that they could control him. On 6 April 1939, 'Abd al-Ilāh was appointed regent.

'Abd al-Ilāh was born in Mecca just before the First World War, the son of 'Alī and grandson of the Sharīf Ḥusayn. For one brief year (1925–1926), 'Alī had been king of al-Ḥijāz, before losing the throne to 'Abd al-'Azīz Ibn Sa'ūd. Because of the loss of the throne, 'Abd al-Ilāh keenly felt himself to be second-class royalty, an inferiority complex he later attempted to remedy by regaining Fayṣal's lost throne in Syria. 'Abd al-Ilāh's early upbringing and education took place in the insulated environment of Mecca, and it was only in 1926 that he came to Iraq. He later attended the British-run Victoria College in Alexandria for three years without graduating. Partly because of his background and training, partly because of his shy nature, 'Abd al-Ilāh always seemed to feel more at home among the English than among Iraqis. Despite native intelligence, he was neither a conscientious reader nor a natural politician. He often relied on those around him for information, a characteristic that was eventually his undoing.[43] ʻAbd al-Ilāh used his position of power to draw the establishment closer to the British than to the nationalists, with fatal consequences for the British and the regime they established.

The year following the king's death was one of relative stability, partly because of a temporary coincidence of interest between Nūrī and the nationalist officers. As a result, Nūrī was able to break relations with Germany in September 1939, without any protest from the officers who were to have such a different reaction a year later. The calm was deceptive. Beneath the surface, nationalist sentiment continued to mount, creating a climate of opinion that would eventually isolate the pro-British politicians and create irresistible pressures within the establishment.

The Rising Tide of Nationalism

Arab nationalist sentiments were hardly new in Iraq, but the end of the mandate and the escalation of the Palestine problem gave them new impetus. The wave of fascist propaganda emanating from some European countries fanned already intense anti-British feeling. These sentiments, although shared by some of the older politicians, had their firmest roots among the younger generation raised under the British mandate and now coming into their own. The main locus of the pan-Arab movement was in the school system, particularly at the secondary and college levels, where the seeds planted earlier by Sāṭiʻ-l-Ḥuṣrī had taken root. Though primary education was slowly spreading, secondary schools and colleges were still scarce, and they were concentrated in the large cities. These schools were thus vulnerable to the influence of a handful of teachers, who made them centers of political activism.

By the 1930s, Arab nationalism had taken firm hold in these institutions. Political action began with a demonstration against Alfred Mond, a British Zionist who visited Baghdad in 1928. This event inaugurated an era of educational politicization, enhanced by the importation of several Palestinian secondary and college teachers and the introduction of new texts, heavily oriented toward pan-Arabism, in history and the social sciences. Nationalist clubs like al-Muthannā (named after a seventh-century Arab hero) and al-Jawwāl (the Wanderer) appeared in schools and colleges in addition to the government sponsored al-Futuwwah program. Pan-Arab sentiments, strongly influenced by German ideas of nationalism and encouraged by Fritz Grobba, German minister in Baghdad until 1939, reached a peak in 1939, when Sāmī Shawkat, brother of Nājī and an ardent Arab nationalist, was appointed director-general of education. Sāmī Shawkat began making inflammatory speeches on the art of death, advocating the shedding of blood for the sake of Arabism and the Arabs.[44] These speeches, soon curbed by Nūrī, were said to have contributed to the death of the British consul.

A commitment to Arab nationalism was clearly shared by the younger generation of army officers; indeed, it was the main motive force behind their increased forays into the political arena. Politicization of the army officer corps had begun at least as early as 1930, when Tawfīq Ḥusayn, a fiery lecturer at the Military College, advocated military intervention in politics on the model of Turkey and Iran. By 1934, there were at least seventy officers in his circle. It was not long, however, before a number of these broke away from Ḥusayn and formed their own group, oriented in the direction of a more Arab policy. Alienated by Bakr Ṣidqī's lack of interest in Arab affairs, this group had been behind Bakr's assassination and the subsequent military action that had put Nūrī back in power in 1938.

By 1940 the four core leaders of this group, which had originally included at least half a dozen officers, were Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh, Muḥammad Fahmī Sa'īd, Maḥmūd Salmān, and Kāmil Shabīb. As all were key participants in the events of 1941, it is useful to look at their backgrounds and outlook. All came from modest families. Maḥmūd Ṣalmān was the son of a small contractor; Kāmil Shabīb came from a poor Baghdad family; and Muḥammad Fahmī Sa'īd was the son of a lieutenant in the Ottoman army. Only al-Ṣabbāgh came from the middle class; his father was a merchant, orginally from Sidon, who had settled in Mosul. All four had attended the Ottoman military academy, fought on the Turkish side in the war, and joined Fayṣal's movement in Syria. All except Salmān had graduated from the Staff College in Baghdad, where they had established personal ties with one another. More importantly, all were Arab *sunnī* (although Sa'īd reportedly had a Kurdish background), and all identified wholeheartedly with the pan-Arab cause.

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh was soon to emerge as the undisputed leader of the group. He had spent time at the British Army Staff College at Camberley and had married an English woman who later died.[45] He knew English and Turkish as well as Arabic and was well read in Arab history. Although he was a member of one of the nationalist clubs and had helped train the Futuwwah, his animosity toward the British developed only later. Al-Ṣabbāgh was angered by the armaments issue that arose during Bakr Ṣidqī's time and also by the British role in Palestine. His strongly nationalistic philosophy is summed up in his memoirs: "I do not believe in the democracy of the English nor in the Naziism of the Germans nor in the Bolshevism of the Russians. I am an Arab Muslim. I do not want anything as a substitute in the way of pretensions and philosophies."[46]

One more individual, Yūnis al-Sab'āwī, played a critical role in the Arab nationalist movement. A young Arab *sunnī* like the officers, al-Sab'āwī had been born into a modest family from Mosul, and he was an ardent supporter of the pan-Arab cause. As a graduate of the Damascus Law College and also a journalist, al-Sab'āwī was widely read in history and politics. He had a restless, energetic mind and a persuasive tongue and pen. Al-Sab'āwī cultivated the young officers, raising their political consciousness (often by using analogies drawn from their own studies of strategy and tactics),[47] sharpening their Arab nationalist sentiments, and encouraging political activism.

Despite the growth of pan-Arabism and residual anti-British feelings, it is doubtful whether popular opinion would have become as inflamed as it did, had it not been for the role of the Palestine struggle and the influence of the muftī al-Ḥājj Amīn al-Ḥusaynī. The resistance movement, led by the muftī in Palestine, had reached a peak between 1936 and 1939 with riots and armed resistance to the British. Clearly determined to enforce the Balfour Declaration, the British put these down by force. The activities of the Palestinians and the muftī, which received the sympathy of most Iraqis, put an increasing strain on Anglo-Iraqi relations and on the continuance of the alliance. On 16 October 1939, after the resistance movement was crushed by the British, the muftī took refuge in Baghdad, adding his voice to the mounting anti-British sentiment. The muftī's contacts with Iraqis intensified, especially with the Palestine Defense League, headed for a time by Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī.

The Second World War exacerbated social and economic problems in Iraq, leading to commercial disruptions, inflation, and a shortage of funds. The slow pace of development and the disruption of a war thrust on Iraq by foreign powers increased the rancor of Iraqi politicians and fed the intense anti-British feeling that was shortly to engulf Iraq. In 1938 the education budget was still less than a million Iraqi dinars ($2.38 million), while the mass of the population in rural and urban areas continued to live in poverty that was soon to be exacerbated by the shortages of the war. One source suggests that the position of the cultivator deteriorated in the interwar period, and estimates that about a quarter of the population of al-'Amārah had migrated to urban areas by the mid-1940s.[48]

All of these factors—the pan-Arab issue, the intrusion of the military in politics, and personal fears—came to a head once again in February 1940, when Nūrī offered to resign as prime minister. Personal dissension in the cabinet over his treatment of adversaries, as well as the general tensions brought about by the Palestine issue, had made his position untenable. The prospect of Nūrī's resignation generated a split among the officers who had previously supported him. The four young colonels, who formed the backbone of Nūrī's support, saw no reason for a cabinet change and therefore asked Nūrī to stay in power. The older officers, and specifically Amīn al-'Umarī and Ḥusayn Fawzī, were unwilling to continue their intervention in politics and wanted the matter of the new cabinet left to 'Abd al-Ilāh, the regent.[49] Threatened by the constant political intervention of the younger colonels and the support they enjoyed from Nūrī, al-'Umarī and Fawzī told the regent they could not approve of either Nūrī or his cohort Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī being included in any new cabinet.

The result was yet another quiet coup. The four officers mobilized at al-Washshāsh Camp while al-'Umarī mobilized at Rashīd Camp. The army appeared on the verge of civil war. The four colonels, however, held the higher cards, due to their close ties to Nūrī and through him, to the regent. ʻAbd al-Ilāh decided in favor of Nūrī and the four officers. Nūrī formed a new cabinet and retired al-ʻUmarī, Fawzī, and their supporters in the army, ending any hope of removing the four officers from politics. Just a few months before the crisis that nearly ended their political futures, Nūrī and ʻAbd al-Ilāh thus played a major role in pushing the four colonels to the forefront of politics. From then on, it was the colonels who would force Nūrī's hand, and not the other way around.

On 31 March 1940, Nūrī finally stepped down as prime minister. On his advice, former prime minister Rashīd ʻĀlī formed a new cabinet, his first since 1933, including both Nūrī and Ṭaha. The crisis of army intervention appeared to have subsided, but the damage had been done. The third coup had put the younger officers in complete control of the country's armed forces. They owed their position less to Rashīd ʻĀlī—soon to become their spokesman—than to Nūrī, who for shortsighted and entirely personal reasons had cooperated with them from the first.

The Rashīd ʻĀlī Coup

Much ink has been spilled on interpreting the events of 1940 and 1941 and the brief war that resulted in the second British occupation of Iraq.[50] The anglophile party in Iraq has always regarded the movement labeled with Rashīd ʻĀlī's name as an illegal movement against the constitutional government, one more step in undermining the legitimacy of the regime established in 1920, and a blot on Iraq's international reputation. This view prevailed for a time in Iraq with the victory of the regent and the pro-British forces, who executed and imprisoned the perpetrators of the coup. The nationalists, more attuned to opinion inside Iraq and less concerned with Iraq's foreign reputation, viewed the movement as a genuine assertion of Iraq's national rights, a further step in achieving Iraqi independence, and a blow struck for the Arab cause and the Palestinian struggle. They charged that the pro-British party disregarded Iraq's national welfare in the interests of a foreign government. In the long run, with the eventual domination of nationalist governments after 1958, this interpretation prevailed.

However one views the situation, it is clear that the events of the eight years since the death of Fayṣal had gradually deprived the country of many of its experienced politicians and army officers, and brought to the fore a group of younger men inexperienced in international affairs. In 1940, Iraq's statehood was still fragile and its independence incomplete. Iraqi statesmen needed to balance the country's internal needs and the sentiments of its population against the realities of the international situation. As the tide turned against Britain in the first year of the war and Britain pressured Iraq to fulfill its treaty obligations, the situation became acute.

Despite the growth of political pressures, moderate views still prevailed in the government as Rashīd ʻĀlī's cabinet was formed in March 1940.

The difficulty began when Italy declared war on the Allies on 10 June 1940. Three days later the British asked Iraq to break off diplomatic relations with Italy, fearing that the Italian embassy would be used as a center of espionage and propaganda for the Axis powers. These fears were not unjustified. With the fall of Nūrī's government in March 1940, the muftī had increasingly come out into the open, associating more often with the Italian legation, through which he maintained communications with the Germans. The muftī actually formed a miniature government of his own in Baghdad. Meanwhile, Britain's war situation worsened. In May, the fall of France put the Vichy government in control of neighboring Syria, threatening British communications in the Middle East.

When Nūrī, as foreign minister, asked the cabinet to comply with the British request for support, the rift in the cabinet deepened. One group, led by Nūrī and supported by the regent, favored the British and estimated that despite early reverses, the Allies would eventually win the war. They wished to support the British to the hilt, even going beyond treaty obligations. The other faction, represented by Rashīd 'Ālī but led by the muftī and the officers, wished above all to remain neutral, keeping Iraq out of the war and reducing British influence in internal affairs. This group won out, and in the summer of 1940, they tentatively explored the possibility of German support in case of an open conflict with Britain. The results of the negotiations were disappointing.[51] The Germans made no real promises of tangible help and clearly warned against precipitating armed conflict with Britain. Despite these warnings, either misinterpreted or ignored, the anti-British party persisted in its course.[52]

Toward the end of the summer, the conflict came out into the open, and positions within the cabinet hardened. The officers in the army now sided with the pro-German party. In return for breaking relations with Italy, they wished to extract from Britain a promise of independence for Syria and Palestine and a solution of the Palestine problem that would realize the desires of the Arabs.[53] In the course of several meetings, attended by Nūrī and al-Ṣabbāgh, Nūrī was attacked for his pro-British stand. For the first time, al-Ṣabbāgh took an open position against Nūrī. Nūrī and his supporters began to encourage opposition to the cabinet in the senate, hoping to resolve the conflict by constitutional means.

This might have worked had the British not decided to take a step that exacerbated the situation and forced an irreversible decision on the government. In November 1940, British Ambassador Kinahan Cornwallis met with the regent and Nūrī and indicated that the Iraqis had two choices—to keep Rashīd 'Ālī or to retain the friendship of Britain. Rashīd 'Ālī then received the same information, to which he replied that he was not concerned with the confidence of a foreign government but only with that of parliament and the people.[54] The British move, perhaps understandable under the pressures of the time, proved to be a serious blunder. Had the British maintained a cool stance, permitting the Iraqis to ride out the European situation until the tide had turned, as the majority of the Iraqi politicians wished, the crisis might have been avoided. Instead the British forced the issue, delivering a virtual ultimatum and blatantly interfering in internal politics. Britain's use of the regent as spokesman did little to bolster the prestige or legitimacy of the palace.

A rapid succession of events followed. Rashīd 'Ālī refused to resign, backed wholeheartedly by the four officers. Two ministers, Nūrī and Nājī Shawkat, resigned in an effort to bring about a new cabinet. Instead, Rashīd 'Ālī appointed two new ministers—one of them Yūnis al-Sab'āwī, clearly shifting the balance toward the nationalists. When more ministers resigned and Rashīd 'Ālī still refused to step down, a cabinet crisis ensued. This time Rashīd 'Ālī's actions met with questions and disapproval on the part of some deputies in the assembly. Rashīd 'Ālī submitted a request to the regent for the dissolution of parliament and calling of a new election, designed to bring in a chamber that would back his position. To avoid signing the request and to force cabinet resignation, the regent took refuge with units of the armed forces in al-Dīwāniyyah. This act brought the constitutional issue to the fore. Still unwilling to make an open breach in the constitution, Rashīd 'Ālī resigned on 31 January 1941.

The new cabinet was led by Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī, a man presumably acceptable to both the officers (because of his pan-Arab sentiments) and the British (because he had served in a cabinet that had accepted the treaty). In a brief attempt at compromise, Ṭaha secured the return of 'Abd al-Ilāh to the capital on the assurance that the army would be put back in the barracks. Ṭaha then attempted to live up to his promise, but it was too late. By now the four officers were too deeply involved in events and were too anxious for their careers—even their lives—to back down. In February 1941, an attempt to transfer Shabīb and al-Ṣabbāgh out of the capital failed, as did another attempt with Shabīb in March.[55] By this time the officers were determined to rid themselves of Ṭaha in favor of Rashīd 'Ālī, who was supporting them. Once again, they threatened force, this time against Ṭaha.[56] On 1 April 1941, Ṭaha called a cabinet meeting to announce his resignation. In the meantime, the four officers had mobilized their forces and surrounded the royal palace. Once again, however, the regent managed to give them the slip, thanks to the U.S. minister in Baghdad who smuggled him out of the capital in the back of his car. 'Abd al-Ilāh made his way to Basra and from there to a waiting British ship. Nūrī, al-Midfa'ī, and several other pro-British politicians managed to escape at the same time. The regent's departure without his signature on Ṭaha's resignation made it necessary for the four officers and Rashīd 'Ālī to act outside the constitutional system. This came to be known as the Rashīd 'Ālī coup.

Rashīd 'Ālī, Yūnis al-Sab'āwī, and the officers now formed a new government of national defense wholly composed of the nationalist party, an act accomplished amidst a high tide of nationalist sentiment. On 10 April they deposed ʿAbd al-Ilāh, appointing al-Sharīf Sharaf, a distant relative, in his place. The new regent accepted Ṭaha's resignation, and Rashīd ʿĀlī was deputized to form his third and last cabinet. Even with the crisis completely out of hand, Rashīd ʿĀlī desperately tried to find a compromise that would satisfy the British and the officers. However, the British had already decided it was too late for compromise, and were determined to force the issue. Holding out the bait of recognition of the regime, Ambassador Cornwallis demanded that British troops be allowed to land in Iraq, presumably to be transported through the country in accordance with the treaty. Rashīd ʿĀlī agreed, and on 17 and 18 April British troops landed at Basra.

By this time Rashīd ʿĀlī had lost whatever measure of control he once held. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh and Yūnis al-Sabʿāwī, apparently blind to the probable consequences, informed Rashīd ʿĀlī that the British troops would have to leave the country in a few days, that no further arrivals would be allowed until then, and that the Iraqis must be notified of further troop arrivals well in advance. The British, however, had no intention of moving their troops out, and events marched to an inevitable conclusion. On 28 April, the Council of Ministers decided to send Iraqi troops to al-Ḥabbāniyyah air base as a precautionary measure. The following day, the British, who were attempting to evacuate women and children by plane from al-Ḥabbāniyyah, were told that if the plane left the ground it would be fired upon. The British regarded this as an act of war, and on 2 May the local British commander decided to attack the Iraqi forces surrounding the base without warning, and before they could take the initiative. The move succeeded. Had the Iraqis taken the initiative, the British would have been outnumbered on the ground, and the move might have convinced the Axis powers that Iraq was worth saving. But no such orders were issued.

The rest of the story is soon told. The battle was not fought on the ground but in the air. Within hours, the RAF had destroyed twenty-five of Iraq's forty planes. Taken by surprise, the Iraqi army withdrew to al-Falūjah, destroying the Euphrates dams and flooding the area. This delayed the British advance but hardly stopped it. In the meantime, British reinforcements began to stream in from Jordan, including contingents from Glubb Pasha's Arab Legion. Al-Falūjah was captured on 19 May and the way lay open to Baghdad.

In Baghdad, the government proved as ineffective as the army. No plans had been made prior to precipitating the crisis for help from the Axis powers. The day after the destruction of the air force at al-Ḥabbāniyyah and with mounting casualties reported, the cabinet hurriedly sent Nājī Shawkat to Turkey to secure German support. In fact, some assistance was sent, but it was too little and too late. At this point, Hitler was mobilizing for an attack on the Soviet Union and was not prepared to help Iraq in any substantial way.

The government that had precipitated the war collapsed shortly. On 29 May, as British columns approached Baghdad, the four officers escaped to Iran, where they were soon joined by Rashīd ‘Ālī, al-Ḥājj Amīn al-Ḥusaynī, and their followers. On the same day, Mayor of Baghdad Arshad l-‘Umarī formed a committee that included the remaining senior army officers at the Ministry of Defense. This committee concluded an armistice, which was duly signed on 30 May. On 1 June, ‘Abd al-Ilāh arrived in Baghdad with Nūrī, ‘Alī Jawdat, Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī the peacemaker, and others. They were entrusted with the formation of a government made up of the pro-British party alone. Thus ended the most serious attempt since the 1920 revolt to sever the British tie and to unseat the regime they had established. Once again, it ended with a British victory.

The crisis had profound repercussions for the future; all the participants paid a price sooner or later.[57] Many supporters of Rashīd ‘Ālī were executed or imprisoned; suspected sympathizers were dismissed or confined in camps. Rashīd ‘Ālī began a long exile. Retribution to the regent and Nūrī came later, in 1958. The British also paid at this later date with the fall of the regime they had done so much to foster. Most important of all, the events of these years generated a deep rift in Iraqi society. Opposition to the regime could henceforth be contained, but not compromised. Those who were executed for precipitating the events of 1941 were regarded as martyrs by much of the army and the Iraqi population. The young officers who overthrew the regime in 1958 believed they were but completing the task left unfinished in 1941. As for the British influence, events showed how thin this was. Without the second British occupation, it is doubtful how much longer their work would have remained. As it was, thanks to the urgent wartime situation and the presence of British troops on Iraqi soil, the regime was given another lease on life.

The Second British Occupation, 1941–1945

In June 1941, the first contingent of forces reached Baghdad and began to requisition houses and buildings; the second British occupation of Iraq had begun. Like the first, twenty-five years earlier, it was carried out under the exigencies of war and maintained for the benefit of the Allied war effort. Iraq's internal affairs were given second priority. British desires and needs were effected, as before, through Iraqi politicians and a palace completely in support of, and dependent upon, the British tie. In other respects, however, the second occupation differed markedly from the first. There was little or no uncertainty about the future of the country. It was clearly recognized that the situation was temporary and would lapse at the conclusion of the war with the withdrawal of British troops. British influence would be maintained thereafter through the treaty and the personal relations established with the ruling group.

It was in the interests of both the British and the politicians who returned with them to perpetuate their restored status. Both used the war period to assure their continued dominance until well after the end of the war. The regent and the pro-British politicians proceeded to eliminate their anti-British rivals and to weaken their hold over the army and the bureaucracy with unprecedented thoroughness. The British presence during the war was all-pervasive. The most tangible evidence was the presence of foreign troops. By the end of 1942, these forces consisted of two British divisions and an armored brigade, three Indian divisions and an armored brigade, and one Polish division. It was not until the successful defense of Stalingrad in 1943 that this huge force was reduced.[58] British troops were only one aspect of the occupation. Far more important was British control over much of the economy, the army, key elements of the bureaucracy, education, and the media. Presiding over this operation was Kinahan Cornwallis, the British ambassador, who knew the country and its personalities thoroughly from fifteen years of experience as advisor to the Ministry of Interior.

The Reinstatement of the Regime

The real significance of the British occupation, however, lay in their reinstatement of the pro-British ruling group. The second occupation indissolubly linked the ruling circles of Iraq, and especially the regent and Nūrī, to the British. The willingness of these politicians to act as mediators between the British and their own people, and their pursuit to the death of the followers of Rashīd ʿĀlī, gradually cut the regime off from the articulate middle class, making them ever more dependent upon the British.

The occupation began, however, with a policy of moderation. Jamīl al-Midfaʿī, the perennial compromiser, formed a cabinet clearly dedicated to dropping the curtain again upon the past. He was prepared to go a certain way toward meeting British demands and curtailing the nationalist danger, but not so far as to eliminate the nationalists entirely. On 3 June, his cabinet issued a declaration of martial law, which remained in effect until March 1946. Another decree declared Rashīd ʿĀlī's government unconstitutional, paving the way for action against its members if this were deemed necessary. The dispute with the British over the treaty was resolved, and on 11 June, diplomatic relations with Italy were severed. A number of army officers and civil servants who had participated in the events of May 1941 were retired and replaced by older men of unquestioned loyalty to the regime. Key figures in education who had taken Iraqi citizenship, such as Sāṭiʿ-l-Ḥuṣrī, were deprived of citizenship and deported, along with about 100 Palestinian and Syrian teachers. The Futuwwah movement was abolished and nationalist clubs like al-Jawwāl and al-Muthannā were closed down.

This was as far as al-Midfaʿī was prepared to go to appease British interests. He was soon pressured by the British and the regent to exceed these limits. Many of Rashīd ʿĀlī's supporters remained at large in the bureaucracy, and the British wanted them rounded up and detained for the duration of their stay. The regent wished to go even further, to prosecute the leaders of the movement who had earlier been captured by the British in Iran and who were currently being detained in Rhodesia. Finally succumbing to these pressures, al-Midfaʿī submitted his resignation on 21 September, after a brief three months in office. With him went the policy of moderation.

On 9 October, to no one's surprise, Nūrī was asked to form a new cabinet. Shortly thereafter, a second wave of dismissals took place, especially in the Ministry of Interior, while preparations were made for the internment of those the regime considered dangerous. Although this category was supposed to include only Rashīd ʿĀlī supporters and those with open Axis sympathies, personal motives were also at work. Some Iraqis with pronounced pro-German leanings remained free, thanks to their friendships with Nūrī, while opponents of Nūrī with no Axis sympathies were arrested. The sum total of those interned during the war may have reached 700 to 1,000, although there were probably no more than 300 or 350 in the camps at any one time.[59]

Of far more significance than these internments were the trials and executions of the movement's leaders. Here too, Nūrī's government was quick to act. Late in 1941 an Iraqi court-martial was established; on 6 January 1942 it handed down the severest possible sentences. Rashīd ʿĀlī, three of the four colonels, ʿAlī Maḥmūd al-Shaykh ʿAlī, Yūnis al-Sabʿāwī, and General Amīn Zakī were all sentenced to death in absentia; others received long sentences of imprisonment. Demands were made for extradition of the prisoners who were in British hands in Rhodesia. British compliance with the Iraqi request and the subsequent executions of the main participants raised questions as to where responsibility for the trials and executions lay. Nationalist historians have put the blame equally on the British and on the regent and Nūrī.[60] It is more likely that the responsbility should be laid at the door of the Iraqis, and particularly the regent, who were anxious to eliminate their opposition. Nevertheless, the British, for whatever reasons, did return the prisoners.

During the second trial the prisoners were allowed to defend themselves, and many of the sentences were reduced. This did not hold true for the officers. On 4 May 1942, two of the colonels, Muḥammad Fahmī Saʿīd and Maḥmūd Salmān, were sentenced to death and hanged along with Yūnis al-Sabʿāwī. In April 1944, Colonel Kāmil Shabīb was handed over to the Iraqis by the British, and he too was sentenced and hanged. Last came Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh, who was finally released by the Turks at the end of the war and sent into British-controlled Syria. There he was captured and turned over to the Iraqis. Al-Ṣabbāgh was sentenced and hanged at the gate of the Ministry of Defense in October 1945. The remaining sentences were less severe, but of the leaders who had participated in the movement, only Rashīd ʿĀlī and the muftī managed to escape, the former ultimately to Saudi Arabia, and the latter to Germany and later to Egypt. These proceedings bit deeply into the public consciousness. Many army officers, in particular, were bitter over the treatment accorded their colleagues and especially over the execution of al-Ṣabbāgh. It was no coincidence that the body of ʻAbd al-Ilāh was hanged by the gate of the Ministry of Defense in July 1958. The exile and internment of the regime's enemies might have been forgotten, but the executions created a vendetta and marked a point of no return in the attitude of many Iraqis toward the regime.

The cabinet now turned its attention to the army and the educational system. The army was in considerable disarray. The officer corps had been decimated by the flight of its chief officers and the retirement of many others, and the soldiers had deserted in droves as soon as they knew the outcome of the battle with the British. Throughout the war, Nūrī reduced both the size and the influence of the army. Conscription was neglected, and a number of older, Ottoman-trained officers were brought out of retirement and put in command because they were politically safe.[61] By the autumn of 1943, however, with the prospect of the withdrawal of foreign forces from Iraq, this policy had become inappropriate. The regent became alarmed for Iraq's future security and persuaded the British of the need for reorganization. In the spring of 1944, Major General Renton was sent to Iraq as head of the British military mission. He organized the army into the shape it was to assume right up to the revolution of 1958. The older, Ottoman-trained officers were replaced by younger officers, mainly trained by the British. Renton also worked hard to reequip the army.

The regime turned next to the Ministry of Education. The British rightly attributed much of the pro-Axis sentiment in the country to the spread of extreme nationalist sentiments in the curriculum, the textbooks, and among the teachers—especially in the secondary schools and colleges. Offending teachers were dismissed and some of the most offensive texts removed, while passages in other texts were expunged.[62] Finally, the regime took steps to protect itself from a repetition of the events of 1941 through a constitutional amendment designed to buttress the throne. It passed a draft amendment to the organic law that provided, among other things, that ʻAbd al-Ilāh should be heir to the throne until a male heir was born to Fayṣal II, at which time the regent would become second in line for succession. The king was also given the right to dismiss the prime minister if necessary, a prerogative that would be exercised by ʻAbd al-Ilāh until the young king's maturity. The regent could thus legally remove an obstructive cabinet such as Rashīd ʻĀlī's, should one come to power.[63]

These arrangements put the old leaders firmly in political control, but they needed more popular support to remain there. The removal of so many nationalists had thinned the ranks of the Arab *sunnī*s from which the regime had usually drawn support. The remaining wartime cabinets, therefore, drew far more heavily on the *shīʻah* and the Kurds, who for the first time often outnumbered the Arab *sunnī*s in the cabinet.

Of far more significance for the future, however, was the encouragement given to the left. At the start of the war the left had joined the Rashīd ʿĀlī supporters in attacking the British. After the Nazi invasion of Russia in June 1941 and the subsequent alliance of the Soviet Union with Britain and France, the leftists followed the lead of the Soviet Union and switched their position. They were among the regime's strongest supporters during the war. At the same time, the regime itself began to take a more benign view of the leftists. The remainder of the war period was a field day for the left. Underground Communist newspapers were distributed freely without police interference. Communist leader Yūsuf Salmān was seen freely visiting government offices, and leftists even attended British embassy parties. A number of leftists—even some Marxists—received high positions in education, among them ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Ibrāhīm. The liberal attitude toward the left during and shortly after the war gave the Communist Party and other left-wing movements an opportunity to organize and to strike roots in the schools and among the workers. The Communist Party achieved a position of first rank among the intelligentsia and the working class that it retained in spite of the persecution of the late 1940s and 1950s.

The Wartime Economy

The war years marked a turning point in social and economic life as well. The economic consequences of the war may well have been the most profound of its effects. In the years before 1941, Iraq had been a relatively poor country, but most of its inhabitants had been poor together. Although a few were considered wealthy by the standards of the time, enjoying greater income, more amenities, and a better style of life, the gap that separated the wealthy from the middle classes and the middle classes from the poor was not very great. Moreover, economic and social disparities were cushioned by strong family ties, which provided a hedge against adversity and a common sense of community and identity for rich and poor alike.

The war changed this situation substantially. On the one hand, the spiraling wartime prices (especially for grains) and the shortage of goods created unprecedented opportunities for exploitation. The resulting scramble for wealth created some affluence, but more often built breathtaking fortunes for a very few. Gradually, the gap between the rich and the poor, and even between the wealthy and the merely well-to-do, widened, creating new social tensions and breaking down the old ties of family and community and the values that sustained them. What made the situation even more intolerable was the close tie between political power and wealth and the obvious corruption in high places. As a close-knit oligarchy of wealth and power evolved, the legitimacy of the regime was further eroded.

Meanwhile the middle class of civil servants, army officers, and teachers, caught on a treadmill of fixed salaries, saw their economic and social position worsen daily. The situation of the poor often became extreme, and bitterness against the government broke out in riots and strikes. The Communists saw their opportunity and took it, rapidly gaining ground politically among the lower classes. They exacerbated tensions and spread a new class consciousness that accelerated the destruction of traditional ties. By the war's end, the transition to a new era of economic and social problems was well under way.

The first and most important factor in the postwar economy was inflation, produced partly by the descent of British troops on Iraq and partly by the shortages of the war. The amount of currency in circulation rose from ID 5 million ($12 million) to ID 45 million ($107 million) in 1941 alone; expansion in the money supply between 1939 and 1946 was 900 percent.[64] The price index leapt from 100 in 1939 to 650 in 1942. Grain prices rose from an index of 100 in 1939 to 773 in the peak year of 1943; textiles to 1,287.[65] Even these figures probably understate the level of inflation. Many knowledgeable businessmen estimate that the increase generally was not less than ten times the prewar level, indicating an average rise of 200 percent a year.[66]

Among those who profited most from these circumstances were the grain producers and dealers, who suddenly found an expanded market for their produce at higher prices. Although this enabled small landlords to pay off debts and entrepreneurs to amass a nice nest egg, some of the windfall fortunes made in the grain trade were enormous. A good example is the case of 'Abd al-Hādī-l-Jalabī, who emerged from the war one of the wealthiest men in the Middle East. Al-Jalabī was not only a landowner and producer of grain himself, but the agent and middleman for the British purchasing agency. Al-Jalabī's estimated profits are staggering by the standards of the time. Between 1938 and 1943 the price of barley rose from about ID 2 or 3 to ID 21 a metric ton; that of wheat from ID 4 or 5 to ID 50. Although production levels varied, a dunam of irrigated land could produce 3 to 5 tons of wheat a year, turning a profit after costs of ID 75 to 150 per dunam.[67] For the many landlords and shaykhs who owned 100,000 dunams the profit would have been as high as ID 400,000 a year; al-Jalabī, whose holdings were close to a million dunams, must have made ID 1 million ($2.38 million) or more a year.[68]

The grain trade, although the most lucrative, was not the only means of gaining wealth. Another profitable business was importing. All sorts of items were in short supply, and those who could corner the market on some item turned a nice profit. In fact, the government was forced to institute an import licensing policy, supposedly regulated by the High Supply Committee. The import licenses then became a scarce commodity themselves. Indeed, the profits made in the purchase and sale of valuable import licenses often exceeded the profitability of the import trade itself. Unlike the grain trade, where anyone with land and a little enterprise could manipulate the market, the import business required official connections. So valuable were these licenses that ministers, senators, and almost all deputies except the shaykhs—who were busy making money on grain sales—registered as licensed importers even though they had no intention of engaging in the business themselves.[69] They then sold the licenses to merchants. This practice caused more cabinet instability during the war than any other issue and was responsible, at least in part, for three of the four cabinet resignations that took place between 1941 and 1945.

The end result of all this profiteering was a widening social and economic gap in the population. Middle-class merchants, contractors, and self-sufficient cultivators became more affluent, but most of the wealth gravitated toward the upper end of the scale. Writing just after the war in 1946, one British member of parliament remarked on the seeming abundance in Iraq of clothes, food, and the comforts of life.

> Anyone coming from strictly rationed and spartan Russia or Britain wonders about it till he realizes it is not for the *fellahin* [peasants]. In the outskirts of Baghdad luxury villas are going up and wealthy merchants and "effendis" give parties that would put in the shade a London society hostess of the Edwardian era. The Arab world is enjoying the delights of unrestricted private wealth, assisted by other people's wars and consequently inflation. But trade unions are forbidden and the *fellahin* in the poorest quarters of Baghdad live in squalor, darkness and disease. There is an income tax, which you may pay if you like.[70]

Meanwhile, salaried employees working for the government suffered. While the cost of living rose five-, six-, and sevenfold,[71] employee salaries rose only 25 percent.[72] Schoolteachers, for example, who were in the lower ranks of all government employees, made between ID 6 to 21 a month at elementary levels, and ID 18 to 35 at secondary schools. Taking the highest possible figure this would give the elementary teacher a yearly income of about ID 252 ($440) and the secondary teacher ID 420 or about $1,000 a year. As for workers, their wages in 1939 were estimated at ID 3.38 a month or ID 40 ($95) a year.[73] These incomes must be compared to the profits of the merchants and grain producers mentioned above.

Although both the economic and social situation of the lower and middle classes deteriorated during the war, the hardship itself was easier to take than the inequality of the burden. The war years were punctuated by bread strikes, especially in the year 1943, when shortages were greatest and prices reached a peak. The strikes were put down by the police, although police action was accompanied by attempts to supply bread to the masses, mainly through a temporary cessation of grain exports.

The closing years of the war hastened the polarization of society that became such a marked feature of the postwar period. Economically, the war created an ever-more-visible oligarchy. Politically, it brought back a regime tied almost wholly to the British, the landlords, and the wealthy.

The removal of the nationalists, whose ranks were mainly drawn from the middle classes but whose ideals had cut across class barriers, eliminated a buffer between the regime and the people. The demise of the nationalists also opened the door to the left, which now worked to widen the gap between the regime and the people and to pave the way for the new social conditions of the postwar era.

4

The Old Regime, 1946–1958

Postwar Iraq presents a study in contrasts. On the surface, political life appeared stable. The establishment politicians, supported by the landlord-shaykhs, the new urban wealthy, and the upper reaches of the army, seemed firmly entrenched in power. Beneath the surface, however, new social groups, motivated by different ideals and aspirations, emerged to challenge establishment values and policy. In country and city alike, poverty was widespread, yet new oil wealth was creating visible pockets of modernity and presenting Iraqis with prospects for a better future. Although the bulk of the population remained traditional in outlook and social practice, a new generation, reared on Western ideas of nationalism, secularism, and modernity, pursued the search for a new national identity on a new ideological basis.

Nowhere were these contradictions more apparent than in the area of foreign policy. While the regime clung to the British tie, bitterness over the events of 1941 and the wartime arrests and executions spread. These feelings were exacerbated by the Arab defeat in Palestine and the establishment of the Israeli state. In the 1950s, the eruption of revolutionary movements in other Middle Eastern states caused strong reverberations inside Iraq, illustrating once again the country's fragility as a nation-state and its vulnerability to outside pressures. As these pressures intensified, Iraq was plunged into a series of foreign policy crises, some due to its alliance with Britain, others of the leaders' own making. All weakened and further isolated the regime from large numbers of its own people.

Foreign policy problems were matched by and intertwined with domestic difficulties. New political parties emerged, permitted—initially even encouraged—by the establishment. Aided by the spread of the press and radio and by an expanded educational system, these parties proceeded to politicize the new socioeconomic groups, especially the educated middle class and the new working class. The presence of these groups in vulnerable sectors of the economy and society gave them a serious capacity for disruption. Their influence was increasingly evident in strikes, demonstrations, and riots that further undermined and weakened the establishment.

In the face of these difficulties, the regime continued to rely on the police to put down disturbances and on the manipulation of elections to assure compliant parliaments. Opposition demands for political change were largely ignored. More importantly, the regime refused to moderate its foreign policy. Some of the regime's politicians were aware of the need for political and social reforms, and from time to time there were attempts at liberalization. These failed, however, to effect real social and political change, and most died of inertia or opposition. The period began with one such attempt, worth recounting because it illustrates so well the problems confronting the regime and the inadequacy of its methods of dealing with them.

Early Attempts at Liberalization

The regent both recognized the need for change and wished to profit from it personally. Realizing how unpopular he had become for his cooperation with the British during the war and for his suppression of the Rashīd 'Ālī movement, 'Abd al-Ilāh now devised a new formula for gaining some public support. The formula entailed greater political freedom at home and a new modified treaty with Britain, which he hoped would remove some of the objectionable features of the 1930 instrument.

This liberalization policy was set forth in a speech on 27 December 1945, in which the regent promised permission for political parties, a new electoral law allowing greater freedom of choice, measures to improve social security and unemployment, some redistribution of wealth, and a political "open door" for the younger, educated generation.[1] The problem for the regime was how to implement this policy. It had to go far enough to propitiate the opposition and yet not so far as to alienate its conservative base of support. For this task, the regent chose Tawfīq al-Suwaydī as prime minister. Though al-Suwaydī was a member of the establishment whose loyalty to the throne was beyond question, he was also more liberal than colleagues such as Nūrī al-Sa'īd.

During its brief span in office, al-Suwaydī's cabinet brought the first breath of fresh air to the political system since 1936. Although the regent's speech had referred to social and economic reforms, the emphasis of the cabinet's program was on the political freedoms the opposition had demanded. Martial law was ended; the restrictions imposed on the press and public meetings during the war were removed; and the remaining internment camp was closed. The cabinet also sponsored a new electoral law that divided the three large electoral districts, weighted in favor of the conservative rural areas, into one hundred smaller districts. This reorganization was designed to make it easier for liberal urban politicians to get elected. The most important step taken, however, was the decision

The Three Pillars of the Old Regime: (left to right) King Fayṣal II, Crown Prince ʻAbd al-Ilāh, and Nūrī al-Saʻīd.

to license five new political parties, the first such attempt in ten years. Even more startling, four of the five were genuine opposition parties; two were Marxist. Although three of the five proved to be short-lived, the remaining two, al-Istiqlāl and the National Democratic Party, survived to play a critical role in the postwar period and in the early part of the revolutionary era. Both helped to shape the mentality of the emerging middle class, and between them they captured the minds and hearts of the younger generation of educated Iraqis.

The Istiqlāl (Independence) Party was a reincarnation of the older anti-British parties of the 1920s and 1930s, reinforced by the survivors of the Rashīd 'Ālī movement. Although it was headed by Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, a man in his mid-40s from a well-known *shī'ī* family, the real power in the party lay in the hands of a younger group of lawyers and journalists who had provided the backbone of Rashīd 'Ālī's movement, and who had been interned together during the war. Al-Istiqlāl was anti-British and pan-Arab. It called for the elimination of remaining British influence in Iraq, espoused independence for al-Muḥammarah (now Khūzistān, a province with a majority of Arabic speakers) in Iran, and championed the Palestinian cause. In the search for national identity, the Istiqlāl came down heavily on the side of Arab nationalism and against the development of a separate Iraqi identity. Its greatest ideological weakness was its lack of a social program, which it only developed much later. Like most Arab nationalist groups in Iraq before and since, it drew its support mainly from the *sunnī* Arab population. A few Christians joined the party, but there were no Kurds.[2]

The National Democratic Party was a direct outgrowth of the older Ahālī group and the Popular Reform League of 1936, now stripped of its more extreme elements. It was headed, like the former Ahālī group, by Kāmil al-Jādirjī. Most of the leadership came from wealthy or well-established families, a background oddly in contrast with their semi-socialist views, which some had acquired at Western universities. The party stood for political freedoms, land reform, the abolition of monopolies, and a more equitable distribution of wealth, to be achieved mainly through tax measures. As this platform indicates, the party was willing to work within the existing system for as radical a social change as could be brought about, and it did not advocate the abolition of the free enterprise system. Because of its emphasis on reform and its lack of interest in pan-Arab schemes, the National Democratic Party appealed to the minorities and the *shī'ah* as well as to the liberal, left-leaning elements of the educated middle class.[3]

Both al-Istiqlāl and the National Democratic Party appealed almost wholly to the urban, literate classes. Their activities centered on a newspaper and the creation of a favorable climate of opinion. Their impact on the lower classes, whether urban or rural, was minimal. Indeed, despite the concern of the National Democratic Party for land reform, their movement found little echo in the rural countryside, where the overwhelming majority of the peasants retained their tribal and sectarian ties. Both parties were dedicated to working through parliament and elections to achieve their aims. However, as time passed and it became clear that they would not unseat the establishment or even gain many seats in the assembly, they became more negative in their policy toward the government, and more alienated from the system.

Neither had a widespread or tightly knit organization. Their institutional structure consisted of an elected central committee and a handful of branches in urban centers. Nor was the leadership of either party particularly firm or decisive, and they often failed to seize the initiative when an opportunity to effect significant change in domestic or foreign policy appeared. Nevertheless, party discipline was far better than it had been in the older parties of the 1920s and 1930s. Whatever their faults, the two parties dominated the legal opposition until the revolution and helped to create and spread a climate of hostility to the establishment.

The remaining three parties had little impact. The Aḥrār (Liberal) Party, a moderate center group led by al-Suwaydī and composed of senior and junior politicians oriented toward the cabinet's mild reform program, folded in 1950. The other two, the Sha‘b (People's) Party and the Ittiḥād al-Waṭanī (National Union) Party, were both left-wing Marxist groups, supported and even infiltrated by the Communist Party. Al-Ittiḥād al-Waṭanī was headed by ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Ibrāhīm, the former ideologue of the Ahālī group, who now advocated radical social reform within the limits of parliamentary democracy. The leader of the Sha‘b Party—a group composed mainly of lawyers—was ‘Azīz Sharīf, a judge from ‘Ānah. So close to the Communist Party was al-Sha‘b that it was considered little more than a front, although Sharīf proved far more independent than the Communists had expected.

Although the Iraq Communist Party was not among the licensed parties, it must be considered here in the context of the opposition. The Communists, like the Istiqlāl and the National Democratic Party, had roots going back to the 1930s. Informal Communist circles existed in the late 1920s, but organized Communist activities date at least from the mid-1930s with the first central committee created in 1935. The real impetus behind the founding of the Communist Party, however, came in 1941 when Yūsuf Salmān, a Chaldean and a self-educated worker known as Comrade Fahd, took over the party leadership. He put together a central committee whose membership consisted primarily of journalists, teachers, and lawyers.[4] Almost half of the members were Jews, Christians, or *shī‘ah,* indicating the appeal of the party to the minorities and to *shī‘ah* still resentful of their small share of power and privilege.

Although its membership was small, the Communist Party had several strengths the other parties lacked. One was ideological rigor. In Iraq, there was much visible material at hand to support the theory of class struggle that the Communists espoused, and this made the party intellectually appealing to some. Another advantage was its organization and discipline. Aided by the proleft policy of the government during the war, the Communist Party built a solid base in Iraq; by 1946 it was the best organized political group in the country. The party also possessed a dedicated leadership, willing to face prison and even death for their aims, and willing to use ruthless means to achieve them. The party's support was drawn partly from the literate intelligentsia—especially students, bureaucrats, and teachers—at the lower end of the middle-class pay scale, and partly from workers, particularly those in the vital oil, port, and railway sectors. Like the National Democratic Party, however, the Communists had little influence in rural areas among the peasants. Another weakness was their lack of concern for Arab nationalism, including the Palestine issue. This lessened their appeal to middle-class urbanities, who also distrusted their support from minorities. The party's ties to the Soviet Union made them suspect to large numbers of Iraqis.

The Demise of Liberalization

Despite the flowering of new political parties, the liberalization program was short-lived. Its failure clearly demonstrated the insecurity of the regime, the imperfections of the parliamentary system, and the contradictions inherent in the regime's attempts to open up the political system. The activities of the newly licensed parties, and especially the intemperate attacks on the regime by the two Marxist parties, soon confirmed the opponents of reform in their belief that an open political system would only lead to an overthrow of the regime itself. The tribal shaykhs in particular began to pressure the regent to withdraw support from the cabinet, and ʿAbd al-Ilāh, whose commitment to reform had never been more than skin deep, began to draw back from the water's edge. The cabinet, which should have taken a firm stand somewhere in the center of the political spectrum, could not do so because it was, as usual, divided on personal grounds. The split occurred between its two strongest personalities—Prime Minister al-Suwaydī and his minister of interior, Saʿd Ṣāliḥ, who supported the parties and was interested in developing a base of support among them. Matters came to a head in May 1946, when a number of senators, with the approval of the regent, absented themselves during a critical vote on the cabinet's budget. Al-Suwaydī had no choice but to resign, an act that heralded another shift in policy.[5]

The regent was still not prepared to scrap the liberalization program entirely. To rescue the situation, he chose Arshad l-ʿUmarī, an Ottoman-trained engineer, to conduct a neutral election. A man of abrasive personality, Arshad was soon attacked in the opposition press; he responded by suspending the offending newspapers. Far more important then these suspensions was a strike by oil workers in Kirkūk, which proved so serious that even the British, who had encouraged the liberalization movement, became worried. The strike began on 3 July when workers demanded higher wages and other benefits. These changes were long overdue, considering the wartime inflation that had continued unabated into the postwar period. At the same time, the foreign-owned oil company was blamed for much of Iraq's internal troubles. There is little doubt that the Communist Party had a hand in fomenting the strike. On 12 July, workers clashed with police; eight workers were killed and scores were wounded when police fired into the crowd.

The incident, dubbed the Kirkūk Massacre by the opposition, caused an uproar. All political parties now sided with the strikers against the government, demanding the resignation of the cabinet and the punishment of the police. In August, after a strike of oil workers in the Iranian port of Ābādān led by the Communist Tūdah (Masses) Party, the British moved additional troops to Basra as a precaution. The opposition press attacked this action as a breach of the treaty. The offending papers were suppressed, and this resulted in a sympathy strike by the printers and railways workers. On 16 November, the cabinet resigned. The main casualty of the affair, however, was not Arshad but the reform program. With matters out of hand, the regent turned to Nūrī to conduct an election. To no one's surprise, the newly elected members of parliament were conservative and predominantly rural. No liberalization program could be expected from them.

With the election out of the way, Iraqi politics gradually returned to its customary channels. As the regent and Nūrī had agreed before the election, Nūrī stepped down, and Ṣāliḥ Jabr was asked to form a new cabinet. As the first *shī'ī* prime minister in Iraq's history, Jabr represented a step forward in the integration of the *shī'ī* into the upper echelons of power. Yet despite his reputation for progressive views, Jabr proved to be even less liberal than his predecessors. Within six months of taking office he had banned the two left-wing parties and brought Kāmil al-Jādirjī and 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Ibrāhīm to trial. 'Azīz Sharīf only escaped arrest by fleeing the country. In June 1947, the principal Communist leaders, including Fahd, were tried. Three members of the central committee, including Fahd, were given death sentences, which were commuted to life imprisonment for Fahd and fifteen years of hard labor for the other two.

The Portsmouth Treaty and the *Wathbah*

With surface tranquility restored, the regent now turned to the second half of his reform program—revision of the 1930 treaty with Britain. In 1947 this treaty still had ten years to run, but the regent hoped to modify the treaty in Iraq's favor, believing that such a change would go far toward meeting the objections of the opposition and recouping some of his lost prestige. In this the regent was misguided. The treaty had always been a divisive issue in Iraqi politics and the opposition wanted it eliminated, not modified. To revive the whole treaty issue unnecessarily was an open invitation to the nationalists to attack the regime and to incite more disturbances. ʿAbd al-Ilāh's timing also showed bad judgment. The regent proposed to resuscitate the treaty issue just as the Palestinian situation issue was reaching a crisis stage, focusing public attention on Britain's role in that affair.

Moreover, as events were to prove, the regent had brought the wrong man for the task to power. Ṣāliḥ Jabr was relatively new to politics. Originally of a poor family from the south, he had graduated from the Baghdad Law College to become a judge and a provincial administrator. Although his appointment illustrates how new social elements were absorbed into the establishment, Jabr was neither accepted by the older politicians nor feared by the opposition. As a *shīʿī* with a strong base of support among the tribes of the south, he was suspected of sectarian politics by the Arab nationalists, who also disliked him for his support of the regent during the war. The left disliked him for his marriage to the daughter of al-Jaryān, one of the largest tribal landlords in the south.[6]

Despite—or more likely, in ignorance of—these disadvantages, the regent and Jabr opened negotiations with the British. Here, too, they encountered opposition. Unlike the regent, the British were skeptical about change. The international situation in the postwar era looked threatening. The Soviet Union's aggressive policy in neighboring Iran and Britain's anticipated withdrawal from Palestine emphasized the need for a firm alliance in the Tigris and Euphrates Valley. From the British point of view, the Iraqi treaty already in force served that purpose well; renegotiations could open a Pandora's box. Nor was Nūrī keen about renegotiation. He shared Britain's preoccupation with the Soviet threat, and he worried about Soviet support for the Kurds in Iran and the effect this might have on Iraq's Kurds in the north. Nūrī also recognized that the occasion would be exploited by the regime's political enemies. Nevertheless, when it became apparent that both the regent and Jabr were determined to raise the issue, he cooperated.

In May 1947, negotiations began in Baghdad. The major issue was who would have control over the air bases. By December 1947, a preliminary agreement had been reached on Iraqi control. A meeting of senior politicians was then called at the palace to discuss the treaty, but no opposition members were included.[7] When the opposition parties learned of the meeting, they protested both the meeting and the fact that the treaty was not being brought before the public for discussion. On 5 January 1948, demonstrations against the treaty began. Ignoring or misinterpreting these warning signals, an Iraqi delegation left for London to complete the negotiations. Here the two sides quickly reached agreement. On 15 January, the treaty was signed at the Portsmouth naval base after which the document was named.

The Portsmouth Treaty was undoubtedly an improvement over the 1930 treaty. It provided for the removal of British troops from Iraqi soil and gave Iraq sovereignty over the bases, but it was hardly a treaty of equals, as the regime claimed. A joint defense board composed equally of Iraqis and British gave Britain a say in Iraq's military planning—given the relative military strength of the two partners, a predominant say. Iraq was still tied to Britain in terms of supplies and military training, and the agreement to surrender the bases to Britain in time of war negated any possibility of future neutrality. Lastly, the new treaty extended to 1973, whereas the old one had been due to expire in 1957. However, the actual provisions of the treaty were not at stake; many politicians who opposed it admitted they had not even read it. What was at stake was the continuation of a treaty at all and the whole issue of the British tie.

While the British and Iraqi delegations were exchanging congratulatory speeches in Portsmouth, events in Iraq were reaching the crisis that has come to be known as the *wathbah* (uprising).[8] On 16 January 1948, during a student demonstration against the treaty, police fired on the crowd, killing four people and wounding more. An uproar ensued. By the end of January, virtually every articulate element in the country—the parliament, students, professors, and the lower classes—had come out against the treaty. For a time, a real atmosphere of war prevailed in Baghdad.

To understand the violence of the *wathbah* it is necessary to realize the strength of the pent-up frustrations created by the war situation. The nationalists were bitter over the continuance of British influence in Iraq and the failure of the Rashīd 'Ālī movement. This was their first opportunity since 1941 to express their feelings. Resentment toward the British for their role in the Palestine problem had reached a peak, with daily statements in the opposition press attacking Britain. The intelligentsia and the opposition politicians resented their continued exclusion from power and the failure of liberalization, while the poor were angry over rising prices and a bread shortage that had become particularly acute in 1947.

The wartime conditions of grain shortages and inflated wheat and barley prices had continued after the war, together with government control over imports and exports. Grain prices reached a new high in 1947 when the index rose to 714.[9] All this, aggravated by a bad harvest and a locust plague that destroyed much of the crop, resulted in severe hardship for the urban lower classes. Jabr had done little to alleviate this situation, although government controls gave him the means to do so. One method would have been to curtail exports, forcing more wheat on the markets at lower prices, but this would have displeased the grain producers of the south—his main supporters, so no such restrictions were forthcoming. This helped to turn the urban populace against Jabr, demonstrating once again how social and economic tensions exacerbated the regime's political and foreign policy problems.

Demonstrations and uprisings were nothing new in Iraq. What was new and startling in the current situation was the extent of the disorders, the size of the demonstrations, and the bitterness of the protest. The *wathbah* showed that by 1948 the urban population at least had been thoroughly won over by the opposition. The regent was clearly frightened by the situation. On 21 January, he partially yielded to the opposition by issuing a statement proclaiming that the Anglo-Iraq treaty signed at Portsmouth did not realize the country's aspirations and that no treaty would be ratified that did not assure the rights of the country.[10] In London, both Bevin and Jabr, unaware of the seriousness of the situation and clearly out of touch with public opinion, were shocked by the regent's statements.

On 27 January, however, the day after Jabr returned, there was another clash between demonstrators and police, this one worse than any in Iraq's recent history. According to official sources, at least seventy-seven were killed and several hundred wounded. The actual numbers were undoubtedly higher. After these bloody events, the Istiqlāl, the National Democratic Party, and the Aḥrār Party demanded the immediate abolition of the treaty, the dissolution of parliament, a new, free election, and a prompt supply of bread. The last demand indicates the role played by economic problems and the influence of the left. At least twenty deputies resigned from parliament, including the chamber's speaker. Finally, on 27 January, Jabr himself resigned. Although it remained for the succeeding cabinet to repudiate the Portsmouth Treaty, the opposition had clearly achieved their main aims: cancellation of the treaty and the fall of Jabr's cabinet.

The failure of the treaty and the success of the opposition in bringing down the cabinet were the most important political events in Iraq since 1941. The *wathbah* illustrated the depth and breadth of resentment against the regime and its foreign connection. Though the British were silently outraged, the rejection of the Portsmouth Treaty made little real difference to them: They merely fell back on the old 1930 treaty. They no longer fully trusted the regent, however, and began to regard Nūrī as the only really strong pillar of the regime.

In Iraq, the results of the *wathbah* were far-reaching. A coolness developed between the regent and Nūrī, who had not wanted the new treaty but who had nevertheless supported the regent's efforts. In time, the rift between the two men helped to undermine the united front of the establishment. The opposition had won a considerable victory. Although time would prove the establishment to be stronger than expected, the *wathbah* gave the opposition more confidence and encouraged them to challenge the establishment more aggressively. They tried again in 1952, in 1956, and ultimately in 1958. Finally, the *wathbah* made a lasting impression on Nūrī, influencing his policy six years later when he wished to conclude the Baghdad Pact.

With the collapse of the treaty he himself had initiated, the regent found himself in the most critical situation of his career since 1941. The Portsmouth Treaty and the *wathbah* inaugurated a new cycle of politics in Iraq. When faced with a crisis, the regent would attempt to arrange the return of the Portsmouth politicians as the only ones strong enough to protect the throne. The appointment of these politicians, especially Nūrī, would trigger the eruption of opposition. This would be followed by attempts to appease the opposition by bringing in new men or known moderates and temporarily removing Nūrī. The opposition would seize this opportunity to push for more drastic changes in domestic and foreign policy; the situation would deteriorate; and Nūrī and his cohorts would be brought back to deal with it. At each turn of the wheel the same methods were tried—street violence by the opposition and police action by the regime—while the tenuous political fabric of Iraq eroded.

The dilemma of the regime was clear. Attempts to open the political system to permit an orderly process of change were met not with prospects of reform, but demands for the regime's replacement. Yet the regime failed to buttress its rule through grass-roots institutions or through a coherent ideology that could have appealed to a wider group. Meanwhile, the opposition kept up a barrage of criticism that weakened not only the regime, but also what little existed of a sense of political community in Iraq.

The cycle began with the resignation of Jabr's cabinet. As a replacement the regent appointed another *shī'ī*, the venerable senator Muḥammad al-Ṣadr. He also gave one seat in the cabinet to Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, the Istiqlāl leader. The task of the cabinet was to conduct a new election. The opposition, which had been united in attacking the treaty, now found themselves without a constructive program. The fact that one party, al-Istiqlāl, had accepted office while others were left out, helped split the opposition as intended by Nūrī and the regent. The parties fixed their attention on parliament, demanding a fair election in which they hoped to secure a share of seats. The Communists, however, were not interested in the election, for they had no hope of entering parliament. They continued to help foment demonstrations with slogans demanding democracy, bread, and the execution of Ṣāliḥ Jabr. The cabinet was too weak and disunited to curb the demonstrations, and it was not long before a number of cabinet resignations took place. This now provided the regent and Nūrī with the opportunity to retrieve the situation, and in May 1948, Muṣṭafā-l-'Umarī, a staunch supporter of the regime, was appointed minister of interior. It was he who would now run the election, in a manner satisfactory to Nūrī and the regent.

Shortly after the appointment of Muṣṭafā-l-'Umarī, the government declared martial law, ostensibly because of the war in Palestine, and the demonstrations ceased immediately. The opposition protested and Kubbah resigned from the cabinet, but otherwise they could do little. The election, conducted in 1948, returned a parliament essentially no different from the one preceding it. Out of 138 members only 7 represented the three political parties.[11] By the end of the summer the crisis appeared to be over, but the failure of the opposition to remove the elder politicians only increased their bitterness and frustration, and they were determined to try again.

War in Palestine

All through the Portsmouth crisis, the Palestine problem had been gathering storm. It finally erupted in the outbreak of the first Arab-Israeli war in May 1948. The Palestine problem, and Britain's role in establishing a homeland for the Jews in Arab territory, had been a critical factor in Iraqi politics for decades, contributing to the 1941 crisis, the *wathbah,* the growth of Arab nationalist sentiment and the alienation of key sectors of the Iraqi public from the government. It was the one issue that could unite the Iraqi population, *sunnī* and *shīʿī,* religious and secular, rich and poor. Strikes and demonstrations protesting the division of Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state there took place in November 1946, September 1947, and again in November 1947, following the UN decision on partition. On 5 January 1948, just before the *wathbah,* 100 people had been arrested, and the Baghdad Law College was temporarily closed because of protests and demonstrations over a statement made by Fạ̄dil al-Jamālī, Iraq's foreign minister, in London. Al-Jamālī had referred to Anglo-Iraqi relations without mentioning Palestine. By the outbreak of the war in Palestine in May 1948, Iraqi passions were thoroughly aroused.

Tensions were temporarily relieved by the dispatch of Iraqi troops to Palestine, where they fought with Jordan's Arab Legion on the central front, north and west of Jerusalem. Initially the Arabs did well, advancing to the heights above Tel Aviv ten miles from the Mediterranean,[12] and a swift victory was expected back home. However, a cease-fire, concluded under pressure from the UN at the end of May, stopped the advance, and worked to the advantage of the Jews. Although both sides used the cease-fire to strengthen their position, the Jews did a better job of acquiring men and matériel, and when fighting resumed, the tide turned in their favor, an advantage they retained until their final victory. Whether or not an initial Arab victory would have ensued without the cease-fire is questionable, but the belief was fostered among the civilian population, in Iraq as elsewhere in the Arab world, that victory had been snatched from them by the British, the Americans, and their UN supporters.

Further fighting only resulted in Arab retreats and another cease-fire—this one concluded between the Jordanians, Iraqis, and Israelis. This allowed the Israelis to concentrate their forces on the Egyptian troops. Although Egypt asked for help from other Arab states, Iraq was prevented from coming to Egypt's aid by Jordan (a good illustration of the divisions in Arab ranks), and in January 1949, Egypt was forced to sign a truce. This episode led to charges of collusion between ʿAbd Allah, Jordan's monarch, and Israel, further discrediting the Hāshimites, including the regent in Iraq.[13]

These beliefs, as well as the defeat itself, bit deeply into the Iraqi conscience and added to the difficulties of the regime. Although the British and the Americans received most of the blame for the debacle, the poor Arab showing in the war focused attention on the economic, social, and political conditions that had caused it. It also strengthened the position of those who had been calling for greater Arab unity. These sentiments were particularly acute among the younger members of the officer corps who had fought on the front, and who felt cheated out of victory and humiliated by conditions beyond their control.

Bitterness and frustration within the army was not the only legacy of Palestine. The war had dealt a heavy blow to an already ailing economy. The problems of inflation and the bread crisis intensified. Because of the war, the government had been forced to divert 40 percent of available funds to pay for allotments to the army and contributions for the Palestinian refugees. At the same time, income had been drastically reduced when the Haifa pipeline was put out of operation, cutting oil royalties in half. The years 1948 and 1949 had bad harvests and poor trade balances, and by the end of 1949 reductions in administrative personnel, a partial standstill in public works, and advances by the oil company were needed to balance the budget.

Meanwhile, the large and well-established Jewish community had come under attack, and eventually it was lost to Iraq. Under martial law, Jews as well as Communists were arrested; both were accused of supporting Zionism and Israel. In the autumn of 1949 a wealthy Jewish merchant, Shafīq ʿAdas, was convicted and hanged, allegedly for selling scrap metal indirectly to Israel. His Muslim partners went free. Although in 1949 the loyalty of the Jewish community to Iraq was in almost all cases beyond question, the position of the Jews became increasingly untenable. In 1951 the Iraqi government decided that Jews should be allowed to leave if they wished, thinking that only a few thousand would do so. To their surprise, the number exceeded 100,000. The withdrawal of the Jewish community left a large gap in the economy and the professions, where Jewish expertise and foreign contacts had contributed much to Iraqi society.

Though a loss in one sense, the vacuum left—particularly in the business world—by the Jewish exodus was soon filled by enterprising *shīʿah* and Christians, providing both communities with a new channel of mobility. The younger generation of *shīʿah*, educated in technical and professional subjects, moved into positions in medicine, law, and finance. Some used the capital acquired by an older generation of *shīʿī* landlords and merchants to become entrepreneurs, creating the backbone of a new *shīʿī* middle class.

With political and economic tensions rising over the defeat in Palestine, the regent decided to bring Nūrī back to power as the only man able to deal with the effects of the war. Jordan wanted the Iraqi army to withdraw, and when both Syria and Jordan signed the armistice in March

1949, Iraq had to remove its troops. The move generated much bitterness, for Israel gained more territory as a result, but there was no alternative. The withdrawal was not accomplished without the strict political controls for which Nūrī was famous.

On the domestic front, Nūrī took advantage of martial law to deal the Communists a severe blow. When strikes and demonstrations continued under Nūrī's cabinet, he blamed the Communist leaders serving sentences in prison, who were tried again, this time by a military court. In February 1949 they were sentenced and executed, depriving the movement of its best organizers. Having managed the troop withdrawal and silenced the opposition, Nūrī turned to the deteriorating economic situation. By the end of the summer, he had negotiated loans and advances sufficient to bring Iraq out of its budgetary difficulties. A total of 3 million pounds sterling was raised from British markets, and an interest-free advance was obtained from the Iraq Petroleum Company.

By the autumn of 1949, surface calm had been restored. The men of Portsmouth were securely back in office, just a little over a year after the *wathbah* and a crippling defeat in a war that affected all Arabs deeply. This had mainly been accomplished by shrewd, firm management by Nūrī, increasingly giving weight to the belief, inside and outside the establishment, that he was the only man capable of saving the regime. As the Portsmouth and Palestine crises receded, a new foreign policy problem emerged. This next crisis was to cause dissension in the establishment, distract the regime from pressing internal problems, and absorb the attention of the regent to the exclusion of almost all other matters. The new issue was the struggle for Syria.[14]

The Struggle for Syria

The struggle for Syria grew out of the attempt by Iraq and other Fertile Crescent countries to create some Arab unity after the area was divided by the European powers into separate states after World War I. By the post–World War II period, however, vested interests, reluctant to relinquish their benefits and privileges, had already become entrenched in these countries. This made union difficult. Since the end of World War II, Syria had become the focus of unity schemes, not only because of its strategic position but also because of its historical role as the center of an Arab empire in classical times. More recently, Syria had been the seat of Fayṣal's short-lived kingdom in 1918.

With the end of World War II, the withdrawal of foreign powers, and the creation of the Arab League, the idea of a Greater Syria revived. Initially, the chief proponent of this scheme was 'Abd Allah of Jordan, who hoped to recreate his brother's lost domain with Amman, not Damascus, as the center. This scheme was foiled by the Syrians, who resisted becoming an appendage of Jordan; by the Egyptians, who opposed any Hāshimite domination of the union; and by King 'Abd al-'Azīz of

Saudi Arabia, who feared the encirclement of his northern borders by his traditional enemies. Although hopes of achieving some kind of unity were temporarily dashed by the Palestine war, it was not long before the scheme was revived under the impetus of events in Syria.

On 30 March 1949, the first of a series of postwar military coups took place in Syria, caused partly by domestic politics, partly by unrest in the wake of the Palestine defeat. The coup inititated a period of instability, and the struggle for Syria began in earnest. The regent viewed this situation as a golden opportunity; it revived his long cherished hope of a kingdom or possibly a vice-royalty for himself in Damascus. From the moment the new military government came to power, the regent worked quietly but assiduously on a scheme for a Syrian-Iraqi union in which he would have a place.

The regent's enthusiasm was not shared by Nūrī. Although Nūrī had begun his career as an Arab nationalist, he was by this time far more interested in Iraq than in pan-Arab unity. To propitiate the regent, he nevertheless made some halfhearted attempts at a unity agreement in the spring of 1949. These efforts were more than matched by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, who worked against the scheme. Before long, the first Syrian military coup was followed by a second, and then, in December of the same year, by a third, which brought Colonel Adīb al-Shīshaklī to power. In all these affairs, Iraq played a not inconsiderable role. Unfortunately for the regent, Colonel al-Shīshaklī opposed the union scheme, but 'Abd al-Ilāh did not give up.

These events had serious repercussions for the Iraqi establishment, though the population and parliament were scarcely affected. Nūrī soon turned against the plan, fearing that Iraqi funds much needed at home would be spent instead on the Syrians, with no visible results. His opposition to the regent on this score caused a rift that deepened as the regent persisted in his schemes. The disagreement drove a wedge into the hitherto united front of the establishment, and Nūrī resigned in November 1949. Ironically, he was attacked in the press by Egypt and Saudi Arabia for the Syrian venture.[15]

Nūrī's resignation had no appreciable effect on the regent's enthusiasm. 'Abd al-Ilāh chose another prime minister, 'Alī Jawdat, who was more amenable to carrying out his wishes. Jawdat proved no more successful than his predecessors,[16] and he was replaced with yet another prime minister. Nūrī continued to control parliament, and his manipulation of its members brought these cabinets down. Outmaneuvered for the moment, the regent reappointed Nūrī as prime minister in July 1950. This episode clearly illustrates the imperfections of the constitutional system. The regent, with no power base of his own, would select ministers for purposes and policies not supported by a parliamentary majority. Parliament was usually controlled by Nūrī through his network of supporters among the delegates, and through the conservative landlord contingent. Meanwhile, the articulate public, which might have supported some sort of union under the proper auspices, was largely ignored.

Economic Development

Nūrī's cabinet, which lasted a full two years, gave Iraq a respite from strikes and demonstrations and an improved economic situation. The first major accomplishment of his regime was the conclusion in October 1950 of a new oil agreement with IPC that increased the oil royalties. In 1952 a second agreement, patterned on the arrangement made in Saudi Arabia by the Arabian-American Oil Company (Aramco), gave the Iraqi government half the profits of IPC. As a result, Iraq's revenues rose from ID 14 million ($32 million) in 1951 to ID 40 million ($112 million) in 1952. Seventy percent of this revenue was now set aside for development under a law passed by the previous cabinet. The Iraqi budget showed its first surplus in years, while a genuine development program slowly got under way.

The development program was Nūrī's answer to social and political unrest. In general, it was designed to accelerate modernization and to address the problems of backwardness. Hence, the emphasis was put on long-term investment in the country's natural resources and development of infrastructure. Funds were also spent on social services such as health and education, but these had lower priority. A development board was established to administer the program. Three of its six members were to be experts, and two of them foreign—one British and one American. To insulate the board from politics and to allow for long-term planning, it was given a status independent of the government.

The achievements of this program, particularly in harnessing the country's agricultural potential, were considerable. Unfortunately, they were not matched in the social sphere, the origin of the regime's main problems. Little was spent on short-term projects that would have raised living standards, particularly among the volatile urban population whose expectations increased as more oil funds were generated. These expenditures were urgently needed. In 1950, only 23 percent of the school-age population was in school; only 7,000 children graduated from elementary schools; and illiteracy was estimated at nearly 90 percent. Despite progress in health services, which had reduced epidemics, endemic diseases such as malaria and trachoma were still widespread. Only 40 percent of municipalities had safe water supplies; most had no electricity; and sewage was almost totally neglected, even in Baghdad.[17]

Meanwhile, there was little industrial development to employ the rural population flowing into the cities. In 1950, it was estimated that of the 60,000 people engaged in industry outside of oil, almost all were working in small undertakings where work was done mainly by hand.[18] Workers' earnings and benefits had increased, but they had not kept pace with inflation, or with rising expectations, especially in the key oil and transport sectors, where awareness of discrepancies was greatest. These conditions, coupled with the increased flow of oil revenues, help explain the public's increased impatience with a government that appeared to be doing little to improve the lot of the common people. The presence of foreign advisors and the board's insulation from the desires of the public also left it open to accusations from the opposition that the program represented increased foreign control over the economy.

The failure of the establishment to bring about social change was more than matched by its failure to achieve political change. In the eyes of many, only the retirement of the older generation of politicians and their conservative parliamentary supporters could produce the necessary conditions for change. By 1950, this was apparent even to many members of the establishment. Nūrī's seemingly indestructible grip on the levers of power had discouraged even those who might have been expected to support the regime. In March 1950, thirty-seven delegates resigned from parliament over a minor episode. Some were members of the National Democratic Party, but most belonged to a new group, the United Popular Front, which included a number of younger members of the establishment. These younger politicians were anxious to move the country forward at a faster pace and to take over positions of leadership themselves.[19] The disillusion of the moderate elements at this point boded ill for the future. Even Ṣāliḥ Jabr, a solid member of the establishment, broke with Nūrī, although the dispute was initiated over a personal matter. In June 1951, Jabr established al-Ummah-l-Ishtirākī (the National Socialist) Party, thus challenging Nūrī's monopoly of power within the establishment.

These political and social dissatisfactions help explain the next outbreak of political violence, the most serious since the *wathbah*. The unrest was sparked by events in neighboring Middle Eastern countries that created a new political climate in the area, hostile to established regimes and their collaboration with the West. The rise of Muṣaddiq in Iran and Iranian nationalization of the oil company in 1951 inspired demands from the opposition in Iraq for nationalization of IPC. In Egypt, a new group of young officers successfully overthrew the monarchy on 23 July 1952 and installed themselves as rulers. Although it was not yet clear what sort of regime would emerge there, the fall of a monarchy with roots stretching back a century and a half created considerable anxiety for a regime where the monarchy was only thirty years old.

More important for Iraq, however, was a strike of port workers on 23 August 1952. Generated by a dispute between workers and the government over pay, the strike soon escalated under the leadership of the Communists. The strikers demanded increased wages, more housing, and better working conditions. They even managed to take over Basra's generator, temporarily cutting off water and electricity in the city. Police moved in; the inevitable clash took place; and once again injury and death were the result. It was not until the beginning of September that the strike was extinguished.[20]

The Riots of 1952

It is doubtful whether these events would have precipitated the 1952 riots had Nūrī been in power. On 10 July 1952, having concluded a successful oil agreement and in preparation for a forthcoming election, Nūrī resigned. His place was taken by Muṣṭafā-l-'Umarī, whose main task was to conduct a neutral election. Al-'Umarī, regarded as a guardian of the establishment, became the target for the popular discontent that had been festering beneath the surface. It began at the end of October, when al-Istiqlāl, the National Democratic Party, and the United Popular Front submitted a memorandum to the regent demanding a new law to permit direct, one-step elections and a policy of nonalignment—which could only have meant abrogation of the Anglo-Iraq treaty.

Before the election could be held, a riot erupted over an unrelated issue, an indication of how social conflicts in Iraq had escaped any organized control. On 26 October, students at the College of Pharmacy struck over an amendment to the rules governing their examinations. By this time, strikes had become a way of life among the student population. Before long, matters got out of hand, the police made some arrests, and the pharmacy students were joined by compatriots in other colleges in a general strike. When al-'Umarī's government failed to take strong measures immediately, the strike turned into riots, spreading throughout other cities as well. By mid-November most of the urban centers of Iraq were in disorder, and in Baghdad a police station and the American Information Office were burned to the ground. By the time the riots were finally put down, ten to fifteen people had been killed and over fifty wounded. The attack on a U.S. installation indicated that the United States was now associated in the public mind with the British as an unwanted foreign power. The police were targeted as the main arm of the establishment in suppressing discontent.

By the end of November, it was clear to the regime that emergency measures would be necessary to restore calm. On 21 November, al-'Umarī resigned; on 23 November, Iraq's first military government was appointed under Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd, chief of staff of the army. Martial law was announced, all political parties were banned, a number of newspapers were suspended, and a curfew was declared. Wholesale arrests of rioters and politicians—including some former ministers and deputies—ensued. According to the government, eighty members of the Iranian Tūdah Party were among those arrested, indicating the extent to which events in Iran had spilled over into Iraq.

The *intifāḍah,* as these riots were called, marked another turning point for the regime. Although the opposition was insufficiently organized to unseat the regime, the widespread alienation of critical sectors of the population was clear. The establishment had been forced to rely on the army as well as the police to maintain order, thus drawing the military further into politics. The *intifāḍah* also convinced many of the younger generation that more ruthless, even clandestine activities would be necessary to accomplish their aims.

The violence and bitterness of the riots indicated that the regime would have to make some concessions to the opposition to save itself. In January 1953, the cabinet issued a new law providing for direct elections, as the parties had requested. This law failed, however, to remove Nūrī and his supporters. In the first direct election, carried out that month under martial law, a parliament was returned that gave Nūrī and his conservative followers a majority of 100 out of 138 seats.[21] On 22 January Nūr al-Dīn resigned. The crisis was over, and the establishment politicians were once again firmly in the saddle.

Fayṣal II

The year 1953 could have been a turning point in Iraqi history; instead it marked another opportunity missed by the regime. On 24 May, Fayṣal II reached his majority and became king of Iraq. His enthronement should have initiated a new era. He was young (eighteen), Western-educated, and had democratic ideas. As a member of the younger generation he might well have been able to identify more readily with the newly emerging Western-educated class in the cities, the group that was giving the regime so much trouble. Many Iraqis liked him. However, no such transition took place, for several reasons. Young and inexperienced, Fayṣal was a shy youth with little public personality and none of the qualities of leadership possessed by his cousin, King Husayn of Jordan, although personal acquaintances acknowledged his charm. Raised as the only son of King Ghāzī and Queen 'Āliyah, Fayṣal had been overprotected and too much in female company. His father had died while he was still a child; his mother died when he was fifteen. Thereafter he had been surrounded mainly by his aunts, in an insulated atmosphere largely cut off from Iraqi society.[22] Fayṣal's training also counted against him. Educated mostly by British tutors in Baghdad or in English schools, including Harrow, he was out of touch with Iraqi popular opinion.

The Regent's Syrian Scheme

Of far more importance, 'Abd al-Ilāh had no intention of relinquishing real power to the young king, even after 1953. For the remainder of the old regime the crown prince continued to dominate palace politics, although he no longer had the legal authority to do so.[2] However, there was now a difference. As soon as the king married and produced his own heir, 'Abd al-Ilāh would no longer be crown prince. This new situation worried him, and it was not long before 'Abd al-Ilāh's interest in the Syrian scheme revived. He was encouraged by recent events in Syria, where al-Shīshaklī's dictatorship had come under severe attack. An overthrow seemed increasingly possible. The situation in Saudi Arabia had also changed, for 'Abd al-'Azīz had died and been replaced by the weaker Sa'ūd. The crown prince found a prime minister to carry out his bidding in Fāḍil al-Jamālī, a man willing to undertake the Syrian project in return for entrance into the higher citadels of power.

From the first, the secret preoccupation of al-Jamālī's cabinet was the crown prince's Syrian scheme.[24] Considerable sums were paid to Lebanese and Syrian newspapers and to pro-Iraqi politicians in Syria to overthrow al-Shīshaklī. Constant contact was maintained with these politicians through cabinet ministers and others. A detailed plan was even drawn up providing for an invasion of Syria by Iraqi forces if need be. This secret activity was accompanied by a public proposal by al-Jamālī to the Arab League for an Arab federation beginning with Iraq, Syria, and Jordan. Although the revolt that finally overthrew al-Shīshaklī in February 1954 was engineered by a faction within his own army, there is little doubt that it was helped along by Iraqi money, propaganda, and support.

With al-Shīshaklī removed and pro-Iraqi politicians in power in Syria, the crown prince looked forward to a successful conclusion of his union scheme. But he had reckoned without Nūrī. Relations between the two men had deteriorated. Although Nūrī would not openly oppose the throne, he could thwart the crown prince through his control of parliament. To bring the Syrian project to fruition, 'Abd al-Ilāh needed more money. Nūrī refused to allow a quorum of his delegates to attend the budget session, and in this way was able to bring about the fall of the cabinet.[25]

Even this did not dampen the crown prince's ambition; he continued to seek ways to isolate Nūrī and to pursue his own policy. He consulted with a number of politicians, who advised the dissolution of parliament and a new election. This advice was entirely to 'Abd al-Ilāh's liking, as a new parliament might be used to neutralize Nūrī's influence and even to support the Syrian scheme. In April, 1954, Arshad al-'Umarī was once again called to form a cabinet to conduct the election.

The Elections of 1954

The conduct of the election of 1954 became a controversial issue. While Nūrī was vacationing in Europe, the crown prince and Arshad prepared to manage the election as they wished, without consulting him. The election of June 1954 has rightly been regarded as the freest in Iraq's history, although some of the usual controls were retained. It produced the country's most representative chamber. All licensed parties participated, and the campaign was intense, with some 425 candidates standing for 135 seats. When it was over, Nūrī's party, although it obtained the largest single bloc of seats—51—fell below a controlling majority. The National Democratic Party returned 6 members, including Kāmil al-Jādirjī; al-Istiqlāl returned 2; and the United Popular Front, 1. Even a known Communist sympathizer was elected: Dhū-l-Nūn Ayyūb, a writer and teacher from Mosul. The balance of power lay with the independents, presumably committed to the crown prince.[26] To all appearances, the stage was set for the revival of legal opposition and for the crown prince to pursue his Syrian policy. Nothing could have been further from reality. Within less than two months, the parliament would be dismissed, Nūrī returned as prime minister, and a new, strictly controlled election would be held to replace Iraq's first reasonably representative chamber. The reason was the Baghdad Pact.

The Anglo-Iraq Treaty of 1930 was due to expire in 1957, and the old treaty provided that a new one be negotiated between 1952 and 1957. If any new treaty were to be negotiated, and a repetition of the ***wathbah*** avoided, most establishment politicians felt that Nūrī was essential. However, they had not counted on the price of his cooperation. While he was vacationing in Europe, Nūrī made it known that he would not take responsibility for affairs under the chamber just elected, and in particular, that he would not work with a parliament that included leftists such as Kāmil al-Jādirjī. In a hastily arranged meeting in Paris with ʻAbd al-Ilāh and the chief of the Royal Diwan, Nūrī laid down several conditions for his return to power. One was that the crown prince stop interfering in Syrian affairs; the other was the dismissal of parliament and a new election.[27] This sealed the fate of the newly elected chamber.

On 27 June 1954, parliament was adjourned, and on 3 August Nūrī formed his twelfth cabinet. With parliament in abeyance, Nūrī began a systematic suppression of all political activity that surpassed any previously undertaken and began a new era in Iraq. A series of decrees designed to uproot the left permitted the Council of Ministers to deport persons convicted of communism, anarchism, and working for a foreign government, and to strip them of Iraqi citizenship. It became an offense to join the Peace Partisans, the Democratic Youth, and similar organizations, and professional societies were prohibited from conducting activities impairing public security.[28] The police were empowered to forbid any meetings that might disturb public order, and night street meetings were stopped. As a fitting climax to these activities, the cabinet broke off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. In September 1954, a new election produced what has been called "the unopposed parliament." So tightly was it controlled that before the election was held over 100 delegates were returned unopposed, with only 22 seats contested.[29] When the returns were in, the parliament contained no genuine opposition at all.

The election and the decrees effectively put an end to any open political activity for the next four years, and Iraq settled down to rule maintained by the police and the army. There is little doubt that this suppression produced sufficient stability to shepherd the Baghdad Pact through parliament and later to ride out the Suez crisis. But it ultimately had fateful consequences. It put almost complete power in the hands of a man increasingly unable to come to terms with the new forces about to shake the Arab world. It eliminated any challenge to Nūrī from within the establishment that might have caused him to moderate his policies. The opposition, deprived of any hope of change, was driven from the halls of parliament underground, where it inevitably became more revolutionary.

The Baghdad Pact

The way was now cleared for Nūrī to begin negotiations on a new defense arrangement, but a thorny path lay ahead. Nūrī had to contend with foreign—particularly Egyptian—sensitivities. At the time that Nūrī began his task, the defense posture of the Middle East and its relations with the West were still in a fluid stage. The West, especially the United States, was anxious to tie the Middle East to its own mutual defense system. To many in the Middle East, this smacked of a revival of colonialism. Although the area had not yet frozen into pro-Western and anti-Western blocs, opposition to alliances with the West was growing. A younger generation of Arabs wanted complete independence from the West and an Arab unity that would overcome the territorial divisions imposed during the First World War. The older politicians, still in control in most countries, understood the inherent weaknesses of their states and the need for some kind of support from outside. The question was how to provide the necessary strength and yet satisfy the popular desire for independence.

Nūrī had several possibilities at hand to solve the defense problem. One was to expand the base of Iraq's security system to include the Arab League countries in a joint defense command. This would collectivize Iraq's defense, but as a realist Nūrī had no intention of relying solely on an Arab collective security arrangement; he also wanted help from the West. Another possibility was to join with the northern tier states—Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan—in the collective defense arrangement then beginning to take shape under the guidance of U.S. Secretary of State Dulles. This arrangement was based on loose bilateral agreements that could later be joined by other countries, including Arab states.

Nūrī liked the shape of this arrangement, but there were several obstacles. An alliance of Iraq to Turkey and Iran (much like the Saʿdābād Pact of 1937) was a connection that the Arab nationalists in Iraq had always opposed. Furthermore, Iraq's relations with Britain had to be the cornerstone of any new agreement, and Britain had not initially favored the northern tier policy. The British preferred to leave this arrangement to the United States, fearing to jeopardize their position in the Arab world.

The most serious problem was posed by Egypt. Even after two years in power, Nāṣir's domestic position was still precarious. Due to strong anti-British forces in Egypt, Nāṣir felt the need to distance himself from Western alliances. In fact, Nāṣir was still in the process of negotiating a new treaty with Britain that would provide for the withdrawal of

British troops from Suez. However, the British were demanding a clause providing for their right to use the Suez Canal in case of an attack on Egypt, another Arab country, or Turkey. The Egyptians, and especially the anti-Western Muslim Brotherhood, resented the inclusion of NATO member Turkey; they wanted no tie at all to the former colonial powers.

Aware of the need to consult with Nāṣir, Nūrī went to Cairo on 14 September to discuss matters with him. There is no published record of the discussion, but according to one of those present, Nūrī did too much talking and too little listening. He outlined the possibilities of coming to some agreement with Turkey and the northern tier countries, to be joined later by Britain. Nāṣir, with his own treaty with Britain still pending and with a difficult internal situation, asked Nūrī to wait. Nāṣir clearly preferred to avoid a connection with the northern tier countries and to rely instead on a defense strategy based solely on Arab collective security. Nūrī pleaded the special position of Iraq, with its borders with Turkey and Iran and its proximity to the Soviet Union. He told Nāṣir in plain terms that he thought any collective security without the West would be indefensible. Nāṣir finally told Nūrī he was free to do what he thought was best.[30] What Nāṣir meant by this is not clear, for he later claimed that the Iraqi-Turkish agreement of the following year took him by surprise. Nūrī, however, seems to have left with the dangerously erroneous impression that he had secured Nāṣir's agreement to pursue a treaty of alliance with Britain and the northern tier. He believed that only the timing was at issue. In October, Nāṣir signed a new agreement with Britain; one week later the Muslim Brotherhood tried to assassinate him.

Meanwhile, Nūrī continued contacts with the British, who were interested in renewing their treaty, and the Turks, who were busy filling in the regional gaps in their alliance. On 2 April 1954, Turkey had signed a treaty with Pakistan, and Adnan Menderes, the Turkish prime minister, supposedly urged on by the Americans, was anxious to include Baghdad. In January 1955, during a visit by Menderes to Baghdad, Nūrī expressed caution, indicating that he did not wish to plunge headlong into an arrangement with the northern tier until the way had been prepared among the Arab countries and with the West. He was worried about how the timing would affect Egypt, and told Menderes he would prefer to have the Turks talk to Egypt first before coming to an agreement. In fact, Menderes was willing to go to Egypt, but Nāṣir was unwilling to have him for domestic reasons. At the same time, Nāṣir issued a warning against Arabs joining the northern tier bloc. Although Nūrī was apparently prepared to postpone the subject to a future date, Menderes insisted on a statement of intent before he left Baghdad.[31] On 12 January 1955 a statement was issued, casting the die that was to precipitate the clash between Egypt and Iraq. The pronouncement declared that the parties had agreed to undertake to cooperate in repelling aggression from inside and outside the area. In short, it announced an impending agreement and Iraq's alignment with the northern tier countries.

Nūrī went forward with this policy, and on 24 February 1955, the Iraqi-Turkish agreement was signed. England joined the agreement, placing the two bases at al-Ḥabbāniyyah and al-Shu'aybah under Iraqi management in return for the right of air passage in Iraq and the use of the bases for refueling. In case of attack on Iraq, Britain would come to Iraq's aid, and the British would continue to equip, supply, and help train Iraq's military forces. On 23 September Iran joined the agreement; on 3 November Pakistan followed suit. The Baghdad Pact, as this system of intertwining alliances came to be called, was complete. The United States, which had originated the idea, did not officially join the pact, but it became a member of the pact's various committees and cooperated fully with it.

Egypt's reaction was immediate. Beyond Iraq's alliance to the northern tier, Arab unity and the struggle for leadership of the Arab world was at stake. There was no secret made of Iraq's intention to induce the other Arab countries to follow their lead; Menderes made the rounds of several Arab capitals before he returned to Ankara. If this had been achieved, Iraq would have led the way into a new security arrangement, forming the cornerstone of a new alliance system tying the Arab countries to the West and to the northern tier. This prospect threw down a challenge to Nāṣir that he could not fail to take up. The issue of defense, even of neutrality, now took second place to the struggle for dominance of the Arab world.

Also at stake was the nature of the regimes that would prevail in the Arab world in the coming decades. Although the constitutional structure of Nāṣir's regime had not yet solidified, it was clear that the three pillars of the old regime— the monarchy, the landed oligarchy, and the British— had been largely swept away in favor of middle-class army officers and civilians. Their legitimacy rested on a policy of independence and Arab unity. If Nāṣir was to achieve these goals, the spread of the Baghdad Pact to the Arab world had to be stopped.

The consequences of the pact for Iraq's subsequent history cannot be exaggerated. On the positive side, the pact unquestionably strengthened Iraq's internal defenses and helped build up the state's infrastructure. Good relations with Turkey and Iran also paid internal dividends in continued peace with the Kurds and the *shī'ah*. But its disadvantages were overwhelming. The Baghdad Pact split the Arab world into two camps—those favoring a Western alliance and those favoring neutrality. It embroiled Iraq in a constant succession of foreign policy problems at a time when it needed to concentrate on the home front. It generated a heated anti-Western campaign in the area, something Iraq, with its anti-Western opposition, hardly needed. The challenge to Nāṣir's leadership initiated a cold war between Egypt and Iraq, aimed at the elimination of either Nāṣir or Nūrī. The intensity of this struggle swept all other issues aside for the next four years.

The first and ultimately most damaging manifestation of the cold war was the propaganda campaign broadcast by the Voice of the Arabs in

Cairo. From the moment the first Iraqi-Turkish communiqué was issued in Baghdad, the Voice of the Arabs proceeded to vilify the entire regime that had signed the pact. One quote from a speech made early in January 1955 will indicate the depths to which relations had plunged:

> Today . . . the peoples and states of the Arab League are witnessing a new barefaced treason, the hero of which is Nūrī al-Sa'īd. His insistence on this alliance, his challenge to the Arab peoples, and his trifling with their most sacred rights is an act of treachery against Arabism far more damaging to the Arab League than anything done by Israel or Zionism.[32]

Although it had a tight clamp on internal opposition, Nūrī's regime was unable to control this new weapon. Heretofore, opposition had surfaced through demonstrations, strikes, and newspaper articles, which could be dealt with by arrests, police actions, and suspensions. But the Voice of the Arabs penetrated the village, the field, and the bedouin camp, the barracks and the dormitory. Gradually its message spread hostility—previously limited mainly to the urban groups—among rural areas as well, swelling the numbers of those opposed to the regime and undermining whatever remaining legitimacy the regime possessed. The greatest impact of the Voice of the Arabs was on the officer corps, which was capable of mobilizing the force necessary to overthrow the regime.

The Suez Crisis

In the midst of this situation, Nāṣir precipitated the Suez crisis. Nāsir's purchase of arms from the Soviet bloc after a series of frustrating negotiations with the West; his successful nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956; and the resulting tripartite attack on Egypt by Britain, France, and Israel had profound repercussions throughout the Middle East. In Iraq, these events undercut the regime's entire position. Although efforts by Britain to protect its interests in the canal might have been understandable, Britain's collusion with Israel in an attack on an Arab country was regarded by all Arabs as intolerable treachery.

The Suez disaster confronted Nūrī with a crisis almost as severe as the *wathbah*. His cabinet issued a statement protesting the British and French action; demanded immediate withdrawal of all forces from Egyptian territory; boycotted Britain in the Baghdad Pact meetings; and broke off relations with France (although not with Britain), but these actions failed to stem the tide of protest inside Iraq. Nūrī was able to weather the crisis only by applying even more stringent measures than had been taken for the Baghdad Pact. Martial law was immediately declared and it remained in effect until May 1957, a week or so before Nūrī's cabinet resigned. Throughout the remainder of 1956, the country was in an uproar. On 21 November, several students were killed and over fifty police and nine civilians were wounded during demonstrations in Baghdad; the government responded by closing down all colleges and secondary schools in the capital until further notice. Strikes then spread to al-Najaf and to the four northern provinces. In the southern town of al-Ḥayy, deep in feudal territory, there was a struggle between the townspeople and the police.[33] Some 2,000 demonstrators were involved; two participants were ultimately sentenced to death and executed.

By 1957, the cold war had spread discontent in Iraqi cities and, as the disturbances in al-Ḥayy showed, in the Iraqi countryside as well. It had deepened the bitterness of the intelligentsia and the students, who were now willing to risk arrest, and it had certainly penetrated the army. The disturbances had also taken a toll on the economy. In November 1956, the IPC pipeline through Syria had been blown up by forces opposed to Iraq's policy, drastically cutting back Iraq's oil revenues and curtailing its development program.

This recitation of the regime's foreign and domestic problems should not, however, obscure the fact that the last few years of the old regime were also boom years for development. By 1957 the development plan called for the expenditure of ID 61 million ($171 million) a year. A massive building program, begun in the 1950s, resulted in new dams, barrages, roads, hospitals, and other facilities. However, these improvements came too late to salvage the regime's image.[34] The program undoubtedly created an aura of prosperity and considerable affluence and employment for some, but too little of it trickled down to the middle and lower classes already alienated from the regime on other grounds.

Meanwhile, considerable attention was lavished on the army and the bureaucracy, Nūrī's main interests. A new army service law provided privileges and benefits to officers, and a new army pension law raised their pensions.[35] Among the benefits to officers was housing, built with development funds. Whole streets sprang up in Baghdad, inhabited only by active and retired officers. Time would show, however, that discontent in the military could not be bought off by material benefits. As for the bureaucracy, a new law established a civil service commision for appointing, promoting, and retaining employees. Civil salaries were raised, including teachers' salaries. A social security law was passed, but so was a graduated income tax, which fell heavily on the salaried while the independently wealthy found means to avoid paying.

Despite these economic advances, Nūrī continued to avoid pressing social problems, hoping that the benefits of development would trickle down fast enough to make up for discontent over the lack of political freedom and the uneven distribution of wealth and privilege. It was a race against time that many believed Nūrī was losing. "He is determined," wrote British correspondent D. J. Mossman in 1956, "that the profound social changes that development will bring about should be firmly controlled."[36] As a result, Mossman added, Nūrī enjoyed little support from the politically conscious forces. In February 1957, another correspondent gave Nūrī two more years in office at most.[37]

Yet it was not on the domestic front, but in the foreign policy sphere that the regime really lost the battle. By 1957, Iraq was surrounded by hostile Arab states (with the exception of weak, ineffectual Jordan), while the propaganda barrage continued unabated from Cairo. By the spring of 1957 it was apparent to all that it was time for a change of cabinet, if not of strategy. Nūrī's resignation, presented several times previously, was finally accepted. He left office in June 1957. The regime still had a year to alter course and save itself, but as events will show, it did neither.

On 20 June, 'Alī Jawdat, now sixty-four, formed his second cabinet. His government made a last attempt to moderate Nūrī's foreign policy. The new prime minister maintained the basic pro-Western, anti-Communist stand of Nūrī, but with a definite shift in favor of Arab nationalism. Jawdat's first foreign policy statement pointedly avoided mention of the Baghdad Pact and spoke of achieving better relations with Arab countries. The domestic policy statement was more timid, but Jawdat did promise a just land tax that would distribute the public burden more equitably—an obvious reference to the landlords who had benefited from development schemes without paying their share of taxes.

Jawdat's new policies were never implemented. Once again, the cabinet was drawn into Syrian affairs. This time it was the U.S. government, concerned over increased Soviet influence in Syria, that urged Iraq to take action.[38] Initially, the crown prince wished to comply—indicating how thoroughly out of touch he was with public opinion—but neither the prime minister nor the chief of the Royal Diwan favored any action, and there the matter ended.[39] Unhappy with this turn of events, the crown prince refused in October 1957 to grant Jawdat's request for permission to dissolve parliament and hold an election, which Jawdat hoped would garner support for his program. On 14 December, Jawdat resigned. He had accomplished nothing except to prevent another foolish venture in Syria. Jawdat was succeeded in office by 'Abd al-Wahhāb Mirjān, who was a *shī'ī*, a Baghdad Law College graduate, a rich landlord from al-Ḥillah, and most importantly, a supporter of Nūrī. In his first announcement, Mirjān supported the Baghdad Pact. This, and the composition of Mirjān's cabinet, indicated that Nūrī was back in office by proxy.

The UAR and the Federation

No sooner had this cabinet come to office than it was faced with another foreign policy crisis. On 1 February 1958, Egypt and Syria announced the formation of the United Arab Republic. This relatively short-lived experiment was launched largely to avoid further Communist penetration in Syria, but it created immediate fears in Jordan and Iraq that the next step would be the overthrow of their own regimes by forces favorable to the union. King Husayn now took the initiative. He invited the Iraqis to Jordan and proposed, as a joint reply to the new UAR, an Iraqi-Jordanian federation. Very little discussion appears to have taken place on the merits and demerits of the federation. Like the UAR, it was formed in haste and as a reaction to external events.

The federation was negotiated in Amman between 11 and 14 February 1958. It soon received the blessing of Saudi Arabia, now thoroughly alarmed by the emergence of anti-Western regimes in Egypt and Syria. Nūrī was the only one to voice skepticism from within the Iraqi establishment. He felt the federation was unnecessary and would be a burden on Iraq's finances, and events proved him correct. The constitution of the federation provided that each country was to retain its political system, and Jordan was given an escape clause that absolved it from joining the Baghdad Pact. Significantly, Iraq was to supply 80 percent of the federation's budget.[40]

The tale of the federation is soon told. Its implementation required an amendment of the constitution in Iraq, and this necessitated a new election. On 2 March 1958, Mirjān resigned to make way for Nūrī, who engineered the election in May with his usual thoroughness. There were only twenty-nine new faces in the chamber, virtually all of them committed to the government. On 12 May, this parliament ratified the constitution of the federation; and on 19 May, the last government under the monarchy was formed. Its strongest politicians took federal posts, a factor that may have hastened the revolution, as they had less time to pay attention to internal affairs. The government lasted only twenty-five days.

The federation was the last straw for the old regime. Iraqis regarded it as little more than an alliance of Hāshimite kings that would drain Iraq's resources and squander precious oil money on Jordan. One of Nūrī's first acts as the federation prime minister was to invite Kuwait to join the federation, a move that would have made the federation more palatable to Iraqis. Kuwait could have shared the expenses, and many Iraqis regarded Kuwait as a part of Iraq, detached from the Ottoman Empire by the British. However, for Kuwait to join the federation, Britain would first have to recognize Kuwait's independence. The federation idea was unenthusiastically received in Kuwait, which did not want its territory or its oil resources swallowed up by Iraq and Jordan, and by Britain, which was not ready to relinquish control over Kuwait. In the early summer Nūrī had an angry session over the issue with Selwyn Lloyd, Britain's foreign minister, in London. He gained few concessions.[41] Whether anything would have come of this projected amalgamation cannot be known, because the regime was overthrown before negotiations could proceed any further.

Opposition and the Establishment

While the regime was involved in federation affairs, the deceptively quiet internal situation was putting forth ominous signs. The opposition, now underground, was coalescing into a united front against the regime, nurtured by its exclusion from power and bitterness over Nūrī's internal repression and his foreign policy. This process had begun as early as September 1953, when the Istiqlāl began to cooperate with the National Democratic Party. In June 1956, the two parties had applied to the government to form a new joint party with a program based on neutrality, Arab federation, the liberation of Palestine, political freedoms, and an end to Nūrī's decrees. The request was denied. The same year, the two parties were joined by Ṣāliḥ Jabr, indicating how widespread was the opposition to Nūrī and his policies. Jabr collaborated with them until June 1957, when he suffered a fatal heart attack.

In 1957, the Istiqlāl and the National Democratic Party turned to the more radical elements in the political spectrum, forming the United National Front, which included the Communist Party and a relative newcomer to the Iraqi scene, the Baʿth. The Baʿth Party had originated in Syria in the early postwar years. Its program combined the two strands of political thought that had dominated the intelligentsia since the 1930s—pan-Arabism and radical social change. Early on, the Baʿthists had adopted the Communist tactic of cell organization, which soon made them one of the best organized and disciplined parties in the Middle East. The Baʿth leader Fu'ād al-Rikābī, a young *shīʿī* engineer from al-Nāṣiriyyah, joined the United National Front in 1957.

Far more serious for the regime was disaffection in the army. Troubles in the officer corps had come to light as early as 1956, when a plot to overthrow the regime had been discovered. Though the leaders had been dispersed, intelligence sources in 1958 revealed new conspiracies.[42] Lulled into a false sense of security by his repressive tactics and believing that the benefits extended to the army had done their work, Nūrī evidently dismissed these signs. Had the regime been less preoccupied with foreign problems, some action might have been taken, but in May 1958, civil war broke out in Lebanon. Fearing that it might spread, King Ḥusayn asked that Iraqi troops be sent to Jordan to protect its frontiers, and this event sealed the fate of the monarchy in Iraq. Ordered to march to Jordan, the troops marched instead on Baghdad. A swiftly executed coup ended the Hāshimite monarchy and Nūrī's regime in the early hours of the morning on 14 July. Few mourned their passing.

The old regime has been much maligned by successor regimes, which have often conveniently forgotten its real accomplishments. The old regime achieved a relaxation of communal tensions, created a professional army and bureaucracy of impressive proportions, and initiated an economic development program that would sustain revolutionary regimes for some time to come. The economic accomplishments of this development program are dealt with in Chapter 5. Despite considerable progress, however, the regime's economic achievements were not sufficient to stem the tide of opposition or to prevent the regime's overthrow. Economic disparities and increased social tensions played a critical role in the revolution, but in the last analysis, the main culprits were the failure of political leadership and the direction of the old regime's foreign policy.

One of the most serious of the regime's weaknesses, as the chronicle of events clearly indicates, was its continual involvement in foreign affairs. Nūrī's declining years were spent with the Baghdad Pact, the Suez crisis, and finally the federation, while lesser men were left to deal with domestic affairs. The palace, which might have provided a counterbalance to this trend, reinforced it. Nothing so distracted and weakened the regime as the crown prince's continual interference in Syria in an effort to achieve a position for himself. By 1956, the foreign pillar on which the regime largely rested—its alliance with Britain—had become more of a liability than an asset.

The regime also failed to build a solid base of support inside Iraq. Although the constitution technically prevented the concentration of power in the hands of a single individual, it did not keep a few men from manipulating the political mechanism to their own advantage. The man who came closest to dominating the system spent his declining years stamping out meaningful political activity instead of constructing political institutions or molding public opinion. Never interested in the development of political parties or in the creation of public opinion, Nūrī engaged in intense intrigue behind the scenes—now with the British, now with the palace, and always with a coterie of politicians and tribal leaders. The pattern of politics in Iraq in 1958 hardly differed from that of the 1920s and 1930s, except that as time went on, Nūrī's circle of consultants shrank to a handful of intimates. Nūrī wore down his competitors, who possessed neither his drive for power nor his inveterate love of intrigue, but he left no political apparatus to bolster the regime.

Nūrī's activity left Iraq with a succession crisis. Nūrī had blocked the transition to power for younger men who should have been his natural successors. Jabr, for example, never held high office again after his split with Nūrī. Neither his cohorts nor his younger protégés could equal Nūrī's manipulative skill, and the third generation of men just coming into their own in the 1950s was hopelessly outmatched. They had begun their careers in the postwar period, when political parties were enjoying a revival. These parties, which provided the means to build a political base that did not rely on tribal politics or sectarianism, were eliminated in 1954. The succession problem among politicians was echoed in the palace, where 'Abd al-Ilāh had squandered the prestige of the throne on will-o'-the-wisp ventures in Syria rather than husbanding the power of the young king. He had badly weakened the throne by refusing to either relinquish real power to Fayṣal or train the young king for his duties. 'Abd al-Ilāh was isolated and unpopular, and his behind-the-scenes maneuvering brought the whole monarchial system into disrepute.

The regime's greatest weakness was its failure to build viable political institutions to support its rule. In Ottoman fashion, leaders relied on the army and bureaucracy as the mainstay of the state. The regime also relied on family and personal ties. Several ministers represented the third generation of family members in a cabinet seat, and political families often intermarried. Family connnections were supplemented by regional, school, and professional ties. From the outside, the ruling group did not look like a collection of the best talent available (although it often was) but like a close-knit cabal of relatives and friends, increasingly difficult to enter without connections.

The old regime refused to shift its basis of support from the rural class of tribal leaders and landlords (now augmented by the urban wealthy) to the new urban middle class. Tribal shaykhs and Kurdish aghās and landlords continued to form about 45 percent of all postwar parliaments, even though they represented few besides themselves. While the economic and political power of these landed groups was crumbling in the countryside, it was bolstered by an alliance with the politicians in the cities. Urbanites, particularly from the middle and lower middle classes, remained underrepresented in the political structure, and they rapidly came under the influence of the opposition.

The old regime allowed the opposition to dominate cultural and ideological discourse in Iraq, failing to articulate an ideology of its own that might have appealed to a broader spectrum of Iraqis. It vacillated between a policy of Iraq for the Iraqis and Arab nationalism. An "Iraq first" policy could have brought social benefits to a country still attempting to integrate diverse sects and ethnic groups into a national entity, yet no such policy was articulated. Meanwhile, the regime allowed the opposition to usurp the theme of Arab unity without forcing it to spell out how Arab unity could be accomplished without eroding Iraq's social and political fabric. Perhaps the greatest disservice to the country was the regime's refusal to deal with the opposition in parliament, where opposition leaders could have achieved a measure of responsibility and experience. The seeds of future military dictatorship were sown by Nūrī's authoritarian regime between 1954 and 1958.

Failures in domestic affairs were matched by foreign policy failures. The increasingly visible British tie, the renewed treaty negotiations, and the new alliance with the West—achieved through relentless domestic suppression—only served to intensify the desire for independence and the nationalist sentiments that had been the main motive force behind Iraqi politics since 1920. The opposition had failed in 1920, 1941, and 1948 to bring the regime down; it succeeded in 1958.

5

Economic and Social Change Under the Old Regime

This study has focused thus far on the creation of the Iraqi state, its political and institutional structure, and the nature and pattern of politics among its rulers. Another important theme of Iraq's modern history comes into focus in the postwar period, with Iraq's attempts to regain control over its physical environment and revive its social and cultural life. This process was delayed until the 1950s by Iraq's poor financial situation.

Iraq's development program, begun in the 1950s, was impressive for its time. Considerable advances were made in bringing more land under cultivation, expanding the communications network, and developing Iraq's oil resources—resources the country would soon depend on. Yet too little was done in the industrial sector and in the development of human resources. Above all, the benefits of development were not evenly distributed. In retrospect, Iraq's experience illustrates the need for social progress to complement economic advance.

Despite the regime's neglect of social reform, considerable social change did take place. Under the impetus of urbanization and the spread of education, which began in the 1930s and accelerated in the 1950s, the traditional social structure began to erode. A new middle class, characterized less by the size of its income than by education and occupation, emerged, and a new industrial working class, small but increasingly vocal, also took shape. Both groups were unsettling elements in the social and political structure. Meanwhile, urbanization helped create a shifting population of poor migrants, often unemployed or underemployed, that added to social tensions.

Education and urbanization also helped to erode ethnic and sectarian differences, at least among the small but growing number of Arab *shīʿah* and Kurds who moved into the new middle and upper classes. During the years of Nūrī's enforced stability, Kurdish revolts ceased in the north, and a number of Kurds joined the bureaucracy and the army. The Arab *shī'ah* made even greater strides, using education, the new professions, and entrepreneurial ability to move ahead. Problems between the *shī'ah* and the *sunnīs*, the Kurds and the Arabs, had by no means disappeared by 1958, but they were less prominent than in mandate days. Arab *sunnī* dominance diminished but did not disappear.

Perhaps the most significant change occurred in the intellectual and cultural realm. Along with the spread of education and the press, increased contact with the West introduced new ideas and values that posed a sharp contrast with the past. They were reflected in the remarkable literary and artistic flowering of the 1950s, in short stories, in poetry, in art, and in sculpture. Like the journalists and educators, the new writers and artists expressed the tensions and contradictions of their society as well as the aspirations and frustrations of the new educated generation. Their work prepared the climate for revolution. In the intellectual sphere, as in the political and social realms, the old regime did little to counteract these ideas or to put forth a social vision of its own.

Economic Development

As indicated, the main lines of Iraq's development program were the increase in oil revenues after 1951; the establishment of the Development Board in 1950; and the subsequent inauguration of a series of development plans designed to improve Iraq's infrastructure and harness its agricultural potential. The following pages assess the economic impact of this program and describe the changes in Iraq's economic structure since World War II. The most important change was the development of the oil sector, upon which all other development depended.

The Oil Sector

Large-scale development of Iraq's oil resources came late, particularly in comparison to its neighbors. Although IPC had begun commercial export of oil from the Kirkūk fields in 1934, it was not until the 1950s that Iraq's productive capacity was developed in earnest. Some of the delay was due to the inland position of Iraq's major oil fields at Kirkūk. Iraq needed to expand its pipeline capacity to get the oil to market. In 1946, IPC had begun construction of two additional 16-inch pipelines to parallel the old pipelines to Haifa and to Tripoli, but throughput to Haifa ceased after the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. It was only in 1952, after the opening of a third 30-inch line to Bāniyās, that oil deliveries to the Mediterranean reached 16 million metric tons a year.[1]

Another reason for the delay was that IPC was slow to develop Iraq's oil potential, a point of contention between the government and the company that also caused considerable bitterness. Exploration and development of Iraq's oil fields proceeded only gradually. The three northern fields were all discovered prior to World War II: Naft Khānah in 1923;

TABLE 5.1
Iraqi Oil Fields, 1960

Field and Discovery Date	Production in Barrels	
	Daily Average (barrels)	Cumulative (thousands)
Nafṭ Khānah, 1923	3,300	60,116
Kirkūk, 1927	643,087	1,917,830
ᶜAyn Zālah, 1939	18,425	55,245
al-Zubayr, 1949	72,936	248,814
Butmah, 1952	8,516	12,891
Bay Ḥasan, 1953	33,387	1,498
al-Rumaylah, 1953	172,648	225,377
Jambūr, 1954	11,033	5,115
TOTAL	963,332	2,526,886

Source: Reprinted by permission from Charles Issawi and Mohammed Yeganeh, The Economics of Middle Eastern Oil (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 93.

Kirkūk in 1927, and ‘Ayn Zālah in 1939. After the war, the potentially valuable southern fields near the Gulf were brought in—al-Zubayr in 1949 and al-Rumaylah in 1953. By 1960 the southern fields were producing 250,000 b/d, 25 percent of Iraq's total production.[2] By 1958, eight fields had been discovered (see Table 5.1), and Iraq had six refineries with a capacity of 56,000 b/d.[3]

There is ample evidence that Iraq's oil growth was slower than that of other Gulf countries, most of which started development later. By 1960, Iraq was being outproduced by Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.[4] With some justification, Iraqis have blamed this delay on the foreign ownership of IPC and its lack of concern for Iraq's interests. A leading analyst of the oil industry has argued, however, that the structure of IPC itself was more of a problem than foreign ownership. Because IPC was an operating company, owned by parent companies (including the Anglo-Iranian Company, Royal Dutch Shell, Compagnie Française des Petroles [CFP], Standard of New Jersey, and Mobil) that also had concessions in other Arab countries, Iraq's interests were frequently sacrificed to its competitors. Among the IPC parent companies, only the French company, CFP, which had a weak supply position, was in favor of developing Iraqi oil production rapidly. The other partners tended to favor regulating production and thus keeping prices high. As a result, the development of Iraq's oil sector lagged behind its potential.[5]

In the 1950s, IPC's concession was renegotiated to give Iraq a greater share of oil revenues. With the changes negotiated in February 1952 (and retroactive to 1951), Iraq's revenues per ton more than doubled.[6] Along with increased capacity this meant a fifteenfold increase in revenues since the end of the war.[7] Between 1952 and 1958, output and revenues doubled again, raising Iraq's oil income to ID 84.6 million ($237.7 million) in 1958.[8] With the accelerated pace of oil development, Iraq became increasingly dependent on the export of a single resource, controlled by a foreign-owned company and subject to international market conditions beyond Iraq's control. In 1948 oil revenues contributed only 10 percent of Iraq's GNP; by 1958 the figure was 28 percent. Between 1938 and 1959, oil revenues grew from 26 percent of the government budget to 61 percent.[9]

The Development Program

Oil revenues enabled Iraq to make a sustained effort at long-term development for the first time. The main mechanism employed was a series of development plans. Between its inception in 1950 and 1958, the Development Board introduced four successive plans, as its allocations rose from ID 65 million ($182 million) under the first plan (1951) to ID 500 million ($1.4 billion) under the last (1955).[10]

The board's priorities clearly reflected the economic orientation of the old regime. First priority in all plans went to agriculture, which received 33 to 45 percent of total allocations. The bulk of this went toward large-scale flood control and irrigation schemes. By 1958, a number of these projects had been completed or were near completion, including the Tharthār Dam (opened in 1956), which prevented the flooding of Baghdad; the Ḥabbāniyyah scheme, which provided a water storage facility and a dam on the Euphrates north of al-Ramādī; and two dams in Kurdish territory—the Dūkān Dam on the Lesser Zāb and the Darbandikhān Dam on the upper reaches of the Diyālā. These projects expanded agricultural potential and also freed Baghdad from floods for the first time in centuries.

The second priority was transportation and communications, which received around 24 percent of allocations. Here too, large-scale projects—roads, railroads, ports, and airports—were stressed. By 1958, 2,000 kilometers (1,243 miles) of main roads, 1,500 km (932 miles) of local roads, and twenty bridges had been built, while the Basra port was enlarged and a new airport was constructed in Baghdad.[11] Allocations for industry came third, and they generally were low. The first plan spent nothing on industry. Twenty percent of the second plan went to industry, but this dropped to 13 percent by the last plan. With this money, the Development Board did construct five electric power plants, the Dawrah refinery, and light industries such as cement and textile plants.

Most of the remaining funds went to construction; its share ranged from 11 to 24 percent (Table 9.1).[12] No allocations were included for health and education, although funding for these areas was included in the regular budget, and a portion of the construction money went to schools and hospitals. In 1958 development funds were allocated for

15 hospitals, 49 clinics, 110 elementary schools, and 12 secondary schools.[13]

The Agricultural Sector

As the bulk of development expenditures went to agriculture, how much was accomplished in this sector? On the positive side, the area under cultivation increased and so did production. One study concluded that the area used for grain production increased 50 percent over pre-Second World War levels, while grain production increased 56 percent.[14] The import-export figures reflect the same picture. Despite population growth, by 1958 Iraq was self-sufficient in wheat and rice, and produced enough barley to export 25 percent of its crop.[15]

How much of this progress was due to the board's expenditures is questionable. Although its achievements in harnessing Iraq's river systems should not be underestimated, the main impact of the Development Board's dams and barrages, except for flood control, lay mainly in the future. Most of the growth in this period took place in the private sector and was due to individual investments in pumps and tractors. By 1955, no less than 20 percent of all cultivated land was being irrigated by pump.[16]

Though these advances were considerable, too little was done under the old regime to modernize existing agricultural practices and to improve the productivity of land already under cultivation. Most agriculture was still practiced by primitive methods: Shallow draft wooden ploughs, driven by animals, were still widely used, and crops were normally harvested and processed by hand. Rectifying this situation would have required a substantial investment in agricultural education, improved seeds and stock, and credit and marketing facilities. These were not forthcoming. In the board's last plan, only 3 percent of the budget was devoted to such items.[17]

Agricultural development along these lines was neglected for several reasons. Agricultural extension programs were opposed by the landlords, as they would strengthen the individual cultivators at their expense. Effective implementation would require an extensive supply of trained personnel, which Iraq did not have. Lastly, such expenditures did not show tangible results like money spent on dams, and were thus harder to justify to the public. Whatever the reasons, the failure to invest in human resources and in smaller auxiliary facilities in rural areas greatly impaired effective use of the large-scale projects that were completed.

A more serious criticism of the old regime's agricultural policy is that it failed to bring needed changes in the economic and social structure of the agrarian sector. In 1958, 70 percent of the population still earned a living in agriculture, but they produced only 30 percent of Iraq's income.[18] Because modernization had not encompassed human resources, the way was also not being prepared for future structural change. This became apparent in the postrevolutionary period, when massive rural-to-urban migration proved devastating to agriculture.

Under the old regime, the maldistribution of rural income, the poverty of the peasant farmer, and the antiquated landholding system continued. The government attempted to skirt the problem of land reform by appropriating development funds for the distribution of uncultivated state lands to peasants and a few others such as graduates of the Agricultural College. Between 1952 and 1954, 2.1 million dunams were distributed, and by 1958, over 53,000 people were living on state land. The most famous distribution scheme was the Dujaylah project twenty-five miles southeast of al-Kūt.[19] However, these projects were too small in scope to affect the grip of the large landholders on the rural economy. In parliament, the landlords continued to resist any efforts at real land or tax reform. Before genuine modernization of the agricultural sector could take place, this problem had to be addressed.

The Industrial Sector

In the industrial sector, progress outside of the oil industry was slow and inadequate to Iraq's needs. This was partly due to the advice of foreign development planners, who saw Iraq's comparative advantage in agriculture, but also to the free enterprise climate in which both government and foreign planners were operating. It was falsely assumed that industrial investment would be undertaken by private entrepreneurs. Thus, the government's role was limited to providing loans, credit, and infrastructure. These measures proved inadequate. Industry was the weakest sector in the economy, and in contrast to agriculture, there was little private investment. Although laws encouraging industry had been passed since the 1930s, Iraqi citizens were reluctant to invest in long-range projects, and the government incentives were insufficient to overcome this reluctance. Moreover, in the absence of adequate protection, Iraqi industry could not compete with Western imports.

Despite these difficulties, however, some progress was made. In the postwar period, manufacturing increased slowly but steadily. Between 1953 and 1958 it showed an increase of 85 percent, but this must be measured against a very low base line.[20] By 1958, the industrial sector still employed less than 7 percent of the population, much of it in small-scale operations,[21] although large firms were already catching up to small ones. By the mid-1950s, 727 large-scale (employing 10 or more people), nonoil firms accounted for a total of over 44,000 workers. By contrast, 21,733 small establishments (employing under 10 workers) accounted for nearly 46,000 workers. Thus, the large firms, which constituted only 3.2 percent of all firms, employed almost 50 percent of the work force (Table 5.2).

Iraqi industry of the 1950s was overwhelmingly based on agricultural processing and textiles; these firms accounted for 61 percent of industrial employment and sales. Second in importance were mineral-based industries (mainly cement used in construction), employing about one-third of the industrial work force. Intermediate industries, such as

TABLE 5.2
Size of Industrial Establishments, 1954

Number of Workers	Number of Establishments	Percent of Total	Number of Workers	Percent of Total
1	10,157	45.2	10,157	11.2
2	5,651	25.2	11,302	12.5
3	2,805	12.5	8,415	9.3
4	1,383	6.1	5,532	6.1
5	804	3.6	4,020	4.5
6-9	933	4.2	6,455	7.2
10-19	433	1.9	5,718	6.3
20-99	199	0.9	8,185	9.1
Over 100	95	0.4	30,507	33.8
TOTAL	22,460	100.0	90,291	100.0

Source: Adapted from Kathleen Langley, The Industrialization of Iraq (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 90, taken from the Industrial Census of Iraq, 1954.

chemicals and metallurgy, and heavy industry were virtually nonexistent. Almost all industry was consumer-oriented.[22]

The Iraqi industrial sector was still in its infancy. It was slow to develop, relatively neglected by the Development Board, and dominated by a few consumer-oriented industries. Large-scale enterprises were beginning to achieve a commanding position in the labor market, but the bulk of establishments were small-scale cottage industries. Industrial development had neither generated substantial employment for the new urban population, nor provided the impetus for a structural shift from agriculture to manufacturing.

Services

Progress in health and education occurred despite the absence of any direct allocations in the development budgets. In regular budgets, government expenditures on education increased from a little over ID 3.5 million ($9.8 million), representing 14 percent of the budget, in 1950, to ID 14 million ($39 million), representing 20 percent, in 1958.[23] Most of the growth in education in these years took place at the elementary level. Between 1950 and 1958, the number of students in government and private elementary schools rose from 203,127 to 437,660.[24] At the secondary level, the figures were 32,430 and 70,260.[25] At the level of higher education, the number of students in Iraqi institutions increased from 4,900 to 5,400.[26] Particularly at higher levels of education, the growth was small indeed compared to the country's needs and the amount of money available. In 1958 it was estimated that only 42 percent of the school-age population was in school, mainly at the elementary level. Among boys, attendance was 62 percent; among girls, 21 percent.[27]

One reason for the slow growth was the persistence of elitist attitudes, inherited both from the British and from Sāṭiʿ-l-Ḥuṣrī. The policy was that quality must take precedence over quantity, and that growth at the upper levels should await a firm foundation at the lower. Although the goal of quality was commendable, the policy slowed the expansion of higher education and helped create a narrow educational pyramid. The regime's difficulty in absorbing the educated elements into the economic and social structure was also a factor. Finally, lack of funds before the 1950s played a role. Education was expanded only after revenues increased. In 1958, illiteracy was still the rule in provincial areas and was only being attacked on a broader scale in large urban centers.

In the field of health, much had been done by 1958 to eradicate communicable diseases such as cholera and typhoid, but in rural areas sanitation remained virtually nonexistent, and infant mortality was high. Drinking water was often drawn from irrigation ditches and muddy rivers; flies and other insects spread disease and internal parasites. By 1958 there were 123 hospitals, with 9,700 beds; 117 clinics; and 498 dispensaries in Iraq. Yet there were only 1,192 doctors, one for each 5,500 persons, and 58 percent of them were in Baghdad Province.[28] Urban health services were improving, but the rural areas had a long way to go. According to one authority, "[in] the consumption of public health and medical and education services we find the greatest sources of discomfort, misery, illness and premature death. It is here that the condition of living of perhaps the majority of the people was truly abysmal."[29]

The Development Program in Perspective

Iraq's pre-1958 development program has been adversely evaluated by the regime's opponents and by many economists, yet most observers put Iraq's average annual growth rate in the 1950s at a very respectable 7 percent. The figures involved seem small in comparison with those of the 1970s, but they represented a quantum leap forward at the time. The very idea of allocating the bulk of oil revenues to capital expenditures and expansion of Iraq's future productivity was imaginative, and well ahead of the steps taken by neighboring oil countries.

The development program made considerable strides in helping Iraq master its physical environment. Unfortunately, too much was spent on agriculture; too little on industry. Insufficient attention was devoted to diversifying the economy, leaving Iraq highly dependent upon the export of two primary products—oil and agricultural produce, the one controlled by foreign interests and the other by a group of wealthy landlords. Above all, the development of human resources lagged woefully behind Iraq's needs. The development of education and industry, which would have strengthened the two groups inimical to the regime—the educated elite and the workers—was neglected. As a result, these groups, which form the backbone of any modern state, remained distinctly underdeveloped in 1958.

The Changing Social Structure

The regime attempted to control social change, but it could not prevent it. The economic and social developments of a half century, which greatly accelerated in the 1950s, gradually eroded the traditional social structure and created new social groups. Cutting across traditional divisions based on ethnic, sectarian, and tribal lines, the emerging class structure blurred but did not eliminate the old divisions. Class lines cannot be drawn too sharply in this period. Even as the structure and functions of the old groups eroded, traditional attitudes, values, and habits of behavior persisted. Tribal loyalty and leadership were no longer functional in the countryside, but reliance on kinship ties, on family honor, and even on the vengeance motive remained. Clearly defined roles were lacking in the new class structure, leaving a marked social vacuum. As Doreen Warriner pointed out in 1957, no new social or economic class had emerged that was strong enough or coherent enough to direct the economic changes into constructive channels.[30]

The New Upper Class

The greatest social change was the disintegration of tribal structure and the decline in the nomadic way of life. At the start of the century, 17 percent of Iraq's population had been nomadic; by 1957, only 4 percent was. Shaykhs became landlords, and tribesmen peasants. Most shaykhs bought urban homes, spent increased time in the city, and even traveled abroad, where they picked up a taste for some Western amenities. Their sons, educated overseas, were often completely detribalized. The process was by no means completed by 1958, however. The Tribal Disputes Code was still in effect, and local shaykhs and aghās often settled civil conflicts entirely outside the jurisdiction of the central government. Tribal structure was less affected in the mountainous Kurdish regions of the north, where landed aghās maintained a tighter hold over their villages and tribal cohesion was stronger.

The disintegration of tribal structure generated a new social problem, the emergence of a new upper class of landed proprietors and urban wealthy. By the end of the prerevolutionary period, the former group had brought almost three-quarters of all the surveyed land of Iraq into their legal possession. Although no statistics exist on individual holdings, one study estimates that in 1958, 45 percent of the landholders owned 1.08 percent of the land, and less than 1 percent owned 55 percent (see Table 5.3). Over 23,000 holdings were under 1 dunam; at the other extreme, 128 were over 20,000, 33 over 50,000 and 8 over 100,000.[31] The last category included the holdings of Mūḥān al-Khayr Allah of al-

TABLE 5.3
Distribution of Landholdings Prior to the 1958 Revolution

Size of Holding in Dunams	Landholders		Area	
	Number	Percentage of Total	Dunams	Percentage of Total
Under 1	23,089	9.12	8,599	0.03
1-3	50,021	19.75	93,722	0.29
4-9	40,475	15.98	243,004	0.76
10-49	71,049	28.05	1,671,484	5.20
50-99	29,884	11.80	2,055,856	6.40
100-499	31,508	12.44	5,799,012	18.03
500-999	2,916	1.15	1,992,431	6.20
1,000-1,999	1,832	0.72	2,560,190	7.96
2,000-9,999	2,128	0.84	8,550,322	26.59
10,000-19,999	224	0.09	3,030,773	9.42
20,000-49,999	95	0.04	2,998,607	9.32
50,000-99,999	25	0.01	1,725,988	5.37
100,000 and over	8	0.003	1,424,825	4.43
TOTAL	253,254	100.00[a]	32,154,813	100.00

[a] Figures have been rounded.

Source: Reprinted by permission from Hanna Batatu, The Old Social Classes and Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba'thists, and Free Officers (Copyright (c) 1978 by Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J.), p. 54, Table 5-1.

Muntafiq, who started out at the beginning of the mandate by leasing land from the Saʿdūn family and ended up with an estimated 1 million dunams; Muḥammad Ḥabīb al-Khayzarān, paramount shaykh of the Banī Rabīʿah of al-Kūt, whose daughter was married to the regent; and the Jaryān family of al-Ḥillah, allied with Ṣāliḥ Jabr by marriage.[32] Increasingly, this landed group was infused with entrepreneurs and an entrepreneurial spirit, which helps account for the spread of cultivation and the increase of agricultural production. The landed class was a mixed group of tribal leaders, urban merchants, and investors.

The urban upper class was made up of entrepreneurs and businessmen, who often had antecedents in the older bourgeoisie of traders and merchants. This group acquired its wealth in various ways. The most lucrative was the field of real estate, which took off in the 1950s as cities expanded and inflation pushed up land profits. A law passed in the 1940s allowed the conversion of a portion of *lazmah* land to freehold ownership through paying part of its assessment value and relinquishing the rest. Owners of farmland near the expanding cities could make fortunes this way. Among those who profited were ministers, members of parliament, and shaykhs. Many of the shaykhs had originally acquired their *lazmah* titles gratis.[33]

Development Board expenditures also created new opportunities for wealth. Professionals—particularly lawyers, engineers, and technocrats—made money supplying services and importing equipment, while contractors and subcontractors profited from burgeoning construction projects. The import-export business flourished as never before, with former ministers and politicians using their contacts to good advantage. Few entrepreneurs made their fortunes in industry, which confirms the weakness of this sector.

Several generalizations may be made about the members of this urban entrepreneurial class. First, they invested heavily in land. Land purchases, urban real estate, and investments in pumps and agricultural machinery indicated that land was still the basis of the economy. As a result, the new entrepreneurs did not constitute a distinctly urban class, developing a new economic power base of their own. They did not produce a new economic mentality, capable of challenging the landed class, for they were inextricably mixed with that class.

Second, business dealings, like political activities, were conducted on a personal or kinship basis. The high degree of overlap in various economic enterprises and the concentration of economic investment in the hands of a few are two indications of this. Another is the low number of public liability stock companies—67 in 1957, compared with 374 partnerships in the same year.[34] The same was true of banking. Many entrepreneurs preferred to borrow on a personal basis rather than go to public lending institutions. The weakness of economic institutions helped concentrate wealth in the hands of a few and at the same time kept a strong independent bourgeoisie from developing.

Third was the mixture of political power and wealth. A high percentage of these entrepreneurs were ministers and civil servants; favorable legislation played a major role in reducing their risks, extending their security, and protecting their investments. And fourth, the urban entrepreneurs were largely an upper class rather than a middle class. In general, the acquisition of wealth was weighted toward the upper end of the scale. The increase in oil revenues and spending on the development program enhanced the opportunities for accumulating wealth, especially for those who were already favorably situated. In general, the gap between the upper and middle classes, so evident during the Second World War, continued, significantly changing people's perception of class structure. The presence of wealth at the top of the political structure did little to enhance the legitimacy of the regime.

The New Middle Class

As a mixed landed and entrepreneurial class emerged at the upper end of the social strata, a new middle class was also taking shape. Although distinguished from the upper class by its lower income level—and by its resentment of the former's wealth—the new middle class differed from the upper class more in outlook and culture than in wealth.

The single most important factor in forming that outlook was secular education. Despite the slow growth of higher education, by the 1950s there were far more secondary and college graduates than in mandate days. By 1932, the mandate had produced only about 700 to 800 graduates of Iraqi secondary schools;[35] between 1945 and 1958, over 30,000 graduated.[36] In the twelve years after 1932, only 2,500 students graduated from Iraqi higher institutions, and 332 bursary students returned with degrees from abroad.[37] In the twelve years after World War II, the comparable figures were 12,000 and 1,030.[38] Although the increase was substantial, those with a secondary or a college education were obviously a small elite. Even by 1958, there were probably not more than 15,000 to 18,000 college graduates in the country.

As education expanded, it also diversified, giving the educated middle class a broader background. At the end of the war, the only higher institutions in the country were the Law College (established 1908), the Higher Teachers' Training College (1923), the Medical College (1927), the Pharmacy College (1936), and the College of Engineering (1942). In the next decade numerous colleges and higher institutes were founded, including the College for Women (1946), the College of Commerce (1947), the College of Arts and Sciences (1949), and the College of Agriculture (1952), culminating in 1957 with the establishment of the University of Baghdad.

Between 1950 and 1958, the largest number of graduates came from the Law College (2,368), which trained students for the civil service as well as for law. Second were the graduates of the Higher Teachers' Training College (1,444). Few went into technical or scientific fields. The Engineering College graduated only 470; the Medical College, 435; and the Agricultural College, 170 (Table 5.4). Even fewer went into religious education and subjects allied with it, such as Islamic law and Middle Eastern languages. In 1958, only 3 percent of students enrolled in higher education were studying religion or Islamic law in formal institutions, and these were at a disadvantage in finding professional employment outside the religious institutions. The new educated class therefore was almost wholly the product of secular schools, and it had a legal or humanistic background, rather than a scientific or technical one.

The educated class was also wholly urbanized, because it was only in urban areas that higher education institutions were established. The difference in secondary school attendance in urban and rural areas was striking. In 1957/1958, in the two provinces where the urban population was over 50 percent (Baghdad and Karbalā'), the school-age population in government intermediate and secondary schools averaged 9 percent. In Basra, Kirkūk, and Mosul, where 38 to 46 percent of the population was urban, the figure was 6.7 percent. In the three most rural provinces, al-Sulaymāniyyah, Arbīl, and al-Kūt, with urbanization rates ranging from 24 to 27 percent, the figure was only 3.2 percent. Even these figures

TABLE 5.4
College Graduates, 1920-1958

College	1920/21	25/26	30/31	35/36	40/41	45/46	50/51	51/52	52/53	53/54	54/55	55/56	56/57	57/58
Law	15	53	10	37	129	116	621	564	351	183	158	180	147	164
Education			19		63	91	176	167	163	176	162	210	177	213
Engineering						19	59	42	50	55	53	61	68	82
Taḥrīr (Women)							64	77	87	74	101	114	72	102
Commerce							69	105	157	192	266	237	134	104
Arts & Sciences									56	61	82	136	167	148
Medical				17	38	41	46	24	44	50	67	78	51	75
Pharmacy					25	23	25	32	30	30	24	32	33	29
Police							31	25	24	35	24	24	15	20
Divinity								17	18	29	34	26	39	58
Agriculture										14	16	45	51	44
Nonacademic Institutions													28	88
TOTAL	15	53	29	54	255	290	1,091	1,053	980	899	987	1,143	982	1,127

Source: Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Report on Education in Iraq for 1957-1958. (Baghdad: Republic Government Press, 1959), pp. 16, 26.

disguise the maldistribution of secondary schools. Of all children in government intermediate and secondary schools in these years, 34 percent were in schools in Baghdad (many of them boarders from other provinces), 15 percent were in Mosul, and 8.4 percent were in Basra.[39]

The second most important influence in shaping the outlook of the new middle class was occupation. Although no statistics exist that give a truly accurate picture of the occupational structure of Iraq or the size of the emerging middle class, several surveys offer a rough approximation. A UN report on the work force in 1957 found 3 percent in commerce and 7.6 percent in services, with most of both groups probably middle or lower middle class. Among those in services, 1.4 percent were professionals of various kinds, and 2.8 percent worked for the civil service. In addition, 6.25 percent of those in industry were probably self-employed owners of small industrial enterprises, who could be classified as middle class.[40] Using this measure, a little over 10 percent of the work force could be considered middle class. This figure tallies with a calculation made by Batatu, who found the urban middle class in 1958 to be about 10 percent of the total population (Table 5.5). Among this group about 1.8 percent of the population could be classified as professionals; 2.5 percent as civil servants (including pensioners); 2.8 percent as traders; and about 1.7 percent as self-employed owners of industrial establishments or employees.[41]

Thus, as in the case of the wealthy, the middle class consisted of a mixture of professionals and those engaged in private enterprise, often with considerable overlap between the two. The most important element in this group were those few engaged in occupations requiring a modern education: about 5,000 in the professions (doctors, lawyers, engineers, and college professors); 20,000 secondary and primary school teachers; 27,000 in the middle and upper levels of the civil service; and army officers of an indeterminate number, but probably not exceeding several thousand.[42] The traditional middle class, engaged in commerce and small-scale business, outnumbered them two to one. The new professionals, though growing as a group and strategically important, were still a small percentage of the population, even in urban areas. Nevertheless, they were the cutting edge of the new middle class, its most influential group.

There were also gradations within the middle class, both at the upper and the lower levels. The lower middle class was composed of lower-level bureaucrats, noncommissioned army and police officers, and elementary teachers. This group, undoubtedly squeezed economically, could not hope to advance much further because of a lower level of education. A number of elementary teachers left their profession to go to the military academy, and army officers often retired to attend the Law College, indicating the scale of status values.

The Lower Classes

In 1958, the social structure was only just beginning to be affected by the emergence of a new urban working class, employed mainly in

TABLE 5.5
Estimate of the Urban Middle Class, 1958

Category	Number
Professionals	
Elementary and secondary school teachers	20,154
University teachers	600[a]
Army officers	4,000[a]
Registered engineers[b]	1,270 (1959)
Registered lawyers[b]	1,361
State physicians[b]	1,192
Others	2,000[a]
Middle-income state pensioners, officials, employees	
Officials and employees (excluding state physicians, teachers, and engineers)	27,000[a]
Civil and military pensioners	15,000[a]
Trading, industrial, service components	
Retailers	36,062 (1956)
Self-employed industrial enterprisers and owners of industrial establishments employing less than ten workers	21,733 (1954)
Owners of small and middle-sized establishments	10,546[a] (1957)
Employees of private commercial, industrial firms	7,000[a]
	147,918
Dependents (subtotal X 4)	591,672
Total urban middle class	739,590
Percentage of urban population (2.6 million in 1958)	28%

[a] Estimated or partly estimated.

[b] A small segment of these professionals belonged to the upper classes.

Source: Reprinted by permission from Hanna Batatu, The Old Social Classes and Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba'thists, and Free Officers (Copyright (c) 1978 by Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J.), p. 1127.

large-scale factories and modern industries. Although it is difficult to obtain accurate statistics on the size and composition of this group, in 1958 it was still small. According to a UN survey, 6.2 percent of the work force was engaged in industry; 1.8 percent in construction; and 2.7 percent in transport, most of them laborers. An undetermined number of unskilled laborers worked in the service sector.[43]

Among this group, stratification had already taken place. The most skilled workers and the best organized were those employed in the oil industry and on the railroad. The 1958 *Statistical Abstract* put petroleum workers at about 14,760 and railroad workers at 11,800, together comprising 1.3 percent of the total work force, a considerable number given their strategic importance.[44] To this group should be added about half the factory workers in industries employing over ten workers—approximately 24,275, according to the industrial census.[45] It was this group, often under the influence of the Communist Party, that initiated many of the strikes in the 1950s.

A larger number of the urban working class in 1958 was still semiskilled, or engaged in traditional occupations such as crafts and domestic service. Added to these was an undetermined number of unskilled urban laborers, mainly recent migrants from villages. Figures on rural-to-urban migration give some notion of this group's size. According to one study, the net urban gain from rural areas between 1948 and 1952 was 11,700 people a year; between 1953 and 1957, it rose to almost 20,000 a year. Another estimate has placed the number of rural migrants to Baghdad between 1947 and 1957 at 200,000.[46]

In Baghdad these new lower-class migrants crowded into empty spaces in the city, living in *ṣarīfah* huts (mud dwellings with reed mats [*ṣarīfah*s] for roofs). Here they created new quarters and virtually a new city on the other side of the old dike protecting the city from floods. A 1956 survey of one such settlement, al-Washshāsh, gives an idea of living conditions. It had 12,000 people living in 1,555 houses. Over one-half had been in the settlement less than five years. Significantly, 90 percent were working—as porters, policemen, servants, guards, and in other low-level jobs—indicating that unemployment was less than might have been expected, although the jobs were menial. Despite the seeming poverty, the area had water, electricity, a dispensary, and schools for boys and girls. Disease and unsanitary conditions were still prevalent, however.[47]

The poverty of these new groups proved less unsettling than the discrepancies in wealth between the rich and the poor in their new urban environment. The new migrants were not all concentrated in relatively isolated areas on the outskirts of Baghdad. Frequently, families and small communities would settle on empty lots in middle- and upper-class residential areas, building their *ṣarīfah* dwellings adjacent to the homes of the affluent and raising their chickens and goats on the surrounding stubble. This stark contrast in living conditions caused much of the social unrest and initiated the revolution of rising expectations. The impact on the middle class, and especially the students, was no less explosive, providing clear and ever-present proof to them of the system's inability to accommodate social change.

The real poor in Iraq, however, were not these urban groups, but the rural peasantry, still the largest single component of the population. Well over 70 percent of the work force were peasant farmers. Of this group, only a small percentage could be classed as small landowners. The distribution of landholdings in 1958 indicates that a little less than one-fifth of all holdings were in plots of four dunams or less, probably held by small owners. Based on these figures, it is safe to say that at least four-fifths of Iraq's farmers were sharecroppers or agricultural laborers.[48]

The lot of the sharecropper varied depending on the terrain and the equipment supplied by the landlord. In the southern irrigated areas, where the shaykh was frequently a pump owner, the landlord took a larger share of the crop than in the rainfed zones in the north. In general, if the tenant supplied the seed, he took between one-third and one-half of the crop. If a pump was involved, the pump owner took 20 percent, the landlord 40, and the tenant 40. In the northern rainfed lands the tenant could take as much as 60 to 80 percent on rainfed land, and about two-thirds on irrigated land.[49]

Virtually all peasants lived in mud-hut dwellings with an average density of four to five people a room, sharing a courtyard (if they were lucky) with a goat and possibly chickens. Furniture consisted of reed mats and bedding for sleeping; chests for clothes, and some cooking utensils. The staple food was unleavened bread, rice, dates, and sometimes vegetables. Meat was seldom eaten. Few peasants wore shoes and sanitation was virtually nonexistent. Irrigation ditches were used for bathing, laundering, and other purposes, and drinking water was seldom pure. Flies and dust were omnipresent. However, one authority has rightly cautioned against painting too bleak a picture of poverty—urban or rural. In food, clothing, and housing, at least, the Iraqi poor were probably above subsistence level. It was mainly in the areas of health, sanitation, and education that improvements were desperately needed.[50]

Ethnic and Sectarian Integration

The same forces that helped to create a new socioeconomic structure and to diminish tribal and religious influences also eroded traditional ethnic and sectarian loyalties. The spread of secular education and the extension of administration to the countryside weakened the influence of religious and tribal leaders in the south. This was less true in the Kurdish areas of the north, although urbanization brought Kurds and *shīʿah* into the cities in greater numbers, diminishing communal ties. Gradually some *shīʿah* and Kurds were assimilated into the institutions of state and society.

Much of this assimilation took place at the upper levels of the social and political structure and in the urbanized sector of society. There was little assimilation in rural areas and among the lower classes. Moreover, those *shīʿah* and Kurds who did assimilate were still a minority. The Arab *sunnīs* continued to determine the predominant social and cultural standards to which the other communities were expected to adjust. To the extent that Kurds and *shīʿah* did assimilate into the upper and middle ranks of the emerging social structure, they became arabized and secularized, losing much of their original communal identity.

Arab Sunnīs

Arab *sunnī* dominance continued in almost all areas of society. There are no conclusive statistics on ethnic and religious background by

TABLE 5.6
Ethnic and Sectarian Background of Political Leaders, 1920-1958[a]

Background	1920-1932		1933-1945		1946-1958	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Arab Sunnī	33	54.1	48	56.5	36	60.0
Arab Shī^{c}ah	18	29.5	22	25.9	13	21.7
Kurd	8	13.1	13	15.3	9	15.0
Other	2	3.3	2	2.3	2	3.3
TOTAL	61	100.0	85	100.0	60	100.0

[a] Included in the sample were cabinet ministers; kings; the crown prince; and a few tribal leaders and army officers who played an important role in decision making.

Sources: Data gathered from newspapers, British diplomatic documents, and interviews with Iraqi politicians and their families between 1957 and 1969.

TABLE 5.7
Occupational Background of Political Leaders, 1920-1958

First Occupation	Arab Sunnī	Arab Shī^{c}ah	Kurd	Other	Total for Occupation	Percentage of Politicians
Military	25	0	10	0	35	19.7
Civil service	18	9	1	0	28	15.7
Legal	20	9	4	0	33	18.5
Professional	15	11	1	3	30	16.9
Business	4	6	0	1	11	6.2
Agriculture	5	8	2	0	15	8.4
Tribal, religious leader	7	10	4	0	21	11.8
Politician	3	1	1	0	5	2.8
TOTAL	97	54	23	4	178	100.0

Sources: Data gathered from newspapers, British diplomatic documents, and interviews with Iraqi politicians and their families between 1957 and 1969.

occupation, but a previous study I made of the political leadership between 1920 and 1958 may provide some clues. Between 1920 and 1932, all eight top-ranking political leaders were Arab *sunnī*; between 1946 and 1958, only five were. By this time there were also two Arab *shī'ah* and one Kurd. However, at lower levels, Arab *sunnī*s maintained their dominance (Table 5.6).[51] All evidence suggests that the same was true for the upper reaches of the officer corps and the civil service, although inroads were made in the former by the Kurds and the latter by both Kurds and *shī'ah*. One indication of this can be gleaned from the occupational backgrounds of the political elite. Well over half of those who began their careers as army officers, civil servants, and lawyers were Arab *sunnī* (Table 5.7), suggesting that despite their minority status the *sunnī*s had a sufficient number of trained personnel in these fields to place them in high positions in considerable numbers.

Much of this Arab *sunni* position was perpetuated by their disproportionate share of society's privileges. Education is an example. In the provinces that were wholly or mainly Arab *sunnī*, there was a consistently higher percentage of the population in secondary schools than in *shīʿī* or Kurdish areas, regardless of whether the province was urban or rural. As secondary schooling was the key to upward mobility, the Arab *sunnī*s had a considerable advantage from the start. Arab *sunnī*s not only had a higher degree of education, but a broader base of occupational skills. Thus, they were able to dominate both the government and the professions.

Arab Shīʿah

The Arab *shīʿah* made considerable strides in upward mobility between 1920 and 1958, but progress was concentrated in certain areas. There was more progress made outside of the government than in it, although the *shīʿah* unquestionably increased their representation at the top of the political elite. It was not so much in government but in the private sector that the Arab *shīʿah* came into their own. They entered the ranks of the upper class in agriculture, in trade, and in finance; some would say they came to dominate it. A disproportionate number of the newly emerging landed class was *shīʿī*, especially among the tribal landlords of the south. A survey of the families owning more than 30,000 dunams in 1958 shows that the largest single group, 44 percent, was *shīʿī*.[52] *Shīʿah* also took their place in the emerging entrepreneurial class as grain merchants, pump owners, traders, and financiers. Here they achieved at least parity with the Arab *sunnī*s and in some fields may have outnumbered them. Of the capitalists with assets of over 1 million ID ($2.8 million) in 1958, eight were Arab *sunnī* and seven were Arab *shīʿah*.[53] In the same year, the Administrative Council of the Chamber of Commerce, which represented the trading community of Baghdad, had fourteen *shīʿī* members out of a total of eighteen.

The Arab *shīʿah* were also assimilated into the new middle class in increasing numbers. This process was encouraged by the spread of education into *shīʿī* areas. In 1947, only half as many Arab *shīʿah* as *sunnī*s were in secondary schools; by 1958 that ratio had been improved to three to five. Arab *shīʿah* used education as a channel of mobility and pursued an activist policy at the Ministry of Education under a succession of *shīʿī* ministers. In the 1930s, in particular, Fāḍil al-Jamālī, a *shīʿī*, used his position as director-general in the ministry to encourage *shīʿah* to attend the Higher Teachers' Training College; to spread schools to the rural south; and to give *shīʿah* scholarships to study abroad.[54] The result of these efforts was a new generation of *shīʿah* with higher degrees—often from the West—in modern technical and professional fields such as medicine, engineering, and economics. A number of the less well-to-do went into secondary and elementary teaching.

By the 1950s, the *shīʿah* had produced a class of technocrats and professionals, trained in the fields needed to run a modern economy.

They were also producing more teachers to further the process. Although some *shīʿah* went into the legal profession and government service, fewer used the military academy to get ahead, leaving the *shīʿah* largely absent from the top levels of the officer corps. In rural areas and in those urban areas where *shīʿah* were left behind in education and occupational mobility, sectarianism still provided a focus of loyalty and identification. This was due less to religion, however, than to social discontent, often played on by *shīʿī* politicians to their own advantage.

The Kurds

Kurdish integration was more problematic and followed different patterns. Kurdish assimilation was contingent on the strength of Kurdish separatism in the north, which was reinforced by language and a strong sense of tribal and familial loyalty. It was not until the end of the Second World War that Kurdish rebellions in the north ended. The last, under the leadership of Mullā Muṣṭafā-l-Bārzānī, was crushed in 1945. It was only then that schools, government development projects, and other facilities could penetrate rural areas.

Nevertheless, a portion of the Kurdish community did join the mainstream of Iraqi society (Table 5.6). Unlike the *shīʿah*, they used the more traditional channels of the military and the bureaucracy rather than the new professions such as engineering and medicine. Nor, apparently, did they concentrate on education, and this contributed to the strength of traditional leadership and traditional ties in Kurdish areas. Few of the lower class or rural Kurds were touched by changing social forces.

The Kurds did produce a middle class of educated professionals who blended in with the new Arab middle class. However, this Kurdish middle class was proportionately smaller than that of the Arab *sunnī*s or *shīʿah*. This is borne out by education statistics. In 1947, in purely Kurdish provinces the Kurds had more of its population in secondary schools than did the *shīʿah*, and almost as many as the Arab *sunnī*s. By 1958, they had less than half the percentage of either of these communities. Kurds did well in the army and the bureaucracy, but they were doing less to prepare the ground for future leaders than either the *shīʿah* or the Arab *sunnī*s.

The Kurds also produced a new landed class. In 1958, almost a quarter of the landholders owning over 30,000 dunams were Kurdish.[55] Very few Kurds went into business. In 1958, not a single Kurd was represented on the Administrative Council of the Chamber of Commerce.[56] The Kurdish upper class was still mainly a landed class, closely tied to its traditional religious and tribal leadership. Less urbanization and fewer schools in Kurdish areas also meant less assimilation into the Iraqi state, and kept alive a sense of separate Kurdish identity.

Intellectual and Cultural Change

The 1950s brought an intellectual and cultural renaissance that shaped the new literate middle class no less than social and economic factors did. New ideas and values, imported for the most part from abroad, caused a break with the past and created a generation gap. Iraqi students who went through school in the 1930s and 1940s emerged in the 1950s with sharply different views and aspirations than their elders. The new ideas contrasted with the traditional values of the regime and contributed to the sense of malaise that afflicted the establishment in its last years. They were at the root of many of the regime's difficulties. Because the new views were most prevalent in, and most clearly articulated by, the opposition, they were formative in shaping the new regimes that followed the revolution.

Education

The most important vehicle in shaping the outlook of the emerging middle class was education, especially at the intermediate and secondary school level, which was the last broad education most Iraqis received. The history and social studies texts used at these levels indicate the views being imparted. Through the 1930s and until the British occupation of 1941, these texts were intensely pan-Arab and anti-British. Arab social customs and the great Arab periods of history were emphasized. Little stress was put on Iraq's links with its ancient Mesopotamian heritage. Loyalty to the throne and to the Iraqi state were encouraged, but the emphasis was on identification with, and loyalty to, a wider Arab world. During the British occupation of Iraq during the Second World War, the extreme nationalist and anti-British material was removed by the British; new texts were put into circulation, and a number of pan-Arab teachers were dismissed. These steps removed excesses, but the pan-Arab thrust continued. The following excerpt from a 1947 secondary text illustrates the point.

> [The Arabs] are one country and one nation, united by firm racial, spiritual, intellectual, cultural, social, and economic bonds, with a common legacy of religion, language, history, traditions, and customs. They have the same aspirations and hopes and they constitute one nation in which ethnic units have been overcome by Arabism and Islam. The area [of this nation] extends from Sind, in the east, to Andalusia, in the west, and the borders of Asia Minor, in the north, to Ethiopia and the Indian Ocean, in the south.[57]

Interestingly, the new texts also reflected the liberal, left-wing tendencies prevalent in the aftermath of the war, and delved into subjects like the inequality of landownership and the social problems associated with poverty and underdevelopment.

> The primary foundation of agricultural progress is the distribution of agricultural land to those who actually till it. This is to encourage feelings of ownership and stability. . . . However, the land in most of Iraq is not distributed in this just manner, a factor constituting one of [the country's] biggest problems, one which extends to the economic system where it has a bad effect on agricultural progress, and which prevents the growth of social institutions and the reform of the Iraqi village. . . . A reasonable solution to this problem is probably the most important factor in the economic, social, and political progress in Iraq.[58]

As these examples show, nationalist and leftist thought had captured the field even in the area of secondary education. Despite the diversification of education in the 1950s, the regime appears to have put insufficient thought into the philosophy and direction of its social studies curriculum.

The Press

A second important influence in shaping the intellectual direction of the new literate class was the press. Given the limitations of higher education and the paucity of dramas, novels, and other art forms, the press was the main channel of scientific and cultural knowledge for the public. From the first, the publications of the political press—particularly the opposition press—were the best known and most widely read. Their mainstay was criticism of the government, often biting, but they also ran columns on political subjects and translated articles from the foreign press. Newspapers helped to forge a new Arabic prose style, simpler and more straightforward than the complex, rhymed prose in which traditional works had been written, and closer to spoken Arabic. This style, pioneered in the 1930s, was greatly influenced by the Egyptian press.

The paper that did the most to shape public opinion, especially among the youth, was *al-Ahālī,* whose first issue appeared in February 1932. The paper was edited at first by a Marxist, ʿAbd al-Qādir Ismāʿīl, and later by the members of the Ahālī group. It incorporated the views of Marxists, liberals, Fabian socialists, and reformers, and represented a great leap forward not only in the quality of political thought, but in the depth and breadth of ideas offered to the reading public. *Al-Ahālī* became the organ of the National Democratic Party after the Second World War, espousing greater political freedom, parliamentary democracy, and a moderate socialism. In 1946 it was joined by the opposition paper *Liwāʾ-l-Istiqlāl,* organ of the Istiqlāl Party. Edited mainly by Fāʾiq al-Sāmarrāʾī, *Liwāʾ-l-Istiqlāl* was anti-imperialist and espoused strong pan-Arab views.

These opposition dailies were complemented by a number of other newspapers, journals, dailies, weeklies, and monthlies, which came and went depending on the extent of government censorship and the size of their readership. These too were dominated by nationalist and especially by leftist thought. However, beginning in the 1930s, a nonpolitical press developed as well. Professional in outlook and organization and independent in its views, the nonpolitical press was dedicated mainly to straight news coverage. By 1958 there were about thirty such publications in Iraq, with a total circulation of about 100,000. In addition to political subjects, these publications translated and published a wide variety of materials on science, technology, culture, and modern living.

Literature and Art

One of the most impressive developments of the 1950s was a renaissance in literature and art. In literature the short story made its debut (the novel was still rare); in poetry free verse took hold. Film, a wholly new medium of communication, was introduced, and painting and sculpture came into its own. These new forms owed much to European influence, but the content of the literature and art showed strong feelings for the indigenous culture. Above all, they reflected to a remarkable degree the social tensions involved in the country's transition from a traditional to a modern society. They conveyed the plight of the intellectual, who faced abrupt social change, the disintegration of old ties, and a kaleidoscope of different ideas and ideals, which rarely integrated well with traditional values and often contradicted them. The works of the 1950s are marked by several common themes—frustration at the slowness of change, alienation from outmoded traditions, and above all, a search for identity in a world of shifting values.[59]

The most popular of the new literary forms was the short story. Writers abandoned the traditional genre of the romantic adventure and wrote instead about the common man and woman and the plight of the individual in adjusting to the modern world. The first Iraqi short stories appeared in the 1930s. However, it was the postwar generation that reflected the new trends most clearly. Followers of the realistic school, they rebelled against the tyranny of the family, the customary status of women, and the individual's alienation from government and society. One of the most outstanding of these short-story writers was 'Abd al-Malik Nūrī (1921–), whose best-known work, *Nashīd al-Arḍ* (Song of the Earth), depicts the life of the poor and is characterized by solitude, loneliness, and alienation.[60] Nūrī's *South Wind* is the story of a mother who protects her blind daughter. The family takes refuge in the belief that a saint will miraculously restore the daughter's sight, but on the way to the saint, salvation is snatched from mother and daughter by an act of fate. The story is striking in its depiction of poverty and an almost unbearable physical environment.

Closely akin to Nūrī was Fu'ād al-Takarlī (1927–), who brutally attacked the customs of his elders. In *al-Ākharīn* (The Others),[61] first published in 1954, the heroine abandons her mother on her deathbed because love of family is a symbol of the dying past. She joins a group of demonstrators fighting for social justice, the wave of the future. These two writers are the best known; a number of others wrote on the same themes. Safīrah Ḥāfiẓ (1931–) wrote as a woman about women and the harshness they endured in traditional society.

Iraq's modern cinema explored the same themes. Yūsuf al-‘Ānī, a left-wing playwright and actor, was Iraq's best-known cinematographer in this period. His finest film, *Sa‘īd Effendi* (produced in 1956), criticized the old regime, depicting life and customs among Baghdad's lower middle class. It is a well-produced work of film art.[62]

Iraq's modern poets, long regarded as among the best in the Arab world, were among the first to break with the past. As early as the Ottoman period, Jamīl Ṣidqī-l-Zahāwī and Ma‘rūf al-Raṣāfī, struck a new path. Their poetry shifted from preoccupation with style for its own sake to the use of language to communicate; from the idealized bedouin themes of courage and honor and praise of rulers to social and political topics. The focus of attention shifted from the elite to the ordinary people.[63] Muḥammad Mahdī-l-Jawāhirī (1900–), a leftist, wrote critiques of social and political repression under the old regime.

These poets were overtaken in the early 1950s by a new group that created a virtual revolution in poetic form by introducing the free verse style, which soon spread to the rest of the Arab world. Their themes were rebellion against authority, the need for freedom, and the desire to express one's inner feelings (closely identified with Arab nationalism).[64] One of the most important of these new poets was a woman, Nāzik al-Malā'ikah (1923–). She has written of the problems of women, their search for love and companionship, and their struggle for liberation.[65] Even more influential was Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb (1926–1964), who passed through several stages in his writing—romantic, realist, and symbolist. Al-Sayyāb stressed the malaise of the Arabs and their anxiety about the future, describing the loss of innocence and purpose as Arabs and Iraqis became entangled in Western civilization.[66] ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī (1926–), a socialist poet, concentrated on portraying real life, with emphasis on the class struggle and the oppressed masses, but he also reflected the broader theme of a search for Arab identity.[67] This is perhaps most poignantly expressed in "Lovers in Exile," in which Arabs are described as going "from exile to exile, from door to door . . . We die, our train missed for eternity."[68]

The literary and poetic renaissance was accompanied by a revival of the visual arts. Modern Iraqi art showed three strong tendencies: a total break with traditional forms; a concentration on ordinary people, urban and rural; and a renewal of Iraq's heritage from ancient and classical times (also reflected by some of the poets). Jawād Salīm (1920–1961), Iraq's best known painter and sculptor, returned to Babylonian and Sumerian themes in his work, although he also dealt with contemporary people and places. Fā'iq Haṣan (1914–) was another major painter whose work, sometimes abstract, concentrated on the ordinary Iraqi. Although many of his paintings showed the village and countryside, he popularized the life of the Baghdad cafe with its water pipes and trictrac players.[69] Virtually all of these writers and artists were critics of the regime; a number were arrested or exiled. Al-Sayyāb, who became first a Communist and then an Arab nationalist, suffered exile and imprisonment; al-Bayātī spent many years abroad.

By 1958, the fabric of traditional society was beginning to unravel under the impact of oil wealth, economic development, urbanization, and education. A new, educated generation had emerged, shaped by intellectual and cultural influences different from and inimical to those of the established regime. Some progress had been made in building a unified Iraqi state, and some members of Iraq's communities had been integrated at the middle and upper levels of society, yet little had been done to improve the human condition or to develop a social or cultural basis for the Iraqi nation-state. In these areas, no less than in the political arena, the seeds of revolution were sown in the postwar years.

6

The Revolution Begins: The Qāsim Era, 1958–1963

The military coup that finally overthrew the monarchy and inaugurated a new era in Iraqi history succeeded more because of luck and audacity than as a result of long planning or extensive organization. The coup was unquestionably a reflection of deep-seated discontent among officers and among civilian politicians with the regime's foreign policy and its slowness to reform. However, the military men, who were particularly susceptible to slogans from Radio Cairo, gave far more thought to the overthrow of the existing regime than to what would replace it. Due to internal disagreements and jealousies among the Free Officers, as the revolutionary movement among the military came to be called, the military action, when it occurred, was the work of only a few men; it was not a concerted effort by a cohesive military group with decided political ideas. Herein lay the source of most of the new regime's difficulties.

The Free Officers

The military had remained aloof from politics in the early postwar years, mainly because of the removal of the Rashīd ʻĀlī supporters during the war and the presence of a British military mission until 1948, but trouble in the officer corps began again in 1952. That year's riots against the regime played a role in crystallizing discontent among the officers, but what really set them thinking about a coup was the successful military revolt on the Nile. As in 1941, the focus of discontent was the regime's foreign policy. Positive neutrality had acquired many adherents in the army since the start of the Arab cold war, and officers and civilians alike had been increasingly impressed with what Nāṣir had achieved through nonalignment. These sentiments were reinforced during 1955 and 1956 by the conclusion of the Baghdad Pact, Radio Cairo's propaganda war (which had widespread impact on the barracks), and above all, the Suez crisis of 1956.

The first revolutionary cell in the officer corps was apparently organized as early as September 1952 by Rif'at al-Ḥājj Sirrī, a nephew of Jamīl al-Midfa'ī. By 1954 his activities had spawned a number of small cells, independent of one another and lacking any central organization. In the summer of 1956, however, the movement (such as it was) attracted the attention of Chief of Staff Rafīq 'Ārif, who took action against those involved, transferring some and demoting others. Why 'Ārif did not take more drastic measures must remain a matter of speculation. It is possible that he did not want to alienate the younger officers from the regime entirely or to repeat the weakening of the officer corps that had followed the Rashīd 'Ālī affair. His action did break up the movement temporarily and dispersed its leaders.[1]

The movement revived in the autumn of 1956 under the impetus of the Suez crisis. Several new groups were formed, some apparently influenced by the liberal democratic program of the NDP, and others influenced by the Communists. Most were pan-Arab in orientation. A number of these groups eventually coalesced into the Baghdad Organization, headed by Muḥyī-l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd. This group formed the nucleus of the Free Officers' executive committee. Another circle, headed by 'Abd al-Karīm Qāsim, merged with the Baghdad Organization in 1957. Qāsim became head of the combined group because of his seniority in rank. The group had contacts with junior officers and with other cells in various places, but in 1957 the Free Officers still numbered only between 170 and 200. They were still fairly unorganized, with separate groups existing in various cities.[2]

The fourteen[3] members of the central committee may be taken as fairly representative of the movement. The overwhelming majority were Arab *sunnī*. There were only two *shī'ah* and no Kurds, although a few Kurds joined the movement to represent Kurdish views. Most came from the middle or lower middle class, although three—Qāsim and the two 'Ārifs, 'Abd al-Salām and 'Abd al-Raḥman—came from poor families. One, Nājī Ṭālib, was the son of a large landowner. All had been educated at the Baghdad Military Academy; one, Qāsim, had been a schoolteacher first. The majority were Staff College graduates. Five had studied in England, but they were a distinct minority. Three were brigadiers; nine were colonels; two were majors.[4] All belonged to the military wing of the new professional middle class, at odds with the structure and policy of the old regime.

This committee functioned as the executive and planning arm of the Free Officers, but there was apparently little cohesion of aims and policy among its members. There was considerable disagreement on the timing and tactics of the coup,[5] though all seemed to have agreed on the overthrow of the regime, the establishment of a republic, and a trial of the crown prince and Nūrī. Most did not wish to kill the young king, but this decision was taken out of their hands by actual events. The committee discussed what was to take the place of the old regime, but no consensus appears to have emerged on particulars. As with most clandestine groups, agreement on what was to be discarded was easier than agreement on a substitute. It was understood that the central organization would function as a revolutionary command council (RCC) on the Egyptian model until a more democratic form of government could emerge, and that a sovereignty council would be formed.[6]

According to one member of the group, a general program was drawn up. This was more a statement of principles than a program of action, and it left ample room for disagreement on implementation. The program called for (1) national freedom; (2) the struggle against imperialism and an end to pacts and foreign bases; (3) the removal of feudalism and the freedom of the peasants from exploitation; (4) the removal of reactionaries and an end to the monarchy, together with the announcement of a republic; (5) freedom, democracy, a constitution, and the establishment of a democratic regime; (6) complete recognition of the national rights of the Kurds and other minorities within the framework of national unity; (7) social justice; (8) peace; (9) positive neutrality; (10) brotherly cooperation with all Arab countries and support for the Arab struggle against imperialism; (11) Arab unity; (12) the establishment of friendly relations with all countries in accord with the interests of the country and its positive neutrality; and (13) the return of Palestine to its people.[7] As these points indicate, the program was overwhelmingly concerned with foreign policy. Some kind of land reform was contemplated, but beyond the call for social justice, economic and social goals were vague in the extreme. An eventual return to civilian democratic rule was expected, but not spelled out in any detail.

Because of the dangers involved in meetings of the clandestine movement, and because some members were stationed outside Baghdad, not all committee members met regularly. This ultimately led to a lack of coordination. Several coups were planned before 14 July, but they did not take place either because circumstances were not right or because officers were hesitant. As time went on, some of the younger officers, led by 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif, grew restive. Personal tensions within the group reached a breaking point, and several members withdrew.[8]

The 14 July Coup

The coup that finally took place on 14 July was essentially the work of two men, Qāsim and 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif, and a handful of strategically placed followers. A close working relationship between the two men apparently developed in Jordan in 1956, when 'Ārif was head of a battalion under Qāsim's command. Qāsim disclosed his revolutionary aims to 'Ārif, who had impressed Qāsim by his boldness and courage. Qāsim seems to have recognized in 'Ārif a man who would not hesitate to take the necessary measures when the time came. Upon their return to Baghdad, Qāsim brought ʿĀrif into the central committee. However, the actual planning of the July coup did not take place in Baghdad but in Jalawlā' northeast of Baghdad, where both men were stationed in 1958.

The coup was triggered by the unexpected revolt in Lebanon against the pro-Western regime of President Shamʿūn, and the resulting fear in Baghdad and Amman that the revolt might spread to Jordan. The Twentieth Brigade, in which ʿĀrif headed a battalion, received orders to proceed to Jordan to strengthen King Ḥusayn's forces. ʿĀrif and Qāsim, the latter in charge of the Nineteenth Brigade, decided to act. The central committee, aware of the marching orders, attempted to meet several times to plan the coup, and to apportion positions in the new government to follow it. Disagreements prevented their plans from reaching fruition on one occasion; on a second, the meeting broke up under unexplained circumstances. Some later suspected Qāsim of manipulating the situation in order to take charge of the movement himself.[9] In any event, only the handful of officers who were to take part in the coup were informed. ʿĀrif, with his orders, was to move on Baghdad. Qāsim was to remain with his brigade at Jalawlā' as a backup force in case resistance was encountered and move slowly to the city later on.

By a series of clever maneuvers, ʿĀrif was able to neutralize opposition to the coup within the Twentieth Brigade. With the cooperation of Colonel ʿAbd al-Laṭīf al-Darrājī, who was the commander of the First Battalion, a friend, and a Free Officer, ʿĀrif took charge of the brigade himself and began the march on Baghdad. In the early hours of 14 July, he occupied the broadcasting station that became his headquarters. ʿĀrif personally made the first announcement of the revolution on the radio, on behalf of the commander of the armed forces (whose name was left unmentioned). He denounced imperialism and the clique in office; proclaimed a new republic and the end of the old regime, identified as al-Riḥāb Palace and Nūrī al-Saʿīd; announced a temporary sovereignty council of three members to assume the duties of the presidency; and promised a future election for a new president.

Meanwhile, two detachments of his own battalion were dispatched, one to al-Riḥāb Palace to deal with the king and the crown prince, and the other to Nūrī's residence. There is still some doubt as to what orders were given to the contingents sent to al-Riḥāb Palace, but it is clear that the crown prince did not resist, despite the desire of the head of the royal brigade to do so. Had the crack royal brigade resisted, the revolt might have been put down then and there. As it was, reinforcements among the Free Officers were needed to take the palace. But the crown prince, partly because of a failure of will and partly to save his life and that of the king, ordered no resistance. This sealed his fate and that of the royal family. At about 8:00 A.M., the king, the crown prince, and the rest of the family were leaving the palace through the kitchen door when a young captain, who was not a member of the Free Officers' group, opened fire. Others joined in, and in a confusion of shots they were killed.[10] This ended any hope of restoring the Hāshimite dynasty in Iraq. The force that went to Nūrī's house was less successful. Nūrī had been awakened by the sound of shooting and had managed to escape undetected from the river side of his house in a motor launch. His escape put the success of the coup in some doubt, as it raised the possibilities of intervention by the old regime's allies.

About noon on 14 July, Qāsim arrived in Baghdad with his forces and, significantly, set up his headquarters in the Ministry of Defense. His late arrival gave color to suspicions that he was waiting to see if the coup would succeed before advancing. Whatever his reason, the fact is that the revolution itself was carried out by 'Ārif, not Qāsim, and it was not long before 'Ārif was to take full advantage of this. Even with the arrival of Qāsim, however, the officers were still in a precarious situation. The attitude of the remainder of the army and of the regime's allies was unknown. Internal resistance in the army did not, in fact, materialize. 'Umar 'Alī, commander of the First Division in al-Dīwāniyyah, appears to have contemplated some action, but he finally decided to wait. Iraq's allies were in the same quandary. King Ḥusayn, who had tried to warn Chief of Staff Rafīq 'Ārif of the Free Officers' movement some two weeks earlier, wanted to intervene, but he too hesitated, because of his own internal situation and because of pressure from the British.[11]

The coup was not complete until the capture of Nūrī. A reward of ID 10,000 was posted, and a massive search began. On 15 July he was recognized in a street in al-Battāwīn, a quarter in Baghdad, as he was trying to escape from the house of a friend disguised in a woman's black cloak. Nūrī and the woman accompanying him were shot on the spot. His body was taken to the Ministry of Defense and quietly buried in the cemetery at Bāb al-Mu'aẓẓam that night.

One set of problems had been solved for the new leaders, but another was beginning. For most of the early hours of the revolution, 'Ārif, an impetuous man, was in control. The first pronouncements of the revolution, promising freedom and an election, had inspired confidence, but 'Ārif soon urged the liquidation of traitors. Uncontrollable mobs surged through Baghdad. The body of 'Abd al-Ilāh was taken from the palace, mutilated, and dragged through the streets until it was finally hung at the gate of the Ministry of Defense. Several Jordanian ministers and U.S. businessmen staying at the Baghdad Hotel fell into the hands of the mob and were also killed. Finally, Qāsim imposed a curfew, which brought some order out of chaos but did not entirely end the barbarities. The day after Nūrī's burial, his body was disinterred by the mob and also dragged through the streets. The overwhelming majority of Iraqis regarded these deeds with horror and disgust. They caused irreparable damage to Iraq's international reputation and marred the image of the revolution in the minds of many of its own people.

During his first pronouncements after the capture of Baghdad, ʻĀrif identified the personnel of the new government, agreed on by Qāsim and ʻĀrif himself. At its head was a three-man sovereignty council designed to appease Iraq's three major communities, the *shīʻah,* the Kurds, and the Arab *sunn'ī*s. Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, the *shīʻī,* was the former head of the Istiqlāl Party and a member of the United National Front; Khālid al-Naqshabandī, the Kurd, was a former officer and governor of Arbīl. Former general Najīb al-Rubayʻī, the Arab *sunnī,* was made head of the council in recognition of his tacit support of the Free Officers' movement, and because a senior army figure would give the government prestige.

A cabinet, remarkable for its coverage of the opposition, was also announced. It included two National Democratic Party representatives, one member of al-Istiqlāl, one Baʻth representative, and one Marxist. It also included a strong Kurd and a liberal Arab nationalist.[12] Aside from Qāsim and ʻĀrif, only one Free Officer, Nājī Ṭālib, was given a cabinet post (social affairs). The lion's share of power went to Qāsim, who became prime minister and minister of defense, while retaining his position as commander in chief of the armed forces; and ʻĀrif, who became deputy prime minister and minister of interior, as well as deputy commander in chief. The cabinet was a master stroke that showed considerable contact with the politicians. It propitiated the entire opposition movement, and because of the high regard that most of the opposition leaders commanded, it lent the regime a legitimacy and respect that would have been difficult to achieve as a mere army movement.

Thirteen days after the revolution, a temporary constitution was announced, pending a permanent organic law to be promulgated after a free referendum.[13] According to this document the state was a republic; Iraq was part of the Arab nation; and Islam was the religion of state. The Council of Sovereignty was to carry out the powers of the presidency, and the powers of legislation were vested in the Council of Ministers, with the approval of the sovereignty council. The executive function was vested in the Council of Ministers collectively and in some cases in the ministers individually.

The constitution kept some of the trappings of the previous regime, such as the cabinet, but it put an end to parliament, the main stronghold of the wealthy conservative elements and the chief manipulative device by which the old regime had given legal sanction to its rule. However, the constitution was most important for what it left unsaid. Nothing was mentioned, for example, about how the Council of Ministers was to be appointed and dismissed. Nor did it disentangle the army from politics, for the prime minister continued to hold a key office in the military, as did his junior colleague. The constitution merely masked the real power structure that was emerging—joint rule by two men behind a cabinet of respected political leaders who did not yet suspect what was in store for them.

The revolutionary command council originally planned by the fourteen did not materialize. This failure naturally alienated the Free Officers, who had done so much to prepare the ground for revolution in the army. A more important source of resentment was that many Free Officers in subordinate positions now had to take orders from ʿĀrif, their junior in rank, and a man whose presence in their committee some had originally opposed. The disaffection of the Free Officers sowed the seeds of much future discord, but this was not the cause of the first rift in the revolutionary front. A struggle for power between the two main protagonists of the coup began no less than five days after the stunning revolt that put the country in their hands.

Struggle for Power

The differences between Qāsim and ʿĀrif soon crystallized around a key policy question—union with Egypt. ʿĀrif, encouraged by the Baʿth and the Arab nationalists, favored prompt union; Qāsim was more cautious in his approach to this issue. Their policy differences soon led to a struggle for the leadership of the revolution. Despite the fact that the revolt had been a joint effort made in Qāsim's name, ʿĀrif soon began to put himself in the limelight. In a widely publicized tour of the provinces, ʿĀrif made ill-considered speeches strongly advocating union with the UAR. He referred frequently to Nāṣir, while scarcely mentioning Qāsim.

The most serious episode took place in Syria four or five days after the coup. ʿĀrif was sent to Damascus as head of a delegation to negotiate with Nāṣir for his support in case of a counterrevolutionary attack. ʿĀrif apparently discussed with Nāṣir the possibility of Iraq joining the UAR and reportedly referred to Qāsim as the "Naqīb" of the Iraqi revolution, a reference to Muḥammad al-Naqīb, the Egyptian general who had challenged Nāṣir's leadership of the Egyptian revolution and had been removed by Nāṣir. This conversation was soon reported to Qāsim, who drew his own conclusions and began to make his plans. There is no evidence that Qāsim was opposed to better relations with other Arab countries and possibly even a federation with the UAR, but ʿĀrif's challenge to his leadership and the precipitous and untimely drive for unity forced Qāsim into action.

Qāsim's patient and clever manipulation of affairs behind the scenes assured his success in the ensuing power struggle. His response to ʿĀrif's challenge was the first evidence of the political style that would mark his regime. Qāsim ignored ʿĀrif's speechmaking, certain that it would alienate people, and at the same time began to encourage support for himself among the officers. He found opponents of unity among the Communists, who organized demonstrations in favor of Qāsim and against immediate union. In September, after ʿĀrif had made another bid for leadership by reviving the idea of the RCC in a public speech,

'Abd al-Karīm Qāsīm (right).

Qāsim moved to retire 'Ārif from his post as deputy commander of the armed forces. On 30 September, Qāsim also removed 'Ārif from his posts as deputy prime minister and minister of interior.

Qāsim now attempted to remove 'Ārif from the country by offering him an appointment as ambassador to Bonn. 'Ārif refused. On 11 October, Qāsim invited 'Ārif to his office in a final attempt to persuade him to leave. The historic meeting, attended by other officers from time to time, lasted all day as the clash between the two men continued. Late in the afternoon, Qāsim saw 'Ārif remove his pistol from his belt. Qāsim maintained that 'Ārif was going to assassinate him; 'Ārif said that he was going to commit suicide. The outcome of the encounter was that 'Ārif agreed to leave for Bonn temporarily.[14] He returned to Baghdad on 4 November, amidst rumors of an attempted coup against the regime. This time Qāsim lost his patience. On 5 November, 'Ārif was arrested on charges of attempting to assassinate Qāsim and of trying to overthrow the government. A month later he was delivered to the court. Thus began the trial that was to reveal to the world many of the secrets of the revolution.[15] Although 'Ārif denied all charges, he was sentenced to death. The sentence was commuted to life imprisonment on the recommendation of the court.

The personal aspects of the struggle for power must not obscure the genuine policy issues that were involved. The fragmentation of the opposition under the old regime played a role in the struggle. All elements in the opposition movement came to the fore to jockey for position, rapidly eroding the unity of the new regime and reducing the country to near chaos. The political instability of the revolutionary governments and the cycle of coups that became their hallmark can be traced to this early struggle.

The chief participants can easily be identified. The Arab nationalists, who favored the ideal of pan-Arabism, continued the tradition of the older Istiqlāl but drew their inspiration primarily from the Egyptian revolution and often looked to Nāṣir for leadership. Closely allied with the Arab nationalists and drawing on much of the same support was the Ba'th Party. The major impetus for the Ba'th Party's growth came after the 1958 coup, when it utilized a surge of Arab nationalist sentiment to organize and gain adherents. The Ba'th shared the goal of Arab unity with the Arab nationalists, but Nāṣir was not their hero. The Ba'th Party looked instead toward Syria, where the party had originated and where its firmest base lay. Its strong organization and its ideology made it a much more effective competitor in the struggle for power than the amorphous Arab nationalist group.

The leading group on the left was clearly the Communist Party, which surfaced again in the postrevolutionary euphoria. The Communists continued to make inroads among the dispossessed, the *shī'ah,* the Kurds, and the intelligentsia. Qāsim appeared to be leaning toward the other main contender on the left, the National Democratic Party. Unfortunately, the party was no better organized than it had been in Nūrī's day, and it soon split between those supporting and those opposing Qāsim.

These four groups vied with each other for the dominant position in the state. The struggle perpetuated the old polarization of the intelligentsia between the nationalists and the leftists, but this time with a difference that boded ill for the future. Whereas the older opposition groups—mainly the Istiqlāl and the NDP—had been rooted in liberal traditions, the Ba'th and the Communists were both clandestine, highly organized groups, committed to a total monopoly of power by ruthless means if necessary. With 'Ārif gone, the situation of the Arab nationalists and the Ba'thists deteriorated, and both groups soon attempted to recoup their losses. The fierce struggle of the next year and a half was precipitated by nationalist efforts to return to power by removing Qāsim. Qāsim's increased reliance on the left was a response to this challenge. The struggle left scars that remain today. It generated a fear of chaos on the part of successive governments that soon ended any hope of returning to a democratic system. It polarized the ruling elite between nationalists and leftists; and it left a legacy of escalating violence and ruthlessness that worsened as time went on.

The Rashīd 'Ālī Challenge

The struggle begun under 'Ārif continued under the banner of an unlikely candidate, Rashīd 'Ālī al-Kaylānī, who had returned to Baghdad after seventeen years of exile. Rashīd 'Ālī had spent the latter part of his exile in Cairo, where he had been in touch with Nāṣir. His home soon became a gathering place for the two groups that had previously supported him—the Arab nationalists in the army and the tribal leaders. The former now included Ba'thists as well as officers who had supported 'Ārif. The tribal leaders were less interested in nationalism than in preventing Communist influence and land reform. News reached Qāsim that this group was planning a coup for 9 December, and he devised a counterplot to smoke out his enemies. Rashīd ʻĀlī's nephew and one of his agents were implicated by two of Qāsim's informers, and they were arrested on 9 December and brought to trial together with Rashīd ʻĀlī. Rashīd ʻĀlī was set free for lack of evidence; the other two, who felt unjustly accused of a crime for which Rashīd ʻĀlī had gone free, asked for a second hearing. This time more information was revealed, including testimony that weapons and money had been received from the UAR and that Rashīd ʻĀlī had been working for a union with Nāṣir. Rashīd ʻĀlī was sentenced to death but never executed.[16]

This sentence, together with mounting discontent on the part of Arab nationalists, finally induced the nationalist politicians in the cabinet to resign. In February 1959, Baʻthist Fu'ād al-Rikābī; Ṣaddīq Shanshal, the Istiqlāl representative; nationalists Nājī Ṭālib and ʻAbd al-Jabbār Jūmard; and Kurdish ministers Bābā ʻAlī and Ṣāliḥ Maḥmūd left in a bloc. Their place was quickly filled by leftists supported by Qāsim, including NDP member Ḥusayn Jamīl.

Outside of the government, the Communists moved to take control. They sent cables to Qāsim urging death for ʻĀrif and other traitors, and addressing him as Qāsim, the Sole Leader. They infiltrated key organizations, including the broadcasting station, the press, and the proliferating professional associations. The officer corps remained a nationalist stronghold, although the Communists made inroads there as well. To compensate for their weakness in the military, the Communists attempted to capture the Popular Resistance Force, a civil militia. Established in August 1959, this group was modeled on the civil militia forces of Communist countries.[17]

The Mosul Revolt

This rising tide of Communist influence, which Qāsim supported, provoked the next—and the most serious—nationalist uprising, the Mosul revolt. Led by Arab nationalists, the revolt was actually inspired by a mixture of motives. It was as much anti-Communist as it was pronationalist. The main leaders of the revolt, ʻAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shawwāf, commander of the Mosul garrison; Nāẓim al-Ṭabaqjalī, head of the Second Division in Kirkūk; and Rifʻat al-Ḥājj Sirrī, then chief of military intelligence, all came from conservative, well-known Arab *sunnī* families with little to gain from communism.[18] As members of the Free Officers movement, they resented the fact that no RCC had been created. They had been shunted aside to less important posts while Qāsim and his cronies made the decisions, and feared that the fate of ʻĀrif would be theirs as well if they did not act soon.

Tentative plans for a coup had been laid by the nationalist officers and others, but their hand was forced prematurely by the leftists and Qāsim. The Peace Partisans, led by ʻAzīz Sharīf, announced that they would commemorate their founding in Mosul on 6 March 1959. Already suspicious of a coup, Qāsim agreed, undoubtedly intending to intimidate his enemies. Peace Partisans and their Communist supporters poured into Mosul from all over Iraq, and by 6 March they numbered about 250,000. The nationalist officers decided to act. Plans had already been made for the cooperation of two other groups outside of the army: the Shammar tribe surrounding Mosul and the UAR. Aḥmad ʻAjīl al-Yāwir, leader of the Shammar and one of Iraq's largest landowners, was an anti-Communist who feared agrarian reform. The UAR, which was by now openly hostile to Qāsim, had arranged to send arms and a radio transmitter from across the Syrian border. Although the Peace Partisans rally passed without a major outbreak, on the following day demonstrations, attacks, and counterattacks escalated between the Communists and the nationalists, now reinforced by Shammar tribesmen. On 8 March the leading Communists were rounded up and detained by al-Shawwāf, and the revolt was proclaimed. Fighting broke out in earnest as the Communists and their supporters marched toward the camp where their colleagues were detained. They were met by fire from al-Shawwāf's troops.

From the start, the revolt suffered from haste and poor planning. Only two units from outside Mosul city, those in Arbīl and ʻAqrah, joined al-Shawwāf. The radio transmitter from Syria did not arrive in time to announce the revolt, and when it did arrive the signal was weak. An attempt to bomb the broadcasting station in Baghdad on 8 March failed. Above all, al-Shawwāf's colleagues, Sirrī and al-Ṭabaqjalī, did not come to his aid. On 9 March, Qāsim sent airplanes to bomb al-Shawwāf's headquarters. Al-Shawwāf was wounded in the attack, and at the hospital where he went to have his wound dressed, he was killed by a Kurdish medical dresser. Shortly thereafter, the movement collapsed. Al-Shawwāf's officers were either killed in the affray or fled to Syria.[19]

For Mosul, the aftermath of the revolt was far worse than the rebellion itself. As the Shammar tribes faded into the desert, the Kurds looted the city and attacked the populace. The Communists and the Peace Partisans massacred the nationalists and some of the well-to-do Mosul families, and looted their houses. Hundreds of people were killed, the overwhelming majority of them Arab nationalists. An informal court was established by some Communists, and at least seventeen people, including some with no connection with the revolt, were summarily executed. All kinds of animosities festering beneath the surface erupted. Christians killed Muslims, Kurds attacked Arabs, and the poor looted the rich. Al-Ṭabaqjalī, Sirrī, and others were taken into custody by Qāsim and brought to trial. They were sentenced to death, and on 20 September 1959, under pressure from the Communists, they and eleven other officers were executed. Others had met the same fate earlier.

The Baʻth Attempt

The failure of the Mosul rebellion, the execution of its perpetrators, and the engulfing tide of communism had convinced Fu'ād al-Rikābī and the hierarchy of the Baʻth Party that the only way out was to eliminate Qāsim himself. Since their forces in the army had been removed or arrested, a coup was no longer feasible; assassination, an act defended later as patriotic, seemed the only course of action.[20] In the spring of 1959, a group of young Ba'thists, including Ṣaddām Ḥusayn and 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shaykhlī (later to play a role in bringing the Ba'th to power in 1968), were selected to train for the assignment. The plan was also discussed with Ṣaddīq Shanshal and some officers. Colonel Ṣāliḥ Mahdī 'Ammāsh and General al-Rubay'ī agreed to play key roles.[21] The plot was to shoot Qāsim as he passed through Rashīd Street in his car on 7 October.

The group did succeed in wounding Qāsim, but he was soon discovered by a passerby, who rushed him to the hospital. Within weeks, Qāsim had recovered. Some of the Ba'thists managed to escape to Syria, including al-Shaykhlī, Ḥusayn, and al-Rikābī, but seventy-eight others were rounded up and taken to court where they courageously defended their acts.[22] Indeed, it was the trial and the testimony of the participants, especially key organizer Ayyād Sa'īd Thābit, that first brought the Ba'th national attention. Some of the conspirators were acquitted; others were given the death sentence and imprisoned. None of the death sentences were carried out.

The Communist Challenge

The collapse of the nationalist attempts against the Qāsim regime[23] left the Communist Party as the most powerful and influential political force in the country. Well before the Ba'th attempt, they had moved to consolidate their already impressive position. Leftist officers replaced the commanders responsible for the revolt in the north. A mammoth purge was carried out in the army and in the bureaucracy under Communist influence, and in April 1959 the Communists began a campaign for the licensing of political parties and for representation within the cabinet. On 13 July, Nazīhah al-Dulaymī, a woman doctor and a Communist, was appointed minister of municipalities. 'Awnī Yūsuf, a Kurd, was made minister of housing and works; Fayṣal al-Sāmir became minister of guidance. Both were pro-Communist. These appointments shifted the cabinet toward the radical left.

Communist pressure was also applied to reorient foreign policy. On 24 March 1959, two weeks after the Mosul revolt, Qāsim announced Iraq's withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact, a move that had long been expected. Ties were formed with the Soviet Union, which had been permitted to reopen its embassy in Baghdad immediately following the overthrow of the old regime. On 16 March 1959 Iraq signed an extensive economic agreement with Moscow. It provided Iraq with a loan of 550 million rubles (ID 48 million) for forty-three industrial and development projects. A year later this sum was increased by 180 million rubles (ID 15.8 million). The funds were to be used for industrial equipment for steel, electrical, glass, and textile industries; railway projects; oil exploration; technical training; and help with the agrarian reform program.[24] Russian technicians increasingly replaced the departing Americans and British. Meanwhile, a series of cultural exchanges took place. By 1959 there were almost 800 Iraqi students studying in the USSR, mostly at Soviet expense. Eastern bloc films and books were imported. Tourism to these countries was encouraged, as were exchanges of professional groups.

These cultural and educational exchanges were paralleled by arms deliveries, which would henceforth tie Iraq's military establishment to the Soviet Union, rather than to the West. Late in 1958 a squadron of MIG-15 fighters was delivered, followed by later deliveries of MIG-17s and MIG-21s, transport aircraft, and helicopters. In February 1959 the first deliveries of 100 to 150 Soviet tanks took place. More followed. The Iraqi air force was reorganized and modernized under Soviet aegis.[25]

Even more startling was the change in relations with the UAR. The open quarrel between these two countries became a major feature of the Qāsim period. Relations reached a point just as low as they had been under the old regime. The propaganda war began again, with Iraqis calling Nāṣir the new "Pharaoh of the Nile," and Egyptians calling Qāsim the "divider" of Iraq, a pun on his name, which means divider in Arabic.

Despite their political successes, the Communists felt that their position had to be consolidated quickly before, as had so often happened, the regime could turn against them and even liquidate them. They determined to eliminate their enemies first. Private vendettas were pursued in various quarters of Baghdad between nationalists and Communists; Communists intimidated nationalist civil servants; and the Popular Resistance Force, now under virtual Communist control, harassed the populace. But the main thrust of renewed Communist efforts was in Kirkūk in the summer of 1959. Flushed by the success they had achieved in Mosul, the Communists attempted to achieve a similar victory in Kirkūk.

Kirkūk, the Communists reckoned, would be an ideal location for the intimidation of their enemies. The leading families in the city were Turcoman. They formed a well-educated, relatively conservative group of upper- and middle-class bureaucrats, merchants, landowners, and businessmen. The town was also inhabited by a substantial number of Kurds, many of whom had migrated there to work for the oil company as laborers. The Kurds would form a good base of support for the Communists, as many belonged to, or sympathized with, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), which was allied with the Communist Party. As the headquarters of the oil company, Kirkūk also had a large concentration of workers, who could be mobilized by the Communists as during the earlier Kirkūk episode in 1946.

The Communists announced that on 14 July, the first anniversary of the revolution, they would hold a rally and demonstration in Kirkūk, and they sent large numbers of their followers north. The enormous rally was intended to intimidate the conservative elements, but unfortunately, matters got out of hand. A bloody battle followed, in which at least thirty were killed and over a hundred injured.[26] As in the Mosul revolt, traditional animosities between the Kurds and the Turcomen erupted. The Kurds were responsible for most of the deaths.

The Kirkūk affair had an unexpectedly adverse effect on the fortunes of the Communists. On 20 July, Qāsim condemned the episode as barbaric, although he did not mention the Communists by name. A number of Communists responsible for the event were rounded up and sent to a special martial law court, where they were tried in secret. Some were sentenced to death. In Baghdad, Communist Party leaders denounced the criminal acts committed, but the damage had been done. The resulting coolness between the Communists and Qāsim caused a reduction (but by no means an elimination) of their influence in government.

The Communist press was gradually extinguished, and in September 1960, 'Abd al-Qādir Ismā'īl was brought to trial and sentenced to three months in prison. Ironically, he was tried under one of Nūrī's decree laws of 1954, still in effect. The Communist newspaper, *Ittiḥād al-Sha'b*, was banned for nine months and soon disappeared. Many Communists in high posts were gradually removed. The activities of the Popular Resistance Force were severely restricted, and all branches of the Peace Partisans were closed down. In February 1960, Kubbah was dismissed from the cabinet; in November he was followed by Yūsuf and al-Dulaymī. Despite these setbacks, the Communists still supported Qāsim. They remained his main support until the end of his regime, and a number of Communists retained their high posts.

The high tide of Communist activity has raised questions as to whether the party actually could have captured the government and whether they wished to do so. The first point is unlikely. There appeared to be a ground swell of Communist members in 1959 (between 20,000 to 25,000 officially registered members), but most of these were new recruits of doubtful—and untried—commitment. The hard core of the Iraq Communist Party (ICP) was much smaller (about 500 registered members in the mid-1950s).[27] They were largely helped into power by Qāsim to counteract the nationalist threat; to the end, they remained dependent upon him. Qāsim had no intention of relinquishing power, nor, despite their seeming visibility, did the party hold sufficiently strong appointments in the bureaucracy and the army to take power. Qāsim's supporters were preponderant in these crucial areas.

The party was also unequipped for the responsibility so suddenly thrust upon it. The leading historian of the ICP has shown that as Qāsim confronted the party with the challenge of supporting him or losing influence, divided counsels prevailed within the party's central committee. Realizing the inherent weakness of their new membership and fearing a bloody civil war if they pushed the issue too far, the majority backed away from confrontation and contented themselves with a supportive, rather than a dominant, role.[28] Even if the party had wished to take over the government, it would not have been able to accomplish this without the backing of its ally, the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union was opposed to a takeover. The Soviets did not wish to risk retaliation from the West, nor to assume economic responsibility for Iraq if the Western powers should use oil as a weapon against the regime. Above all, they were unwilling to risk their newly won position in Egypt for an as yet unknown regime in Iraq. In the meantime, Moscow urged the ICP to support Qāsim and the army behind him, and this was precisely the policy followed until the end of Qāsim's regime.[29]

The Rise and Fall of Licensed Parties

Partly in response to pressure from the Communists and partly to generate popular support for himself, Qāsim had announced on the anniversary of the revolution in 1959 that a permanent constitution would be drawn up and political parties licensed by January 1960. The constitution never materialized, but the political parties did.[30] On 1 January 1960, a new law of associations was proclaimed. Political parties would be allowed if they did not compromise national unity or the republic; army officers, government officials, and students were forbidden to join. The minister of interior was given wide discretion to grant or withhold licenses. However, an appeal could be made to the Court of Cassation if an application was rejected. The action was widely hailed as a return to much-needed normalcy, and as a step toward the promised freedom long sidetracked in the grisly power struggle. Nothing could have been further from the truth. Qāsim soon showed that he was not, in fact, interested in a genuine revival of political life, nor in the creation of any parties that could possibly challenge his leadership. Aided by splits among the civilian politicians, he began to play one party off against the other, in a way that Nūrī al-Sa'īd could only have admired.

Among the first to apply for licenses were two parties, both calling themselves Communist and advocating similar principles. One represented the Iraq Communist Party and its central committee; the other, unquestionably instigated by Qāsim, was headed by a dissident Communist Party member earlier dismissed from the ICP. The latter party was quickly granted a license, while the real Communist Party, despite its willingness to make concessions on its programs, was refused. The National Democratic Party was also split, but for different reasons. Although al-Jādirjī had known of the coup of 14 July beforehand, and seemed to have welcomed it, he was soon disillusioned by the military dictatorship that resulted, and hence he opposed Qāsim. His views were not shared by Muḥammad Ḥadīd, Qāsim's minister of finance and advisor, and the bitter difference of opinion between the two men soon divided the party. At an NDP conference held in May 1960, al-Jādirjī insisted that Ḥadīd resign from the government and that the party oppose Qāsim; Ḥadīd refused. Al-Jādirjī then won over the leadership of the NDP to his position, leaving Ḥadīd isolated. The NDP under al-Jādirjī was awarded a license, upon which Ḥadīd resigned both from the party and the government, and organized a party of his own, the National Progressive Party. Ḥadīd's new party was awarded a license in July 1960. It did not differ in aims from the NDP except in its position toward Qāsim, but like the spurious licensed Communist Party, it had no real support.

Several other parties appealed for licenses, with mixed results. The Kurdish Democratic Party received a license because of its favorable attitude toward Qāsim, but it was soon harassed when it took a position of opposition. Another left-wing group, led by ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Ibrāhīm and ʿAzīz Sharīf, applied and was refused. On the conservative side, two Muslim-oriented parties came into the field: the Islamic Party and the Taḥrīr (Liberation) Party. Both were refused licenses, but the former, which had the backing of the powerful *shīʿī* mujtahid Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm, appealed to the Court of Cassation and won its case. The Islamic Party took a decidedly anti-Communist line, and was increasingly hostile to Qāsim. Its license was withdrawn in 1961 and some of its leaders jailed. For obvious reasons, no Arab nationalist parties applied for licenses.

The parties initially issued programs and engaged in political activities, but it soon became clear that there was no hope of achieving power under Qāsim. As time went on and the projected constitution, with its presumed national legislature, did not appear, the parties gradually disappeared. In the spring of 1961, the KDP ceased to function (many of its central committee members were in jail); the rump Communist Party had never really functioned. In October 1961, al-Jādirjī closed the NDP and ceased publishing *al-Ahālī,* claiming that parties could not work under military government. By the end of 1961, therefore, the short-lived experiment had come to an end, although Ḥadīd continued his activities until July 1962, when he, too, finally gave up.

The collapse of the parties was accompanied by the withdrawal from the cabinet of all civilian politicians of any note. The last to go was Muṣṭafā ʿAlī, minister of justice and a personal friend of Qāsim, who resigned on 15 May 1961. Thereafter, Qāsim appointed either officers obedient to himself or the usual array of technocrats and civil servants with no political affiliations, so prevalent in all military regimes throughout the Middle East. Iraq settled down for the first time to a period of genuine dictatorship.

The coup, which only three years before had been hailed by almost all segments of the population as the beginning of a new era in Iraqi history, had so far brought disruption, chaos, and bloodshed. Like all revolutions, this one had released long-suppressed forces in Iraqi society—the old conflicts between sectarian, ethnic, and tribal groups that erupted in Kirkūk and Mosul. Another factor was the emergence of new groups that had been long in the making, but were still insufficiently organized to play a constructive role. The *ṣarīfah* dwellers and the urban poor, who often constituted "the street," could be mobilized for demonstrations but little more. The middle class, which inherited the revolution, was divided politically and had little actual experience in rule. The revolution was poorly planned and poorly led by the military. Had some consensus on aims and organization been achieved beforehand, had the Free Officers been drawn more effectively into policymaking after the revolution, some of the disruption might have been avoided. Worst of all, the two main protagonists of the coup lacked the experience and the sophistication needed for the tasks that immediately were thrown upon them. They were unable to bury their rivalry in the common cause. As a result of all these factors, Iraq was plunged into a long period of instability. Instability became the hallmark of the following revolutionary decade.

Social and Economic Revolution

The political struggles of the first two years should not obscure the social and economic revolution that was begun under Qāsim, although the measures taken did more to destroy the edifice of the old regime than to construct the foundations of the new. Political instability slowed progress to a halt, yet the reforms initiated by Qāsim at the beginning of his rule are still important, for as the decade wore on, the revolutionary impetus was renewed. Greater commitment on the part of the growing educated class encouraged the process of change. The movement toward social and economic reform was dominated first by a desire to be free of foreign—and in particular Western—political and economic control, and to gain sovereignty over the country's resources. Second was the urge for social justice, focusing mainly on a more equitable distribution of income and social benefits. Third was the drive to achieve greater national unity and integration and to bring various sectors of the populace under tighter government control. This goal arose partly from a commitment to nationalism, and partly from efforts to modernize a still backward social and economic structure. The attempt to force national unity—which Qāsim felt he embodied—on various communities was most often the cause of trouble. As the drive for uniformity and modernization intensified, and as centralized control increased, Iraq's fragile national unity began to collapse, causing political upheavals at the center and eventually a long and bloody civil war with the Kurds.

The first steps toward social reform under Qāsim, taken early in his regime, were primarily the work of the leftists who dominated his cabinets. The reforms bear their stamp. Among the first several measures were those designed to help the urban lower classes. Rent ceilings were lowered and eviction by a landlord was made more difficult.[31] A price control on foodstuffs was instituted, and merchants making excessive profits were threatened with stiff punishment, but both measures proved difficult to enforce and had to be dropped. More lasting were improvements in workers' conditions. Trade unions were now permitted, although after the Communist excesses, they came under government control. The working day was cut from nine hours to eight, with an increase in overtime pay. Income taxes were reduced for lower income groups. Most important of all, the regime attempted to address the festering slum problem in Baghdad. New housing allocations were immediately appropriated, and construction and slum clearance proceeded simultaneously. Many of the former slum dwellers were eventually settled in simple, sanitary brick houses, which partially replaced the *bund*, the festering ghetto area that had surrounded the east side of Baghdad. The area was named Madīnat al-Thawrah, "City of the Revolution."

Land Reform

The most significant and far-reaching revolutionary program undertaken by the regime was land reform. First, reformers began to dismantle the old feudal structure of the countryside. The 1933 Law of Rights and Duties of Cultivators, which had legally placed the peasant in servitude to the landlord if he were in his debt, was replaced, as was the Tribal Disputes Code, which had provided a separate system of justice for tribesmen. Henceforth, tribesmen, whether shaykhs or peasants, would be judged according to the civil and criminal codes in effect in urban areas. This was a long overdue step in bureaucratic modernization and national unity.

Next, the reformers turned to the thornier problem of redistributing rural income and reducing the drastic inequality in land ownership. The Agrarian Reform Law, promulgated on 30 September 1958, attempted a large-scale redistribution of landholdings and placed ceilings on ground rents. Holdings were henceforth to be restricted to 1,000 dunams of irrigated land; 2,000 of rainfed. Compensation was to be paid to the landowners for their lands in 3 percent government bonds, over a period of twenty years. The land was to be distributed among the peasants in lots of 30 to 60 dunams in irrigated areas; 60 to 120 in rainfed lands. The farmers were expected to pay for the land, with an additional charge of 20 percent of the value for the expenses of distribution, together with 3 percent interest over a period of twenty years. Expropriations and distribution, to be completed over a period of five years, would be overseen by a ministerial committee under the prime minister. The law also provided for the establishment of cooperative societies, and a scale of rents and fees to be paid the landlord. The fixed rents gave the peasant between 55 and 70 percent of the total crop.[32]

The reform law was ambitious in conception, but relatively conservative in the amount of land it left to the landlords. It left middle-level landowners in possession of their land, and although it raised the peasants' share, it did not alter their position substantially. In spite of this, the reform ran into difficulties from the first. Even before the legislation was drafted, peasants in the south took matters into their hands, doubtless inflamed by extravagant promises of prosperity by the regime. In the late summer and fall of 1958, peasants swept through al-Kūt and al-'Amārah, looting and sacking landlords' property, burning residences, and destroying accounts and rent registers. There was little loss of life, but much property was destroyed. The spontaneous movement was quickly joined by the Communists, who urged the peasants on. Their motives were to destroy and weaken the landlord class, but also to gain the upper hand over the peasant movement. The Communists moved rapidly into the countryside to organize the peasantry. They established peasant societies and infiltrated their leadership. The societies were then amalgamated into a National Federation of Peasants, which the Communists then demanded be recognized as the legal authority for land distribution.[33]

These events shocked the landlords, who were frightened by the drift to the left and the specter of incipient anarchy. Many refused to cooperate with the government. They locked up their pumps and machinery and moved to the city, thus putting large areas out of production. In July 1959, Qāsim was forced to conciliate the landlords by raising their share of the crop. He also postponed the expropriation of land belonging to some landlords, and leased tracts to others in order to keep production going. In the meantime, disputes over land policy arose in the cabinet between the Communists, who wanted to retain as much land as possible and eventually to establish state farms, and the moderates, led by the NDP, who envisioned widespread distribution and the evolution of a class of small landowners. Eventually the latter won, but not without a slowdown in the application of the law and increased uncertainty about its direction.[34]

Even without political problems, the economic and social difficulties of applying the Agrarian Reform Law were enormous. Most important was the problem of distribution, which required extensive state machinery not yet in existence. As a result, some 4.5 million dunams of land had been expropriated by 1963, but only about 1.5 million had been distributed.[35] Even for those who received some land, inadequate facilities were available for cultivation and marketing. It was not realized at first how important the landlord had been in supplying credit, seeds, and management. Without supervision, and especially without management of water distribution in the south, the peasant was lost. The cooperatives were intended to take over these functions, but here, too, personnel was lacking. By the end of Qāsim's regime, only a few dozen co-ops were actually operating. Moreover, the landlord had frequently been a tribal leader as well, responsible for many social and quasi-governmental functions. These could not be immediately replaced by the government. As a result, throughout much of the countryside the populace lapsed into old ways. The landlord leased his land from the government but continued to function as a patriarch, or his place was often taken by his *sirkāl,* or agent. Production declined drastically. By 1961, Iraq had ceased exporting barley and was importing rice and wheat to cover 40 percent of its consumption.[36]

Iraqi Nurse, Baghdad Hospital. Courtesy Iraq Petroleum Company.

The Personal Status Law

The agrarian sector was not the only area in which Qāsim attempted to bring about greater equality. He also helped raise the status of women. In December 1959, he promulgated a significant revision of the personal status code regulating family relations, traditionally governed by Islamic law. One of its provisions (article 3) severely limited the right of polygamy. Men were forbidden to take a second wife without the authorization of a judge, and then only for legitimate reasons. Articles 8 and 9 stipulated the minimum age for marriage as eighteen, which could be lowered in special cases to sixteen, thus eliminating child marriage. Article 35 protected women against arbitrary divorce by invalidating divorces pronounced by a man under certain circumstances. Most interesting and most revolutionary was a provision (article 74) that, through an indirect legal mechanism, gave women equal rights with men in matters of inheritance. The new code applied to both *sunnī*s and *shīʿah,* thus bringing all Iraqis under one law.[37] Although not as radical as laws promulgated earlier in Turkey or Tunisia, the revised code clearly showed a liberal intent. Unfortunately, it aroused considerable opposition among religious leaders and conservative elements, and did not survive intact after Qāsim's regime.

Economic Development

In other fields as well, the revolutionary regime showed a sharp change of direction from its predecessor. Education was greatly expanded. The education budget was raised from nearly ID 13 million ($36 million) in 1958 to ID 24 million ($67 million) in 1960, almost doubling the budget of the old regime.[38] Enrollment increased at every level. Unfortunately, the advance in quantity was often made at the expense of quality.

The new regime also displayed a new attitude toward economic planning and the priorities of investment. It adopted the concept of a planned economy, partly influenced by the Soviet model and partly by a desire for more rapid economic development. The Development Board was dismantled, and in 1959 a ministry of planning was created, along with a planning board. In December 1959, a provisional revolutionary plan was published, indicating a new set of priorities. Social welfare and investment in housing, health, and education received considerable attention, while the share devoted to agriculture and irrigation was greatly reduced. This provisional plan did not see completion; in 1961 it was replaced by a more detailed five-year plan, in which the largest share of investment—30 percent—went to industry. Interestingly, the second plan almost exactly reversed the priorities of the old regime. Industry was placed at the top and agriculture at the bottom, while housing received a high share of 25 percent (Table 9.1). Little of the plan was implemented before Qāsim fell.[39]

Qāsim's Oil Policy

Perhaps the most far-reaching of Qāsim's economic moves was in the field of oil policy. Qāsim did not come to power with any long-range oil plans, but he stumbled into an oil policy that proved nevertheless to be one of the most significant and enduring legacies of the regime. It set the stage for the more radical measures to follow. If there was any rationale behind Qāsim's policy, it was to reduce the influence of the oil companies over Iraq's economy and to regain substantial control over the country's major resource. In this the Iraqis were ultimately successful. The Iraqis may also have hoped to break the existing ownership and profit-sharing arrangements then prevailing in the Middle East,[40] but they failed to do so.

In 1961 oil revenue provided 27 percent of total national income; 45 percent of all government revenue; and 90 percent of all foreign exchange.[41] Iraq's dependence upon oil was clearly recognized by Iraqi leaders, and in the early months of the revolution the regime made no move to disturb existing conditions. But the new regime had inherited a number of oil problems, and in the spring of 1959 negotiations were begun with IPC. They continued off and on until October 1961.

There were at least a dozen points of difference with IPC. These included the pricing of oil and IPC's discount policy; the cuts made by IPC in the posted price of oil (an issue then of top priority on the international scene following price reductions by the international oil companies—including IPC's parent companies—and the establishment of OPEC); a cutback in output due, IPC claimed, to a rise in port dues at Basra; greater participation by Iraqis in running IPC; a greater than 50 percent share of the profits; and exploration and drilling expenditures. The two most important issues, from the Iraqi point of view, were the demand for 20 percent participation in the ownership of IPC (a point raised at the time the original concession was concluded) and relinquishment of the unused portion of the concession area.[42] The old regime had concluded an agreement with IPC, published on the day of the revolution, to relinquish 40 percent of IPC territory. Differences now arose over who should have the right to selection of the lots. As IPC demanded—and received—the right of choice, the Iraqis insisted that the company relinquish 75 percent then, and more later, until it held only 10 percent.

Qāsim proved to be an intransigent and somewhat erratic negotiator, but the parent companies were clearly insensitive to the Iraqis' real grievances.[43] Qāsim clearly understood IPC's concern for the effect of Iraq's demands on the parent companies operating elsewhere in the Middle East, but he apparently had an inadequate grasp of the parent companies' problems and divergent interests. In any event, the parent companies, although willing to concede minor points, were not yet ready to compromise on the fundamental changes demanded by the Iraqis, as they would then have to institute these changes in other countries as well. The fundamental issues were higher profit sharing, 20 percent ownership of IPC, and the relinquishment terms.

On 11 October 1961, after a number of stormy sessions, and delays for consultations with the parent companies, Qāsim delivered an ultimatum to IPC. Iraq would give up the demand for 20 percent ownership if IPC would relinquish 90 percent of their territory, increase the government's share of the profits, and grant Iraq partnership with IPC in developing the remaining 10 percent. IPC could not agree to this sudden proposal, and negotiations broke up. On 11 December, Qāsim replied with Public Law 80, which dispossessed IPC of 99.5 percent of its concession territory, leaving it to operate only those areas currently in production. He announced the establishment of an Iraq National Oil Company (INOC) to exploit the new territory. IPC protested and demanded arbitration, which the Iraqis did not accept. Recognition and acceptance of PL 80 by IPC then became a prime aim, indeed a sine qua non of future negotiations.

The effects of PL 80 were far-reaching. It began the battle to remove foreign control over the economy and to isolate the foreign oil interests that had been a key support of the old regime. It put much territory into the hands of the government, territory including the rich Rumaylah field in the south, which had previously belonged to the Basra Petroleum Company (BPC). At the same time, it did not touch the current flow of oil, since IPC continued to produce from the Kirkūk field. Although other points of disagreement were not yet settled, the government could now develop its oil resources in competition with the foreign-owned IPC. This would not happen for some time, however.

Law 80 also had negative effects. Iraq was ahead of its time with its demands, for market conditions and the interests at stake in the parent companies' concessions elsewhere did not incline them to begin the whole process of change in Iraq, one of their least important producers. As a result, the law initiated a long, protracted, and costly struggle with IPC, which resulted in reduced income for Iraq and a slipping production position with respect to other Gulf producers.

Qāsim, the Sole Leader

Whatever the benefits of the social and economic reforms initiated by Qāsim, they could not compensate for the major flaws in his administration—the gradual concentration of all power in his own hands, his increasingly erratic and unsophisticated leadership, and his inability to construct new institutions to buttress his power. Of course, the concentration of power was hastened by the early power struggles, the radicalization of politics, and the disappearance of the moderate center on which Qāsim might have relied for support. Had Qāsim been able to exercise his power with vision and a sense of direction, the results might have been quite different. In the early years of his regime, beset with difficulties, Qāsim attempted to maintain control by balancing one group against the other. By 1960, his one-man rule was buttressed by much of the paraphernalia of demagoguery. The Communists, who were dependent on him, did the most to elevate him to his exalted position and create illusions of grandeur. This was evidenced by mass demonstrations and adulation and the ubiquitous appearance of his picture. But the most potent mechanism used in entrenching his position was the notorious Mahdāwī court.

The function of the Mahdāwī court, established in August 1958, was to try old regime leaders for two categories of crime: plotting against the security of the nation and corrupting the regime. Under the nominal direction of Fāḍil 'Abbās al-Mahdāwī, a cousin of Qāsim's, the court was in fact controlled by Qāsim. As commander in chief, he had the right not only to submit cases to the court but also to withdraw them at any stage. The first proceedings of the court were, in fact, conducted in a relatively quiet and dignified manner, with counsels for defense defending their clients. Although a number of old regime leaders were tried, only four were executed. After the dismissal of 'Ārif, however, Communist influence increased in the courtroom as elsewhere, and the tone and proceedings of the trials altered radically. The court became a platform for the president and others in the audience to attack the British and the Americans and to praise Nāṣir. Once relations between Iraq and Egypt soured, of course, Nāṣir was attacked just as savagely.

The court rapidly acquired the properties of a show, or as some said, a circus. It featured speeches against the accused, poetry recitations, and homilies by the president on a wide variety of subjects. Standards of justice deteriorated rapidly. With more and more trials of revolutionary leaders, an atmosphere of fear prevailed in the country. By the end of 1959, the court trials were discontinued, but they had created a wholly unsavory atmosphere. The court had eliminated Qāsim's enemies; had thoroughly cowed the opposition; and had created sufficient fear in Iraqi political circles to allow Qāsim to govern alone.

Although Qāsim had begun his political career with good intentions and democratic leanings, neither his personality nor his limited background fit him for his difficult role. Born into a relatively poor family from Baghdad, Qāsim had been educated in primary schools, partly in the south of Iraq, where his uncle lived, and partly in Baghdad. He attended secondary school in Baghdad and later taught elementary school for a year (again in the south), before enrolling in the military academy. Neither in school nor as a teacher did Qāsim distinguish himself, although he apparently did better academically at the Baghdad Staff College and at the British Staff College in Camberley, England, where he spent six months taking military courses.

From the first, his teachers and colleagues noted his withdrawn and aloof nature.[44] This trait, noticeable early in his administration, seemed to become more accentuated after the assassination attempt, an event that marked a turning point both in Qāsim's attitude and capacity. His grip on affairs slipped markedly, and his lack of direction became more evident. Moreover, the event apparently convinced Qāsim that he had been spared by providence to save his country and that he, and he alone, represented the people. He became more withdrawn and isolated, virtually barricading himself in the Ministry of Defense where he now lived, spending fourteen hours a day working, most of them in the small hours of the morning.[45] Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the remainder of Qāsim's rule (from 1961 on) was marked by his increasing isolation at home and abroad and his inability to acquire real control over the political situaiton. One of the first, and ultimately the most serious, results of his loss of control was the disastrous Kurdish war, which soon eroded whatever was left of Iraqi unity.

The Kurdish War

Most Kurds had supported the revolution of 1958 enthusiastically, despite its overwhelmingly Arab leadership. One reason was the temporary constitution promulgated by Qāsim and 'Ārif, which stipulated that Kurds and Arabs would be partners in the new state. Another was the new regime's opposition to the Baghdad Pact, regarded by most Kurds as a mechanism for containing the Kurdish population in the member states. Most important of all, first Muṣṭafā-l-Bārzānī, and later the hundreds who had followed him into exile, were invited to return. Al-Bārzānī was given a triumphal entry into Baghdad, was put up in the palace of Nūrī's son, and was given a state-owned car and a cash allowance for himself and his retinue. A Kurdish paper, *Khabat* (The Struggle) was published openly; it had previously only circulated clandestinely. The first issue supported Qāsim and socialism, denounced imperialism, and said it would seek to restore the administrative and cultural rights of the Kurdish nation.

However, the honeymoon between Qāsim and al-Bārzānī did not last long. Mutual suspicion developed between the two, as each perceived the other as a threat. Qāsim, who had brought al-Bārzānī back to Baghdad partly as a counterforce to the Arab nationalists, soon began to fear that demands for Kurdish autonomy within the Iraqi state, if truly granted, would lead to Kurdish independence. The Kurdish leader increasingly came to distrust the sole leader's all-embracing concept of himself as leader of a united state. He rightly suspected Qāsim of giving only lip service to Kurdish demands for autonomy.

Qāsim had a formidable opponent in al-Bārzānī. At fifty-five, al-Bārzānī had been fighting the central government and rival tribal groups off and on since 1931, and had demonstrated his military capacity time an again. His strength came from the guerrilla forces he could muster and from the Bārzānīs, a group of tribal followers located in the village of Bārzān, near Zibār, Muṣṭafā's birthplace and his family's headquarters. In 1945, he had to flee from Iraq after several military encounters. He took refuge in the Kurdish republic of Mahābād, declared in 1946, where he received a congenial welcome and was made a general. When the republic collapsed in 1947, he began a twelve-year exile in the Soviet Union. His long stay there broadened his horizons somewhat, but it did not dampen his sense of Kurdish nationalism. Nor did he acquire any Marxist ideology, although he sometimes spoke its language.[46] Al-Bārzānī's long absence did not appear to have weakened tribal allegiance to him. Although he had only about 600 armed men in 1961,[47] a year later his fighting force was estimated at 5,000 of his own men (the *pēshmergas*, or commandos) and between 5,000 and 15,000 of other Kurdish tribes, with at least an equal number of reserves.[48]

Al-Bārzānī was not the only element in the Kurdish movement Qāsim had to contend with. There was also the Kurdish Democratic Party—the urban, professional wing of the Kurdish movement. The KDP had been founded in 1946 by al-Bārzānī and the Iraqi Kurds who had taken refuge in Mahābād, but it had antecedents in a number of the Kurdish groups that had proliferated in Iraq in the 1940s. The most important was Hīwā (Hope). These parties were heavily influenced by the ICP, and many Kurds were also ICP members. At its first party congress in 1947, the KDP modeled its party structure on that of the ICP and adopted a very progressive, anti-imperialist platform.[49]

However, the party was not al-Bārzānī's medium, and during his exile in the Soviet Union he lost contact with it. Meanwhile, the KDP came under the influence of the left-wing intellectuals, led by Ibrāhīm Aḥmad, its secretary-general. Typical of the party's leadership, Aḥmad came from a middle-class family of merchants from al-Sulaymāniyyah, was a graduate of the Baghdad Law College, a lawyer, and a leftist. Despite their earlier cooperation with the Communists, however, many KDP intellectuals had, by 1959, drifted away from the left and from Qāsim. In January 1960, when Qāsim licensed parties, the KDP received a license. The main provisions of its platform indicated its left-leaning orientation, but soon after this a struggle ensued in the party between the Marxist and non-Marxist elements. The latter won. The party promised to work for autonomy within the Iraqi state. Its fate, however, was no different from other parties under Qāsim. By 1961, it was openly critical of the "sole leader"; by the summer of that year, it had ceased to function above ground.

It was not the party, however, that precipitated the clash with the government that was to lead to civil war, but al-Bārzānī and some of his tribal followers. Al-Bārzānī, like the KDP in Baghdad, had gradually become dissatisfied with the lack of progress in meeting Kurdish demands. In October 1960 he went to Moscow, ostensibly to attend the ceremonies of the October revolution, but in reality to complain to the Soviet leaders of Qāsim's treatment of the Kurds and to seek Soviet pressure on Qāsim to meet Kurdish demands. In this he was unsuccessful. The Soviets were still supporting Qāsim. In his absence, however, Qāsim, suspicious of al-Bārzānī's aims and his trip to the Soviet Union, began to maneuver against him. He took back al-Bārzānī's house, his car, and his subsidy. Qāsim then began to encourage al-Bārzānī's tribal enemies, the Zibārīs, to move against him. Little encouragement was needed. During al-Bārzānī's absence in the Soviet Union, they attacked. When al-Bārzānī returned from the Soviet Union in February 1961, he moved from Baghdad to Bārzān where he could lead his forces against the Zibārīs. From these tribal skirmishes al-Bārzānī emerged victorious. At the end of August, much strengthened, he sent an ultimatum to Qāsim, demanding an end to authoritarian rule, recognition of Kurdish autonomy, and restoration of democratic liberties.

Up to this time the revolt had been purely tribal, and al-Bārzānī had hoped to contain it without involving himself in a costly war with the government, but in this he was not successful. Qāsim's reply to his demands came the first week in September 1961, when the Iraqi army began its first major offensive in what was to prove a long drawn-out war. Next, Qāsim bombed Bārzān village, which decided al-Bārzānī on an all-out revolt. Events moved swiftly. On 23 September, the KDP was banned in Baghdad; on 25 September it joined al-Bārzānī in the north. What had started as a tribal clash had now escalated to a full-fledged war for Kurdish autonomy. It enlisted the support not only of the tribal contingents, always ready to fight, but the sophisticated urban intellectuals as well.

As the fighting began in earnest, al-Bārzānī's tribal forces were boosted by Kurdish army officers who deserted the regular army to go over to his side, strengthening the rebels and also providing much-needed arms. At the same time, their defection weakened the regular army. By 1963, many Kurdish tribes had also joined the rebels, and it was estimated at the end of that year that for every three Kurds fighting for the government, there were four fighting for al-Bārzānī. Adopting guerrilla tactics, the rebels held their strongholds in the mountains and ambushed army garrisons in the cities, cutting off their supply lines. They never attempted to hold sizable cities (where they often went to buy grain), but gradually the cities became isolated and surrounded, while the more remote outposts were in danger. In these encounters the Kurds came out ahead, consistently growing stronger in morale and in weapons.

Qāsim followed a defensive tactic in this struggle. He did not attempt to move in and destroy al-Bārzānī's forces, but instead tried to maintain the status quo, hoping that the Kurdish forces would suffer attrition because of difficulties in getting supplies. Although al-Bārzānī's forces suffered great losses (they claimed some 500 places bombed and 80,000 people displaced in the first year of the war), these tactics failed.[50] By the spring of 1962, the war was costing Qāsim considerable money and prestige. In the summer of that year, the headquarters of the first army division, usually stationed in al-Dīwāniyyah, had to be moved to Mosul. Meanwhile, the regular army, now essential to Qāsim if he was to remain in power, was considerably demoralized because of its inability to defeat a much smaller group of Kurdish irregulars.[51]

Although the war was by no means entirely Qāsim's fault, it badly sapped his strength at home and distracted his attention from other problems. Development slowed, and the opposition began to regroup. In order to garner some needed support, especially among the Arab nationalists and the Ba'thists, Qāsim released their members from prison, whereupon they reorganized and made contact with the Kurds in an effort to establish a common front. During the early days of 1963, contact was made between the Ba'thists and Ibrāhīm Aḥmad, and a tentative agreement appears to have been reached that if Qāsim could be overthrown, Kurdish autonomy would be granted. This unlikely alliance is remarkable mainly in revealing the extent of Qāsim's internal isolation.

Foreign Policy Failures

Qāsim's domestic isolation was more than matched in foreign affairs. Both Turkey and Iran, former Baghdad Pact countries, were unfriendly because of Qāsim's reversal of policy toward them. Relations with Iran, in particular, deteriorated rapidly. Although circumstances did not cause an outbreak of war, they foreshadowed the conflict of 1980. The overthrow of the monarchy in Iraq, the leftward shift of Qāsim's government, and the increased Soviet influence in Iraq worried the shah. Events worsened with the return of al-Bārzānī and the revival of the KDP in Baghdad.

Iraq's withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact all but ended cooperation between these powers on the Kurdish front, and as time went on, the Iranian and Iraqi Kurds began to cooperate across the border.

The Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab

The first arena of disagreement, however, was over the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab. In November 1959, Iran questioned the validity of the 1937 agreement, which had drawn the border at the low-water mark on the Iranian side and given Iraq control of the shipping channel. That agreement had made two concessions to Iran, however—the adoption of the thalweg (midchannel line) for eight kilometers around the port of Ābādān and permission for war vessels of any country to enter Iranian harbors through the river. In December 1959, Qāsim reacted to Iran's reopening of the dispute by nullifying the agreement and claiming sovereignty over the anchorage area around Ābādān. Iran then made a counterclaim to a boundary in the center of the channel along the entire Shaṭṭ. Border incidents led to a stoppage of shipping on the Shaṭṭ early in 1961, but by April of that year the two powers had agreed to settle their differences by negotiation.[52]

The problem of the Shaṭṭ was complicated by Qāsim's assertion of Arab interests in the Gulf, another shift of policy from the old regime. He began by laying claim to Arabistan (the Arab name for the province of Khūzistān in Iran), which stretched from Dizfūl and Ahvāz to the Gulf and contained a majority of Iranians of Arab descent. At the same time, more Gulf students were encouraged to come to Iraqi universities, and the Iraqi media turned their attention to Gulf issues as did a number of Iraqi scholars and authors. In 1961, a resolution by the Iraqi Council of Ministers designated the official title of the Gulf as the Arabian Gulf, the first Arab country to do so.[53] These actions, and especially the last, further alienated Iran.

Meanwhile, Qāsim's natural allies, the Egyptians and Syrians, had been thoroughly antagonized by his policy toward the Iraqi Arab nationalists at home. Although the Soviet Union offered some support, the West had also turned against Qāsim—the United States because of his leftist leanings and the British because of his oil policy. In 1961, Qāsim took one final step in foreign affairs that made his isolation virtually complete. This was the notorious Kuwait affair.

The Kuwait Affair

The episode began in June 1961. In an exchange of letters, Britain and Kuwait agreed to terminate the agreement of 1899, which had made Kuwait a virtual British protectorate.[54] Kuwait now became an independent state. While other countries hastened to send congratulatory cables, Qāsim sent the Kuwaiti ruler an ambiguous message welcoming the abrogation of the agreement but making no mention of independence. Suspicious, the ruler conferred with the British ambassador about invoking

British assistance if necessary. In a radio announcement made five days later, on 25 July 1961, Qāsim laid claim to Kuwait as an integral part of Iraq, citing that Kuwait had once been a district of the Basra *wilāyah* under the Ottomans. Qāsim further announced the appointment of the ruler of Kuwait as a qā'imaqām of Kuwait, to come under the authority of the mutaṣarrif of Basra.

The dispute harked back to the turn of the twentieth century, when Kuwait had been part of the Ottoman Empire. In order to counteract growing German influence in the Middle East, the British had signed their protectorate agreement with Kuwait. When they learned of the treaty, the Turks reacted by declaring Kuwait part of the *wilāyah* of Basra and nominating the Shaykh of Kuwait as qā'imaqām of Kuwait. This claim was now revived by Qāsim. Although he stated that he did not intend to use force, Qāsim did not rule out the possibility, and in fact, there were rumors of troop movements on Kuwait's border. However, no troops were actually sent to the disputed area, and indeed military action was virtually ruled out with the bulk of the Iraqi army fighting the Kurds in the north. Scarcely a brigade was left in the south.

The repercussions were immediate. The Kuwaitis requested British protection, and on 1 July British troops entered Kuwait. Qāsim's provocation and the resulting intrusion of the British increased Arab hostility toward Iraq, already inflamed. The matter was taken up in the Arab League in July, and the league decided to assemble an Arab force to replace the British. The first contingent arrived in Kuwait in September 1961, and except for the Egyptians, the Arab forces remained until 1962, when the danger appeared to be over.

Events then shifted to the diplomatic front. Kuwait applied to the Arab League for admission and on 20 July was admitted. Iraq thereupon ceased all cooperation with the league. Not content with this, on 26 December 1961, Hāshim Jawād, Qāsim's foreign minister, announced that Iraq would reconsider diplomatic relations with any country recognizing Kuwait. As the recognitions continued to pour in, Iraq began to recall ambassador after ambassador, though the remaining diplomatic staff was generally left behind. During 1962, the long list came to include, among others, Jordan, Tunisia, Lebanon, and the United States.

The Kuwait affair isolated Qāsim from all his Arab neighbors and gained nothing. It solved no problems at home. By the end of 1962, Qāsim had no friends left inside Iraq except a weakened Communist Party and a handful of army officers, and none left outside except the Soviet Union, itself increasingly disturbed by the Kurdish war and far more concerned over Egypt than Iraq. Worst of all, the promise of social revolution begun in 1958 had faltered. Land reform was in deep trouble; industrialization could make no headway; development plans could not be launched; and oil revenues were beginning to fall off. It was apparent to all that a change must be made. It was merely a question of who would undertake it, and when.

7

The Arab Nationalists in Power, 1963–1968

The coup that finally put an end to Qāsim's regime came from the Arab nationalist quarter; no other element in the political spectrum was prepared to undertake the task. The Communists and the left still tacitly supported Qāsim, and in any event they had too little support in the army officer corps. The Kurds had weakened the fighting capacity of the army, but they were in no position to overthrow Qāsim by themselves. The Arab nationalists also had problems of their own. There was no real unity of purpose beyond their common desire to be rid of the "sole leader" and to reorient foreign policy toward some kind of union with other Arab countries. Instead, they were splintered into several groups. The two most important of these were the Ba'th and the Nāṣirites.

The Nāṣirites did not constitute a political party; rather, as their name implies, they were a collection of individuals who looked to Nāṣir for leadership and desired some kind of unity with Egypt. Even on this formula, there was no agreement among them. The Nāṣirites had other weaknesses as well. They lacked a clear-cut program for internal affairs. Generally, they favored the pragmatic Egyptian approach to social and economic development, but had done little thinking on how to apply this approach to the Iraqi situation. Another drawback was their lack of leadership. 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif came closest to being their spokesman. Nevertheless, despite their difficulties, the Nāṣirites had tacit support among a number of civilians and the military. They drew heavily on the Arab *sunnī* population for support, especially the people of al-Ramādī and Mosul provinces.

In any event, it was the Ba'th, not the Nāṣirites, who organized the coup that overthrew the Qāsim regime. The Ba'th Party was far better organized and better positioned to undertake a coup, with its tight-knit organization, its clandestine activities, and its militant leadership. Where the Nāṣirites were weak, the Ba'th was strong. Its chief ideological feature was a combination of almost mystic belief in Arab unity with a call for the social and economic transformation of society. The Ba'th thus combined the two strains of thought that had divided the intelligentsia in Iraq since the 1930s.[1]

The Iraqi Ba'th in 1963

Although the party was first introduced in 1949 by Syrian Ba'th students studying in Iraq, it was in the early 1950s that it gained a real foothold in Iraq under the leadership of Fu'ād al-Rikābī. In 1951, it had about fifty members; by 1952 its membership had doubled, and in that year the Iraqi party was designated a regional branch of the parent party in Syria.[2] Between 1952 and 1958 the Ba'th made inroads in the schools and colleges, from which it drew much of its leadership and support. After the revolution of 1958, these gains accelerated, and new contacts were made in the officer corps. Despite increased support in the military, however, the leadership of the party remained in civilian hands.

After the failed attempt on Qāsim's life in 1959 and al-Rikābī's flight to Syria and Egypt, the party went through a difficult period. Many members were in prison or in exile, and there was a serious split in the party. The establishment of the UAR in 1958 had led in 1959 to Ba'th disillusionment with Nāṣir and a struggle for power between the Ba'th and Nāṣir. The result was a victory for Nāṣir and a temporary eclipse of the party's fortunes in Syria.[3] In this conflict, some Ba'th members, including al-Rikābī, sided with Nāṣir, further weakening the movement.

By 1962, however, the party was ready to make a comeback. For the first but not the last time, a new group of clandestine leaders surfaced to take over party leadership in Iraq. The group included Ḥāzim Jawād, a twenty-four-year-old *shī'ī* from al-Nāṣiriyyah; Ṭālib Shabīb, a *shī'ī* engineer from al-Rumaythah; and Fayṣal Ḥabīb al-Khayzarān, son of an Arab *sunnī* tribal shaykh and landlord. The most important leader was 'Alī Ṣāliḥ al-Sa'dī, who in 1960 was put in charge of the Iraqi party branch. Al-Sa'dī, born in 1928 of mixed Kurdish and Arab *sunnī* stock, had emerged from a checkered adolescence to work his way through the College of Commerce by 1952. Tough, militant, even ruthless, he was a good organizer and soon had the party in hand. A new Baghdad command was assembled, and a national front was organized with other Arab nationalist elements.[4] Though not a Ba'thist, 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif was associated with al-Sa'dī's group. He could not be active, however, because he was kept under strict surveillance.

The 14 Ramaḍān Coup

During 1962, plans were laid for the coup. Some of those involved were retired officers who had maintained contact with their friends in the military; others were active officers in key operational positions. In the meantime, a Ba'thist civilian militia of several thousand was organized, trained, and armed in Baghdad. A number of coup attempts planned durng 1962 were called off for fear of detection by Qāsim's intelligence service. Finally, a date was set for 18 January 1963. The coup itself was preceded by a long student strike at the end of 1962, touched off by an incident in one of the schools and organized by the Ba'th. In December, however, Qāsim discovered the plot, and the date was postponed to 25 February. When Qāsim arrested some of the participants, including al-Sa'dī and 'Ammāsh, the plotters decided to move up the date even further, to 8 February—the fourteenth day of Ramaḍān.[5]

The 14 Ramaḍān action was no palace coup. Ba'thists and their Arab nationalist allies only succeeded in gaining control of the government after a bitter two-day fight with Qāsim's forces, which cost hundreds of lives. The coup began early in the morning of 8 February, when the Communist air force chief, Jalāl al-Awqātī, was assassinated, and tank units occupied the Abū Ghrayb radio station. Others moved toward Rashīd Camp and the Ministry of Defense. Once again, a new revolution was announced over the radio, while supporters in the air force bombed the Ministry of Defense and a number of airplanes and the runway at Rashīd Camp. The Ba'thist National Guard was mobilized to surround Rashīd Camp and the Ministry of Defense.

It was at the ministry that the heaviest fighting took place. Qāsim had taken refuge in the heavily fortified building with a few of his loyal followers, and directed the action from inside. Many felt later that had he gone on the offensive with his troops, he might have won the day. The battle at the ministry raged all day, but by the evening the attacking forces had still not penetrated the inner recesses of the building. Most of the army outside of the capital apparently remained neutral, awaiting the outcome. Meanwhile, the Communists took to the streets to resist for two bitter days of fighting. In encounters with the army, the Communist demonstrators were mowed down by tanks, but not before killing a number of soldiers. Finally, on 9 February Qāsim asked for safe conduct out of the country in return for surrender. His request was refused. Early in the afternoon of 9 February, Qāsim and three associates were shot to death on orders of the newly formed National Council of the Revolutionary Command (NCRC). The Qāsim era had come to an end.

The Ba'th Government

Soon after the initial proclamation of the coup, the structure of the new government was announced. The Ba'th members, young and unknown, wished to have an older, well-established figure at the head of government—preferably one satisfactory to Nāṣir. 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif was made president and promoted to field marshal, although in the minds of the Ba'th he was to be mainly a figurehead. Military appointments were given to men who had participated in the coup, Ba'thist or otherwise, and Ṭāhir Yaḥyā was made chief of staff. Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr was appointed prime minister, but 'Alī Ṣāliḥ al-Sa'dī—party leader, deputy prime minister, and minister of interior— was the real power in the government. The cabinet was merely a facade, however, for real power lay in the NCRC established on 8 February. The NCRC held the power to appoint and remove cabinets and to assume the powers of the commander in chief of the armed forces. Membership in the NCRC was initially kept secret, but it was clearly dominated by the Ba'th, who now held all the command posts of power.[6]

The Ba'thists soon showed their ruthlessness in rooting out supporters of Qāsim and persecuting the Communists. The property of almost a hundred Qāsim followers was frozen, and many of his ministers were arrested. Soon thereafter, the execution of Communists began. These executions continued for most of the regime's existence. Communists were unofficially sought out in their neighborhoods, arrested, and sometimes assassinated. These actions, which continued a vendetta begun earlier by the Communists, boded ill for the conduct of politics in the future.[7] The persecution of Communists also caused a sharp deterioration in relations with the Soviet Union. The Soviet media attacked the Ba'th, with *Pravda* describing a "wave of terror" in Baghdad.[8] Iraqi students began to leave Moscow, and Soviet economic aid slowed to a trickle. Arms deliveries virtually ceased, a factor that hampered the Ba'th in its subsequent war with the Kurds and helped weaken the regime.

Ironically, although one of the principles of the Ba'th constitution was socialism, its first actions in government appeared relatively conservative.[9] One of the regime's first steps was to amend the personal status law, modifying the clause granting equality between men and women in inheritance. No socialist measures were passed. On the contrary, Prime Minister al-Bakr assured business interests that the government did not intend to nationalize any industries. Ba'th foreign policy was equally moderate. Relations with the West, specifically the United States, were strengthened, and Qāsim's policy toward the UAR (which no longer included Syria) and Kuwait was reversed. Many suspected the United States and Kuwait of having encouraged the coup—the former because of Qāsim's Communist proclivities; the latter because of Qāsim's Kuwaiti stand.[10] At any rate, the Ba'th described Qāsim's attitude toward Kuwait as erroneous, and in October, Iraq recognized Kuwait's independence. A few days after the revolution, Ṭālib Shabīb, Iraq's foreign minister, traveled to Cairo for talks with the Egyptians and Syrians on federation.

The Ba'th Failures

Despite these moderate beginnings, the Ba'th regime did not last the year. Its leaders' difficulties, which were mainly of their own making, began soon after the coup. One was the ongoing Kurdish war, which the Ba'th aggravated by their pan-Arab policy. Initially, the KDP had been in touch with the Ba'th and had agreed to support the coup in return for a promise of autonomy. Shortly after the coup, contact between the Kurds and the government was established. From the first, the issue at stake was just how much self-rule the new government was prepared to offer the Kurds to achieve peace in the north, especially as the Ba'th, unlike their predecessors, were eager to achieve some kind of Arab unity. In March, al-Bārzānī demanded, among other things, affirmation of the Kurdish right to autonomy, the formation of Kurdish legislative and executive authorities in the north, a Kurdish vice-president in Baghdad, a Kurdish legion in the north, and the appointment of Kurds to all posts in Kurdistan. The Kurdish region was to include the provinces of al-Sulaymāniyyah, Kirkūk, Arbīl, and the districts of Mosul and Diyālā in which Kurds were a majority. This was well beyond the concessions the Ba'th were prepared to make. Their reluctance became evident, although negotiations continued.[11]

The real interest of the Ba'th lay in their negotiations with Nāṣir for some kind of future unity. On 17 April, an agreement was concluded with Nāṣir on a future union. The Kurds had already made it clear that if Iraq were to join an Arab federation they would demand greater autonomy.[12] After the agreement, the Kurds published a memorandum demanding virtually a binational state. From here on, relations with the Kurds rapidly deteriorated. By the end of April, aircraft and troops were deployed northward, and early in June the Kurdish delegation in Baghdad was rounded up and arrested. The war resumed. The situation in the north was serious. The Kurds had control of the entire northern region bordering Iran, and al-Bārzānī was receiving considerable aid from the Iranian Kurds. This enabled his forces to circumvent the blockade previously imposed on the Kurds by the Iraqi government; neither the Iranian nor the Iraqi army was capable of enforcing border control. Meanwhile, cooperation between the Iranian and Iraqi Kurds intensified.

Abandoning the defensive policy followed by Qāsim, the government decided to recapture Kurdish territory and crush the Kurdish movement if possible. Iraqi forces bombarded villages with tanks, heavy artillery, and from the air; they bulldozed Kurdish villages under their control; and began arabization of strategic areas.[13] The toll taken on the Kurds was greater than previous losses, but the Ba'th policy was no more successful than Qāsim's approach. By winter, the Kurds had regained most of their positions, and before long, moderates in the army began to turn against the government's policy. So did a number of ministers. The Ba'th inability to either find a solution to the Kurdish problem or win a military victory hastened its downfall.

Another problem resulted from the Ba'th regime's embroilment in Arab affairs. The pursuit of union with Nāṣir distracted the leadership from internal affairs. The Ba'th coup in Iraq had been followed by a similar event in neighboring Syria; on 8 March, the Ba'th came to power in Damascus. For internal reasons, the Syrian Ba'thists were interested in a new union with Nāṣir, although it soon became apparent that the feeling was not reciprocated. To achieve this union, they needed the support of their Iraqi colleagues. On 10 March, 'Alī Ṣāliḥ al-Sa'dī and an Iraqi delegation went to Syria; on 6 April they and the Syrians joined Nāṣir in Egypt for unity talks. These soon foundered on mutual animosity between Nāṣir and the Ba'th. Nevertheless, their differences were papered over by an agreement of sorts, directed at a future union between Iraq, Syria, and Egypt. The agreement was signed on 17 April, but the honeymoon did not last long. Nāṣir did not want unity with the Ba'thists in Syria and Iraq for a number of reasons. He disliked the idea of sharing leadership in the Arab world with them, he distrusted their doctrinaire leadership, and he was unwilling to become embroiled in Iraq's numerous problems. By July, relations between Nāṣir and the Ba'th Party had deteriorated to the point where the Egyptian leader attacked the Ba'th openly. The possibility of union evaporated, and so did much of the Ba'th's support inside Iraq. Nāṣir encouraged the Ba'th opponents to bring about a change of government.[14]

Ultimately, the critical factors that brought down the Ba'th were a deep split in the party leadership—mainly over questions of policy and tactics and its inept handling of internal problems. The party was divided into moderate and hard-line factions. The militant wing, led by al-Sa'dī, was doctrinaire to the core, interested in upholding party principles and maintaining party control above all else. Al-Sa'dī and his faction were also more radical in their interpretation of the party's social doctrines. They adopted such Marxist ideas as socialist planning, collective farms, and workers' control of the means of production;[15] in terms of tactics, they took a militant line that would brook little compromise with gradualism. Al-Sa'dī was both more impetuous and more ruthless than his colleagues. His faction included a number of seasoned Ba'thists, mostly civilians, whom he had introduced into the higher ranks of the party during his leadership: Hānī-l-Fukaykī, Muḥsin al-Shaykh Rāḍī, Ḥamdī 'Abd al-Majīd, Ḥamīd Khalkhāl, Abū Ṭālib al-Hāshimī, and among the military, Mundhir al-Wandāwī, the commander of the National Guard.[16] This faction came increasingly to rely on the National Guard, and under al-Sa'dī's influence, the National Guard was soon running rampant, hunting down Communists, Qāsim supporters, and others hostile to the regime. Innocent people were also arrested for personal reasons, and the populace was disturbed nightly by the guard.[17] These outrages naturally alienated the populace, and the army watched the growth of this rival militia with suspicion and jealousy.

The moderate group led by Ṭālib Shabīb and Ḥāzim Jawād, which included military Ba'thists Ḥardān al-Tikrītī, 'Abd al-Sattār 'Abd al-Laṭīf, and Ṭāhir Yaḥyā, was more pragmatic in orientation. Realizing the weakness of the Ba'th position, they advocated sharing power with sympathetic non-Ba'thists, especially among the military. In fact, they had little choice. Although the Ba'th's ultimate aim was to establish a one-party state, the party's control over both the government and the military was still weak, and its party membership thin. According to one source, total party membership in Iraq probably did not exceed

2,500 in 1964;[18] according to another, there were about 800 full members in February 1963, although the number of candidate members may have been as high as 15,000.[19] (Full members are those at the top party rank; candidate members are those admitted to the party on probationary status and not yet confirmed as full members.) Many of the candidate members, especially among the military, were recent recruits or merely fellow travelers whose commitment to party ideas was only skin deep. Under these circumstances, the moderates believed that it behooved the party not to make speeches designed to alienate conservative elements until their power was consolidated. The moderates also favored a slower approach to change that would prepare the ground for socialism first before introducing radical measures.

Between these two factions was a smaller group, led by officers Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr and Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ʿAmmāsh. Variously classified as "roving rightists" or middle-of-the-roaders, this group's members were anxious to mediate between the two other factions in the interests of party unity.

In October 1963, these issues all came to a head at the sixth Baʿth Party conference, held in Damascus.[20] In the election for the national command, al-Saʿdī and his faction succeeded in winning most of the seats alloted to Iraq. He also succeeded in getting his more radical socialist ideas accepted, thereby alienating Michel ʿAflaq, the party's founder, and other moderates in the party. Victory in Damascus did not mean victory in Baghdad, where al-Saʿdī's opponents were preparing for his downfall. At a November meeting in Baghdad, called by the moderates to elect eight new members to the Iraqi regional command, a number of armed military Baʿthists interrupted the meeting and virtually forced the election of a new moderate command. Al-Saʿdī and four of his aides were arrested and exiled to Spain.

The reaction was not long in coming. Al-Saʿdī's supporters took to the streets, and the National Guard went on a week-long rampage. Al-Saʿdī's supporters in the air force attacked the presidential palace. Baghdad appeared on the verge of anarchy. The Iraqi Baʿthists called in the national command from Damascus, and on 12 November, Michel ʿAflaq and Amīn al-Ḥāfiẓ arrived in Baghdad. This move only deepened the Baʿth crisis. The arrival of Syrian leaders to help decide the issue of the country's leadership was considered by most Iraqis to be blatant foreign interference in their affairs. After a meeting held on 14 November, these leaders declared the Baʿth election of 11 November null and void and decreed that the moderate faction of Shabīb and Jawād should be removed as well. The two moderate Baʿthists were exiled to Lebanon. The national command from Damascus now vested itself with the authority to direct the party's affairs in Iraq until a new election could be held, although real power probably remained in the hands of the Baghdad party branch. A more unfortunate set of circumstances for the party could not be imagined. The national command had brought about unacceptable foreign interference in Iraq's affairs while the factional dispute had removed almost the entire leadership of the Ba'th Party who had carried out the coup of 1963, thereby easing the way for 'Ārif and his moderate supporters in the army to take over.

Throughout these events, most of the military Ba'thists clearly felt they had more in common with their fellow Arab nationalist officers than with the more militant Ba'thist civilians. Ṭāhir Yaḥyā and Rashīd Muṣliḥ, who had only joined the party recently and whose commitment to Ba'thism was shallow, deserted the party to side with 'Ārif. Al-Bakr, 'Ammāsh, and Ḥardān al-Tikrītī did not desert, but sided with 'Ārif in this dispute. They evidently expected to play more of a role in the succeeding regime than they did. Ḥardān al-Tikrītī, in particular, helped bring down the regime by using the air force, an act his colleagues later held against him. Circumstances made 'Ārif's task unbelievably easy. All he and his supporters had to do was to bide their time until both Ba'th factions had been ousted from the party leadership and exiled. When the party had committed virtual suicide, 'Ārif merely stepped in, and in one day of brief military action by his supporters, inaugurated yet another new regime.[21]

The First 'Ārif Regime

'Ārif's takeover was the first bloodless coup thus far. Although facilitated by the Ba'th follies, the coup had been planned some time before. 'Ārif was unquestionably the leader, but he had with him Nāṣirite officers as well as moderate Ba'thists. All of the key figures in this coup were military men, many of them with personal as well as political ties to one another. 'Ārif relied on his brother, 'Abd al-Raḥman, who was appointed acting chief of staff and commander of the Fifth Brigade, to keep the army in line; and on Colonel Sa'īd Ṣlaybī, who came from al-Ramādī and also from the same tribal group as the 'Ārifs, to take charge of the newly formed Republican Guard.[22] The Ba'thist supporters had all been members of the party's military bureau, and more important, all were Tikrītīs. This group, which came from Tikrīt, a small town on the Tigris, had first achieved prominence under the Ba'th regime, and had remarkable cohesion. The looser group of Nāṣirite officers had as their chief figure 'Ārif 'Abd al-Razzāq, first appointed minister of agriculture and then commander of the air force.

The military background of the coup supporters was reflected in the government they formed. On 18 November, 'Ārif announced that the armed forces would take control of the country; that 'Aflaq and al-Ḥāfiẓ would be detained to prevent any disorder by the Ba'thists; and that a new government would be formed with himself as president of the republic and commander in chief of the armed forces. 'Ārif also gave himself extraordinary powers for a year to deal with the internal situation. These powers were renewable if necessary. The Ba'th Party militia was dissolved and a new cabinet established with the coup leaders in prominent posts. Ṭāhir Yaḥyā was made prime minister, and soon became the second man in the regime. The military Ba'thists who had assisted in the coup were also rewarded with posts, but it was not long before 'Ārif managed to outmaneuver them as well. In January 1964, the vice-presidency was abolished; Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr was transferred to the foreign office and subsequently resigned from the government. Ḥardān al-Tikrītī, minister of defense, was dismissed in March. By the spring of 1964, the government was in the hands of 'Ārif and the Nāṣirites. This shift, in addition to removing the Ba'thists from government, generated a split in the party. Those who remained with 'Ārif, especially Ṭāhir Yaḥyā, were naturally read out of the party and marked for particular animus. 'Ārif's role in this affair also generated bitterness among the Ba'th leaders, and especially al-Bakr, who henceforth determined to overthrow the regime at the earliest opportunity.

'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif

The smooth execution of this coup and the masterful manipulation of the opposition showed that 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif had emerged from the turbulent events of the past four years a somewhat different man from the 'Ārif who had brashly led the coup of 1958. The lessons of his struggle with Qāsim, his imprisonment, and his observation of the forces released by the revolution had tempered his impetuosity and given him a greater sense of balance, realism, and maturity.

'Ārif had several qualities that would color his administration. He had been born to a poor but pious Arab *sunnī* family of Baghdad. His family had moved during his youth to the mid-Euphrates, where he was raised with his cousins. Here he imbibed nationalist feelings early on. One of his cousins, Shaykh Ḍārī, had been imprisoned by the British for complicity in the slaying of Colonel Leachman in 1920, an act in which 'Ārif took pride. Like Qāsim, 'Ārif had an undistinguished school career, but he did graduate from both the Military College and the Staff College. Perhaps 'Ārif's most distinguishing trait was his religious feeling. He was a relatively conservative Muslim and a staunch *sunnī,* characteristics that would temper the revolutionary excesses of the past few years.[23] As was shortly to become apparent, 'Ārif's conservatism and his new caution were largely in accord with the temper of the country. Unlike Qāsim and the young Ba'th leadership, 'Ārif was an extrovert who liked people. His ability to govern in a more open manner and to communicate with the populace were to stand him in good stead in consolidating his power and giving the nation some relaxation from the tensions and clashes of the previous years.

Moderate Arab Socialism

Although the 'Ārif regime went through several stages of development, in general it was dominated by the philosophy and tactics of Nāṣir's brand of Arab socialism. 'Ārif relied heavily on the Nāṣirite elements in Iraq at first, mainly to help consolidate his position internally and to win Nāṣir's much-needed support for his regime. Although this group drew heavily on the Arab *sunnī* population, including some of the conservative elements who had supported the Mosul rebellion, its hard core among the civilians was a group of young professionals and technocrats with a much stronger commitment to socialism than their older counterparts.

The 'Ārif regime marked a period of respite in the revolutionary surge and an attempt to consolidate the gains made thus far, although from time to time the young technocrats pressured for more reform. There was a relaxation of the tensions and clashes that had been engendered by the two previous regimes, although some coup attempts did occur. The National Guard with its excesses was dissolved; foreign relations were normalized; greater freedom of speech and action was allowed; and a sensible and relatively successful attempt was made to balance Iraq's internal needs with its foreign policy. The regime stressed stability and efficiency rather than ideological purity and radical change. In retrospect, it came closer to old regime practices and policies than any government since 1958.

The first stage of the 'Ārif regime was dominated by the military. A proclamation issued on 18 November created the National Revolutionary Council, which was headed by 'Ārif and contained the heads of all key military units. The cabinet, headed by Ṭāhir Yaḥyā, included eight former army officers. 'Ārif, promoted to field marshal, assumed the dominant role in government, although he was never as authoritarian as Qāsim. Although active and retired officers were intruded into many high posts, civilians—both politicians and technocrats—also came to play an increasingly influential role. The first cabinet stated that it would institute a planned economy that would encourage both private and public sectors; stimulate industry and private investment; and carry out the agrarian reform that had been all but forgotten in the past few years, all on an equitable basis. Soothed by this start, many Iraqis who had been living abroad returned, and capital flowed into the country once again.

In foreign affairs as well, 'Ārif's government followed a moderate policy. Relations with the Soviet Union were improved without alienating the West. Arms deliveries were resumed early in 1964: The USSR installed a surface-to-air missile system, delivered three additional squadrons of MIG-21s, and provided Iraq's first TU-16 medium jet bombers.[24] The Soviets also constructed an atomic reactor, completed in 1964, and set other projects in motion. Regarding Arab affairs, the regime stated that Iraq would work for future unity with Egypt on the basis of the tripartite agreement of 17 April, a step closely tied to the internal support 'Ārif was receiving from the Nāṣirite element. In January 1964, 'Ārif visited Egypt and talked extensively with Nāṣir. This ushered in the second stage of the regime. Neither 'Ārif nor Nāṣir appeared eager to rush headlong into union, but in Iraq the impetus was seized by the Nāṣirites.

Under their influence, it was not long before Iraq's internal structure began to be revised along Egyptian lines. On 3 May 1964, a new provisional constitution, modeled on that of Egypt, was announced. The chief difference was that the Iraqi instrument gave more emphasis to Islam and less to socialism. In June, the government took a further step, launching plans for the election of an Arab socialist union (ASU) on the Egyptian model. The union was stillborn. Neither the real left nor the Ba'thists were permitted to join. Former NDP supporters demanded real democracy and a multiparty system; the conservatives—landowners, religious leaders, merchants, and businessmen—mistrusted the union's socialist aims. Only the young, ardent Nāṣirite socialists supported it. Undaunted, they continued to push for union, and in December, Egypt and Iraq announced the establishment of a future unified political leadership, to consist of the presidents of the two republics, their prime ministers, and other ministers. In the meantime, joint military planning had proceeded, and in May 1964, both countries signed an agreement providing for a joint command. By September there were some 5,000 Egyptian troops on Iraqi soil. Presumably there for joint maneuvers, the troops were meant in reality to bolster the regime in the wake of an attempted coup by the Ba'th.

The Nationalization Laws

These pan-Arab political and military measures were short-lived. Of far more importance for Iraq's internal development were the nationalization laws of 1964. Although they were passed mainly for economic and social reasons, the laws were also meant to be a first step in coordinating the two economies. Whatever the motives, they represented the regime's most substantial step toward socialist reform, a step that eventually had far-reaching effects.

The chief architect of nationalization was not 'Ārif, but a young, Cambridge-educated economist, Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb, governor of the Central Bank. Ḥasīb and his cousin, Adīb al-Jādir, who later became minister of industry, were representative of the technocrats who were impressed with Nāṣir's recent experiments in socialism and wanted to adapt them to Iraq. This group had examined the private sector and found it wanting. In their view, capital in private banks and companies was not being invested in economic development; foreign trade was dominated by consumer imports; and wealth was unduly concentrated in a small upper class. They advocated the nationalization of banks and key industries, the creation of a public sector to act as a catalyst for development, and the passage of laws designed to redistribute income.[25]

Published on the anniversary of the July revolution in 1964, the new laws nationalized all banks and insurance companies, all cement and cigarette companies, and some flour and textile industries. A later amendment made the import and distribution of pharmaceuticals, cars, tea, sugar, and other items a government monopoly. The shareholders of nationalized companies were to be compensated, and the capital of the banks and nationalized industries was to be converted into bonds payable in fifteen years at 3 percent interest. Although the law provided that primary industries would belong to the public sector, small companies were left to private interests, while a mixed sector provided for industries such as food processing and clothing. Under the new laws, 25 percent of the profit of all companies was to be shared by workers and officials in the form of cash, social services, and housing. Workers and officials were to participate in the management of the companies and be represented on the boards of directors.

No individual was allowed to own more than ID 10,000 ($28,000) worth of shares in any company, and income and inheritance taxes were revised in a more progressive direction. To administer the new laws, the Public Establishment of Banks and the Economic Organization were created. Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb was appointed head of both.[26] The nationalization laws were opposed by conservative business elements, and they unquestionably discouraged private investment. The suddenness of the decrees and the economic discontinuity they introduced created a climate of uncertainty. ʿĀrif felt it necessary to reassure the public that there would be no further nationalization.

In retrospect, the economy weathered the storm better than expected. Overall production and profits did not decline; they may even have risen slightly.[27] Whatever the economic impact of the new laws, however, politically they marked a major step in converting the economy of the country from a free enterprise system, modified by concepts of the welfare state, to one based on a planned economy and on state ownership of the means of production in major industries. While other aspects of the projected union with Egypt evaporated, this one remained. Although moderate in scope, the step placed the authority for directing the economy in government hands. As in the case of the land reform, however, it proved easier to legislate change than to form a government cadre to take over the functions of the private sector, with resulting problems of inefficiency.

The nationalization laws marked the apogee of Nāṣirite influence in Iraq. By early 1965, relations between ʿĀrif and the Nāṣirites began to cool considerably. In fact, it is questionable how wholeheartedly ʿĀrif had embraced the idea of union with Egypt and the measures, like the ASU and nationalization, taken to achieve it. Despite his earlier enthusiasm for Nāṣir, as a responsible head of government ʿĀrif realized the difficulties that union would impose on Iraq. There is good reason to believe that ʿĀrif depended on the Nāṣirites mainly to rid himself of the Baʿth, rather than out of any ideological leanings. Nāṣir himself was uninterested in union after his experience with Syria. He was, moreover, worried about the stability of ʿĀrif's regime after the attempted Baʿth coup of 1964 and the resurgence of the Kurdish problem.

In any event, by the summer of 1965, ʿĀrif felt strong enough to initiate a series of astute moves against the Nāṣirites. He promised ʿĀrif

'Abd al-Razzāq, commander of the air force and a leading Nāṣirite, the position of prime minister in the future, in an attempt to neutralize potential opposition. On 4 July he orchestrated the resignation of the pro-Egyptian ministers from the cabinet. Actually, their influence had greatly declined, partly because their socialist measures were unpopular. Next, 'Ārif obtained the resignation of Prime Minister Ṭāhir Yaḥyā, who was protecting a number of Ba'thists and socialists in the economic establishment, especially Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb. In the meantime, 'Ārif continued to appoint loyal supporters to important military posts. Colonel 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Nāyif, also from al-Ramādī, obtained a key post in military intelligence; two staunch followers were placed in the key positions of commander of the Baghdad garrison and head of the Republican Guard. On 6 September 1965, 'Ārif formalized the shift in government. He formed a new cabinet, headed by 'Ārif 'Abd al-Razzāq. 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Bazzāz, who was soon to play a dominant role in public affairs and in whom 'Ārif had complete confidence, became deputy prime minister. Feeling relatively secure, 'Ārif departed for a conference in Morocco on 12 September 1965 to attend an Arab summit conference.

On 16 September, Prime Minister 'Ārif 'Abd al-Razzāq attempted a coup with the support of some Nāṣirite elements. The president, however, had chosen his friends well. Both his brother, 'Abd al-Raḥman 'Ārif, and Sa'īd Ṣlaybī, although personal friends of 'Abd al-Razzāq, remained faithful to 'Ārif. They quietly foiled 'Abd al-Razzāq's attempt, put the former prime minister on a plane for Cairo, and restored normalcy. With this episode, however, the position of the Nāṣirites went into a sharp decline, and relations between Baghdad and Cairo cooled. 'Ārif turned to other sources of internal support, initiating an entirely new orientation in government. He appointed al-Bazzāz as prime minister, an ideal choice that enabled 'Ārif to circumvent interference from the military and the danger of a Nāṣirite coup.

Al-Bazzāz and the Retreat from Socialism

'Abd al-Raḥman al-Bazzāz was both a civilian and an Arab nationalist of long standing. As a lawyer with a degree from the University of London, he would satisfy the moderates and wide segments of the population tired of military rule. He would be subservient to 'Ārif, as he had no military backing with which to challenge him. At the same time, putting a civilian into office would remove the military one step further from power, and largely neutralize the hard-core Nāṣirites in the army, 'Ārif's main threat.

Al-Bazzāz had solid nationalist credentials. He had early been involved with nationalist activities, first in the 1930s as a member of the Muthannā and Jawwāl clubs, later in 1940 and 1941 as a supporter of the Rashīd 'Ālī movement. Like others of his generation, he had been interned during the war for his connections. Unlike some of the latecomers to the nationalist movement, however, al-Bazzāz was a mature man, who had served as dean of the Baghdad Law College, and as a diplomat in Cairo and London. Most significant of all, al-Bazzāz provided links with the opposition to the old regime. He was the last civilian of the pre–World War II generation to play a prominent role in Iraqi politics. His whole orientation was far more reminiscent of the constitutional opposition under Nūrī than of the violent and erratic military politics of the revolution.[28] Al-Bazzāz made the slogan of the 'Ārif regime "the rule of law," and it was he who was most responsible for the return to normalcy—and relative freedom—that was the regime's hallmark.

The new policy of al-Bazzāz's cabinet was soon evidenced by a retreat on the socialist front. Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb had earlier been removed as head of the Economic Organization, and in November he resigned as governor of the Central Bank. The key economic figure in the cabinet was Shukrī Ṣāliḥ Zakī, who opposed the nationalization measures. Zakī undertook a number of measures to stimulate the economy. Though nationalization was not reversed, the private sector was encouraged. The measures allowed the establishment of factories of any kind with capital up to ID 250,000 ($700,000); joint projects with national and foreign capital were encouraged; and interest rates were revised to insure savings and investment.[29] Zakī's policy did produce a business upswing. The budget deficit declined; factory construction resumed; and the Iraqi dinar rose in value on the international exchange.[30]

At the same time, the regime was increasingly civilianized. As prime minister, al-Bazzāz was the main symbol of this trend, which affected the whole government. The National Revolutionary Council, which had been an exclusively military group, was dissolved; its functions devolved on the cabinet. A new body called the National Defense Council was established, with functions limited wholly to defense and internal security.[31] Civilian technocrats continued to play an increased role, as they had even before al-Bazzāz's cabinet, when professional cabinet ministers had often been selected by the president of Baghdad University from among his professors. The civilian influence was enhanced in a cabinet that actually functioned as such under a relatively competent prime minister. Above all, the relative openness of the regime compared to its predecessors allowed for planning, discussion, and the normal processes of government to take place, giving civilian experts the opportunity to come into their own. This relatively promising trend did not last, however. An unforeseen tragedy put a stop to these developments and set new forces in motion. This was the untimely death of 'Ārif.

In April 1966, 'Ārif had embarked on a speechmaking tour of the country, one of his favorite activities. On 13 April, after addressing a gathering at al-Qurnah that lasted until dusk, he boarded a helicopter for Basra, along with Minister of Interior 'Abd al-Laṭīf al-Darrājī, Minister of Industry Muṣṭafā 'Abd Allah, and other officials. Shortly after takeoff, the helicopter crashed, apparently because of poor visibility and a sudden sandstorm. All aboard were killed. Although the usual rumors of planned treachery spread, subsequent investigations turned up no evidence of foul play.

The Regime of ʻĀrif the Second

Al-Bazzāz temporarily assumed the office of president, and in accordance with the temporary constitution of 1964, the National Defense Council and the cabinet met to elect a new president. Three candidates were nominated: al-Bazzāz; ʻAbd al-Raḥman ʻĀrif, the dead president's brother; and ʻAbd alʻAzīz al-ʻUqaylī, minister of defense. A key issue was whether a civilian could be elected president. Although the group that met had a civilian majority, and presumably favored a civilian, it was clear that the military was not ready to relinquish power, and could override the election by force if they chose. On the first ballot, al-Bazzāz scored a plurality of one vote, but a two-thirds majority was needed to make him president. It was clear that the military would predominate, and al-Bazzāz did not push his candidacy. Of the two remaining, al-ʻUqaylī was not favored because he was a strong personality and because he was not popular with Nāṣir. He also took a hard position on the Kurds, which might have exacerbated the situation.

By contrast, ʻĀrif's brother was a congenial man of relatively weak personality, whom the ambitious army officers felt they could manipulate. He was also supported by his brother's key appointees.[32] Thus, on 17 April 1966, ʻĀrif was elected president. In accordance with the constitution, al-Bazzāz tendered his resignation as prime minister; the following day he was instructed to form a new government. With the advent of the second ʻĀrif, the weaknesses of the regime became apparent, and its difficulties mounted. The regime had depended for strength on ʻAbd al-Salām's gift for keeping a coalition of forces together, a gift not shared by his brother. One of the new government's most pressing issues was the festering Kurdish problem.

The Kurdish Problem

In dealing with the Kurds, the first ʻĀrif regime had begun much as the Baʻth had. In late 1963 and early 1964 ʻAbd al-Salām ʻĀrif had traveled north to meet Muṣṭafā-l-Bārzānī secretly in an attempt to reconcile their differences. In February 1964, after these contacts between the two men, a cease-fire had been announced. It called for recognition of Kurdish national rights in the constitution, general amnesty, and a reinstatement of Kurds in the civil service and the military. It did not mention autonomy.[33]

Al-Bārzānī's acceptance of the cease-fire angered the hard-line leaders of the KDP, chiefly Ibrāhīm Aḥmad and Jalāl al-Ṭālabānī, resulting in a serious split in the Kurdish movement that still persists today. Aḥmad and al-Ṭālabānī saw the new Iraqi government as weak, and believed the time was ripe for gaining new concessions and a proclamation of autonomy; al-Bārzānī favored negotiations and a respite in the fighting. Attempts to patch up the differences in the spring and early summer of 1964 failed. By that time it had become more a question of leadership than of policy, with Aḥmad, al-Ṭālabānī, and the KDP intellectuals on one side, and al-Bārzānī and his more traditional tribal followers on the other. At a congress convened by al-Bārzānī at the end of June 1964, fourteen members of the KDP central committee, including Aḥmad and al-Ṭālabānī, were expelled from the movement. The split in the party was complete.[34]

The rupture had a number of serious and long-lasting effects. First, it created a continuing source of internal dissension that weakened the movement. Second, it provided a dissident group that was frequently used by the government against al-Bārzānī's forces. Third, and most significant, it alienated many of the Kurdish intellectuals, depriving the movement of some of its most capable and sophisticated leaders. Henceforth, power gravitated to al-Bārzānī, his relatives, and the more parochial elements of tribal society, who had fewer contacts with the outside world. Although this dichotomy was never complete (there were always some intellectuals with al-Bārzānī), it changed the style and content of the leadership and later made it impossible for al-Bārzānī to reintegrate the more sophisticated Kurdish nationalists into the movement. Leadership became more personal, depending increasingly on al-Bārzānī and his loyal followers. Nevertheless, the split had one great virtue, which proved an overwhelming advantage in the short run. It enabled al-Bārzānī to put together a tough and seasoned fighting force, capable of confronting the government in the Kurds' mountain strongholds and able to take a coherent stance in negotiations.

The split had another result as well. It led, indirectly, to the alliance of al-Bārzānī and the shah. Al-Ṭālabānī and his group had taken refuge in Iran, and had negotiated with the shah for protection. Al-Bārzānī protested. It was evidently at this point that the shah recognized the greater strength and potential of al-Bārzānī's group and decided to support them. The shah's decision was influenced by the extent of the help al-Bārzānī was receiving from the Iranian KDP, and by the ties being forged between the two Kurdish movements. Better, from the shah's point of view, to control the aid himself and to set his own conditions. By May 1965 heavy arms supplied by the Iranian government were reaching the north of Iraq.

By 1965, al-Bārzānī had unquestionably emerged as the strongest force within the movement. He had replaced the Aḥmad/al-Ṭālabānī faction with Kurds loyal to himself. He had consolidated his hold over a wide stretch of territory in the north, and had set up his own de facto Kurdish administration, consisting of a revolutionary council of fifty members (an embryonic parliament) and a smaller executive bureau (an embryonic cabinet). Al-Bārzānī's control did not extend to the large cities—al-Sulaymāniyyah, Kirkūk, Arbīl, and Zākhū—but it was virtually complete in the countryside. One authority has estimated that al-Bārzānī controlled about 35,000 sq km (13,500 sq miles) and 1 million inhabitants.[35] Moreover, it was al-Bārzānī's *pēshmergas* who controlled the Turkish and Iranian borders.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the cease-fire broke down. The rupture with the central government began as early as June 1964, during discussions with al-Bārzānī and Ṭāhir Yaḥyā over the issues of autonomy and a general amnesty. The Kurds were also concerned over the unity negotiations with Egypt and the formation of the Arab Socialist Union. In October al-Bārzānī submitted a memo to the government demanding the recognition of Kurdish rights on the basis of autonomy and the transformation of the *pēshmergas* into a regular frontier force. In January 1965, the minister of interior declared that there would be no further negotiations until the Kurdish army was dismantled, and there would be no autonomy in Kurdistan.[36]

By April 1965, the two sides were once again engaged in hostilities. This time the Iranian connection tilted the balance in favor of the Kurds. The heavy arms supplied by the shah sustained the Kurds in their offensive, and by December Iraq was in open conflict with Iran. Iran accused Iraq of attacking border villages in pursuit of Kurds; Iraq accused Iran of providing sanctuary, arms, and equipment to the Kurds, and demanded that Iran police its frontiers. In April and May of 1966, the tide turned against the central government. In the fierce battle of Handrīn, the Kurds scored a significant victory, forcing the Iraqi army to retreat from a strategic mountain pass, and thus preserving their de facto autonomy. This event, together with the presence of moderate, civilian Prime Minister al-Bazzāz, whom the Kurds trusted, finally brought about the accord of 1966, the most liberal recognition of Kurdish rights thus far.[37]

The June 1966 accord was a twelve-point peace plan that would have recognized Kurdish nationality, which would be specified in the permanent constitution; decentralized administration in Kurdish areas; recognized Kurdish as an official language in Kurdish areas; guaranteed representation of the Kurds in any forthcoming parliament and reintegration of Kurds into the army and the civil service; and appropriated funds to rebuild the north. The settlement, however, was never implemented. It was unpopular with a number of elements, including the anti-Kurdish contingent in the army and the Arab nationalists, and it lapsed with the fall of al-Bazzāz's cabinet. The Kurdish agreement contributed to a resurgence of influence by the Arab nationalist officers, causing the regime further difficulties.

The Resurgence of Military Politics

The Arab nationalists were disgruntled with the regime's failure to apply the pan-Arab program of the Nāṣirites; the dismissal of the Nāṣirite ministers; the conservative trend under al-Bazzāz; and in the case of the officers, the continued presence of a civilian prime minister who belittled the role of the army in politics. These dissatisfactions temporarily crystallized in a bizarre episode. On 30 June, ʻĀrif ʻAbd al-Razzāq, who had made his way back from Cairo to Baghdad in disguise, attempted a second coup. He was assisted by some Nāṣirite officers in Mosul, Abū Ghrayb, and al-Tājī (a military camp west of Baghdad). The coup almost succeeded. Rebel planes attacked Rashīd Camp, al-Washshāsh Camp, and the presidential palace. The Baghdad radio station was captured for a brief time and the rebels broadcast an attack on the "colonialist" government of al-Bazzāz, stressing Iraq's right to unity, freedom, and socialism.

The coup attempt failed for several reasons. Intelligence of the coup plans had reached ʻĀrif beforehand, and his forces were prepared.[38] The Baghdad garrison and the presidential guard remained loyal. Moreover, ʻAbd al-Raḥman ʻĀrif himself, unlike Qāsim before him, took to the field with the presidential guard and led the attack on the tanks advancing to Baghdad. He won an easy victory. In Mosul, ʻAbd al-Razzāq was arrested by loyal troops. This last act strikes at the heart of the matter. The people and the army were tired of coups, and this one aroused little support even among the troops. By 1 July, it was all over. In striking contrast to the ruthlessness of the previous Baʻth regime, retribution was mild. Some officers and civilians were arrested and put under surveillance pending a trial that never took place. After the fall of al-Bazzāz they were all released but ʻAbd al-Razzāq, who was freed the following year.

Confidence in ʻAbd al-Raḥman ʻĀrif eroded as the new president proved unable to balance the various political forces in the country and keep the contending parties in check. The military, in particular the Nāṣirite and socialist elements, began to reassert themselves, challenging al-Bazzāz and his moderate policy. Other factions, seeing an opportunity for increased influence, also contended for power, and political competition among the military resumed. Relations between al-Bazzāz and ʻĀrif were strained. The new president, who had but a small following, was jealous of al-Bazzāz's popularity among civilians. On 6 August, ʻĀrif asked for and received al-Bazzāz's resignation. The field was now open for the various contending forces.

Al-Bazzāz was succeeded by Nājī Ṭālib, who was a Free Officer, a moderate Arab nationalist, and more conveniently, a *shīʻī*. Ṭālib managed to stay in office until 10 May 1967, but he was unable to solve any basic problems. He reversed al-Bazzāz's stand on the Kurds, precipitating renewed but desultory fighting on this front. He was unable—or perhaps unwilling—to bring about sufficient unity with Egypt to satisfy the Nāṣirites. In December of 1966 he ran into economic difficulties. A pipeline dispute arose with Syria when IPC refused to pay retroactive dues, and the flow of oil was cut off for three months, creating a severe budgetary crisis. Meanwhile, the three-year period of the temporary constitution came to an end, raising the whole issue of a permanent constitution and an elected national assembly—long promised but never delivered—and an extension of ʻĀrif's term as president. (He had been elected for only one year.) ʻĀrif's term was extended, but nothing was done about the permanent constitution. By now, however, pressures for a change of regime were considerable, not only from those who wanted a return to civilian rule but from moderate Baʻthists who wanted to return to power and from Nāṣirites who wanted more action on unity.

The pressure was too great for Ṭālib, and on 10 May 1967 he resigned, but no acceptable candidate could be found to replace him as prime minister. Finally, ʻĀrif himself became prime minister, and a coalition cabinet was formed of various elements. As a symbolic gesture, it had four deputy prime ministers: Ṭāhir Yaḥyā, its strongest figure; ʻAbd al-Ghanī-l-Rāwī, an Iraqi, rather than a pan-Arab, nationalist; Fu'ād ʻĀrif, a Kurd; and Ismāʻīl Muṣṭafā, a *shīʻī*. The ʻĀrif government had by now become little more than a collection of army officers balancing various interests and ethnic and sectarian groups. It had no parliament, and its power base was in the middle class, but otherwise it resembled nothing so much as the old regime. Like the new regimes before it, it had failed to develop political structures or parties to support it, or to create a consensus or a framework for action.

Not surprisingly, this coalition was unable to withstand the aftermath of the Six-Day War. Iraq's participation in this war was minimal, although it sent troops to fight with Jordan on the Jordanian front. Of course, the swiftness of the Israeli victory left no Arab army with much of a role to play. Like other Arab regimes, the government in Baghdad had to face the responsibility for a humiliating defeat. This unquestionably added to the unpopularity of the military politicians and played a role in eventually toppling a regime already seen as weak and incompetent.

To help rectify the situation, ʻĀrif appointed strongman Ṭāhir Yaḥyā prime minster again on 19 July 1967. For the remainder of the regime's life, Yaḥyā gave the country firm, but unpopular, rule. ʻĀrif came to rely upon him more and more, as he did upon the leaders of the presidential guard, the Baghdad garrison, and the Bureau of Military Intelligence. These three pillars of the regime temporarily enabled ʻĀrif to bypass other officers and their various factions.

But Ṭāhir Yaḥyā faced a growing crescendo of discontent. There were continued rumors of corruption and accusations that the prime minister and his cohorts were enriching themselves at public expense. There were charges of favoritism in the awarding of contracts. Within the government, the Nāṣirites continued to grow stronger, particularly the doctrinaire socialists among them. Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb and Adīb al-Jādir began to exercise more and more influence on affairs. Their group, though weak on grass-roots support, had a hard core of respected and determined civilian politicians, all well educated and with a program that appealed to the intelligentsia and the middle class. Their influence was strongest in shaping the oil policy now pursued by the government.

Anti-Western Feeling and the New Oil Policy

The new oil policy was designed to eliminate IPC by degrees; to undertake direct exploitation of Iraq's oil resources through INOC, using service contracts rather than concessionary agreements; and to reduce Iraq's economic dependence on oil. Considerable progress was made on the first two objectives, but the third remained out of reach. When it came to power, the 'Ārif regime had inherited the unsettled oil problems of the Qāsim era. It will be recalled that PL 80, passed by the Qāsim regime, had expropriated almost all of IPC's concession area. However, the law had left open at least the possibility of IPC's future participation in the expropriated territory (in particular the rich Rumaylah field), alone or in partnership with the government. From then on it became a major aim of IPC to regain control over the northern extension of the Rumaylah field, or at least to prevent its competitors from doing so.[39] From the Iraqi point of view, the issue was who was to exploit the expropriated territory, and under what terms. This issue provided the backdrop for a struggle among various groups over oil policy and over the foreign policy intertwined within it, a struggle which continued right up to the overthrow of the 'Ārif regime.

The process had begun shortly after the establishment of the Ba'th regime of 1963, when a new oil minister, 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Wattārī, who was a U.S.-trained engineer, took control.[40] He remained in office from February 1963 to September 1965. Although al-Wattārī was a moderate, he established the Iraq National Oil Company, which in February 1964 was given the power to bid on expropriated territory, including the Rumaylah field. The foreign companies realized that once bidding began, their situation would be much more difficult, and they took a more conciliatory position. Negotiations began, centering on retrieval of the IPC position in al-Rumaylah and the terms under which the IPC group would be associated with INOC in exploitation of the field. In June 1965, a draft agreement was initialed. It provided for a joint venture between IPC and INOC in which the IPC group would be given a controlling interest. Most important of all, al-Rumaylah and other areas of proven reserves were to be restored to IPC, giving IPC access to all the important producing areas of Iraq. In fact, this agreement was much the same as the final IPC offer rejected by Qāsim. It left IPC in a very strong position within Iraq.

Al-Wattārī's agreement produced a bitter reaction, especially from the Nāṣirite group led by Ḥasīb and al-Jādir. Nothing was done about the agreement at that time, however, due to the ongoing political and economic crises—the 'Ārif 'Abd al-Razzāq coup, the pipeline dispute with Syria, and the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Opposition to the agreement continued, however, and when Ṭāhir Yaḥyā returned as prime minister in July 1967 the Nāṣirite group soon turned their attention to the agreement. Oil policy took a decisive turn with the passage of a series of measures designed to prevent the IPC group, especially the British, U.S., and Dutch members, from gaining the advantages of al-Wattārī's concession.[41] (A more favorable view was taken of French interests because of their stand on the Arab-Israeli question and their more flexible view on oil negotiations.)

On 19 August 1967, Yaḥyā's cabinet passed Public Law 97, giving exclusive rights to INOC to develop the expropriated territory and prohibiting restoration to IPC of the northern Rumaylah field. Any further oil concessions of the previous type were also prohibited, although INOC was permitted to associate with outside parties—governments or companies—to develop its oil resources under new arrangements that would clearly leave control in Iraq's hands. A second measure, Public Law 123 of 1967, reorganized INOC to bring it directly under the control of the president of the republic. Al-Jādir was appointed president of INOC and Ḥasīb a member of the board, thus putting oil policy in their hands and assuring IPC exclusion. At the same time, the more moderate Ghānim al-'Uqaylī, brother of 'Abd al-'Azīz al-'Uqaylī, was removed from his position as managing director of INOC. In April 1968, Adīb al-Jādir announced that INOC would reject all outside offers to develop al-Rumaylah and would proceed to develop the field itself.[42] With this statement, Iraq's future oil policy was clear. However, a cloud still hung over the development of the field, for IPC did not recognize any of these acts as legal, and announced its intention of taking legal action against anyone purchasing oil from the field.

Notwithstanding this liability, INOC began discussions with outside interests on further development of its oil resources. In November 1967, the government signed a service contract with Enterprise de Recherches et d'Activités Pétrolières (ERAP), the French state-owned oil company group, to develop areas outside al-Rumaylah. The contract between INOC and ERAP provided that ERAP would explore for oil in return for the right to purchase a portion of the oil discovered at a price agreed upon by the parties at the time of the contract.[43] ERAP also promised to market INOC oil for a commission. In an even sharper departure from precedent, the government signed a letter of intent with the Soviets in December 1967 stipulating that the USSR would provide direct assistance to INOC for development of the Rumaylah field. By April of 1968, drilling and exploration in the field had begun, but the regime was overthrown before much was accomplished.[44]

These steps not only affected IPC oil interests, but Iraqi foreign policy as well. Once again Iraq was shifting away from a more pro-Western foreign policy in the direction of the socialist bloc. The ground had already been prepared for this shift. Anti-Western sentiment had been building in Iraq for some time. The nationalization laws of 1964 and the adoption of Arab socialism had set Iraq on a path closer to the Soviet Union than to the West. The June 1967 war had unleashed a wave of anti-Western sentiment, while the Soviet Union had profited from this occasion by replacing the arms lost in that war.[45] The successful struggle against the oil company reinforced the new tilt away from the West. It should be noted, however, that the Nāṣirites were less anti-Western than anti-British and anti-American; they tended to favor France as a Western country sympathetic to their interests, a trend that would become more pronounced with the Ba'th.

Two other contracts were subsequently awarded that further alienated pro-Western and especially pro-American groups in Iraq. One was a service contract, similar to the ERAP agreement, with Yugoslavia. The second, more important contract concerned the development of Iraq's sulfur deposits. Pan-American, a U.S. group headed by former assistant secretary of the treasury Robert Anderson, was anxious to obtain this contract. Within Iraq a number of individuals, including those who had supported al-Wattārī's agreement, favored awarding the concession to the U.S. company. These included Luṭfī-l-'Ubaydī, a pro-Western businessman who lobbied for the supporters of the U.S. group, and the 'Uqaylīs. Al-Wattārī's supporters criticized the ERAP concession for offering Iraqi oil to France under overly favorable terms while slowing down the development of Iraq's resources. Nevertheless, the sulfur concession did not go to the U.S. group, but was awarded instead to a French subsidiary of ERAP. This may well have been the last straw for the British and U.S. interests and their supporters in Iraq. It was probably this act that prompted the pro-Western Iraqis to take action against the regime in the coup of 17 July 1968.

The Coup of 17 July 1968

The pro-Western forces were not the only ones dissatisfied with the regime. Many felt that 'Ārif, a weak leader, had allowed things to drift. While more conservative forces were dissatisfied with the socialist trend, others wanted more decisive action in remedying the country's economic and social ills. The desire for a more open political system and public elections—often promised but not delivered—was a factor for some elements in the political spectrum. Yaḥyā's firm grip on the levers of political power seemed to preclude future participation in government by a number of political contenders.

Against this background of rising discontent, a number of groups and individuals had been jockeying for position on the political scene toward the end of 1967. On the left were two Communist movements. One was the central committee of the ICP; the other was a splinter group, the central command that had broken away from the party in September 1967 under the leadership of 'Azīz al-Ḥājj. This group was fighting the regime in a guerrilla action in the south of Iraq.[46] The NDP was active as well. On the right were a variety of groups, including the moderate nationalists previously gathered around al-Bazzāz but now in some disarray. Also arrayed against 'Abd al-Raḥman 'Ārif was a formidable group of military politicians, all determined to regain office.

These included ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz al-ʻUqaylī, an Arab *sunnī* from Mosul who had been a candidate for president in 1966; and Nājī Ṭālib, a *shīʻī* from al-Nāṣiriyyah, who could count on *shīʻī* backing. A number of Nāṣirite officers, including Rajab ʻAbd al-Majīd, resented their exclusion from power and the treatment of the Nāṣirites by the ʻĀrifs. Lastly, military Baʻthists such as al-Bakr, Ḥardān al-Tikrītī, and Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ʻAmmāsh had both political and personal reasons for desiring the fall of the regime. The Kurds and the *shīʻah* could be relied upon to support the overthrow of a government that was predominantly Arab *sunnī*. The Kurds, in particular, were dissatisfied with the government's failure to implement the 1966 agreement.[47]

Al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd

The two different groups that, in an unlikely and uneasy coalition, would finally combine to carry out the coup were the Baʻth Party and a small contingent of disaffected supporters of the ʻĀrif regime. The latter group was led by ʻAbd al-Razzāq al-Nāyif and Ibrāhīm al-Dā'ūd. To a considerable extent these two men held the fate of the regime in their hands, al-Nāyif by virtue of his position as deputy director of military intelligence, al-Dā'ūd as head of the Republican Guard responsible for protecting the president and his entourage.

Al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd were part of a contingent of young officers who had formed a group called the Arab Revolutionary Movement within the army. The group had little ideology except support for the ʻĀrif regime, and had several times played a key role in keeping both ʻĀrifs in office. It may be assumed that the group had supported the moderate Arab nationalism of the early ʻĀrif period. More important, al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd both came from al-Ramādī and had local ties with ʻĀrif and with Saʻīd Ṣlaybī, the chief military support of the ʻĀrifs.

By 1968, however, the two officers had become discontented with the regime for a variety of reasons. In broad terms, they were opposed to Yaḥyā and the growing influence of his socialist-minded supporters, Ḥasīb and al-Jādir, which tended to eclipse their own influence. They were also influenced by reports of Yaḥyā's corruption and had several times asked for his dismissal.[48] Despite their growing dissatisfaction with Yaḥyā, however, they were not seeking the removal of President ʻĀrif. Rather, they hoped to topple Yaḥyā through pressure on ʻĀrif. Yaḥyā, aware of the efforts of the disaffected officers several months before the coup, had begun to transfer them out of the capital in an effort to scatter them. Al-Nāyif had attempted to resign over the issue, but ʻĀrif had refused to accept his resignation. A few days before the coup, al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd were given reason to believe that Yaḥyā was planning to move against them, and hence they had a strong incentive to move first.[49]

Whether al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd were receiving help from outside interests is a question that has not yet been answered satisfactorily.

Ousted members of the ʻĀrif regime are convinced that pro-Western, and in particular pro-American, interests were involved. Iraqis with pro-Western, especially pro-American, sympathies, seeing their position dangerously weakened and with little hope of reversing their fortunes under Yaḥyā and the Arab socialists, may have played upon the discontent of the officers and finally weaned al-Nāyif and his cohorts away from support of ʻĀrif and over to their point of view. One leading figure in the ʻĀrif regime has claimed that Luṭfī-l-ʻUbaydī and Iraq's ambassador to Lebanon, Nāṣir al-Ḥānī, played a key role in these events.[50] Another feels that al-Nāyif was won over by Saudi intermediaries and by the Iraqi military attaché in Beirut, Bashīr al-Ṭālib, as well as by al-Ḥānī.[51] In this respect, it may be significant that al-Ḥānī was made foreign minister in the first government formed after the coup. Whatever the truth of these allegations, the young officers had neither the stature, the organization, nor the public credibility to maintain a government after a coup. For this a political party or publicly recognized group with some grass-roots support was needed. This was the role played by the Baʻth, who, independently of the officers, had been planning the overthrow of the ʻĀrif regime for some time.

The Baʻth Party of 1968

The Baʻth Party of 1968, however, was not the same party that had seized power in 1963. The leadership in 1968 was a more practical and seasoned group than that of 1963; it was also more ruthless, more conspiratorial, and above all, more determined to seize power and hold it. To understand the Baʻth role in the 1968 coup and the shape of the regime that followed the coup, a brief review of the party's history between 1963 and 1968 is necessary.

Although internal struggles had caused the party's fall from power in 1963, the collapse of the regime in November of that year did not end the party's conflicts. Power struggles continued well into 1964 and even 1965, preventing a reorganization of the Iraqi regional command and of the pan-Arab national command as well. Although ʻAlī Ṣāliḥ al-Saʻdī had been expelled from Iraq in 1963, he continued his attempts to dominate both the Iraqi regional command and the national command. Within Iraq, the opposition to al-Saʻdī was led by al-Bakr, who for tactical as well as policy reasons supported the party's founders, ʻAflaq and al-Bayṭār.

At the seventh national Baʻth congress, held in Damascus in February 1964, al-Saʻdī and his faction were finally expelled from the party; instead, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr was elected a member of the national command.[52] However, al-Saʻdī continued, through his adherents in Baghdad, to maintain as much control of the Iraqi party apparatus as he could. The new national command appointed a provisional regional command in Iraq, headed by ʻAbd al-Karīm al-Shaykhlī, to reorganize the party and to patch up differences between factions in Iraq.[53] Before this reorganization could get under way, however, the party was faced with yet another debacle. Despite its disarray, the party attempted to overthrow the 'Ārif regime in September 1964. The plot was revealed, and the episode resulted in a wide sweep of the remaining Ba'th leaders, many of whom (including al-Bakr) were temporarily jailed or exiled. Following this attempt, the party went deeply underground, while 'Ārif's security guards kept after it.

Meanwhile, events in Syria were overtaking the group in Iraq.[54] Between 1964 and 1966, a complex struggle for power had developed in the Syrian region, still under Ba'th control. The chief instigator of the Syrian conflict was a group of military officers who, though Ba'thist, were more interested in gaining power in Syria than in furthering Arab unity. After the breakup of the UAR in 1961 this group, led by Ṣalāḥ Jadīd, increasingly made common cause with a number of Syrian Ba'thists who were also more interested in Syria than in pan-Arab schemes. Increasingly, this faction was opposed by the old guard of the Ba'th, led by 'Aflaq and al-Bayṭār and supported by Amīn al-Ḥāfiẓ, a former officer who had come to dominate the regional command of the party and the Syrian government.

Before long, this split was carried to the national command. At the eighth national congress of the party, held in April 1965 (the last truly pan-Arab Ba'th conference), there was an unsuccessful attempt to patch up the quarrel between the old guard and the military in Syria. Between April 1965 and February 1966, a complex set of political maneuvers took place in Syria. The old guard of the party tried, unsuccessfully, to curb the growing influence of the military members. The culmination came on 23 February 1966, when Jadīd finally seized power in Syria in a military coup in which al-Ḥāfiẓ was wounded. The coup ended any hope of Ba'th unity for some time to come. The new Syrian rulers expelled 'Aflaq and al-Bayṭār from the party and from Syria, and jailed others on the national command. They then held a new "national congress" in September 1966 and elected a "national command" entirely to their liking.

These events posed a challenge to the new Iraqi regional command, which had been supporting the party's old guard and relying on them in their internal struggles in Iraq. The core of the Iraq command, siding with the national command elected in April 1965, now called for a new extraordinary party congress of all factions to seek a compromise that would save the unity of the party, but the call went unanswered. Under the impetus of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, the Iraqi party finally held an extraordinary congress to iron out their differences. After heated discussion, the congress elected a new regional command for Iraq that reflected a clear victory for the anti-Syrian forces.[55] It was led by Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr as secretary-general and Ṣaddām Ḥusayn as assistant secretary-general. These men played a crucial role in bringing the party back to power, and they later figured in its first government.

With the election of this new regional command, the party split was complete. It was not until February 1968, however, that the Iraqis called a new pan-Arab congress to elect its own national command. This congress, dominated by the Iraqi national command, reinstated Michel ʿAflaq as secretary-general.[56] Thenceforth, the party committed to pan-Arab unity would have to endure the irony of two pan-Arab "national commands," each composed of factions supporting the regimes in Damascus and Baghdad. More than irony was involved, however. The split generated a bitter party feud that dominated the foreign policies of both countries after July 1968 and often resulted in attempts at internal subversion as well.

The events of 1965 and 1966 produced new Baʿth leaders in Iraq. Among the civilians as well as the military, Tikrītīs were already becoming prominent. These included al-Bakr, Ṣalāḥ ʿUmar al-ʿAlī, and of course Ṣaddām Ḥusayn. Ḥardān al-Tikrītī played a role on the sidelines. The city of Sāmarrā' also had a strong contingent, represented by ʿAbd al-Khāliq and ʿAbd Allah Sallūm al-Sāmarrā'ī. With the exception of al-Bakr, ʿAmmāsh, and Ḥardān al-Tikrītī, none had played a public role in Iraq before. Nevertheless, many had extensive party experience, most of it in underground politics involving a ruthless struggle for power. This background would mark the leadership for years to come.

Throughout 1967, with the struggle for power essentially out of the way, the new party leadership had set about reorganizing its structure. It built up its local branches, developed a militia and an intelligence apparatus, and infiltrated mass organizations, especially those made up of students and professors.[57] By 1968, using its well-known military figures in the public sphere and its clandestine organization underground, the party was ready to make another bid for power. But it was still not strong enough to do so without help from non-Baʿthists in the military.

The Making of the Coup

Early in 1968, if not before, the senior military Baʿthists began probing the military for dissatisfied elements willing to participate in a coup. Since al-Nāyif was in a key military position, it is not surprising that he was drawn into such schemes. One such meeting, involving al-Nāyif and Rajab ʿAbd al-Majīd, may have taken place as early as February 1968. Rajab ʿAbd al-Majīd was a Nāṣirite who came from al-Ramādī, as did al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd. The key figure in linking al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd with the Baʿth was Saʿdūn Ghaydān, commander of a key tank brigade in the Republican Guard. Ghaydān had long been in contact with the Baʿth, and was a Baʿth supporters, a fact unknown to al-Nāyif in February 1968.

While these contacts were being made, the Baʿth Party was busy on other fronts as well, contributing to the climate that would help overthrow the regime. A student strike in January 1968 was largely their work, although the Communists participated. In March 1968, a demonstration was organized by al-Bakr and the Ba'th in favor of a change of government. The party was also making underground preparations.

These activities reached a climax in April 1968 when thirteen retired officers, including former ministers and prime ministers, submitted a memorandum to 'Ārif calling for the removal of Ṭāhir Yaḥyā as prime minister and demanding, among other things, a coalition government of revolutionary elements and the establishment of a legislative assembly. Of the thirteen officers, five were Ba'thists. Al-Bakr had taken the lead in organizing the group.[58] However, 'Ārif refused to meet their demands. On 10 May, he announced an amendment to the interim constitution extending the transition period another two years, thus making it clear that the status quo would remain. The countdown for the regime probably dates from this announcement. Despite continued pressure from al-Nāyif, al-Dā'ūd, and the young officers, 'Ārif subsequently announced that Yaḥyā would form a new cabinet on 17 July. It became clear to al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd that the time had come to act.[59]

On the eve of the coup, al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd presented themselves before 'Ārif, demanding Yaḥyā's removal and at the same time professing their loyalty. Whether this was a last attempt to change 'Ārif's mind (as al-Nāyif later claimed) or a ruse to cover up the impending coup is difficult to say, but 'Ārif's refusal to dismiss Yaḥyā clearly decided the issue. The contacts with al-Bakr and a few of his chosen colleagues were reactivated. In return for their participation in the coup, al-Nāyif demanded to be made prime minister, and al-Dā'ūd, minister of defense. al-Bakr was to be president and 'Ammāsh, minister of interior.[60] Thus, while the Ba'thists would take over the presidency and the ministry of interior, with its control over the police, the young officers believed that real control of the government would fall to the prime minister and the army.

The demands of al-Nāyif and al-Dā'ūd for participation in the coup were problematic, indeed intensely embarrassing, to the Ba'th, as statements in the Ba'th report of the eighth regional congress indicate. Published in January 1974, this report contains the official party account of the coup. Admitting that al-Nāyif "had expressed a desire to take part in bringing about the change," the report claims that the party had earlier "declined his services." Nevertheless, the party clearly could not do without him.[61] According to the report, the regional leadership was meeting at al-Bakr's house on 16 July to review the final moves when word came from al-Nāyif of his agreement to participate in return for the position of prime minister. The Ba'th leadership agreed to the demand, but determined to remove him and al-Dā'ūd at the earliest possible moment.

In the early morning hours of 17 July, the coup began. Al-Nāyif and his forces occupied the Ministry of Defense, while al-Dā'ūd, with members of the Republican Guard, occupied the broadcasting station. The critical action took place at the Republican Palace. Sa'dūn Ghaydān played a key role, opening the gates of the palace to the Baʿthists, including al-Bakr, ʿAmmāsh, ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Ḥadīthī, and Ḥardān al-Tikrītī. The Baʿth also called the militia and the Tenth Brigade into action. Al-Nāyif attempted to stop the brigade and the militia from marching on Baghdad, but to no avail. The Baʿth intended to use these groups to make good their claim to power. The air force also participated, making some cosmetic overflights. In the middle of the night ʿArif was summoned, and after a brief confrontation he surrendered. He was sent off to England and eventually into exile—which he spent in Istanbul and later in Cairo. Almost ten years to the day after the first revolution of 1958, the fourth major change of regime had been effected in Baghdad.

8

The Baʿth in Power

The coup of 17 July 1968, although not entirely the work of the Baʿth, shortly brought the Baʿth Party to full power and inaugurated another distinct change in the structure and orientation of government in Iraq. This time the Baʿth, having learned well the lessons of 1963, managed to stay in power and to institute the kind of regime they had failed to achieve in 1963. To the surprise of many, they brought a long period of stability, achieved by draconian means. The regime established a one-party state that eventually developed an impressive institutional structure, and gradually concentrated power in the hands of one man, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, to a degree not seen since the last days of the monarchy. The Baʿth also reached a settlement of the Kurdish problem that appeared more likely to remain intact than previous solutions, although it took a bitter and costly war to achieve. The party made a renewed and reasonably successful effort at economic and social transformation, going well beyond the achievements of previous regimes. It was aided by the oil price rise of 1973, which enabled Iraq, like other oil producers, to undertake a major development program. Meanwhile, in accordance with Baʿth ideology, the party set up a socialist state that heavily emphasized building up the sinews of military and bureaucratic power. By 1980, Iraq had begun to emerge from its earlier regional and international isolation. Thanks to the economic, social, and political developments mentioned above, Iraq also began to exercise a major influence on the Middle Eastern scene, especially in the Gulf, where it expected to play a leading role in the future.

These relatively positive developments were brought to a halt by Iraq's ill-fated involvement in a war with Iran. By 1983, this conflict had halted the economic and social progress of the previous years, undermined the legitimacy of the regime, and decisively checked Iraq's pretensions to leadership in the Gulf and the Arab world in general. There were other weaknesses as well. One was the repressive authoritarian nature of the regime, which despite an array of grass-roots institutions, actually rested on a fragile base of enforced consent. By 1980, the regime was dangerously top-heavy, relying to an overwhelming degree on one individual, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn. National loyalty, although greatly improved since mandate days, was still weak, as reflected in discontent among the *shī'ah* and Kurdish communities. Iraq's foreign relations were precarious, allowing its neighbors to intervene in Iraq's internal affairs with destabilizing effects. The Iran-Iraq war was only the most dramatic example; problems with Syria also had internal repercussions.

Emergence of a New Political Order

Within two weeks of the coup, the Ba'th executed a series of maneuvers that completely removed al-Nāyif, al-Dā'ūd, and their supporting faction from power. They were replaced with loyal Ba'thists, giving the Ba'th full control of the government. From the first hours of the revolt, the struggle for power between the Ba'th and the young officers' factions was evident.[1] In policy statements, the latter group favored a pragmatic economic program, an oil policy more lenient to the West, and a conciliatory attitude toward the Kurds. The Ba'thists, in turn, made it clear that they anticipated a continuation and intensification of Arabism and socialism, no backtracking on the previous oil policy, and a somewhat harder line on the Kurds.

It was soon apparent that the young officers and their civilian supporters were no match for the Ba'th. Both factions fought over control of government appointments and the press, but the battle was ultimately decided in the military. Al-Bakr and his colleagues instituted a series of shrewd moves. The Tenth Brigade, under the command of Hammād Shihāb, was moved to Baghdad. Then the Ba'thists arranged for al-Dā'ūd to visit the Iraqi troops at the Jordanian front, thus putting Chief of Staff Ḥardān al-Tikrītī temporarily in charge of the army. Al-Tikrītī was also commander of the air force. Finally, the Ba'thists reinstated 117 Ba'thist officers previously dismissed from the army.[2] On 30 July, al-Nāyif was invited to lunch with al-Bakr at the presidential palace. At the conclusion of the meal he was confronted with a group of armed party members, led by Ṣaddām Ḥusayn. Al-Nāyif was made ambassador to Morocco and, like 'Ārif before him, was put on a plane and sent off into permanent exile. The same day, al-Nāyif's civilian followers were swept from the cabinet. In their place, President al-Bakr also became prime minister and commander in chief of the armed forces; Ḥardān al-Tikrītī was made minister of defense; and 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shaykhlī took Nāṣir al-Ḥānī's place at foreign affairs.[3] 'Ammāsh continued as minister of interior.

Several features of this second government deserve mention. First, it was dominated by the military. The members of the newly formed RCC were all military men, and military men occupied the four key cabinet posts of president, prime minister, defense, and interior.[4] Second was the predominance of Tikrītīs, especially Tikrītīs who were relatives of al-Bakr. Three of the five members of the RCC were Tikrītīs; two (al-Bakr and Shihāb) were related to each other. In the cabinet the posts of president, prime minister, and defense went to Tikrītīs. To these must be added Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, a Tikrītī and relative of al-Bakr. Though holding no official position as yet, Ḥusayn played a key role behind the scenes. Lastly, the government was completely dominated by the Ba'th. All key posts were given to Ba'thists, and most of the remainder were distributed to Ba'thists or Ba'th sympathizers. The new leaders had learned at least one lesson from 1963—not to share power with non-Ba'thists. This was to remain a cardinal tenet of their rule throughout the next decade.[5]

Consolidation of Power, 1968–1973

The coup of 30 July had put al-Bakr and the military Ba'thists in power, but the Ba'th position was still precarious. Throughout the country Ba'th support was thin; according to the party's own estimates, it had no more than 5,000 members in 1968.[6] The party faced two tasks if it was to retain power and avoid a repetition of its fate in 1963. It had to consolidate its hold over the apparatus of state, and it had to avoid serious divisions in leadership. These tasks were tackled successfully between 1968 and 1973.

The consolidation process began in the military. Early on, officers of questionable loyalty were replaced by Ba'thists or Ba'th sympathizers. In December 1968, Fayṣal al-Anṣārī was retired as chief of staff and replaced by Ḥammād Shihāb. Sa'dūn Ghaydān was made commander of the Baghdad garrison, and a new set of divisional commanders was appointed. In July 1969, Ḥusayn Ḥayāwī, a Ba'thist and a Tikrītī, was made commander of the air force. At the same time, many senior civil servants, including most directors-general, were also replaced by Ba'thists.

The Trials

Another move to consolidate Ba'th rule was a series of trials, used by the regime to eliminate real or potential threats to its power. The trials, which began only a few months after the Ba'th took office, involved a range of accusations, including spying for the United States, Israel, and Iran, and conspiracy to overthrow the government. Whatever the validity of the charges (impossible to evaluate because of the secrecy of the trials), the trials demonstrated the ruthlessness of the regime and made it clear to other political groups that no attempt to overthrow Ba'th rule would be tolerated. The first to be arrested were the Arab nationalists and Nāṣirites, beginning with Yaḥyā, Ḥasīb, and al-Jādir. They were charged with corruption and jailed. However, as fellow Arab nationalists and socialists, they were dealt with leniently. No charges were proved and all were eventually released.

Far more important was the harassment of the pro-Western elements. On 10 November 1968, Nāṣir al-Ḥānī was murdered under suspicious circumstances, and a number of Iraqi representatives of Western firms were arrested. Then came the arrest of several men accused of spying for Israel and supplying information to Central Treaty Organization countries, especially Iran and the United States. The arrested men included a number of Jews as well as former ministers 'Abd al-'Azīz al-'Uqaylī and 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Bazzāz.[7] A number of the accused were tried by secret military court, and fourteen were executed. Amidst international outcry, they were hanged publicly for maximum effect. The first fourteen executions were followed by seven more in February and then an additional fourteen in April and May. Some of the latter occurred in Basra, indicating the regime's growing fear of Iran. Finally, in the summer of 1969 al-Bazzāz, al-'Uqaylī, and Rashīd Muṣliḥ—a former Ba'thist who had deserted the party in 1963 to join with 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif—were put on trial. Rashīd Muṣliḥ confessed on television to spying for the CIA, and he and fourteen others were executed; al-Bazzāz and al-'Uqaylī did not confess and were given prison sentences instead.[8]

No sooner had these trials ended than the regime faced another plot, by just the right-wing pro-Western elements it most feared. The plotters were supported by Iran and led by 'Abd al-Ghanī-l-Rāwī. The exiled 'Abd al-Razzāq was also drawn in. In January 1970, thirty-seven men and women were executed on charges of attempting to overthrow the government, and a death sentence was passed in absentia on al-Nāyif. In the same month Iraq expelled the Iranian ambassador, closed the Iranian consulates in Baghdad, Karbalā', and Basra, and undertook wholesale deportation of Persians under conditions of severe hardship. All in all, by the end of 1970 the Ba'th had officially executed at least eighty-six people; countless others were imprisoned.[9]

The Ba'th did not spare the Communists. When the Iraq Communist Party took a position of opposition in the spring of 1970, the regime began arresting its members, and by June 1970 several hundred Communists were in jail. The dissident Communist guerrilla group operating in the south under the leadership of 'Azīz al-Ḥājj was also brought to heel, and al-Ḥājj recanted on television in 1969.[10]

The Interim Constitution

While the party was moving to eliminate or neutralize external threats to its control, it also acted to broaden and institutionalize its power within the state. The first step in this direction was taken on 9 November 1969, when the five-member RCC was enlarged to fifteen. All those appointed were Ba'thists, and all but one were civilians. Ṣaddām Ḥusayn became vice-chairman of the RCC, stepping out of his strictly party role and officially becoming the second most important figure in the regime after al-Bakr.[11] All the new appointees were members of the party's regional command, and most were veterans of the party's struggle with the Syrian branch in 1966.

The next step came in July 1970 with the formal publication of a new interim constitution. This instrument set the form of government that has remained, with few modifications, right up to 1984. It was a statement of the regime's ideology. The new constitution defined Iraq as a People's Democratic Republic aimed at achieving a united Arab state and a socialist system. A provision aimed at the Kurds declared that no part of Iraq could be given up. Islam was declared to be the state religion, but freedom of religion and religious practices were guaranteed. Iraq was said to be formed of two principal nationalities, Arab and Kurd, with recognition of Kurdish national rights.

The state was given the authority to plan, direct, and guide the national economy for the purpose of establishing socialism on a "scientific and revolutionary basis." State ownership of natural resources and the principal instruments of production was stipulated, but private ownership was guaranteed with some limitations on agricultural land ownership. Free education up to the university level and free medical care were guaranteed. The right to work was not only guaranteed but required.

The constitution also defined the locus of power in the new regime. Dominant power was given to the RCC, which had the authority to promulgate laws and regulations, to deal with defense security, to declare war and conclude peace, and to approve the budget. The president, as the executive of the RCC, was made commander in chief of the armed forces and the chief executive of the state. He was given the power to appoint, promote, and dismiss judiciary, civil, and military personnel. He was also responsible for preparing and approving the budget. The regional command of the party was also to play a key role. Article 38 stipulated that newly elected members of the RCC had to be members of the regional command, thus making the RCC an arm of the party. The constitution also provided for the appointment of ministers, who were to function as department heads executing RCC decisions. Lastly, the constitution included provisions for the election of a national assembly, but these were not activated until 1981.[12] The constitution indicated that the party had learned a second lesson from 1963—that the executive and legislative organs of state should be firmly controlled by the party. Power was concentrated in the RCC, whose membership was to be monopolized by the regional command of the party.

The Internal Struggle

The second task of the party—preventing leadership divisions—proved more difficult. While institutions were being constructed, the top leadership was undergoing considerable attrition over a series of struggles over policy and power. The most important struggle took place between the military and civilian wings of the party. Both al-Bakr and Ḥusayn were anxious to reduce military influence in politics and to prevent the military Ba'thists from taking over the government as had happened in Syria. The enlargement of the RCC in 1969, which had reduced the military component to a little more than a third, was a first step in this direction.

The next step was to gradually remove two key military figures, Ḥardān al-Tikrītī and Ṣāliḥ Mahdī 'Ammāsh, who both had constituencies in the party and the military. In April 1970 both were made vice-presidents, largely a ceremonial office, while their places at interior and defense were taken by Ghaydān and Shihāb. In October 1970, Ḥardān al-Tikrītī was relieved of all his posts, ostensibly over a clash of policy with Ṣaddām Ḥusayn on the Palestinian question. In March 1971 he was assassinated in Kuwait amidst rumors that he had been planning a coup. Next came 'Ammāsh's turn. In September 1971 he was dropped from the RCC and appointed ambassador to Moscow, and he never again played an important role in Iraqi politics. In 1974, Ghaydān was dropped from the Ministry of Interior and given a lesser cabinet position, although he remained on the RCC. Shihāb was killed during a coup attempt in 1973, and his position at defense was assumed by al-Bakr. By 1974, al-Bakr was the only former army officer still in a key post.

Equally significant was the gradual removal from the party command and the RCC of a number of Ba'th civilians with long-standing party credentials. Ṣalāḥ 'Umar al-'Alī, a relative of al-Bakr, was dropped in June 1970. 'Abd Allah Sallūm al-Sāmarrā'ī and Shafīq al-Kamālī followed him out, and 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shaykhlī was sent abroad as ambassador in October 1970. The attrition did not end here. In 1973, just when the regime's position appeared to have stabilized, it received its severest jolt thus far. In June, Nāẓim Kzār, the party's carefully chosen security chief almost succeeded in an attempt to unseat the regime.

The Kzār Coup Attempt

Although it was poorly organized, lacked widespread support, and was motivated mainly by personal concerns, the coup attempt nevertheless reflected a certain amount of dissatisfaction within the top Ba'th leadership. Kzār, a *shī'ī* from al-'Amārah and the son of a policeman, had worked his way to the top of the party hierarchy through its underground security network. After his appointment as chief of security in 1969 he had been blamed for the torture, arrest, and assassination of the party's opponents and for attempts on the life of al-Bārzānī and his son, although it is difficult to believe that such measures were undertaken without top party authority. A hard-liner and more of a nationalist than a reformer, Kzār was apparently opposed to the regime's policy toward the Kurds, which he felt had put far too much power and autonomy in their hands, and to the leftward turn of the regime and its close ties to the Soviet Union. Behind the policy differences, however, lay personal animosity toward al-Bakr, Ḥusayn, and the Tikrītīs, all of whom Kzār accused of having profited from party struggles.[13]

The plot called for the assassination of al-Bakr at the Baghdad airport when he returned from an official visit to Poland on 30 June 1973. Earlier that day, Kzār had taken Shihāb and Ghaydān hostage as a guarantee of success. The plans misfired when al-Bakr's plane was delayed and Kzār's co-conspirators dispersed at the airport. Fearing discovery, Kzār fled toward the Iranian border with the hostages. He offered to negotiate with al-Bakr at the home of 'Abd al-Khalīq al-Sāmarrā'ī, thereby implicating one of the most respected of the party's top leaders. Kzār was intercepted before he could reach the border, but not before he had shot both hostages. Shihāb died, but Ghaydān survived.

The outcome of the affair could easily be predicted. On 7 July a trial was held. Seven security officers, including Kzār, and thirteen army officers were executed. The following day thirty-six civilians, including al-Sāmarrā'ī, were tried, and thirteen more executions followed. Al-Sāmarrā'ī denied knowledge of the plot and was merely imprisoned.[14] The extent of his involvement, if any, was not clear, but the regime was taking no chances on his leading a more effective opposition in the future.

The Kzār episode further depleted the leadership at the top of the party. The RCC had now been reduced to six members: Ḥusayn, al-Bakr, 'Izzat al-Dūrī, 'Izzat Muṣṭafā, Ṭaha-l-Jazrāwī, and Sa'dūn Ghaydān. Ghaydān was the only member not on the regional command. As survivors of these critical years, the other five now became the core of the party's leadership. These struggles, beginning with the removal of 'Ammāsh and Ḥardān al-Tikrītī, and ending with the Kzār coup, paved the way for the unquestioned dominance of two men, al-Bakr and Ḥusayn. The personal and political interaction between them and their ability to work together would continue to keep the party and the regime in power.

Al-Bakr and Ḥusayn

From the first, the relationship between al-Bakr and Ḥusayn had been complementary. Al-Bakr, the only senior politician in the regime, had been publicly associated with Arab nationalist causes for over a decade. He brought the party a certain legitimacy. More important, he brought support from the army, both among Ba'thist and non-Ba'thist officers, with whom he had cultivated ties for years. By contrast, Ḥusayn provided youth and dynamism and appealed to those more imbued with ideology and more interested in progress and development. Both men, however, shared a basic agreement on orientation and ideology and both were determined to prevent friction between themselves from becoming an opening wedge for others. Although Ḥusayn began very early to gather the threads of power into his hands, he was careful not to challenge al-Bakr's leadership. In time their ties of kinship were cemented by a close personal relationship and bonds of mutual trust that were to stand Ḥusayn and the party in good stead. To understand the operation of the regime in these years, it is necessary to understand the background and orientation of these two men.

Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr was born in 1914 in Tikrīt of the al-Bayjāt (Begāt) clan of the Albū Nāṣir tribe.[15] His father was a small landowner; his mother was related to the important al-Shāwī and al-'Ubayd clans, which were prominently represented in the government. Like many boys of modest means, al-Bakr went to a teachers' training school and taught primary school for six years in the countryside before joining the military academy in 1938. He graduated in 1942, just a year after the Rashīd ʿĀlī movement and the British occupation. Both left a profound impression on him. Throughout much of these early years, al-Bakr and his cousin Khayr Allah Ṭalfāḥ were close companions. In 1958, as a Free Officer, he took part in the overthrow of the monarchy. After the revolution he supported ʿAbd al-Salām ʿĀrif in his struggle with Qāsim, and he was involved in an abortive coup against Qāsim. He was subsequently retired from the army. In 1959 he was implicated in the Mosul rebellion and briefly arrested, indicating a commitment to Arab nationalist (but not necessarily leftist) causes. During his enforced retirement al-Bakr went to Baghdad Law School and obtained a degree. It was probably some time before 1958 that he joined the Baʿth Party. When the party came to power in 1963, he played a key role in its government as prime minister.[16] Al-Bakr's attempt to mediate the party dispute in 1963, his bitterness at being ousted by ʿĀrif, and his role in overthrowing the ʿĀrif regime in 1968 have already been discussed.

Al-Bakr's significant role in bringing the party to power and keeping it in power has often been discounted by observers. In addition to keeping the army in line, he projected a paternal image that somewhat mitigated the party's reputation for harshness. As a practicing Muslim and a known moderate, al-Bakr appealed to the more conservative and nationalist elements in the population, and as a consummate manipulator, al-Bakr often helped mediate conflicts within the party.

Ṣaddām Ḥusayn presented a contrast in personality to al-Bakr. Ṣaddām was born in Tikrīt in 1937 to a landless peasant family. His father died before he was born, and he was entrusted to the care of his maternal uncle, Khayr Allah Ṭalfāḥ.[17] The first ten years of his life were spent shuttling between Ṭalfāḥ's home and that of his paternal uncle, whom his mother had married after the death of his father. At the age of ten he went to live with Ṭalfāḥ, whose influence on his life was to be critical. Ṭalfāḥ was an army officer who had participated in the Rashīd ʿĀlī movement and been discharged from the army and imprisoned for five years as a result. The episode ruined his military career and inspired a deep grudge against the old regime and the foreign influence behind it. Ṭalfāḥ passed this resentment on to Ḥusayn at an early age. Among the intellectual influences that Ḥusayn has cited as critical in shaping his views were the memoirs of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh—the main protagonist behind the Rashīd ʿĀlī coup.[18]

Ḥusayn attended school up to the intermediate level in Tikrīt. In 1955, at the age of eighteen, he left Tikrīt to join a secondary school in Baghdad. Here he plunged into antiregime activity, participating in the demonstrations and riots of 1956. He joined the Baʿth Party in 1957. It was in these formative years that Ḥusayn became a militant nationalist. He participated in the clashes between Qāsim and the Baʿth in 1958 and was jailed for six months. In 1959 he took part in the

Saddam Hussein, President of the Iraqi Republic, 1984. Courtesy Press Office, Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations.

famous assassination attempt on Qāsim, during which he was wounded in the leg. While hiding in a safe house Husayn had one of his companions remove the bullet under his instructions, thus contributing to the early legends of his courage and coolness.[19] He was sentenced to death in absentia and fled to Syria along with several others.

Ḥusayn then made his way to Cairo, where in 1961, at the age of twenty-four, he finished secondary school. During this period, he was also on the executive committee of the Ba‘th Party for this region. In 1962 he enrolled in the Cairo University Law School, but before he could complete the year, the Ba‘th took over in Iraq and he returned to take part in party activities in Baghdad. Shortly after his return from Cairo on 5 May 1963, he married his cousin Sājidah Ṭalfāḥ, then a primary school teacher in Baghdad. They have four children, two boys—‘Udday is the eldest—and two girls. He finally completed his law degree in Baghdad in 1971.

Ḥusayn's role in the regime of 1963 was minimal (he was a member of the party's central bureau for peasants). However, he absorbed the lessons to be learned from the experience. At the seventh national Ba‘th congress, held in Damascus in 1964, he took a position against al-Sa‘dī's faction. After the attempted Ba‘th coup of 1964, Ḥusayn went underground, but in October of that year he was discovered and sent to the central prison in Baghdad. Here he continued to recruit and organize party members until he succeeded in escaping in 1966.

Between 1966 and 1968 Ḥusayn worked assiduously to establish the party's underground apparatus, taking charge, in particular, of the special forces that became the party's militia. In 1966 he was elected to the new regional command as assistant secretary-general. According to his biographer he played a leading role in upholding the legitimacy of the old guard leadership and thus in forcing the split with the Syrian branch after Ṣalāḥ Jadīd's 1966 coup.[20] Meanwhile he continued recruiting and organizing and (according to some) ruthlessly rooting out the party's enemies.

These underground, conspiratorial activities were most influential in shaping Ḥusayn's outlook and mentality. His secretiveness, his cautiousness, and his distrust of outsiders sprang from years of being hunted, and from his own considerable talents in organizing conspiracy. At the same time, his courage and fearlessness contributed to his image as a *shaqāwah,* a local term denoting a kind of tough or bully—a man to be feared. These experiences also inclined him toward the Stalinist model of political control. He has admitted to admiring the man who, in his early years, captured and controlled the civilian Soviet Communist Party and so firmly entrenched it in power that it could not be dislodged, even by the army.

By 1969 Ṣaddām Ḥusayn was clearly a moving force behind the scenes. He applied his considerable talents toward organizing the party's institutional structure and finding a solution to the Kurdish problem. However, he could not do entirely without al-Bakr's support and patronage, which he used astutely until, by 1973, he had gradually come to overshadow the older man.

Ba‘th Foreign Policy: The Radical Phase, 1969–1973

The first years of the Ba‘th regime were turbulent externally as well as internally; as usual, foreign and domestic problems were contantly intertwined, complicating attempts to stabilize the regime. Some of the foreign policy problems were of the regime's own making; others were caused by neighbors anxious to exploit a new and presumably weak regime. The most serious difficulty came from Iran, which was alienated by the pan-Arab ideology of the Ba‘th, its zeal for revolutionary socialism, and its anti-Western stance. Ba‘th revolutionary zeal was soon translated into Iraqi support for the Arab liberation front in Khūzistān and the leftist insurgency in Ẓufār. Meanwhile, the announcement by Britain in 1969 that it would withdraw its forces east of Suez in 1971 precipitated a major struggle for power in the Gulf. The shah's aggressive stance, armament program, and support from the United States worried Iraq and helped precipitate conflict between the two countries.

Confrontation began over the perennial problem of the Shaṭṭ al-‘Arab and was initiated by Iran. In February 1969, after several weeks of discussions with the new government in Baghdad, an Iranian delegation announced that Iraq had not fulfilled its obligations under the 1937 treaty and demanded that the boundary between the two countries be drawn along the thalweg, the center of the deep water channel. Iraq refused. On 19 April Iran publicly abrogated the treaty, and on 22 April proceeded to pilot its own ships through the Shaṭṭ without paying dues to Iraq. The Iraqi reaction was swift. A number of Iranians were expelled from Iraq, a propaganda war ensued, and Iraq began to aid dissidents against the shah's regime, such as Ṭaymūr Bakhtiyār, the former Iranian security chief. Iran responded with aid to the Kurds.

Fuel was added to the fire when the shah occupied the islands of Abū Mūsā and the two Ṭunbs (previously under the sovereignty of al-Shāriqah [Sharjah] and Ra's al-Khaymah) in November 1971. Iraq then broke off diplomatic relations with Iran. The cold war slid into a hot war with numerous border incidents. Iraq repeatedly took its case to the UN (as did Iran), but with little effect. Although the situation eased slightly in 1973, the respite was only temporary.

Iran was not the only Gulf country disturbed by Iraq's radical stance. Saudi Arabia and the conservative Gulf shaykhdoms opposed Iraq's support for South Yemen, its ties to left-wing elements in North Yemen, and its aid to the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf. The most serious confrontation was with Kuwait. This time the dispute centered on the two Kuwaiti islands of Warbah and Būbiyān, which dominate the estuary leading to the southern Iraqi port of Umm Qaṣr. The islands had assumed increased significance to Iraq with its plans to expand this port. Iraq demanded that the two islands be transferred or leased to it. Possession of the islands would have increased the size of Iraq's Gulf shore (and its offshore oil rights) and allowed it to develop a much needed deep water port on the Gulf. When negotiations proved fruitless, Iraq decided to apply force. On 20 March 1973, Iraqi troops occupied al-Sāmitah, a border post in the northeast corner of Kuwait.[21] Saudi Arabia immediately came to Kuwait's aid and together with the Arab League, secured Iraq's withdrawal. Relations with Kuwait remained tense until the end of the 1970s.

The Kurdish Problem

Iraq had problems in its own backyard as well. When the Ba'th came to power in 1968 they inherited the unsolved Kurdish problem from the 'Ārif era. The promising settlement concluded by al-Bazzāz in 1966 had fallen into abeyance, partly because it was unpopular with a number of army officers and partly because the Kurds had hardened their stance. In November 1966 the KDP had held its seventh congress and elected a five-man political bureau of hard-liners. Moreover, al-Bārzānī had begun consolidating his relations with Iran and had established contact with Israel, factors that did not augur well for a solution given the intense Arab nationalism of the Ba'th.[22]

Although the new regime initially committed itself to implementing the 1966 agreement, before long it began openly supporting Ibrāhīm Aḥmad and Jalāl al-Ṭālabānī, al-Bārzānī's opponents. Al-Bārzānī naturally drew the conclusion that no real implementation of the agreement was likely, and by the fall of 1968 clashes were already taking place between the Iraqi army and the Kurds. By December the government was using the air force to bomb Kurdish territory. In the same month, the Kurds attacked IPC installations in Kirkūk. Although the damage was intentionally limited, the attack delivered the message that unless Kurdish demands were heeded the source of most of the government's revenue could be cut off. Four divisions of the Iraqi army were now sent north and full-scale war ensued once more. Iran was soon heavily embroiled in the conflict. By 1969 the Kurds were receiving massive aid from Iran, and Iranian units were even fighting in Iraqi territory. This aid, together with the situation on the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab, helped turn the tide in the Kurd's favor. Recognizing the stalemate, the government reluctantly concluded an agreement with al-Bārzānī in March 1970.

From the first, the 1970 settlement was the work of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, who went north for discussions with al-Bārzānī in January. On 11 March, the fifteen-point agreement was made public. It provided for Kurdish autonomy (the first official use of the word),[23] and it guaranteed proportional representation of Kurds within a national legislative body; the appointment of a Kurdish vice-president at the national level; the expenditure of an equitable amount of oil revenue in the autonomous region, and the recognition of both Kurdish and Arabic as official languages in Kurdish territory. For his part, al-Bārzānī agreed to turn over the heavy weapons of his fighting force, the ***pēshmerga,*** and integrate the force into the Iraqi army. A census was to be carried out to determine the areas in which a Kurdish majority prevailed, prior to the grant of autonomy. Most important of all, there was to be a delay of four years before the agreement was to come into effect.[24] The signing of the agreement was followed by the withdrawal of government support for the dissident Kurdish factions, and five supporters of al-Bārzānī were taken into the Council of Ministers.

The agreement, which allowed both sides to claim a measure of victory, was controversial from the start. It helped stabilize Ba'th rule and gave the regime the capacity to deal with its enemies on other fronts, yet many inside and outside the party felt the price was too high. The agreement, they claimed, allowed al-Bārzānī to control a wide tract of territory from Zākhū to Ḥalabjah; official recognition of the KDP allowed it to exploit and consolidate its position in the north.[25] On the other hand, many Kurds were critical of the agreement's failure to declare immediate autonomy and to define the future government structures to be established in the north and the powers they were to be granted.[26] More important, the long postponement of the final application gave the government time to strengthen its position and reverse some of the concessions in practice. There is little doubt that the agreement helped stabilize the Ba'th regime and postponed an unfavorable settlement on the Shaṭṭ.

The Nationalization of Oil

Like the Ba'th stand toward the Gulf powers and the Kurds, the Ba'th oil policy was more radical than the policies of previous regimes. Although the new government allowed the ERAP agreement and other arrangements made by the 'Ārif regime to continue in force, there was little doubt that direct ownership and control over Iraq's oil resources was the long-range aim. To this end, the regime immediately undertook measures to exploit the southern fields previously expropriated by Qāsim and designated by PL 97 of 1967 to be exclusively exploited by INOC. In 1969, new contracts were signed with the Soviet Union for drilling in the north Rumaylah field; U.S. and West German firms were enlisted in constructing pipelines and a new port, Mīnā'-l-Bakr, to offtake the southern production. By April 1972, exports from the Rumaylah field had officially commenced with 21,000 metric tons of crude.[27] To circumvent IPC's ban on the sale of crude from expropriated territory Iraq made trade or barter agreements with an number of countries.

Development of the southern fields did not solve the government's continuing problems with IPC. The main issues were recognition of PL 80, settlement of back claims, and a renewed demand by the Ba'th for a 20 percent share in the company's ownership.[28] In addition, there was underlying bitterness in Iraq over low levels of production from the Kirkūk fields in the face of increased production everywhere else in the Gulf. Much of this, of course, was due to the lingering dispute with IPC and the hostility shown to the company by successive governments.

The production problem was partly overcome in October 1970 when Iraq made new agreements with IPC and BPC to increase production in the southern fields. For a time, the atmosphere improved, but then between March and May 1972, IPC dropped production from the Kirkūk field about 44 percent, an action that brought home to Iraq its dependence on the foreign oil company.[29] The company maintained that the decision had been made entirely on economic grounds (a drop in freight rates had made Gulf oil cheaper to offtake than oil that had to be piped to the Mediterranean), but the Iraqis saw the move as a means of forcing concessions from them on other points of disagreement. Whatever the true motives of the company, the decision certainly showed an insensitivity to political realities in Baghdad. In May, the company was warned to restore production or face legislative measures. Although the company offered to increase production in the southern fields and to make back payments for royalty expenses, it also asked for 12.5 percent of INOC oil in recognition of the loss suffered since expropriation in 1961. This euphemism translated as compensation for the effects of PL 80. For this reason the offer was rejected out of hand by the government. Events moved to a rapid conclusion. On 1 June 1972, Public Law 69 nationalized IPC (but not BPC) and established a new company, Iraq Company for Oil Operations (ICOO) to take over IPC facilities in the north. The French shareholder, CFP, was offered an option (which it soon accepted) to reach a separate agreement with Iraq in appreciation of the French stand on Israel. Meanwhile, IPC extended its embargo on the sale of any oil from the expropriated Rumaylah field to the Kirkūk fields as well.[30]

Although Iraq had to cut expenditures drastically and postpone development projects, the action was enormously popular in Baghdad because of its anti-imperialist thrust. Despite dire predictions of what might befall Iraq as a result of nationalization, on 28 February 1973 a new settlement, favorable to Iraq, was reached with IPC. It cleared the decks of eleven prior disputes, removed all legal action threatened by the company against the purchasers of oil, and paid Iraq approximately ID 105 million ($345 million) to settle back claims. In return, Iraq granted IPC 15 million metric tons of crude, then worth over ID 91 million ($300 million).[31] IPC retained rights in BPC. However, following the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973, U.S. and Dutch interests in BPC were nationalized, and in December of that year Iraq nationalized the remaining interests. With these acts, all foreign oil concessions were put in government hands.[32]

The Ba'th had finally accomplished a major aim of all revolutionary regimes since 1958, but the price was high. Nationalization disrupted oil production and development programs; alienated Iraq's Western trading partners; contributed to Iraq's reputation as an unreliable state; and helped isolate the regime internationally, a development the government could ill afford. On the positive side, however, it gave the government complete control over its oil production and sales, established new economic relations with Western-owned oil companies, and paved the way for the regime to profit fully from the oil price rise about to shower bounty on the Gulf producers.

Relations with the USSR

The Ba'th's ideological stance inclined the party toward the Soviet Union. However, it was less ideology than its internal difficulties and its international isolation that caused the regime to look to the USSR for support. In seeking support, the Iraqis took the initiative. On 1 May 1969, Iraq became the first Arab country to recognize East Germany; in the spring of that year the government concluded a major contract with Poland to develop Iraq's rich sulfur deposits. Meanwhile, the USSR provided essential help in developing the Rumaylah field, the first significant entry of the Soviet Union into the production of Gulf petroleum. In February and June of 1969, Soviet naval squadrons paid visits to Umm Qaṣr and Basra, indicating their support for Iraq in the face of its "imperialist" neighbors.[33]

The high tide of Soviet-Iraqi cooperation came with the conclusion of the Iraqi-Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1972. Again, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn took the initiative by going to Moscow in February and speaking of his wish for "a solid strategic alliance with the USSR."[34] In April, the fifteen-year treaty was signed. The accord called for cooperation in the military, political, and economic spheres and required regular consultations on international affairs affecting both parties. It did not provide for mutual assistance in the event of hostilities, but merely stipulated that both sides would continue to strengthen each other in their defensive capabilities and "coordinate their positions" should a threat to peace arise.[35] On the Soviet side this clearly meant continued supplies of military equipment and training at a high level. On the Iraqi side it meant access to Iraqi ports and airports, but not base facilities. As part of the agreement the Soviets were allowed to use Umm Qaṣr, although they had to request special permission for each visit.[36]

From the Iraqi point of view, the treaty paid off handsomely in the short run, both in Kurdistan and in the nationalization of oil. It also played a role in stabilizing the regime by compelling cooperation from the ICP. But the relationship soon cooled. Iraq was irked by the Soviet's sale of oil to Europe at much higher prices than it paid, and at the poor quality of the Soviet goods it received in exchange. There was little the Ba'th could do, however, to break its dependence on Soviet arms.

The One-Party State

By the end of 1973, the regime had reached a turning point. The most urgent foreign policy problems had been solved, at least temporarily, and its power had been consolidated at home. However, the attempted coup of 1973 and the gradual attrition of leaders on the regional command and the RCC had shaken the regime and shown the need for new blood in top party circles. To remedy the situation the party called a regional congress, which met from 8 to 12 January 1974 and undertook several critical tasks.

First, the congress elected a new thirteen-member regional command, adding eight new members to the previous five.[37] Second, it published a definitive party report that chronicled the party's past struggles, elaborated its ideological positions, laid out its future policy, and clarified the role and function of the party in the state. Above all, it made clear that it was the party, and specifically the regional command, that would make policy.

The party then took several steps to strengthen its hold over the government. In November 1974, eight new ministers were appointed, five of whom were new command members. Although ministerial reshuffles occurred with regularity thereafter, the Ba'th share of ministerial posts seldom fell below two-thirds, and key posts were always occupied by command members. Following these shifts, a second expansion of the regional command, to twenty-one members, took place in January 1977.[38] In September 1977, all regional command members were appointed members of the RCC, making these two bodies indistinguishable. Through the overlap of personnel on three essential bodies—the regional command, the RCC, and the Council of Ministers—the party could control policy formation, policy legislation, and policy execution. Whoever controlled the party contolled the state.

Buttressing this centralization of power at the top was a grass-roots party organization, which had taken full shape by 1974. The smallest unit in this organization was the party cell or circle (*ḥalaqah*), composed of between three and seven members. Cells usually functioned at the neighborhood level, where they met to discuss and carry out party directives. Next on the hierarchical ladder was the party division (*firqah*), made up of several cells and operating in small urban quarters or villages. Professional and occupation units similar to the divisions were also located in offices, factories, schools, and other organizations. Honeycombing the bureaucracy and the military, these units functioned as the eyes and ears of the party. Above the division was the section (*shu'bah*), composed of two to five divisions. A section usually had jurisdiction over a territory the size of a large city quarter or county. A branch (*far'*), composed of at least two sections, operated at the provincial level, and the regional command, elected by the party's congress, operated at the national level.

Over and above the regional command was the national command, headed by a secretary-general (still Michel 'Aflaq in 1980) and including the party's representatives from other Arab countries as well as Iraqis.[39] While the regional command formulated policy for Iraq, the national command connected the Iraqi party to its friends and allies in other Arab countries. Attached to this structure was a militia or popular army, composed mainly of new party recruits. Initially, its main function was to help defend the party in time of need, to keep order in the neighborhoods, and to give military training to members. Reliable figures on the militia are difficult to obtain. According to one source, it numbered 50,000 in 1978.[40] Ba'thist officials claim that in the mid-1970s, the militia was opened to nonparty members and grew substantially by the end of the decade. There is little doubt that since the Iran-Iraq war, the militia has greatly expanded, and its role and functions have changed. In 1982 the militia had 250,000 members, and the following year the government announced plans to increase the popular army to 750,000, including an additional 100,000 recruits in 1983. By this time the popular army was fighting at the front and providing logistical support for the regular army.[41]

Careful attention was paid to the recruitment and indoctrination of party members. Party candidates were required to undertake a long probationary period, taking anywhere from five to eight years before reaching full membership. In that time they passed through several levels of membership, performing party tasks under careful supervision and attending party seminars and courses. Although no accurate figures on party membership exist, reliable estimates indicate that the party grew rapidly in this period, at least at the lower levels. One source claims that by 1978 there were about 50,000 regular members and perhaps as many as 500,000 dependable followers.[42] Some estimates have put party followers as high as 1 million in 1978. By the early 1980s, according to official party sources, followers totaled 1.5 million. This figure included supporters, such as union members, as well as those working their way up the party ladder. Full members numbered 25,000.

Although the Ba'th Party monopolized power in the RCC, it did allow other parties to play some role in politics through the mechanism of the National Progressive Front. Although the principle of the front was agreed on as early as March 1970, the front itself did not come into being until 1974. The first step in its creation was a national action charter, published by the party in November 1971, which called for collaboration with other revolutionary and progressive groups, and set forth a program of action. Understandably, other parties were reluctant to join. Negotiations with the ICP took place during 1971 and 1972, but it was only after considerable pressure was exercised by the Soviet Union that the ICP agreed to join. Enticing the KDP into the front proved even more difficult, and in the end al-Bārzānī declined. Eventually, in 1974, a group of Kurdish parties opposed to al-Bārzānī agreed to participate. The front was then joined by two additional representatives designated as independents. In 1976, the front's executive committee consisted of eight Ba'th members, three Communists, six Kurds, and two independents. The Ba'th dominated the front, however, and was solely responsible for carrying out its decisions.[43]

Another mechanism for generating grass-roots support was a network of popular organizations. These were generally organized along occupational lines, with the exception of those organized for women and youth. Some, like the associations for lawyers, writers, and journalists, were old and well established; others, such as the General Federation of Peasants' Associations and the General Federation of Workers' Unions, had been created after the revolution of 1958. All were encouraged and dominated by the Ba'th.[44] These associations were designed to mobilize much of the working public and provide links between the government and the populace. By 1974 the regime had also provided for elected popular councils at local levels. Composed mainly of nonparty constituents, these councils were a means of reaching nonparty opinion in the country.

The Emergence of Personal Rule

While this institutionalization was going on, there was also a countertrend at work—the increased concentration of power in the hands of one man, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn. Buttressing Ḥusayn's party position was a network of kinship and personal ties that interlaced with and often cut across party lines. At its core was the family relationship between Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, and 'Adnān Khayr Allah Ṭalfāḥ. In 1977 Ṭalfāḥ had been elected to the regional command, appointed to the RCC, and made minister of defense, so that he could keep an eye on the military. All were key members of the party, the RCC, and the cabinet, and all were members of the Ṭalfāḥ family of Tikrīt, headed by Khayr Allah Ṭalfāḥ. Khayr Allah Ṭalfāḥ was Ḥusayn's uncle and guardian, 'Adnān Khayr Allah's father, and al-Bakr's cousin. Ḥusayn was married to 'Adnān Khayr Allah's sister; 'Adnān Khayr Allah to al-Bakr's daughter.

From this inner circle, family ties extended outward to include more distant kin in positions of influence. One example is the well-known al-Shāwī family, related to al-Bakr through his mother. At one time or another during the regime, al-Shāwīs included a minister of justice, a member of the National Progressive Front, and the presidents of Baghdad and Basra Universities. Another more distant relative of al-Bakr was 'Abd al-Fattāḥ al-Yāsīn, who in 1980 was a member of the regional command and the RCC, and a minister of local government. In 1980 Ḥusayn's half brother, Bārzān al-Tikrītī, was head of intelligence (he was discharged in 1980). Beyond this group were a number of Tikrītīs in key military and security posts. The emergence of the Tikrītīs to a dominant position in party and government had caused some resentment. Indeed, so embarrassing did these clan and local ties become that in 1976 the regime made it an offense for public figures to use a name indicating tribal, clan, or local affiliations. Overnight, 'Adnān al-Ḥamdānī became 'Adnān Ḥusayn; Ṭaha-l-Jazrāwī, Ṭaha Ramaḍān; 'Izzat al-Dūrī, 'Izzat Ibrāhīm, and so on.

Al-Bakr, unquestionably the senior figure in this inner group, had begun by the mid-1970s to gradually retire from an active political role. This was due partly to illness (which surfaced increasingly by 1974) and partly to several personal tragedies.[45] First his wife died; then in 1978 his eldest son, Muḥammad, his daughter-in-law, and her two sisters were killed in an automobile accident. As al-Bakr's position became more ceremonial, Ḥusayn's office became the central focus of power and decision making in Iraq. By 1977, the party bureaux, the intelligence mechanism, and even ministers who, according to the constitution, should have reported to al-Bakr, reported to Ḥusayn. Meanwhile Ḥusayn himself became less accessible. Ministers who were not on the regional command, for example, rarely saw him. The RCC and the regional command of the party were used less for collective discussions of policy than as instruments to ratify decisions already taken by Ḥusayn and a close group of followers.

As power gravitated into Ḥusayn's hands, he exercised it in an increasingly paternalistic fashion. Several hours a week he had an open phone line to receive public complaints, often dealt with summarily on a personal basis. Meanwhile a cult of personality—even a mythology—grew up around him. The press constantly displayed his picture; his virtues became part of party legend. Newborn babies were named after him, and young party members emulated his walk, his dress, and even his manner of speech. A film made in Baghdad depicted his childhood, his participation in the attempted assassination of Qāsim, and his escape to Damascus and Cairo. Typical of this adulation was an advertisement in the *New York Times* in July 1980 that asked whether Iraq would "repeat her former glories and the name of Saddam Hussein link up with that of Hammurabi, Asurbanipal, al-Mansur, and Harun al-Rashid?"[46]

The Resignation of al-Bakr

It had been widely expected for some time that Ṣaddām Ḥusayn would take al-Bakr's place. It came as no surprise, therefore, when on 16 July 1979, President al-Bakr officially resigned and Ṣaddām Ḥusayn took his place as president of the republic, secretary-general of the Ba'th party regional command, chairman of the RCC, and commander in chief of the armed forces. His presidency was later ratified by the new national assembly. There is little doubt that Ḥusayn was impatient to assume official title to the power he held in actual fact, and he probably engineered the older man's retirement. In the cabinet reshuffle that ensued, 'Izzat Ibrāhīm (al-Dūrī) was named deputy chairman of the RCC and assistant secretary-general of the party's regional command, and Ṭaha Ramaḍān (al-Jazrāwī) became first deputy prime minister, indicating the intended line of succession.

The Coup Attempt of 1979

Much was made in public of the smoothness of this transition, but within days a bizarre episode revealed deep dissension within the leadership. Several key Ba'thists, including members of the Ba'th command, were accused of attempting a coup, arrested, and executed. The events were undoubtedly precipitated by al-Bakr's departure. It was the most serious challenge to the regime since the 1973 attempt by Kzār. Despite some official publicity, however, many aspects of the alleged coup, including its motivation, remained obscure.

The coup attempt came to light ten days after Ḥusayn's inauguration, on 28 July, when Ṣaddām Ḥusayn announced the discovery of a plot to overthrow the government by a number of Ba'thist leaders, including five members of the RCC and the regional command. An outside power (understood to be Syria) was said to be involved. The announcement of the plot had been preceded by the arrest, on 12 July, of Muḥyī-l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥusayn, a *shī'ī* member of the RCC and the regional command. He disclosed the names of the conspirators and details of the plot. In an extraordinary session of the regional congress of the party, called for 22 July and televised in a large hall in Baghdad, Muḥyī-l-Dīn made a public confession of the plot, naming those involved.

The accused were promptly taken into custody. The five key regional command members were Muḥyī-l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥusayn himself, Muḥammad 'Āyish, 'Adnān Ḥusayn (al-Ḥamdānī), Muḥammad Maḥjūb, and Ghānim 'Abd al-Jalīl. The first three had recently been dropped from their ministerial posts in a cabinet reshuffle, but the last two still occupied high positions. The remainder of those accused were middle- to high-level party officials, as well as a few army officers, academics, and union leaders. An investigating committee and a court, both composed entirely of RCC members, were immediately set up, and ten days later death sentences were issued for twenty-two of the accused, including the five RCC members. Among those executed were 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Sāmarrā'ī, a former regional command member who had been imprisoned since 1973; the Ba'thist minister in charge of the autonomous region; a major general; three trade union members; several journalists; a former ambassador; and a provincial governor. One of the accused escaped, and thirty-three others were sentenced to prison terms. Thirteen, including Sulṭān al-Shāwī, al-Bakr's relative and president of Baghdad University, were acquitted.[47]

The fact that three out of the five RCC members convicted were *shī'ī*, that the discovery of the plot had been preceded by *shī'ī* riots, and that *shī'ī* militancy from Iran had begun to spill over into Iraq, led to speculation that *shī'ī* discontent with the leadership was the root cause of the problem. There was also dissatisfaction with Ḥusayn from the left wing of the party, unhappy about recent ties with conservative Gulf states, the coolness toward the Soviet Union, and his treatment of the Communists. However, neither *shī'ī* nor left-wing discontent appear to have been a major motivating factor in the events of July 1979.

More significant was the Syrian link. The regime contended that ties between the accused and the Syrian regime went back to 1976 and 1977, when Syrian attempts at subversion in Iraq were clear. However, the Syrian regime denied any connection with the plot, and the Iraqis did not accuse Syria publicly in order to prevent a deterioration in Arab relations. An attempted reconciliation with Syria and a possible union of Syria and Iraq had been under discussion just before the alleged coup; this promising development was now brought to an abrupt conclusion. There were also strong indications that Ḥusayn opposed a union headed by Ḥāfiẓ al-Asad, in which he would have played a lesser role.

The events may also have been connected with al-Bakr's departure and Ḥusayn's final elevation to the pinnacle of power. Among the leadership, some may have feared a lessening of their future role, while others resented the concentration of power in the hands of Ṣaddām. Whatever the policy differences in the leadership, it seems clear that the resignation of al-Bakr and Ḥusayn's final promotion to president precipitated anxieties among some of the RCC members as to their future and that of the party. These anxieties played a role in arousing Ḥusayn's suspicions.

Whether or not a full-blown plot existed, Ḥusayn was taking no chances. He decided to inaugurate his presidency by making it clear, once again, that no genuine dissent would be tolerated, not even by close associates. Ḥusayn's elimination of his opposition strengthened his position within the party and the country in the short run, but it raised long-range questions of legitimacy among the party rank and file. As the power of Ḥusayn and the Tikrītīs increased, the party was reduced to little more than an arm of the increasingly personal and autocratic government.

The National Assembly

Ṣaddām Ḥusayn was aware of the need to broaden his base of support, and to this end, he decided to institute the long-promised national assembly. In December 1979, a draft law on the assembly was circulated, and after some suggested modifications, the law was promulgated in March 1980. It provided for an assembly of 250 members, to be elected by secret ballot every four years. All Iraqis over the age of eighteen were eligible to vote and the country was to be divided into electoral zones of about 250,000 inhabitants each. A key provision stipulated that each district would have only a single electoral list, thus eliminating any competition among parties or groups.

Qualifications required of prospective candidates were detailed. They had to be at least twenty-five years of age, Iraqi by birth, and with fathers who were also Iraqi. The only non-Iraqi mothers allowed were those from Arab countries. No candidate could be married to a foreigner and no one could run who had been subject to expropriation under the land reform or nationalization laws. Most important of all, candidates had to believe in the principles of the 17–30 July revolution. All candidates had to be reviewed by an election commission before receiving permission to run, thus assuring that only those favorable to Ba'th principles would be elected.

The law also defined the prerogatives of the National Assembly, stipulating that it would perform legislative duties along with the RCC. The assembly was given the authority to propose and enact laws; to ratify the budget and international treaties; and to debate domestic and international policy. It also had the power to supervise state institutions and to call cabinet members for questioning. The assembly was to hold two sessions a year, the first in April and May, the second in November and December. Though allowing some public discussion of policy and participation in legislation, the law kept the ultimate power in the RCC, and the authority given the government to screen candidates assured a relatively compliant assembly.[48]

On 20 June 1980, elections were held, the first in Iraq since the fall of the monarchy. To no one's surprise, the results gave the Ba'th an overwhelming victory, although a number of independents were also elected. On 30 June, the first session was held. Na'īm Ḥaddād, an RCC and regional command member, was elected speaker.[49]

Opposition to the Regime

By the end of a decade of rule, the Ba'th had been able to stabilize its regime by dealing ruthlessly with dissent, but it still faced opposition from a variety of sources. Some came from groups and parties dissatisfied with the regime's political or economic policies. More serious was the traditional opposition from ethnic and religious groups, most specifically the Kurds and the *shī'ah.*

The Kurdish Problem

The most serious opposition came from the Kurds. The 1970 Kurdish agreement had put a temporary end to hostilities, but the peace was short-lived. Between 1970 and 1974 the situation between the government and the Kurds gradually deteriorated due to a series of steps taken by both parties. In July 1970, the KDP nominated its secretary-general, Muḥammad Ḥabīb Karīm, as the Kurdish vice-president, but he was rejected by the Ba'th because of his Persian background. Worse, on 7 December 1970 al-Bārzānī's son Idrīs escaped an assassination attempt, and two other attempts were made on al-Bārzānī himself, one on 29 September 1971 and another on 15 July 1972. By the end of 1972, the Kurds were accusing the government of attempting to change the Kurdish balance in the north by the intrusion of Arabs in these areas.

It was not long before desultory fighting began once again. In the skirmishes that preceded the outbreak of war in 1974, the strategies of the two parties stood out clearly. The aim of the Ba'th was to isolate the KDP and al-Bārzānī. Through its treaty with the Soviet Union and its successful pressure on the ICP to join the front, the Ba'th deprived the Kurds of one of their traditional allies. This growing isolation and the Ba'th assassination attempts led al-Bārzānī to reestablish ties with the shah, who was now thoroughly alarmed by Soviet influence in Iraq. So, too, was the United States. On 31 May 1972, President Nixon directed the CIA to surreptitiously advance al-Bārzānī $16 million in aid. The shah followed with far more massive help.[50]

By October 1973, the split between the two sides was almost complete, but one last attempt at a negotiated settlement was made. It failed. The KDP demanded wide powers of autonomy in their region and the inclusion of Kirkūk in their sphere. These terms were unacceptable to Baghdad. On 9 March 1974, the Baʿth gave the Kurdish negotiators two days to accept the government's own autonomy plan. The Kurds rejected the plan, and with this the rupture was complete. On 11 March the Baʿth announced that their plan would become official government policy, and the pro-Bārzānī Kurdish ministers withdrew from the cabinet. By April the war had resumed.

The 1974–1975 War

At first things went well for the government. By May their troops had occupied the great plains area of Kurdistan and consolidated their position in the large cities of Kirkūk, Arbīl, and al-Sulaymāniyyah. By fall they had taken Rāwandūz and reached Qalʿat Dizah, but there the progress ended. They faced high mountains and had extended lines in the rear. However, their capture of Rāwandūz threatened the "Hamilton Trail," the lifeline of the Kurds to Iran. To protect the line, Iran augmented its military aid, furnishing the Kurds with antitank missiles and artillery, and intervening directly in Iraqi territory. Syria, also at odds with Iraq, likewise aided the Kurds. These activities slowed down the Iraqi offensive, and by spring a stalemate had been reached. It was during this stalemate, with no further progress by the Iraqi army, but with Iran becoming directly and dangerously involved, that there was first talk of an agreement between Iraq and Iran, at the expense of the Kurds.

The 1975 Agreement

Although the 6 March 1975 agreement between Iran and Iraq, concluded through the mediation of Algeria, appeared to most observers as a stunning reversal of policy on both sides, both Iran and Iraq had good reasons for seeking a solution. The Iraqi army had done better than expected on the ground, but Iranian intervention had made it clear that the Iraqi regime could not, on its own, win the military victory it needed to impose its own solution. Further escalation might mean war with Iran. More important, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn had staked his future on solving the Kurdish problem and could not risk failure. Lastly, there was pressure from other Arab countries, who did not want to be distracted from the confrontation with Israel. Israel's support for the Kurds was another reason for ending the war.

The shah, although he wished to weaken the Baghdad government, did not want the rebellion to spill across his borders. Moreover, he was concerned over the Soviet commitment to Iraq. The Soviets were providing sophisticated weaponry, including MIG-23s, and the use of Soviet pilots to fly the planes. In return for a cessation of aid to the Kurds, the shah wanted explicit recognition of Iran's boundary claims on the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab and implicit recognition of his status as guardian of the Gulf.

The agreement did, in fact, accomplish most of the shah's goals. The official clauses specified that the frontier between Iran and Iraq would be governed by the 1913/1914 Constantinople Protocol, but that the demarcation line on the Shaṭṭ would be the thalweg, thus legalizing the shah's abrogation of the 1937 treaty in 1969. In return, both parties agreed to exercise strict control over their frontiers to prevent subversive infiltration, in effect ending Iranian support for the Kurds. In recognizing the 1913/1914 frontiers, the Iraqis also renounced any Arab claims to the Arab-speaking province of Khūzistān, as well as to the islands at the foot of the Gulf. In agreeing to stop subversion, they dropped support for the anti-Iranian elements based in Baghdad, especially the Iranian KDP and the Ẓufār rebels operating in Oman.[51]

As for the Kurds supporting al-Bārzānī, the Algiers settlement was little short of a disaster. Within hours of its signing, the Iranians began to haul away their military equipment. On 7 March, the Iraqi army moved into the remaining areas of the north, and on 2 April, it reached the border, sealed off the area, and proclaimed the end of the revolt. Under an amnesty plan, about 70 percent of the *pēshmerga*s gave themselves up to the Iraqis. Some remained in the hills of Kurdistan to fight again, and about 30,000 went across the border to Iran to join the civilian refugees, then estimated at between 100,000 to 200,000. The result of the agreement was to leave the Kurdish national movement in a state of complete disarray with its leadership defeated and in exile (al-Bārzānī eventually went to Washington, D.C., where he died in March 1979) and the Kurdish countryside in chaos. The initiative for a solution lay with the government.[52]

The Kurds Since 1975

On 11 March 1974, the Ba'th regime had begun implementing its own autonomy plan, which stated that Kurdistan was to be autonomous, although forming an integral part of Iraq; that the administrative capital was to be Arbīl; and that the region was to be governed by an elected legislative council and an executive council, to be elected by a majority vote of the legislative council. The president of the executive council was to be appointed from among the members of the legislative council by the Iraqi head of state. The Baghdad government maintained final control through a provision giving the president of the republic the right to dismiss the Kurdish president and to dissolve the assembly. A number of departments with authority over local affairs were established, but foreign affairs, oil, and defense were left to the central government. The autonomous region was given a special budget.[53]

Initially, the area covered by these provisions included those areas with a Kurdish majority according to the 1957 census; this excluded the districts of Sinjār, Khānaqīn, and Kirkūk, originally claimed by al-Bārzānī. A census taken in 1977 redefined the areas of Kurdish majority but did not substantially change the previous territorial delimitation. On 5 October 1974, an appointed legislative council was convened, but in 1980, when the law for the national assembly was promulgated, a new election law for the Kurds was also issued. The first elections for the new fifty-member council were held shortly thereafter. By 1981, the council was in operation.[54]

Meanwhile, a number of Kurds were appointed to positions in the central government and the National Progressive Front. To accomplish this, three progovernment Kurdish parties were formed. One group, led by 'Azīz 'Aqrāwī (who later defected to Syria), Hāshim 'Aqrāwī, and Ismā'īl 'Azīz, formed a new "KDP"; another, headed by 'Abd al-Sattār Ṭāhir Sharīf, formed the Kurdish Revolutionary Party; a third, led by 'Abd Allah Ismā'īl Aḥmad, constituted the Progressive Kurdish Movement.[55] There is little evidence that any of the three had widespread support among the Kurds, but they gave the Ba'th the Kurdish apparatus needed to put its own autonomy plan into effect. The Ba'th moved equally resourcefully to settle the refugee question and to begin economic reconstruction in the north. By the end of 1976, all but 30,000 of the refugees from Iran had been repatriated. In 1976, the Kurdish areas were given a budget of ID 329 million ($1.1 billion). Much of this went into industrial projects, dams and barrages, agrarian reform, schools, and hospitals, as well as for roads and communications networks, which were expected to improve the government's capacity to control the area.

These positive achievements were accompanied by drastic negative measures, taken to assure that no further organized rebellion would take place. The measures included large-scale deportation and relocation of Kurds. Some were sent to the south and others to the central plains areas of the north, where they could be watched and controlled. By 1976, the Iraqis had also razed all Kurdish villages along an 800-mile stretch of the border with Iran.[56] In mixed Kurdish provinces, such as Sinjār, Khānaqīn, Kirkūk, and others, the Kurdish population was reduced and additional Arabs were introduced. In these areas, Kurdish was not permitted as the primary language of instruction, as was supposed to be the case in the autonomous zone.[57]

The Kurds in Opposition

These measures failed to end Kurdish opposition. Renewed guerrilla acts in the north began as early as March 1976, particularly after the resettlement schemes. In January and February 1977, several foreign technicians working in the north, including several Poles, two Frenchmen, and an Algerian, were kidnapped. On 12 July 1977, Kurdish guerrillas claimed credit for the assassination of a member of the Kurdish executive council.[58] However, the revived Kurdish movement showed signs of intense factionalism. Several irreconcilable groups emerged. The first was the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), formed in June 1975 under the leadership of Jalāl al-Ṭālabānī and other KDP dissidents. The program of this group was clearly leftist and, as might be expected from al-Ṭālabānī, totally repudiated the leadership of al-Bārzānī. This group received support from Syria.[59] In 1984, however, al-Ṭālabānī made his peace with the central government, widening the split in the movement still further.

The old Kurdish Democratic Party was also revived in December 1975, but it, too, split between supporters of al-Bārzānī and his opponents. In December 1976 an anti-Bārzānī group formed under the impetus of Maḥmūd ʿUthmān, but it kept itself separate from the KDP. Gradually, the leadership of the revived KDP gravitated into the hands of al-Bārzānī's sons, Idrīs and Masʿūd. In October 1979, this group held a congress that officially elected Masʿūd as KDP party chairman, along with a new congress and political bureau. It called for continued armed struggle against the Baʿth through sustained guerrilla warfare inside Iraq. The group also expressed sympathy for al-Khumaynī's (Khomeini's) revolution in Iran.[60]

Throughout most of 1978 and 1979, however, the main KDP struggle was not against the Baghdad government but against the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.[61] The situation was complicated by the fact that al-Ṭālabānī had aligned himself with the Iranian KDP (which was in opposition to the Iranian government), while the Iraqi KDP cultivated good relations with that government. The factionalism of the Kurdish movement and the differing alliances made by various groups drew the Kurds once again into a web of international and regional politics. Internal conflict weakened their opposition to Baghdad and enabled the government to play them off, one against another, while relying for support in the north on the progovernment Kurds, now firmly established in Arbīl and Baghdad.

Shīʿī Opposition

The Kurds were not the only opposition group. By 1980, the *shīʿah* had superceded the Kurds as the major concern of the government. Some *shīʿī* opposition centered on conservative religious elements in the holy cities of al-Najaf and Karbalāʾ, but recent *shīʿī* migrants to Baghdad, especially those living in poor sections such as Madīnat al-Thawrah (now Ṣaddām City), were alienated more on economic than religious grounds. A number of educated *shīʿah* resented the share of political influence that had gone to *sunnī*s. From time to time, this dissatisfaction spilled over into active opposition. In 1969 a *shīʿī* party, the Fatimid Party, was formed to propagate *shīʿī* rights, but little came of it. More serious was an underground *shīʿī* religious party, al-Daʿwah al-Islāmiyyah (The Islamic Call—in a missionary sense), formed in the late 1960s and led mainly by religious leaders with ties to Iran. Al-Da'wah took its inspiration from the Iraqi Āyat Allah Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr, who called for a return to Muslim precepts in government and social justice against exploitation. Al-Da'wah's program was designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of *shī'ī* opinion.[62]

Shī'ī dissidence surfaced in several episodes in 1974. In November and December of that year, over two dozen *shī'ī* leaders were secretly tried and sentenced for plots against the state. In mid-December, five of these were reported to have been secretly executed.[63] Far more serious and widespread were the *shī'ī* demonstrations and riots of 5 and 6 February 1977 in Karbalā' and al-Najaf. These were sparked by government claims that a Syrian agent had been discovered carrying explosives into the shrine at Karbalā'. The town was subsequently closed to pilgrimage traffic at the height of a religious ceremony. Riots led to a confrontation between mobs and the police and several deaths. The disorder then spread to al-Najaf and continued for several days, until the rebellion was put down by military troops. A number of rioters were arrested, tried, and sentenced, some of them to death.[64]

The affair generated friction within the Ba'th leadership, which took the episode very seriously. Two members of the RCC and the regional command—Fulayḥ Ḥasan Jāsim, a *shī'ī*, and 'Izzat Muṣṭafā, a long-standing RCC member—were appointed to the court to try the dissidents. They were dismissed from all party and government posts when they failed to deal with the defendants with sufficient sternness to satisfy Ṣaddām Ḥusayn.[65]

The most serious *shī'ī* opposition came with the Iranian revolution and the installation of the militant *shī'ī* government of the Āyat Allah al-Khumaynī. Fears of organized *shī'ī* opposition and attempts at subversion by Iran of the Iraqi *shī'ī* community were a major contributory factor in the Iran-Iraq war of 1980. *Shī'ī* trouble erupted again in June 1979, when riots broke out anew in al-Najaf and Karbalā'. This time the spark was provided by Āyat Allah Bāqir al-Ṣadr, who wanted to lead a procession to Iran to congratulate Āyat Allah al-Khumaynī but was refused by the government. Again, several days of rioting ensued, and the army had to be called in. At the same time, the regime uncovered the clandestine *shī'ī* party, al-Da'wah, which was clearly dedicated to the overthrow of the regime and supported by Iran.[66] The party was joined by other more shadowy *shī'ī* groups, including the Mujāhidīn, about which less is known.[67]

Al-Da'wah was promptly suppressed by the government, but several other dissident *shī'ī* opposition groups formed outside of Iraq, all aimed at the overthrow of the secular Ba'th government. The Āyat Allah al-Ṣadr, identified as a leader of al-Da'wah, was arrested and later executed.[68] Not all *shī'ī* leaders opposed the government, however. A number, including Shaykh 'Alī Kāshif al-Ghiṭā', a member of a prominent al-Najaf family of religious leaders, publicly supported the Baghdad government and criticized al-Khumaynī. *Shī'ī* opposition was more pronounced in al-Najaf and Karbalā', where Persian influence was strong, than in other southern cities where the population was almost wholly Arab and could identify more easily with the Arab cause.

The Communist Party

By 1980, two other elements in the political spectrum joined the opposition. The first was the Communist Party and the various left-wing elements that supported it. The honeymoon between the ICP and the Ba'th, initiated in 1972 with the Iraqi-Soviet Friendship Treaty and the entrance of the ICP into the National Progressive Front, was short. The 1975 agreement with Iran and the government's subsequent policy toward the Kurds convinced the ICP to openly oppose the government. The ICP criticized Ba'th policy on Palestine, the regime's failure to call elections for a national assembly, and its growing ties with the capitalist world after 1973.[69]

Friction between the Ba'th and the ICP was also connected to the Ba'th's deteriorating relations with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was particularly displeased with the 1975 agreement with Iran, taken without consulting the USSR. The agreement ended Iraq's support for radical regimes in the Middle East and marked the beginning of an accommodation with more conservative Middle Eastern governments. The oil boom that followed the 1973 oil price rise also lessened Iraq's economic dependence on the Soviet Union. In Iraq's expanding development program, many large contracts went to Western—even U.S.—firms, and by 1976, 62 percent of the value of Iraq's imports came from the European Common Market (EEC) countries and North America; 10 percent came from the European socialist bloc. By 1981 the figures were 53 percent and 5 percent respectively. During the same period, Japan's share increased from 13 to 30 percent.[70] Iraqi support for radical Palestinian groups and its refusal to accept UN resolutions 242 and 338 also irked the Soviet Union. Iraq opposed Soviet support for Ethiopia against the Eritreans and Somalis, and disagreed with the USSR over Soviet policy toward Syria and South Yemen.

Most important of all, the Ba'th feared internal subversion from the ICP supported by the USSR, particularly after the Soviet-supported coup of Tārāqī in Afghanistan in April 1978. The very next month, the Ba'th executed twenty-one Communists who had been sentenced to prison in 1975, 1976, and 1977 for organizing Communist cells in the army. The executions, which took place long after the alleged crimes were committed, were calculated to show that the Ba'th would tolerate no repeat of the Afghan situation in Iraq.[71]

In March 1978 the Communists openly criticized the Ba'th on a number of issues, and from then on the fate of the Iraq Communist Party was sealed. The Ba'th took progressive steps to end Communist participation in Iraqi politics, and if possible, to emasculate the party.

Virulent attacks on the Communists in the Ba'thist press were followed by wholesale arrests of Communists. By September 1978, the ICP central committee was complaining of arrests, torture, and purges of Communist sympathizers from the government. By April 1979, most of the principal Communist leaders had left the country. From Beirut, Damascus, Europe, and the Eastern bloc countries, they waged a propaganda campaign against the regime. The ICP withdrew from the front and the cabinet; and once again its leadership was driven underground.[72]

Liberal Opposition

The second element of opposition came from the liberal end of the political spectrum. This group was far less organized and coherent than the left, but it was rooted in the professional classes and the intelligentsia on whom the regime relied for its development program. The liberals were singled out for attention by the Ba'th as early as 1974, when the party report of that year stated: "School programs on all levels still fall short of expressing the principles of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party and the socialist and nationalist revolution. They are still propagating bourgeois and liberal values. Also the universities are full of liberal and rightist . . . currents."[73] To combat these tendencies, the party gradually exercised increased control over faculty and students, requiring courses on Ba'th ideology at the university level and replacing non-Ba'thist faculty with Ba'thists.

Many Iraqi intellectuals expressed their dissaffection by leaving Iraq, as evidenced by the sizable number of educated Iraqis working outside of Iraq. In 1974 and 1975, the regime made an effort to lure these graduates back with generous offers of jobs and privileges, but the program did not succeed. Few Iraqis returned, and those who did faced accusations of being too capitalistic and too Western. The intelligentsia also expressed their disaffection through passive resistance to government programs and policies. The poor productivity of the economy was sufficiently worrisome that in the autumn of 1976, the party held a series of seminars on the subject, addressed by Ṣaddām Ḥusayn himself. Among the complaints were protection of top-level administrators for political reasons and too many layers of decision making.[74] These difficulties reflected a growing frustration on the part of an educated class, trained to lead, over their inability to control their professional lives. Lack of genuine political participation outside the Ba'th Party was also a frustration, one shared by all non-Ba'thist political groups.

By 1981, a wide variety of opposition groups were functioning inside and outside of Iraq. Those outside Iraq were mainly situated in Syria, Iran, and Lebanon. The opposition included such diverse groups as the exiled ICP, Jalāl al-Ṭalabānī's left-wing PUK, the more nationalist KDP and the *shī'ī* al-Da'wah. Attempts to organize an opposition front were made, but the opposition was so fragmented and diverse in ideology that effective cooperation was impossible. Nonetheless, the opposition collectively tapped a broad constituency and helped undermine the legitimacy of the Baʿth regime.

Economic and Social Development

Despite its many problems and its preoccupation with politics and foreign affairs, the Baʿth regime did manage to institute many of the economic and social programs for which it had come to power, particularly after 1975. In the second half of the 1970s, the Baʿth scored impressive gains in economic development and social mobility, initiating a degree of social transformation that had only been attempted by its predecessors. In framing this program, the Baʿth focused on three interrelated goals. First was the elimination of an upper—and even a middle—class of wealth and privilege, and a thorough egalitarianism in the distribution of income and services. Second was the establishment of a socialist economy, with state ownership of national resources and the means of production and state control over most of the rest of the economy. Third was rapid economic development, particularly in the industrial sector, as a means of diversifying the economy and achieving as much economic independence as possible. By 1980, results were apparent in all three areas.

The Establishment of the Welfare State

One of the first areas the regime's egalitarian policy was applied to was agrarian reform. When the regime had come to power in 1968, the overwhelming bulk of the expropriated lands still remained in government hands, while peasants farmed the remainder under conditions not much improved from the days of the old regime. The Baʿth soon addressed this problem. In May 1969, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr announced that peasants would no longer pay for the lands given to them and that landlords henceforth would receive no compensation for expropriated land, a considerable redistribution of income. The size of plots distributed was also reduced. Concomitant with these steps the Baʿth moved toward collectivized agriculture. Cooperatives were stressed and collective farms introduced. These and other measures were finally embodied in a new agrarian reform law promulgated in May 1970, which abrogated all previous laws and amendments.

The new law provided that landholding limits in rainfed zones would range from 1,000 to 2,000 dunams; in irrigated zones from 400 to 600 dunams. These limitations were to be extended to private *waqf* lands as well. No compensation was to be paid for land taken after May 1969, although owners would get value for trees, structures, and implements attached to the land. The land to be distributed to the peasants was to be limited to 100 to 200 dunams of rainfed land; 40 to 60 dunams of irrigated land. Cooperatives were strengthened by a provision that those receiving land must undertake cultivation and join a co-op.

Thus, distribution had no meaning outside the state-organized co-ops. The law also provided for the establishment of collective farms.[75]

The Ba'th regime did not stop with legislation. It gave considerable impetus to land distribution, especially after 1975. By the end of 1976, 7.4 million dunams or 71.3 percent of state-held land had been distributed to 222,975 beneficiaries.[76] After the 1975 settlement of the Kurdish problem, land reform was rapidly pushed forward in the north, with additional sequestration and more distribution. By 1982, 9.7 million dunams, including newly reclaimed land, had been distributed to 264,400 farmers.[77]

The Ba'th also vigorously pushed the establishment of co-ops. In 1968, there were 473 co-ops, with 63,000 members. By the end of 1976 they numbered 1,852, with 296,500 members.[78] The number of co-op members was 7,000 larger than the number of beneficiaries of land distribution, indicating that the Ba'th had been relatively successful in getting other farmers to join as well. By 1982, there were 1,877 local co-ops with 375,400 members, and another 82 specialized co-ops with 18,500 members.[79]

The egalitarian thrust of the regime could also be seen in its expansion of education and health services, measures that disproportionately benefited the poorer classes. Education up to the university level and health services, including hospitalization, were free. Between 1968 and 1983, the Ba'th more than doubled student enrollment in schools at every level. At the elementary level, enrollment rose from 991,000 in 1968 to 2.6 million, or about one-fifth of the population in 1983; at the intermediate and secondary level, from 237,000 to 998,000; and at the level of higher education, from 37,000 to over 122,000.[80] The same was true in health services. The ratio of doctors to the population in 1968 was 1 to 4,200; by 1980 it had been improved to 1 to 1,790. Meanwhile the ratio of population per hospital bed declined from 510 in 1970 to 490 in 1978.[81]

The Socialist Economy

The second area affected by Ba'th reform was the economy. The regime continued the socialization of the economy begun under previous regimes. Nationalization of the foreign-owned oil companies, which put control over the production and export of Iraq's major resource in government hands, was the most striking manifestation of this policy, but it was not the only one.

One new area into which socialism was extended was agriculture. Here the Ba'th began the development of collective farms with the intention of creating large-scale, capital-intensive agriculture. By 1972, 6 collective farms, encompassing an area of 24,000 dunams and 490 members, had been established. By 1976 the figures were 79 farms, 534,000 dunams, and 9,850 members. By 1978 there were also 14 state farms.[82] However, by 1980 the leadership was disillusioned with the collective farm as a panacea for agricultural problems. Despite substantial investments made by the regime in barrages, dams, irrigation works, and drainage systems, agricultural production, particularly in grain crops, continued to stagnate or decline. In 1981 the regime reversed its policies and abolished the collective farm program, and by 1983 there were only 17 collective farms left with 749 members.[83] New regulations allowed the establishment of mixed private and public agricultural companies and encouraged private investment in agriculture. In 1983, the government signed 300 contracts with private firms to establish farms on 46,875 dunams of state-owned land.[84]

More significant was the socialization of industry. The newly developed large-scale industries, such as the iron, steel, and petrochemical industries, were wholly owned and managed by the government, as were most medium-sized plants, manufacturing items such as textiles, food products, and construction materials. Trade likewise came under increased government control, through various mechanisms such as state trading organizations, state retail outlets, import licensing, and direct government purchasing.

The increased socialization of the economy was reflected in the government's own statistics. The share of the socialist, or public sector rose from 31 percent of domestic production in 1968 to 80 percent in 1977, although it varied from sector to sector. Between 1968 and 1976 the share increased from 1 percent to 29 percent in agriculture; from 0.4 percent to 100 percent in oil; from 41 percent to 51 percent in manufacturing industries; and from 11 percent to 53 percent in commerce. In foreign trade, the increase was from 41 percent to 89 percent. Thereafter, the percentages remained relatively constant. In 1982, 80 percent of gross domestic capital was produced in the socialist sector; 20 percent in the private.[85]

Socialization was not without its drawbacks, however. It brought inefficiency, wastage, and mismanagement, and there was no indication that the public sector was more productive than the private. Some of these drawbacks were recognized by the regime, but they did not outweigh the regime's ideological commitment to socialism.

Diversification and Industrialization

Diversification of the economy, mainly by industrialization, was the third aim of the Ba‘th. The Ba‘th regime was unsuccessful in lessening its dependence on oil, as were other Gulf producers in this period. The mammoth increase in oil revenues in 1973 and the second price rise in 1979 automatically raised the share of oil revenues in the budgets of all oil-producing states. In 1968 Iraq's revenues from oil totalled ID 169.9 million ($476 million); by 1980, before the downturn in oil revenues due to the Iran-Iraq war, they were ID 8.8 billion ($26 billion). In 1968, oil had provided about 22 percent of national income; by 1980 its share was over 50 percent.[86]

Nevertheless, Iraq attempted to mitigate the dominance of oil in its economy in several ways. One was to keep its oil production below capacity and to hold surplus revenues in mixed, mainly European, currencies. This avoided overdependence on one foreign currency and enabled the country to ride out tight markets and the decline of the dollar. Second, it sold its oil on a contractual basis in return for investments and capital goods from its customers, and the prices of oil and industrial goods were indexed to keep the transactions in balance.[87] Most important of all, Iraq attempted to keep oil production and revenues at a rate its economy could absorb, thus avoiding the accumulation of huge reserves abroad that could put it in a vulnerable position. In fact, however, reserves did accumulate.

Ba'th attempts at diversification and industrialization were reflected in its development budgets after 1975. In development allocations between 1975 and 1980 the largest amount, almost twice that of any other sector, went to industry, 30 percent. The 1976 to 1980 plan called for a growth of employment in industry from 9 to 15 percent, and a decline in agricultural employment from 53 to 48 percent.[88] Annual plans after 1980 reduced allocations to industry and increased funds for building, services, and transportation and communications (see Table 9.1).

Much of the allocation to industry went into developing the nucleus of a heavy industry in Iraq, with a concentration on iron, steel, and petrochemical facilities. Among the new heavy industries constructed in this period were two sponge iron plants at al-Zubayr; a companion steel works in the same area; an aluminum company in al-Nāṣiriyyah; and a massive petrochemical complex in the Basra/al-Rumaylah area, using the natural gas from the Rumaylah fields. These included facilities for processing liquid petroleum gas; a fertilizer plant; and a plant to produce plastics and other chemical derivatives. Another fertilizer plant was located at al-Qā'im near the phosphate mines.

Meanwhile, lighter industries were added at a somewhat slower pace, among them a vehicle assembly plant and plants to produce electrical equipment, tires, and paper. Cement production increased from 1.3 million metric tons in 1968 to over 7 million in 1984, while the consumption of electricity increased almost sevenfold, from 1,908 million kilowatt-hours in 1970 to 13,107 in 1982.[89] The impact of this industrialization on Iraq's economic structure will be assessed in the next chapter, but there was no mistaking the intent of the Ba'th planners. Infrastructure was also developed, as roads, railroads, ports, and airports were expanded and improved. Projects included the construction of the offshore port of Mīnā'-l-Bakr, and the expansion of the ports of Umm Qaṣr, Khawr al-Zubayr, and al-Ma'qal, near Basra, enlarging Iraq's port capacity from 1.4 million metric tons in 1963 to 4.4 million in 1977.[90]

Modern Textile Factory, Baghdad. Courtesy Press Office, Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations.

Iraq's Foreign Policy

The Pragmatic Phase, 1975–1980

Iraq's rapid economic development, its increased economic ties with the West, and its growing distance from the Soviet Union were all reflected, after 1975, in an increasingly moderate and pragmatic foreign policy. The shift was most noticeable in the Gulf, where relations improved with Iran, with Saudi Arabia, and with the conservative Gulf shaykhdoms. In 1975, Iraq established diplomatic relations with Sulṭān Qābūs of Oman, extending several loans to him. Then, in 1978, Iraq sharply reversed its support for the pro-Soviet regime in South Yemen, after an episode involving the assassination of an Iraqi Communist professor working in Aden and the arrest in Aden of the Iraqi diplomats suspected of the deed.

More than any other factor, Camp David propelled Iraq into the mainstream of Arab politics. In November 1978, the Iraqi regime took the initiative in organizing a summit of all Arab governments (except for the Egyptian government) to counteract the Camp David agreement. Again, Iraq was forced to moderate its tone on the Palestine question, ending its support for the extreme faction of the Palestinian movement led by Abū Niḍāl and restoring relations with 'Arafāt and the mainstream PLO.

In the wake of the summit, Iraq even attempted briefly to patch up its long-standing feud with Syria. The summit did not actually improve relations with Syria, but it bore fruit in Jordan. In June 1979 Ṣaddām Ḥusayn paid a visit to Jordan, the first Iraqi head of state to do so since 1958, and a wide variety of agreements—military, economic, and political—were made. By 1980, work had begun on a number of joint projects. Chief among them were the expansion of the ʿAqabah port, which the Iraqis hoped to use to relieve their own Gulf ports and as a potential replacement for those in Lebanon and Syria, and the improvement of the road system between Amman and Baghdad.

These activities culminated in the pronouncement in February 1980 of an Arab Charter endorsed by most of the states who had attended the summit. It rejected foreign bases on Arab soil (Soviet and U.S.); rejected the use of force in Arab (but not non-Arab) disputes; and asked for Arab solidarity against foreign aggression, a clause directed against revolutionary Iran as well as Israel.[91] By toning down its rhetoric and cooperating with more moderate Arab states, Iraq had gained the chance to play a leading role in a powerful bloc of states, including the Gulf states and Jordan. Its ambitions clearly lay, however, beyond the Gulf to the Arab world as a whole, and from there to the nonaligned nations, which Ṣaddām Ḥusayn was to host in 1982.

The Iran-Iraq War: The End of an Era

The realization of these ambitions was abruptly halted by the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war in September 1980. As has been made amply clear, the differences between the two countries are long-standing and deep, and they cover many areas—cultural, religious, national, political, and social. These differences had been carefully contained by the 1975 agreement, which both sides had scrupulously upheld while the shah was in power. All this changed with the Iranian revolution of 1978–1979, which in one blow revived virtually all of the previous problems and added a new one, the incitement of *shīʿī* discontent in Iraq.

The war and its effects will be dealt with more thoroughly in Chapter 10. However, by the mid-1980s it was clear that the conflict had ended one era of Iraqi history and begun another. The physical destruction of much of Iraq's industrial plant and the crippling of its oil export capacity dealt a severe blow to its development program and the social mobility that was its hallmark. The human casualties and the mobilization of all available labor for the war effort has put strains on the social and political fabric of state. Above all, it has weakened the regional and international position of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn and Iraq, and forced the regime into a position of dependence on other Gulf powers.

However, there have been some positive aspects as well. The war and the Iranian revolution threw down a challenge to the Iraqi regime and the secular, progressive, Arab nationalist policies it had followed. Both the regime and the institutions of the Iraqi state rose to the challenge, and at least up until 1984, have proved themselves more resilient than expected. The war has thus far shown that loyalty to the Iraqi state and to Arabism, built up by successive regimes since the mandate and given special impetus by the Ba'th, is stronger than communal, sectarian, and even personal loyalties.

9

Economic and Social Change Under Revolutionary Regimes

The old regime had been attacked by its opposition for the pace and direction of its development program and for the absence of social change. In particular, the regime's reliance on foreign oil companies for its revenue; its neglect of industry and emphasis on agriculture, which benefited mainly the landed classes; its disregard of the country's human resources, and the severe maldistribution of wealth that had resulted from the malfunctioning of the free enterprise system were all singled out for criticism. On the other hand, the old regime had achieved substantial growth in agricultural production and land use, mainly through private enterprise; had made a good start in building the country's infrastructure, including the army and the bureaucracy; and had achieved some progress in integrating ethnic and sectarian groups into the nation-state.

The new regimes minimized these accomplishments and set forth contrasting development aims. Regardless of the regime in power, all rebelled against foreign domination and control of the economy and the maldistribution of wealth, especially in land. They demanded an accelerated pace of development and a change of direction, particularly toward industrial development and social welfare. Increasingly, they favored socialism over laissez-faire economics and emphasized greater benefits to the lower classes.

How have the revolutionary regimes fared in accomplishing their aims? How do their accomplishments compare with those of the old regime? The various revolutionary governments have succeeded in removing landlords and wealthy urban entrepreneurs; nationalizing foreign companies; and reversing the pattern of stagnation, at least in urban areas. They have greatly increased the pace of development through massive doses of investment, especially in industry. They have provided social services, especially health and education, on an increased scale, and thereby increased social mobility for the lower and lower middle classes.

This has been particularly true under the Ba'th, as a measure of stability and increased oil revenues have enabled the regime to implement a consistent pattern of investment in a clearly specified direction. As a result, the middle class has grown substantially, and a new lower class, dominated by workers in modern industrial establishments, has emerged, mainly under the impact of urbanization, education, and industrialization.

However, the new regimes have failed to solve a number of problems. Changes in the economic structure have been modest despite attempts at industrialization, and most of the economic growth has been in public administration and defense rather than in industry and agriculture. Productivity gains in these last two sectors have been small in the first case, negative in the second. Nor have the new regimes succeeded in diversifying the economy and achieving a real measure of economic independence, although they have freed Iraq from dependence on foreign oil companies. Iraq was more dependent on oil income and food imports in 1984 than it was under the old regime. On the social side, ethnic and sectarian problems have not yet been solved. Progress has been made in integrating the Kurds and *shī'ah* into the middle class, but foreign policy problems have continued to exacerbate relations between these communities and the central government.

In the intellectual field as well, the policy of the old regime was reversed; left-wing ideas have been in ascendance since 1968, reaching their apogee under the Ba'th. In contrast to the laissez-faire attitude of the old regime in the cultural field, the Ba'th regime has attempted to impose a rigid ideology, both nationalist and socialist, on the country. It is too early to say whether this ideology has struck lasting roots among the intelligentsia, but Ba'th nationalism has not been successful in integrating the Kurds, and its socialism has generated a reaction from the middle class and conservative religious elements, especially among the *shī'ah*. Lastly, despite large investments in human resources, the new regimes have faced continual problems of political management. Instability in the 1960s made consistent development planning impossible; foreign policy problems in the 1970s created internal instability on the Kurdish front; and in 1980, the Ba'th regime's impressive development program was dealt a serious blow with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war.

The Direction of Economic Development

The revolutionary regimes, whether the military variety of the 1960s or the Ba'th regime after 1968, reacted to the perceived ills of the old regime by reversing the direction of development spending in almost all areas. Primary emphasis in most revolutionary budgets (after defense) went to social welfare, especially health and education. Under the last current budget of the old regime in 1958, these two items came to 14 percent of the total. By 1962 they totaled 27 percent, almost double the 1958 share. Under the Ba'th they declined to 22 percent in 1974 and to 16 percent in 1975; by 1981 they were down to less than 10 percent. However, due to greatly increased revenues, the actual amounts spent were greatly enlarged in absolute terms.[1]

In the commodity sectors—agriculture and industry—the reversal of old regime priorities was striking. In the 1960s, investment in industry averaged 23 percent of development budgets—twice as high as the percentage in the 1950s (Table 9.1). Under the Ba'th it rose to 30 percent between 1975 and 1980. In 1981, after the start of the Iran-Iraq war, investment in industry fell to 18.5 percent. Meanwhile, agriculture slipped from an average of 38 percent of development expenditures in the prerevolutionary period to an average of 19 percent in the 1960s. Under the Ba'th, agriculture averaged a 19 percent share of the development budget between 1970 and 1974, then slipped to 14.6 percent between 1975 and 1980 and finally to 10 percent in 1981 and 1982.

Lastly, the revolutionary regimes, in contrast to the priorities of the 1950s, have stressed more equal distribution of wealth even at the expense of productivity. The expenditures on education and health are one indication of this; other efforts have included land distribution, food and rent subsidies, and welfare benefits, which are impossible to measure in quantitative terms. The last five-year plan of the Ba'th (1975–1980), issued before the war, made greater equality of income distribution and full employment an explicit aim of the development plan.

In two important areas, however, the new regimes continued the priorities of the old, with minor modifications. Transportation and communications, needed to tie the country together and to facilitate its administration, were recognized as essential by all regimes. Expenditures in this area averaged about 22 percent in the 1950s and 1960s; only in the 1970s did they drop to an average of 13 percent. In 1981 and 1982, however, they rose again to 18–19 percent of development allocations (Table 9.1). In the budgets of every period, the military and security have had the highest priority. Their share was highest in the prerevolutionary period, consuming 62 percent of the regular budget; under the Ba'th it averaged about 44 percent for the first half of the 1970s.[2] In absolute amounts, however, the military budget was twice as large in those years as the budget for industry or for health and education.

A good indication of priorities under all revolutionary regimes is provided by the Ba'th expenditures in both current and investment budgets between 1970 and 1975. The highest amount, ID 1.4 billion ($4.34 billion), went to defense and security; next in importance came education and health with ID 631 million ($1.96 billion) and manufacturing, mining, and power with ID 619 million ($1.9 billion), less than half that spent on defense. Transportation and communications received ID 315 million ($976 million), and agriculture, ID 302 million ($936 million). A smaller amount, ID 272 million ($843 million), went to housing, building, and construction.[3] Although accurate figures on military expenditures were impossible to obtain after the start of the

TABLE 9.1
Allocations for Development Plans, 1951-1982 (in ID millions)

Plan	Agriculture	Industry	Transport & Communication	Building & Housing	Education & Research	Other	Total
1951/52-1955/56	30.0 (45.7%)[a]		15.9 (24.2%)	12.6 (19.2%)		7.2 (10.9%)	65.7
1951-52[b]-1956/57	53.4 (34.4%)	31.0 (19.9%)	26.8 (17.2%)	18 (11.6%)		26.2 (16.9%)	155.4
1955/56[c]-1959/60	114.4 (37.6%)	43.6 (14.3%)	74.2 (24.4%)	60.9 (20.0%)		11.4 (3.7%)	304.5
1955/56[d]-1960/61	168.1 (33.6%)	67.1 (13.4%)	124.4 (24.9%)	123.2 (24.6%)		17.3 (3.5%)	500.1
1959/60[e]-1962/63	49.9 (12.7%)	48.7 (12.4%)	100.8 (25.6%)	190.7 (48.4%)		4.0 (1.0%)	394.1
1961/62[f]-1965/66	113.0 (20.0%)	166.8 (29.4%)	136.5 (24.1%)	140.1 (24.7%)		10.0 (1.8%)	566.4
1965/66[g]-1969/70	142.0 (25.2%)	157.0 (28.0%)	91.0 (16.2%)	108.7 (19.4%)		62.5 (11.2%)	561.2
1970-1974[h]	366.2 (19.0%)	391.0 (20.2%)	219.3 (11.3%)	283.0[k] (14.6%)		672.6 (34.8%)	1932.0
1975-1980[i]	2370.4 (14.6%)	4938.0 (30.3%)	2484.1 (15.3%)	2646.3[k] (16.3%)	681.9 (4.2%)	3148.9 (19.4%)	16269.6
1981[j]	681.0 (10.1%)	1246.0 (18.5%)	1284.5 (19.1%)	1899.1 (28.2%)	272.0 (4%)	1360.0 (20.2%)	6742.8
1982[j]	768.4 (10.0%)	1315.6 (17.1%)	1386.9 (18.0%)	1656.3 (21.5%)	182.1 (2.4%)	2393.4 (31.1%)	7702.7

[a] Percentages have been rounded and may not add up to 100.

[b] Revision of previous plan on the recommendation of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Plan was implemented for three years.

[c] Revision of previous plan by the Development Board. Scarcely implemented at all.

Table 9.1 (continued)

[d] Revision of previous plan on the advice of Lord Salter, international expert called to Iraq to advise on development policy. Implementation was interrupted by the 1958 revolution.

[e] Four-year provisional plan introduced after the 1958 revolution. Implemented for two years.

[f] Detailed economic plan designed to replace the provisional plan.

[g] Implemented until 1968, when the plan was interrupted by the Ba^{c}th revolution.

[h] Plan introduced by the Ba^{c}th regime. Revised in 1974 to take account of increased oil revenues.

[i] Composite of annual plan allocations. Although a 1975-1980 plan was drawn up, it was not followed because of fluctuating revenues. Allocations for 1975 include nine months only, as the fiscal year was changed from April to December to January to December. The 1976-1980 plan was approved in 1977, and was thereafter reviewed and adjusted each year in accordance with plan objectives.

[j] Represents yearly allocations within a broader plan framework. The 1981-1985 plan was interrupted by the Iran-Iraq war.

[k] Buildings and other services.

Sources: Khair el-Din Haseeb [Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb], "Plan Implementation in Iraq, 1951-1967" (ECWA, Beirut, 1969), p. 6; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Statistical Pocketbook 1982 (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), p. 49.

Iran-Iraq war, all indications are that these priorities have been maintained well into the 1980s. In the ordinary budget published in 1981, two and a half times as much was spent on the Ministry of Defense as on the three ministries of Health, Education, and Higher Education and Research combined.[4]

The most spectacular change in development spending has been the quantum leap in the amount of money available, as oil prices jumped fourfold in 1973, continued to climb during most of the decade, and escalated once again in 1979. The sums spent on development soared to stunning heights. Total expenditure in current budgets for the five years from 1971 to 1975 was 3.9 million Iraqi dinars ($12.1 billion), more than double the aggregate of current budgets for the preceding twenty-one years; actual expenditures in the investment budget for the same period were 156 percent of the total investment for the period 1951 to 1970.[5] In 1980, the year before the downturn in oil revenue due to the war, expenditures in Iraq's ordinary budget reached ID 6.26 billion ($21.2 billion), over one and a half times the 1971–1975 aggregate; its investment budget totaled ID 5.23 billion ($17.7 billion), over two and a half times that of 1970 to 1974.[6]

These sums, due entirely to exogenous factors, have enabled the Ba'th regime to realize another revolutionary aim, more rapid economic development. Had it not been for the war, by 1980 one could have imagined an end to Iraq's stagnation and the entrance of Iraq into the lower ranks of the developed countries within the lifetime of those now planning for it. However, this staggering increase in wealth also brought problems, among them inflation, difficulties in economic management, and new political tensions. Although the Iran-Iraq war drastically changed Iraq's financial situation, we can assess the results of Iraq's development program up to 1980. In some areas impressive gains were made; in other sectors the results have been disappointing.

The Oil Sector

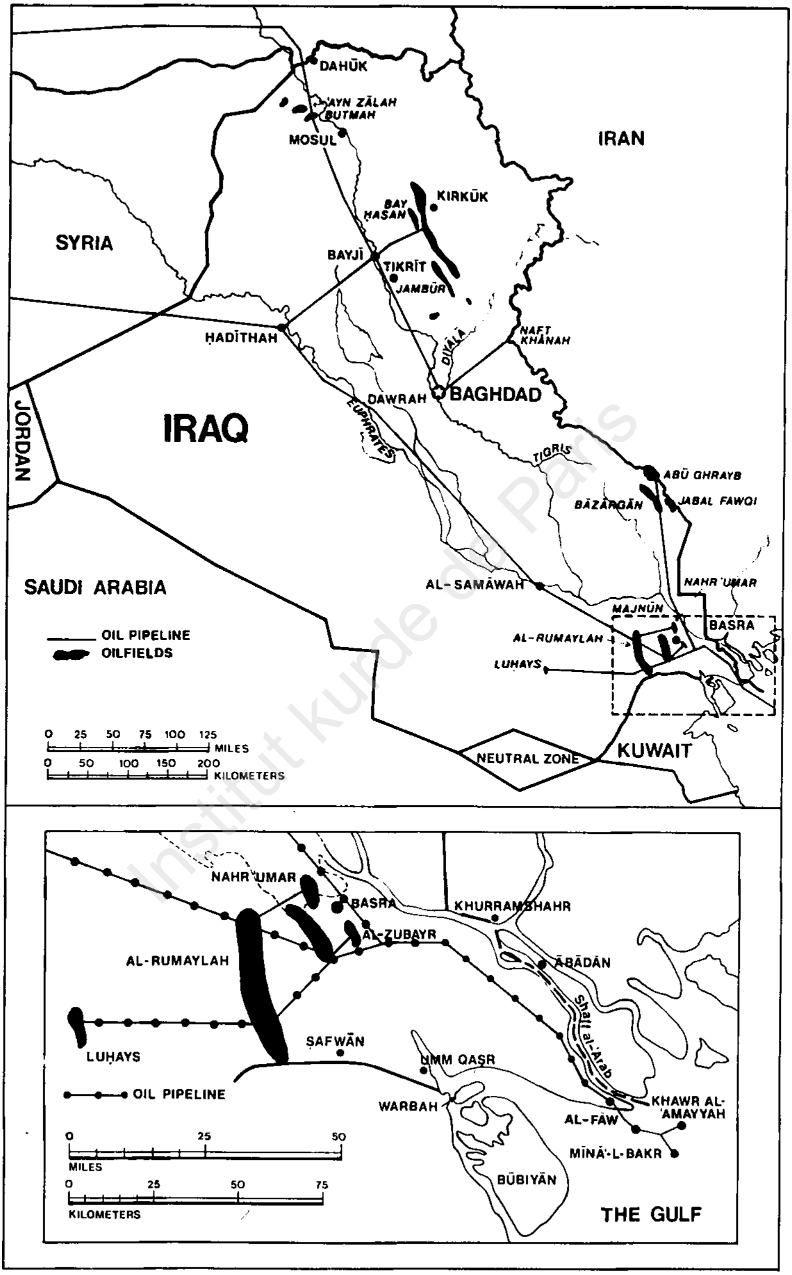
In the oil sector, particularly since 1972, Iraq has followed a fourfold policy of increasing its productive capacity, expanding existing oil production, strengthening its independence from its neighbors and foreign companies, and developing more of the downstream facilities in the oil industry, such as refineries, pipelines, and tankers. Efforts to increase production have met with less than satisfactory results throughout the revolutionary period as a whole. Iraq's oil production doubled between 1958 and 1968 from 731,000 b/d to 1.5 million; it more than doubled again between 1968 and 1979, when it produced 3.4 million b/d.[7] However, Iraq suffered greatly in the 1960s from its long struggle with IPC. Although production increased in absolute terms, Iraq was outdistanced by other Gulf producers. Between 1965 and 1975, the increase in Iraq's production was 67 percent, compared to 184 percent for Iran and 221 percent for Saudi Arabia.

Iraq began to catch up after nationalization in 1972. It had the highest rate of any Gulf producer between 1975 and 1979; 52 percent compared to 20 percent for Kuwait, 35 percent for Saudi Arabia, and a decline of 42 percent for revolutionary Iran. By 1979, Iraq was the second largest Gulf producer, with 16 percent of the total (Iran had 15 percent; Kuwait, 12 percent). Iraq was still dwarfed, however, by Saudi Arabia, then producing 9.5 million b/d or 45 percent of the total. Even with the advances of the 1970s, Iraq's share was still lower than in 1959, when it produced 18.4 percent of Gulf oil.[8] The upward trend was drastically reversed again with the Iran-Iraq war, which severely curtailed Iraq's production and its capacity to get its oil to market.

Iraq's achievement in obtaining independence from the foreign oil companies has already been detailed (Chapters 6 and 7). Under the Ba'th, Iraq also decreased its dependence on Syria in transporting its oil to market. This change had become increasingly necessary. In 1966, after a change of government in Syria, the new Syrian regime had demanded an upward revision of transit fees. In the ensuing dispute, Syria stopped throughput in November 1966, costing Iraq a great deal in lost revenues. After the nationalization of IPC in 1972, Syria demanded a further raise in transit fees, so high that it took virtually all Iraq's profits from nationalization.

As a result, Iraq put out contracts for two new pipelines. One, a 40-inch pipeline from Kirkūk through Turkey to Dörtyol on the Mediterranean near Iskandarūn, with a capacity of 700,000 b/d, was completed in January 1977. Between 1980 and 1984 this line was expanded, raising its capacity to 1 million b/d. The other, the so-called strategic pipeline, was completed in December 1975. Running from Ḥadīthah (a pumping station on the Kirkūk-Mediterranean line) south to al-Rumaylah and thence to al-Fāw, it was designed to take Kirkūk crude south to the Gulf, and al-Rumaylah crude north to the Mediterranean. This enabled Iraq to switch its export of crude from Mediterranean ports to the Gulf depending on oil freight rates. Nevertheless, although the strategic line supplemented the Syrian pipeline, Syria could still inflict damage on Iraq by shutting down the Mediterranean pipeline, as it did during the Iran-Iraq war. Iraq also increased its tanker fleet and expanded its loading capacity. By 1978 it possessed twenty-seven vessels, representing about 1.8 million deadweight tons, and had several others on order.[9] Its two off-shore terminals in the Gulf had, by 1980, a combined capacity of 4.5 million b/d.[10]

Much of Iraq's emphasis in the petroleum sphere has been placed on adding capacity, as these pipelines indicate. Iraq's main field at Kirkūk was expanded to 1.4 million b/d in 1976, and work was under way before the Iran-Iraq war to increase output from the north Rumaylah field to 800,000 b/d. Exploration activities, which had been grossly neglected prior to the 1970s, have also increased, although little has been reported of the results. Of three new fields brought in since 1960,


DAHŪK
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HADĪTHAH
NAFT KHĀNAH
DIYĀLĀ
BAGHDAD
DAWRAH
EUPHRATES
JORDAN
IRAQ
TIGRIS
ABŪ GHRAYB
JABAL FAWQI
BĀZARGĀN
SAUDI ARABIA
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NEUTRAL ZONE
KUWAIT
NAHR 'UMAR
BASRA
KHURRAMSHAHR
AL-ZUBAYR
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AL-RUMAYLAH
Shatt al-Arab
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BŪBIYĀN
THE GULF

Oil Fields, Pipelines, and Ports

Bāzārgān and Abū Ghrayb were producing 200,000 b/d in 1980; a third, brought in in 1978, produced 50,000 that year. Other new fields, not yet in production by 1984, had also been discovered. The largest of these, Majnūn (discovered in 1976 northeast of al-Qurnah), has reserves estimated at 7 billion barrels. Nahr ʻUmar, near Basra, has estimated reserves of 1 billion. Other new fields included one in the province of Maysān, another one near al-Qurnah, and a third near East Baghdad.[11]

These discoveries resulted in a continuous upward revision of Iraq's estimated reserves. A Rand Corporation report published in 1978 put Iraq's proven reserves at about 40 billion barrels and its probable reserves at 50, although it admitted that a figure of 75, then claimed by the Iraq government, was not unrealistic.[12] By 1983, Iraq claimed proven reserves of 59 billion barrels, with an optimistic estimate of possible reserves close to 100[13] and assured production, at prewar rates of exploitation, well into the next century.

Iraq has also emphasized the development of refined products and petrochemicals. By 1980, Iraq had nine refineries, with a capacity of about 300,000 b/d.[14] Two new refineries were brought on stream after 1976—one in Kirkūk and another in Mosul, while refining capacity in Basra was doubled. Despite the war, Iraq continued to expand refining capacity by adding new units in various parts of the country and by bringing into operation the first two stages of a major new refinery, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, at Bayjī, north of Tikrīt. By 1984, Iraq's refining capacity exceeded 400,000 b/d, sufficient for it to begin exporting refined products.[15] In addition, two gas-gathering and liquification processing plants were in construction at the end of 1979, one in the south and one in the north. In 1980, Iraq was producing about 11 million cubic meters of natural gas a day, and flaring 9.6 million. The new gas-gathering schemes aimed at utilizing 80 percent of the gas for industrial and domestic purposes and exporting the excess.[16]

Most important was the development of petrochemical industries. By 1976 petroleum products headed the list of Iraq's industrial producers.[17] By 1980, Iraq's petrochemical industries included two fertilizer plants at Basra and al-Zubayr, a massive petrochemical complex at al-Zubayr, and a second one at Basra. By 1984, plans called for additional petrochemical complexes at Bayjī. The future of these projects, however, was cast into doubt with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. The petrochemical plants and refineries in the Basra area were either damaged by the war or temporarily closed down. Work continued, however, on those in the north.

The Industrial Sector

A balanced assessment of expenditures on industry is difficult, especially for the ambitious industrial program of the Baʻth in the 1970s. This is partly because of the unreliability of statistics and partly because evaluation of the performance has depended on the eye of the beholder. Yet some trends are clear. By most measures, there has been considerable growth in the industrial sector since 1958. In the number of firms, in employment, output, and value added, manufacturing—especially large-scale manufacturing—increased steadily during the 1960s and 1970s. In 1960, the industrial sector contributed ID 54.4 million ($152.3 million) at a factor cost to the gross domestic product (GDP); by 1970, this sum rose to ID 116 million ($324.8 million). It doubled again by 1975 and yet again by the end of the decade, reaching ID 504.3 million ($1.7 billion) by 1979.

Despite this progress in absolute terms, the economy proved more resistant to structural change. Manufacturing did not appear to increase its share of GDP between 1960 and 1979. In fact, due to the rise in the oil sector contribution after 1973, manufacturing actually declined from 9.6 percent of GDP in 1960 to 5.6 percent in 1979. Even if the mining sector (almost wholly oil) is eliminated, manufacturing remained constant at about 15 percent of GDP between 1960 and 1979.[18] By 1981, there were 1,449 large-scale establishments, employing 177,000 workers, and over 30,000 small establishments, employing 64,000 workers. Of the large-scale employers, electricity and water enterprises employed 40,734 workers (Table 9.2).[19]

Most of the growth took place in large firms. This trend intensified after 1975, as iron, steel, and petrochemical plants came into production. By 1981, large-scale industry had clearly taken the lead in industrial employment and output. The 4.6 percent of industrial establishments classified as large (employing ten or more workers) employed 73.3 percent of industrial workers, accounted for 85 percent of industrial wages and salaries, and produced 71.3 percent of the output (value at current prices). Although small-scale firms accounted for 95.4 percent of all industries, they employed only 26.7 percent of industrial workers (some of them unpaid family members), paid 15 percent of the wages and salaries, and produced 28.7 percent of the output (see Table 9.2).[20]

Most of this new industry was increasingly capital intensive. Capital stock increased more than threefold between 1960 and 1970 and continued to rise in the 1970s.[21] This investment did not translate immediately into an increase in productivity, but it did mean that Iraq was developing more potential for large-scale industrial production in the future. Despite the construction of heavy industry—petrochemicals, iron, steel, and aluminum—most of the industrial development was in transformation and import substitution plants, primarily in construction materials, textiles, and food processing. The weakest link in the chain was the production of intermediate goods from the products turned out by heavy industry, although some progress was made in the manufacture of paper, plastic, iron pipes, pharmaceuticals, and some consumer durables. Many of these industries were only introduced into Iraq in the 1960s. They were capital intensive and employed machinery, indicating that Iraq

TABLE 9.2
Industrial Establishments and Employees, 1962-1981

	Large Establishments[a]				Small Establishments						Total	
							Employees					
	Number	%	Employees	%	Number	%	Paid	Unpaid	Total	%	Number	Employees
1962	1186	5.5	77,690	64.3	20,191	94.5	19,023	24,113	43,136	35.7	21,377	120,826
1965	1243	5.5	88,343	63.3	21,333	94.5	NA	NA	48,334	36.7	22,576	131,677
1971	1330	4.2	103,909	60.62	29,940	95.8	27,928	39,553	67,481	39.4	31,270	171,390
1975	1349	3.32	134,600	56.9	39,275	96.7	52,405	49,588	101,993	43.1	40,624	236,593
1976	1479	3.78	142,700	62.5	37,669	96.2	38,652	46,808	85,460	37.5	39,148	228,160
1977	1548	3.6	150,100	61.0	41,719	96.4	44,847	50,955	95,805	39.0	43,267	245,905
1978	1654	4.0	158,600	63.7	40,065	96.0	42,543	48,002	90,545	36.3	41,719	249,145
1979	1692	4.0	181,300	66.0	40,419	96.0	43,322	50,039	93,361	34.0	42,111	274,661
1980	1494	4.2	180,900	70.4	34,351	95.8	34,720	41,977	76,247	29.7	36,025	257,147
1981	1449	4.6	177,000	73.3	30,013	95.4	28,861	35,539	64,400	26.7	31,462	241,400

[a] Includes water and electricity establishments. Large establishments are those employing ten or more workers; small, those employing fewer than ten.

Sources: Iraq, Ministry of Planning; Statistical Pocketbook 1982 (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 29, 30, 32; Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1978, pp. 91, 118; Statistical Pocketbook 1976, p. 40; Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973, pp. 168, 169, 172, 173; Statistical Abstract 1965, p. 150; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Statistical Pocketbook 1960-1970 (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, 1972), pp. 88, 89.

would be in a good position to profit in the 1980s from higher capital productivity.[22]

Though the growth of industry has been impressive, the substantial input of capital stock, and especially machines, has not led as expected to major increases in capital productivity. Although industrial output, employment, and capital stock showed a steady increase between 1960 and 1970, capital stock grew faster than output.[23] This improved in the early 1970s when the growth of output marginally exceeded capital stock, but capital productivity declined again after 1974, when huge capital investments were made, once again raising the ratio of capital to productivity.[24]

The reason for low productivity relative to investment lies mainly in the area of management and labor. The rapidity of forced draft development without the requisite infrastructure and labor has led to excess capacity and an inability to absorb the capital. As usual, implementation of grandiose schemes has lagged behind planning and investment. The unmet need for greater infrastructure, including labor training, has been causing costly slowdowns and inefficiency. Skilled labor has been in short supply, while industry has suffered from compulsory absorption of college graduates. (The Iraqi government guarantees all college graduates a job, whether they are needed or not.)

The pressing need for better organization and management and more efficient use of time and personnel has been recognized by the government, as the 1976 seminars on lack of productivity indicated.[25] Among the projects experiencing delays by that time were the phosphate fertilizer plant at al-Qā'im, the huge petrochemical plant at Basra, the iron and steel plants at al-Zubayr, and the Maysān paper factory: in short, the backbone of the heavy industrial complex in the south.[26] As a result, the government decided to scrap the emphasis on rapid industrialization in the 1975–1980 plan in favor of implementing those schemes already under way and improving productivity in existing industry.[27]

The growth of industry has not yet cut into imports. During the 1960s, imports of such goods as paper, plastics, and rubber doubled; chemical imports more than tripled.[28] The expansion of middle income groups has helped widen the market for consumer goods such as textiles, but domestic production has not kept up with demand or reduced imports. By the late 1970s, the huge investments in industry had not yet shown commensurate increases in productivity, nor had industry kept pace with market demand. However, Iraq has increasingly made an effort to avoid showcase projects, and to bring its investments in line with its absorptive capacity.

The Agricultural Sector

Not surprisingly, given the relative neglect of this sector by most revolutionary regimes, agricultural production has stagnated since 1958. Although the Ba'th regime has made more of an effort than previous regimes to invest in agriculture, by 1984 agriculture was still the Achilles' heel of Iraq's development program. Revolutionary regimes expanded irrigation facilities somewhat, but not on the scale of the old regime. The Tharthār Canal, linking the Tigris and the Euphrates, was undertaken in 1972 more to alleviate the water shortage caused by Syrian and Turkish dams on the Euphrates than to increase agricultural production.

After 1975, the Ba'th made more serious efforts to reverse agricultural stagnation. Extension of irrigation facilities to 437,500 hectares (1.08 million acres) was planned for the 1975–1980 period, with large irrigation works scheduled for Mosul, Kirkūk, and the lower Khāliş system, but with the exception of the Hamrīn Dam, finished in 1981, these were not expected to be completed before the late 1980s.[29] By 1983, about 250,000 hectares (617,500 acres) had been reclaimed in the Khāliş area; the first stage of the Kirkūk project was due for completion in 1984; and the Mosul Dam was under construction. Most other such projects, however, had been slowed by the war. The Ba'th regime concentrated on improving and expanding livestock production through the development of specialized livestock breeding centers. Agricultural mechanization was also expanded. By the mid-1970s Iraq had over 14,000 tractors, one for each 108 cultivators, or more importantly, one for each 280 hectares (691 acres).[30] By 1982, the number of tractors had doubled to almost 30,000,[31] or roughly one for each 180 hectares (450 acres).

Despite these steps, however, agriculture has continued to suffer from low production levels, poor income for the farmer, and since the 1970s, labor shortages due to rural-to-urban migration. Although agricultural statistics are notoriously unreliable, there are multiple indications of stagnation. Agriculture's share of GDP dropped from 17 percent in 1960 to 8 percent in 1980,[32] while agricultural output per capita fell 11 percent between 1971 and 1981.[33] Despite great fluctuations in agricultural production due to weather conditions, droughts, and other variables, production of four key crops: wheat, barley, rice, and cotton, showed no long-term improvement in the 1960s, 1970s, or early 1980s. A slight trend toward increasing yields has been offset by a decline in cultivated areas (Table 9.3).[34] One study found that except for the bumper year of 1972, the share of GDP in agriculture declined continuously between 1969 and 1975.[35] Only fruits and vegetables, grown near urbanized areas where technology was greater, showed some increase.

Another indication of low productivity was the increase in food imports. In 1958, Iraq imported little food and exported certain grains. By 1964–1966 it was importing 14 percent of its agricultural supply; by 1975–1977 the figure had reached 33 percent.[36] Between 1974 and 1981, cereal imports increased over two and a half times.[37] By 1982, food constituted 15 percent of all imports.[38] Some of the increase was due to a growing population, as well as rising standards of living, particularly in urban areas. For example, calorie intake per capita increased from 90 percent of requirements in 1960 to 111 percent in 1980.[39]

TABLE 9.3
Agricultural Production of Key Crops, 1964-1982 (thousands of tons, dunams)

Year	Wheat		Barley		Rice		Cotton	
	tons	dunams	tons	dunams	tons	dunams	tons	dunams
1964	807[a]	6,507	623	4,391	184	438	29	159
1965	1,006	6,813	806	4,389	198	464	32	135
1966	826	6,947	832	4,677	182	443	29	132
1967	1,029	6,020	735	3,139	314	412	19	61[b]
1968	1,536	6,735	992	3,614	353	435	26	63[b]
1969	1,183	6,773	963	3,381	318	424	29	88[b]
1970	1,235	7,034	682	2,691	180	298	41	135
1971	822	3,793	432	1,584	306	436	43	136
1972	2,625	7,658	976	2,092	267	376	51	147
1973	957	6,715	461	2,195	156	288	45	157
1974	1,338	6,533	532	2,076	69	126	40	104
1975	845	5,630	437	2,269	61	120	39	105
1976	1,302	5,997	579	2,303	163	210	34	101
1977	696	3,430	458	2,144	199	254	26	84
1978	910	5,982	617	2,857	172	219	14	68
1979	1,492	NA	872	NA	284	NA	11	NA
1980	976	5,655	682	3,659	167	239	15	64
1981	902	4,847	925	4,195	162	229	13	45
1982	965	4,728	902	4,665	163	245	14	48

[a] Figures have been rounded.

[b] Excludes some districts of Iraq.

Sources: Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973 (Baghdad, Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 105, 113; Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978, pp. 58, 61; Statistical Pocketbook 1982 (Baghdad, Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), p. 15. The 1979 figures are taken from the Quarterly Economic Review, Iraq (Economist, London), Annual Supplement 1983, p. 10.

More was due to rural migration. By the mid-1970s, labor shortages in rural areas had reached the point where Egyptian farmers had to be imported and lack of farm hands in peak seasons was holding up production.

The reasons for poor productivity in agriculture are more complex than in industry, and the problems more intractable. Frequent statements that Iraq's untapped agricultural potential is considerable may be untenable. For one thing, the amount of water available for agriculture has dwindled. The dams on the Euphrates in Turkey and Syria, plus the many small dams built in Iran on the tributaries of the Tigris, will reduce future irrigation possibilities. Salinization, caused by extensive expansion of the irrigation system without adequate drainage, is also a problem. It has been estimated that as much as 25,000 to 30,000 hectares (10,125 to 12,150 acres) are lost each year through the effects of salinity on irrigated land. Extensive and expensive drainage is required to prevent these losses.[40] Due to a successful reclamation program that restored 160,000 hectares (400,000 acres) in 1982, Iraq ceased losing more land than it has reclaimed, at least temporarily.

Nevertheless, Iraqi agriculture could be improved by better management. One reason for low productivity is that, as in industry, massive investment in large capital works (dams and barrages) has not been complemented by smaller investments, including skilled labor, that would help bring the large schemes up to capacity. One leading authority has claimed that smaller improvements in feeder canals, increased technology, and farm education would be far better than the large hydraulic schemes. "Vast sums have been and are continuing to be spent on engineering works on the great river system . . . but much of the benefit accruing from river control has only an incidental impact on agriculture since follow-up works in irrigation have come forward slowly or been tacitly abandoned to an unspecified future. . . . Current government estimates indicate that . . . water use in cultivation has changed little since the early 1950s."[41] Low agricultural allocations in successive development plans illustrate the point. Agriculture's share ranged from a low 12.7 percent in 1959–1963 to a high 25.2 percent in 1965–1970. In 1980 and 1981 it dropped to 10 percent (Table 9.1).[42]

Agriculture also suffered from mismanagement of the land reform program in its early years. The expropriation of vast areas of land before developing necessary management personnel certainly slowed down production. When the Ba'th increased land distribution, the result was fragmentation of holdings, despite the spread of co-ops. This made extensive mechanization and economies of scale difficult. The Ba'th attempted to get around these problems by establishing highly mechanized state and collective farms; but so far this has not improved productivity. As a result, the regime has become disillusioned with collective farming. By 1983 the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform was encouraging private individuals and companies to lease government-held land and increase their investment in it. On the other hand, the regime is still committed to large-scale mechanized farming, using small numbers of skilled (often foreign) workers as well as extensive irrigation. Given the cutbacks in spending due to the war, it is unlikely that Iraq will achieve agricultural self-sufficiency or reduce its agricultural imports in the near future.

Health and Education

Between 1958 and 1983, education experienced a virtual explosion. Enrollment in primary schools rose from about 416,000 to 2.6 million; in secondary schools, from a little over 51,000 to almost 1 million, and at the college and university level, from less than 6,000 to over 122,700 (Table 9.4). The increase in the number of graduates was equally impressive. Between 1958 and 1973 the number of primary and secondary school graduates more than doubled, and at the college level the number increased more than sixfold. By the end of the decade, the figures for graduates at all three levels had more than doubled again.

A more relevant measure of progress in education is the percentage of the school-age population in school at various levels. According to World Bank statistics, in 1960, 65 percent of the primary school–age

TABLE 9.4
Enrollment and Graduation Levels at Government and Private Schools

Level	1958	1973	1979	1983
Primary				
Enrollment	416,600	NA	2,459,870	2,614,927
Graduates	43,130	102,166	213,351[a]	NA
Secondary[b]				
Enrollment	51,500	NA	797,806	998,018
Graduates	8,459[c]	20,435	62,312[d]	NA
Higher Education[e]				
Enrollment	5,679	NA	92,593	122,743[g]
Graduates	1,127	7,019	18,662[f]	NA

[a] Students in the first year of intermediate school who passed primary examinations. Statistics are not available on successful primary graduates.

[b] Includes intermediate and preparatory levels and secondary-level teachers' training schools.

[c] Includes those graduating from preparatory-level government and private schools, and secondary-level institutes.

[d] Students in the last year of preparatory schools. Statistics are not available on those passing final exams. The figures do not include graduates of primary teachers' training schools.

[e] Iraqis only. Includes students in postpreparatory teachers' training institutes, in technical institutes, and in postgraduate work.

[f] Includes higher education and technical institutes.

[g] Includes non-Iraqis but does not include postgraduate students.

Sources: Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Statistical Abstract on Education 1958 (Baghdad: Republic Government Press, 1959), pp. 6, 9, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 26; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973 (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 516, 528, 542, Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978, pp. 239, 243, 245, 251, 256, 264; Statistical Pocketbook 1982, pp. 56, 57, 59, 60.

population (ages six through eleven) was in elementary school; 36 percent of the relevant female population was in elementary school. At the secondary level, 19 percent of the relevant population (ages twelve through seventeen) was in school, including 9 percent of the relevant female population. The World Bank figures express total enrollment (including students from other age groups) as a percentage of the relevant Iraqi group. About 2 percent of the population between the ages of twenty and twenty-four were enrolled in higher educational institutions. By 1980 the primary enrollment figure reached 116 percent of the school-age population, 110 percent of the female population in the relevant age group; at the secondary level the figure was 57 percent for the total school-age population at that level, 35 percent for the females in that age group. In the twenty to twenty-four age group, 9 percent were in higher educational institutions.[43]

Adults and some foreign children accounted for the extra 16 percent at the elementary level, and there may be some adults included in the secondary figures as well, given the World Bank method of calculation. Because adults and foreign students are included in these figures it is difficult to tell exactly how many Iraqi children of the relevant ages were in school. However, the increase in attendance and the narrowing gap between male and female students at the primary level indicate that Iraq may already have reached near universal attendance at primary levels. The process has been hastened by a compulsory education law passed in 1978, which has actually been enforced by the government. This law, together with the literacy program that put many adults back into primary school, helped to swell the enrollment figures in 1980.

Despite the growth of general education, technical education remained relatively weak. In the first decade of the revolution (1958–1968), technical education fared worse than in prerevolutionary days. In 1958, there were 11,000 students in secondary technical schools (agriculture, industry, commerce, and home economics); this dropped to a low of 7,000 in 1963, and only reached 11,000 again in 1968.[44] The situation gradually improved during the 1970s. By 1982, there were 157 vocational schools at the secondary level in such fields as agriculture, commerce, and technology, with over 61,000 students, a 550 percent increase.[45] Nevertheless, the number still fell woefully short of Iraq's needs, and the percentage of secondary school enrollment in vocational education had not increased at all in two decades. In 1960, 6.2 percent of secondary students were in vocational schools; this dipped to 3 percent in 1970 and only rose to 5.5 percent in 1980.[46]

Despite these educational advances, illiteracy remained high, especially among the older population and among females. In 1977, 53 percent of the population was still illiterate: Among females the rate was 70 percent; among males, 36 percent.[47] However, these figures include schoolchildren in primary grades one through three, who have surely joined the ranks of the literate by now. In 1978, the Ba'th mounted a massive literacy campaign. A new law made it compulsory for all male and female adults between 15 and 45 to complete two years of instruction in government-sponsored literacy centers; those 15 to 35 years of age had to complete two additional years, the equivalent of a primary level education. Thousands of literacy centers were constructed.[48] Together with compulsory primary education, this program should virtually eliminate illiteracy by the turn of the century.

Improvements in health facilities have also been substantial, though less dramatic than the gains in education. Between 1958 and 1982 the number of hospitals grew from 123 to 198, an increase of more than 60 percent; the number of beds more than doubled, rising from 9,200 to 24,772.[49] The number of doctors increased from 1,190 to 4,661 between 1958 and 1982; for dentists the figures were 112 to 897.[50] In 1960, there was 1 doctor for every 5,270 persons; by 1980, the ratio was 1 to 1,790.[51] Medical personnel are still concentrated in Baghdad, but progress has been made in extending medical facilities to the countryside and to provincial areas. Under the Ba'th, graduates of medical schools are required to spend at least two years in provincial areas.

Better health care, as well as sanitation and social services, has meant a marked improvement in health standards. One indication is the great decline in infant mortality, from 139 per 1,000 in 1960 to 76 in 1980. In the same time period, life expectancy increased from 46 to 57 years.[52] A study published in 1978 claimed that "vast strides have taken place in preventative as well as curative medicine with general improvement in the quality of sanitation, individual health, and physical resistance to disease, as well as greater control over previously endemic diseases such as malaria. The incidence of these diseases is distinctly and drastically smaller than it used to be in postwar years."[53]

Structural Change

Little structural change occurred in the economy during the 1960s, but by the end of the 1970s, the impact of oil revenues and more rapid development had become decisive (see Table 9.5). One effect was a marked decline in agriculture, both in terms of employment and in the percentage of GDP produced. As already described, the oil sector expanded greatly. The manufacturing share of GDP remained constant, but it was mainly the service sector, and especially government service, that grew in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1960, oil produced 37.1 percent of the GDP; agriculture was second, with 17.3 percent; and services third, with 16.9 percent, of which 8.1 percent was in public administration and defense (Table 9.6). Manufacturing came fourth, followed by trade, and then transportation and communications. By 1975, oil dwarfed other sectors and accounted for 57.6 percent of GDP; agriculture, manufacturing, and construction were down as were trade and finance. Total services, including public administration, defense, and real estate (included in the "other" row), probably accounted for at least 15 percent of GDP. By 1979 these trends had accelerated. Oil (comprising almost all of the mining sector) was overwhelmingly dominant, producing 62.7 percent of GDP; all other sectors were reduced. Services, including public administration but not defense, for which figures were unavailable, constituted 10 percent.[54]

However, nonoil GDP (derived by subtracting the mining sector from GDP) provides a better indication of how other sectors of the economy are doing (Table 9.7). Using this measure, in 1960, agriculture was in first place, producing 27.5 percent of nonoil GDP; services, including public administration, defense, real estate, and other services (included in the "other" row) were second, with probably well over 20 percent. Manufacturing was third. By 1979, the year before the war, services

TABLE 9.5
Importance of Economic Sectors as a Percentage of GDP

Sector	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980
Agriculture	17.1[a]	18.0	10.8[b]
Mining	39.1	32.6	49.6
Manufacturing	8.5	9.0	7.3
Construction	4.7	3.5	4.0
Elect./Gas/Water	0.6	1.1	0.6
Trans./Commun.	6.8	6.6	4.7
Trade/Finance	7.1	8.9	7.1
Public Adm. & Defense	7.4	10.0	8.4
Other[c]	8.8	10.4	7.4

[a] 1955 and 1960.

[b] 1970-1976.

[c] Mainly services and real estate.

Source: World Bank, World Tables, 3d ed., vol. 1, Economic Data (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), pp. 90-91.

(excluding defense) were first, and agriculture second. Manufacturing and trade were next, both over 14 percent.

The picture is much the same from the point of view of employment, although statistics are scant (Table 9.8).[55] In the 1960s, at least half of the population was engaged in agriculture, the least productive sector. Second in importance was services, with at least 12 to 15 percent of the population employed in this field, possibly more.[56] Trade, transportation and communications, and manufacturing fluctuated between 6 and 7 percent. In 1977, however, after a census gave relatively accurate figures, the shift in employment data was dramatic. Agriculture had dropped sharply, and the largest single sector was now services, which rose to almost a third of all employment. Construction had almost quadrupled, and manufacturing also showed some employment growth.

Most of the shift in the service sector has been due to the growth of public administration and defense. Between 1960 and 1976, the growth of employment in government was 6 percent per annum, compared to 3 percent for the economy as a whole.[57] The rate of growth for services is striking in relation to the growth rates of industry and agriculture. Manufacturing's share of nonoil GDP has remained relatively constant, at about 15 percent during the 1960s and 1970s (Table 9.7),

TABLE 9.6
Distribution of Gross Domestic Product by Economic Sector, 1960-1979
(in current ID millions)

	1960		1965		1970		1975		1976		1977		1978		1979	
Sector	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agri.	97.8	17.3	153.2	17.2	206.9	17.3	297.3	7.5	432.8	9.4	412.1	7.8	473	8.0	695	7.7
Mining	209.7	37.1	285.9	33.0	370.5	30.9	2,287.7	57.6	2,475.1	54.0	2,818.7	53.3	2,990.8	50.4	5,686.5	62.7
Manuf.	54.4	9.6	69.4	8.0	116.0	9.7	238.2	6.0	324.5	7.1	388.5	7.3	464.5	7.8	504.3	5.6
Constr.	23.1	4.1	30.5	3.5	40.6	3.4	91.3	2.3	355.1	7.8	227.7	4.3	317.6	5.3	344.8	3.8
Elec., Gas,Wat.	3.6	0.6	12.0	1.4	12.7	1.1	17.7	0.4	25.1	0.5	34.5	0.7	45.6	0.8	49.5	0.5
Trans. & Commun.	39.7	7.0	58.2	6.7	71.2	5.9	157.6	3.9	217.8	4.8	290.7	5.5	339.6	5.7	368.7	4.1
Trade & Finance	41.2	7.3	79.3	9.1	117.2	9.8	255.1	6.4	286.8	6.3	382.7	7.2	447.3	7.5	485.6	5.4
Public Adm./Def.	45.7	8.1	89.0	10.3	124.3	10.4	372.6	9.4	284.9	6.2	NA		NA		NA	
Other[a]	50.0	8.8	90.1	10.4	137.9	11.5	252.7	6.4	180.7	3.9	736.3[b]	13.9	860.5[b]	14.5	934.6[b]	10.3
Total GDP	565.2		867.6		1,197.3		3,970.5		4,582.8		5,291.2		5,938.9		9,069.0	

[a] Mainly services and real estate.

[b] Includes public administration, services, and real estate.

Source: World Bank, World Tables, 3d ed., vol. 1, Economic Data (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), pp. 90-91.

TABLE 9.7
Distribution of Nonoil GDP by Economic Sector, 1960-1979
(in percentages)[a]

Sector	1960	1970	1975	1979
Agriculture	27.5	25.0	17.7	20.5
Manufacturing	15.3	14.0	14.1	14.9
Construction	6.5	4.9	5.4	10.2
Electricity & Water	1.0	1.5	1.2	1.5
Transportation & Communications	11.2	8.6	9.3	10.9
Trade & Finance	11.6	14.2	15.2	14.4
Public Administration & Defense	12.8	15.0	22.1	27.6[c]
Other[b]	14.06	16.7	15.0	
Total Nonoil GDP (ID millions)[d]	ID355.5	ID826.8	ID1,682.8	ID3,382.5

[a] GDP less the mining sector, which is almost wholly oil.

[b] Mainly services and real estate.

[c] Public administration, services, and real estate.

[d] Figured at factor cost.

Source: The World Bank, World Tables, 3d ed., vol. 1, Economic Data (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), pp. 90-91.

while its employment share increased only slightly, reaching 9 percent in 1977 (Table 9.8). Agriculture's share has contracted sharply, dropping to 20 percent of nonoil GDP in 1979 and a little over 30 percent of employment in 1977. (The World Bank gives higher figures for agricultural employment for 1980, but they still reflect a drop.)[58] Meanwhile, the service sector has risen to first place in employment and share of nonoil GDP. Construction likewise grew, absorbing much of the labor leaving agriculture.

Productivity within the service sector varies widely between finance and banking, which are highly productive, especially in terms of foreign exchange, and at the other end of the scale, street vending and petty trading.[59] The development of the service sector has helped to produce badly needed services and benefits and to expand the market for the commodity sectors. It probably has also increased Iraq's future potential for productivity. Yet thus far the service sector, particularly public

TABLE 9.8
Employment of Population by Economic Sector, 1964-1977 (in hundreds)

	1964		1967		1970		1973		1977	
Economic Sector	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agriculture	9,201	49.6	11,774	53.5	13,857	55.3	15,404	55.8	9,439	30.1
Mining	130	0.7	145	0.7	160	0.6	185	0.7	368	1.2
Manufacturing	1,300	7.0	1,400	6.4	1,500	6.0	1,700	6.1	2,844	9.1
Electricity, Water, Gas	120	0.6	126	0.6	130	0.5	143	0.5	232	0.7
Construction	470	2.5	591	2.7	670	2.7	730	2.6	3,217	10.3
Trade	1,200	6.5	1,350	6.1	1,500	6.0	1,640	5.9	2,241[a]	7.1
Transportation, Communications	1,250	6.8	1,370	6.2	1,500	6.0	1,620	5.9	1,778	5.7
Services	2,650	14.3	2,850	12.9	3,000	12.0	3,300	11.9	9,981[b]	31.6
Others[c]	2,200	11.9	2,400	10.9	2,750	11.0	2,900	10.5	1,329[d]	4.2
TOTAL[e]	18,521	100.0	22,006	100.0	26,067	100.0	27,622	100.0	32,157	100.0

[a] Includes some services, such as restaurants and hotels.

[b] Includes finance, banking and insurance.

[c] Components not explained in source.

[d] Includes unemployed and unknown.

[e] Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Sources: Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973 (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), p. 358; Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978, pp. 38-39.

administration and defense, has been the main beneficiary of the growth of oil income, rather than the commodity sector.

A more consistent development policy administered by a stable government might have produced more substantial growth in manufacturing without agricultural decline.[60] However, rather than developing a balanced and integrated economy, with emphasis on both agriculture and industry, the revolutionary regimes "are permitting the country to become an oil economy on a model not entirely different from that more maturely developed in Kuwait and other Arab oil exporting states."[61] Diversification of the economy and reduced dependence on the oil sector remains an unrealized goal.

Income Distribution

The quest for a more equitable income distribution has had mixed results. Much adjustment has taken place at the upper levels, and improved wages and benefits have raised incomes at the lower levels, but some of the old inequities remain, and rapid development and increased oil revenues have brought new ones. The existing evidence demonstrates that middle and lower income groups have achieved a higher standard of living since the revolution than under the old regime. One indication is the narrow tax base and the low rate of taxation in Iraq. In 1968 only 0.8 percent of the population was subject to tax, and tax revenues as a percentage of GNP fell from 10 percent in 1953 to 4.4 percent in 1976.[62] This certainly put more disposable income in private hands than in most states. Another indication is the increase in annual food consumption per capita, which rose from ID 16.8 ($47.04) in 1958–1959 to ID 47.3 ($159.87) in 1975–1976, most of it subsidized by government through financing of food imports,[63] and increased calorie intake. Energy consumption rose from 598 kg (coal equivalent) per capita in 1960 to 1,221 in 1980; TV receivers from 5 to 50 per 1,000 people in the same time period.[64] Most important of all, revenues spent on public housing and social sevices, even on water and electricity, disproportionately benefited the lower and middle classes. The spread of education will translate into higher earning capacity later.

Unfortunately, many of these benefits have gradually been undermined by inflation, which rose from an annual level of 2 percent in the years of 1965 to 1969 to 16 percent between 1970 and 1975.[65] It rose sharply again after 1975 to 28 percent in 1978,[66] and increased still further after the start of the war with Iran. Increased inflation adversely affected the burgeoning middle class, who live mainly on salaries and fixed incomes, and prices of imported automobiles and rental rates for middle-class housing soared. Wages kept pace only for groups like skilled labor, which are in short suppply. A well-worn Baghdad joke of the 1980s has a new college professor, recently returned from the West with his doctorate, unable to buy roast fish, a popular Baghdad delicacy cooked on the shores of the Tigris; the skilled factory worker, however, can easily afford two.

Income inequality has continued since the revolution in three areas: between rural and urban areas; between the central region of Iraq, with its headquarters in Baghdad, and the northern and southern regions; and within urban areas themselves.[67] It is not surprising to find a gap between rural and urban areas. In Iraq, the poor performance of agriculture since the revolution has depressed income in that sector compared to urban income, spurring rural-to-urban migration. In 1971 average urban incomes were 25 percent higher than rural income, and the traditional agricultural sector contained the bulk of those at the bottom and middle of the income scale.[68] Rural-urban discrepancies overlap with regional ones. Most skilled labor was concentrated in the central region, where the average income was one-third higher than in the south and one-quarter higher than in the north.[69] The development of the petrochemical and heavy industries in the Basra area, and of oil in Kirkūk, has fed the regional maldistribution. In 1971, 52 percent of small industry and 78 percent of large industry was located in three provinces: Baghdad, Basra, and Nineveh, which also consumed a disproportionate share of water, electricity, and gas.[70]

What is perhaps more surprising is that within the favored urban areas, and especially within Baghdad, the inequality of income has resisted leveling policies. A survey of household incomes in 1971 showed that the top 10 percent of urban families had an income twenty-six times that of the lowest 10 percent, a larger discrepancy than in rural areas.[71] This suggests that despite attempts to protect the lower classes, there has been an increase at the top of the scale, due in part to the oil price rises of the 1970s. As the changes in social structure show, the increase went to new groups of entrepreneurs, contractors, and high-level bureaucrats. Workers have benefited as a group, but within their ranks, skilled laborers have profited at the expense of the unskilled.

The Changing Social Structure

Change has been more rapid in the social structure than in the economy. This is partly due to the acceleration of trends already begun under the old regime—urbanization, expansion of education, a changing occupational structure, and more recently, the emergence of a class of educated and working women—and partly due to the socialist leveling policies of the revolutionary regimes, which have succeeded in dismantling the old upper classes and strengthening the new middle and lower classes. The new socioeconomic structure that had begun to take shape in the 1950s, based on education, occupation, and achievement, became more firmly entrenched in the two decades that followed. Land was no longer the basis of the economy nor the measure of social status. Government service became the main channel of mobility, and the traditional occupations—agriculture, crafts, and individualized trading operations, based on close-knit communities and personal relations—declined. New occupations dependent upon large-scale impersonal institutions came to dominate work life, although old groupings or loyalties were not totally eradicated. Family and kinship loyalty remained strong, as shown by the developments in political leadership, and this aspect of traditional society may even have been strengthened by the emergence of newly urbanized groups with strong provincial ties. Nevertheless, the social history of the period shows a shift to more modern social organizations and loyalties.

Urbanization

A key factor in causing these changes was urbanization. Rural-to-urban migration increased to a ground swell in the 1960s and 1970s. The rural population, a majority of 63 percent in 1957, dropped to 49 percent in 1965 and 38.5 percent in 1973.[72] By 1981, over 72 percent of the population of Iraq was urban.[73] The average annual urban growth

Street Scene in Baghdad, 1984. Courtesy Press Office, Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations.

rate in the 1960s was 6.2 percent; in the 1970s, it was 5.3 percent.[74] By 1982, Baghdad was a megalopolis of almost 4 million people, dwarfing the cities of Mosul and Basra, which had over 500,000 inhabitants.[75]

In 1947, Baghdad already contained 10 percent of the country's population and 30 percent of its urbanites.[76] By 1982 it contained 55 percent of the urban population, and about 27 percent of the total population.[77] Another feature of Iraq's urbanization was the paucity of medium-sized cities. In 1965, after the first burst of postrevolutionary migration, there were only five cities of over 100,000—Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, Kirkūk, and al-Najaf—and only seven cities of 50,000 to 100,000. The remainder were all small provincial towns.[78] In 1980, there were only three cities of over 500,000: Mosul, Basra, and Baghdad.[79] The emergence of a new provincial elite from the small towns played an important role in shaping society and politics in the Ba'th period.

The most important result of urbanization was to break down the homogeneity of traditional society and to bring people in contact with dissimilar groups. Traditional groupings loosened as urbanites developed new loyalties based on wealth, occupation, and social class.[80] In the growing lower-class districts of the city, many recent rural migrants live uprooted from traditional society.

Education

The second important force in social change was the great expansion of education. Education meant social mobility, enabling lower-class children with primary schooling to move into the lower middle class and those with higher education into the middle class. There were roughly 15,000 to 18,000 graduates of colleges and other higher educational institutions by 1958, and an estimated 26,000 by 1965.[81] By 1977 the figure had reached 122,000, or 1.6 percent of the population.[82] In 1978 alone, 18,662 students were graduated from Iraqi institutions of higher learning.[83]

The number of high school graduates increased from about 50,000, or less than 1 percent of the population, in 1958, to almost 300,000, or 4 percent, in 1977 (the population had doubled in the meantime).[84] Because much of the population is either too old or too young to work, the percentage of educated Iraqis in the work force was much higher. In 1977, high school graduates made up 9.4 percent and college graduates almost 4 percent of the work force of 3.1 million.[85] No reliable data on the composition of the work force has been issued since 1978, but the trend toward a more educated population has continued.

The Role and Status of Women

Urbanization, the spread of education, the changing occupational structure, and the need for skilled labor have also brought a noticeable, though gradual, change in the status of women. The Ba‘th regime in particular has encouraged the education and employment of women and improved their status through legislation. Ba‘th policy has aimed at gradually whittling down the role of the extended family and the authority of its male members while strengthening the nuclear family and women's position within it. In 1978, the Ba‘th passed an amendment to the personal status law.[86] This amendment allowed the *qāḍī* (religious judge) to overrule a guardian's refusal to allow a woman minor to marry the man of her choice, if he saw no valid reason why the marriage should not take place. It also imposed stiff penalties for forced marriages, harsher in the case of relatives who were not parents.[87] Polygamy, although not outlawed, would require the permission of a judge, who would presumably look with disfavor on second marriages. A woman's grounds for divorce were expanded, and judges were given wider discretionary power in awarding divorces. In cases of divorce, the mother was given custody of the children until the age of ten, and in some cases, fifteen.[88] Reformist rather than radical, these steps were designed to give women more control over their personal lives without permanently alienating conservative religious elements.

Women have made the greatest advances in education. By 1982, 46.4 percent of students in elementary schools, 34.5 percent of students in intermediate and secondary schools, and over 30 percent of the university population was female.[89] Women also advanced in the work force, but progress was uneven. In 1977, 17 percent of the work force was female, but the bulk of female workers were in agriculture, where women constituted 37 percent of the labor force, almost all unpaid. Seventeen percent of those employed in manufacturing in 1977 were women. Some were unpaid workers in family establishments, but almost 14 percent of the paid workers in large industrial establishments were women.[90] Women made greater progress in the professions and in other occupations requiring higher education. In 1976, women made up about 15 percent of the bureaucracy, 38.5 percent of those in education, 31 percent of those in medicine, 25 percent of lab technicians, and 15 percent of accountants. Only 4 percent of engineers and 3 percent of those in high government posts were women, but even these percentages represent a substantial breakthrough in traditionally male occupations.[91]

To attract women into the work force, the government established child care centers (forty-one in 1979), provided for paid maternity leave, legislated equal pay for equal work, and outlawed discrimination between the sexes in public service agencies. However, the government has had to be careful not to move so fast that a conservative backlash develops. As a result, women in 1980 still had a long way to go to achieve equal status with men, but the trends were clear, and the progress, especially in the 1970s, impressive.

Occupational Structure

The changing occupational structure has enlarged the new middle class and strengthened the urban working class. Agricultural workers declined from over 70 percent of the work force in 1958 to 55 percent in 1973 and possibly as low as 30 percent in 1977. In urban areas, modern occupations have grown at the expense of traditional employment. Self-employment in trade and traditional industries has declined; employment in large-scale institutions has increased. One study found that the share of wages and salaries in nonoil national income increased from 37.5 percent in 1965 to 56.7 percent in 1975, while the share of the self-employed fell from 62 to 43 percent.[92]

Among the middle class, civil servants and professionals trained in modern subjects were the largest component, gaining on traditional occupations such as retail and wholesale commerce (Table 9.9). Most of this growth was due to the expansion of the public sector. Civil service employment, estimated at about 27,000 in 1958 and 85,000 in 1968, grew to 261,000 in 1973.[93] However, the public sector extended well beyond the civil service, including many of those working in commerce, agriculture, industry, and communications as well. The increase was spurred by the oil boom and the socialist policy of the government. By 1978, 662,800 people were working for the government, over 20 percent of the work force.[94] Between 1972 and 1976, public-sector employment in trade tripled; in agriculture and construction it almost doubled; in manufacturing it increased 49 percent to 78,000, and in services 23 percent, reaching more than 250,000.[95]

TABLE 9.9
Estimate of the Urban Social Structure of Iraq, 1977

Middle and Upper Middle Class	
Professionals and Semiprofessionals	
Physicians, dentists, pharmacists (1978)	4,829
Secondary-level school teachers[a] (1978)	29,209
Lawyers	2,000
Engineers[b]	20,000
University teachers (1978)	4,409
Army officers[c]	27,000
Elementary and kindergarten teachers (1978)	90,000
Paramedics (1978)	7,997
Subtotal	185,444
Civil Service	
Middle- and upper-level civil servants[d]	198,856
Service and Business Sectors	
Middle- and upper-level wholesale, retail, and restaurant employees[e] (1977)	58,265
Owners and paid administrators of small industrial establishments[f] (1977)	21,385
Middle-level bank, insurance, and real estate employees[e] (1977)	17,720
Middle-level employees in transportation and communications[e] (1977)	25,070
Administrative and service employees in large industrial establishments[g] (1977)	43,088
Administrative and service employees in construction (1977)	15,000
Other services[h] (1977)	114,646
Subtotal	295,174
Total workers	679,474
Unpaid dependents (workers x 3)[i]	x 4
Total urban middle class	2,717,896
Percent of urban population (7.6 million in 1977)	35.7
Percent of total population (12 million in 1977)	22.6
Lower Middle Class	
Civil Service	
Lower-level civil servants[j]	119,314
Service and Business Sectors	
Owners of small industrial establishments[f]	20,859
Small wholesale, retail, and restaurant employees[k]	65,662

(continued)

TABLE 9.9 Continued

Lower middle-level of transportation and communications workers[k]	48,000
Lower middle-level bank, insurance, and real estate employees[k]	8,238
Other services[l]	31,391
Subtotal	174,150
Skilled Workers and Technicians	
Supervisors, technicians, and skilled workers in large industrial establishments[g]	77,475
Paid technicians and skilled workers in small industrial establishments	24,698
Subtotal	102,173
Total workers	395,637
Unpaid dependents (workers x 3)[i]	x 4
Total urban lower middle class	1,582,548
Percent of urban population (7.6 million in 1977)	20.8
Percent of total population (12 million in 1977)	13.2
Lower Class	
Government laborers[m]	218,743
Construction workers (1977)	295,316
Semiskilled and unskilled in electricity, gas, and water establishments (1977)	6,683
Semiskilled and unskilled workers in large industrial establishments (1977)	68,916
Semiskilled and unskilled workers in small industrial establishments (1977)	19,623
Semiskilled and unskilled workers in mining and oil extraction industries (1977)	16,907
Lower-level transportation and communications workers[n] (1977)	104,545
Lower-level workers in banks, insurance, and real estate businesses[n]	5,067
Lower-level workers in wholesale, retail, restaurant establishments[n] (1977)	100,846
Other services[o] (1977)	81,435
Unemployed (1977)	74,725
Unknown (1977)	58,237
Total workers	1,051,043
Unpaid dependents (workers x 3)[i]	x 4
Total urban lower class	4,204,172
Percent of urban population (7.6 million in 1977)	55.3
Percent of total population (12 million in 1977)	35

(continued)

TABLE 9.9 Continued

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[a] Includes secondary, vocational, and teacher training schools

[b] Estimated from 1973 figures

[c] Estimated from 1968 figures and the growth of the army since 1968

[d] Civil servants classified as officials; based on 1973 percentages

[e] Estimate based partly on educational levels; includes those with secondary-level schooling and above

[f] Half of the owners of such establishments are listed here

[g] Includes mining, oil extraction, water, gas, and electricity establishments

[h] Unidentified services; estimate based partly on educational levels; includes those with secondary levels and above

[i] The factor of three used for unpaid dependents is a rough estimate based on the economically active population; 26 percent of total population in 1977. The dependency figure--74 percent of the total population--does not include paid family members, such as working wives and older children.

[j] Civil servants classified as employees; based on 1973 percentages

[k] Estimate based partly on educational levels; includes those with primary and intermediate education

[l] Unidentified services; estimate based partly on educational levels; includes those with primary and intermediate education

[m] Those working at manual or low-level jobs; based on 1973 percentages

[n] Estimate based partly on education levels; includes those with no formal schooling or illiterate

[o] Unidentified services; estimate based partly on educational levels; includes those with no formal schooling or illiterate

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Sources: Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973 (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 380, 409; Statistical Pocketbook 1976, p. 102; Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978, pp. 38, 39, 98, 118, 119, 125, 226, 227, 229, 232, 235, 236, 237, 241, 242, 246, 251, 259, 268, 269, 270, 271, 274, 288, 294.

Until the mid-1970s, the largest single group among the urban working population was in industry. Employment in manufacturing and in water, gas, and electricity establishments grew from 163,000 in 1970 to over 307,000 in 1977 (Table 9.8). By 1981, after the war had shut down a number of industries, this figure declined to 241,400 (Table 9.2). About 80 to 85 percent were manual laborers, who in 1977 accounted for 9 percent of the work force. Among this group, the largest component worked in large or medium-sized factories. By 1981, small firms (employing under ten people) employed 26.7 percent of industrial workers, over half of them unpaid family members; large firms (ten or more employees) employed 73.3 percent (Table 9.2).

By the 1980s, the importance of industry was rivaled by construction in the wake of a mammoth construction boom. In 1970 construction workers constituted less than 3 percent of the work force; by 1977 they totaled about 9.2 percent.[96] By 1981, the number of construction workers (240,900) just about equaled the number in industry (241,000).[97] This was the sector that absorbed most of the exodus of workers from agriculture. In addition, large numbers of unskilled rural migrants were probably absorbed by the service sector in relatively unproductive jobs.[98] Whether this trend will persist remains to be seen. There has been a drastic cutback in construction in the wake of the Iran-Iraq war, as much of the civilian work force has been absorbed by the war effort.

Important changes in social structure were caused by the leveling policies of revolutionary regimes. By the 1970s, the old upper class of landed wealth and private entrepreneurs had disappeared. In the countryside, the landed classes had been eliminated by successive land reform acts, especially the 1971 act that reduced the upper limit of landholdings to 2,000 dunams. Less than 3 percent of landowners had held nearly 70 percent of the land in 1958; by 1973 the top 1.6 percent of landowners held only 26.4 percent of the land. The bottom 73 percent had held a little over 6 percent of the land in 1958; by 1973 the bottom 62 percent (excluding the landless) held 23 percent (Tables 5.3 and 9.10). Meanwhile, a strata of middle-level landholders emerged, owning between 40 and 200 dunams each and constituting over a quarter of all owners. Further leveling took place under the Ba'th during the 1970s, especially in Kurdish areas. By the 1980s, however, the greatest need was to stem the exodus from the land and ease the rural labor shortage. To increase productivity, the regime found it necessary to encourage individual entrepreneurship and large-scale production. The farmer's lot was improved by the spread of social services and rural education, which improved farming techniques and raised income levels,[99] but the agricultural sector remained the poorest.

In urban areas, the classes with old wealth based on private ownership of business, real estate, or commerce declined or went into exile as a result of the nationalization laws and government control over international trade, the wellspring of private fortunes under the old regime. In order to prevent the emergence of a new class of intermediaries and commission agents, the Ba'th also passed a stiff agents' law, Public Law 8 of 1976, requiring registration of agents working for foreign companies. These companies were expected to deal directly with the government.[100] These measures, plus state control over large-scale domestic retail operations, were largely successful in preventing the growth of large private fortunes in this area.

Just as revolutionary governments were dissolving the old upper classes, however, a new class of affluent, even wealthy, individuals was

TABLE 9.10
Distribution of Landholdings 1973

Size of Holding	Number of Holdings		Area Held	
	Holdings	Percentage	Dunams	Percentage
Landless	52,021	8.79	—	—
Less than 1 and less than 10	157,059	26.6	691,921	3.02
10 and less than 40	210,072	35.5	4,560,883	19.9
40 and less than 60	70,796	12	3,155,013	13.7
60 and less than 100	53,117	9	3,749,702	16.3
100 and less than 200	38,810	6.56	4,752,888	20.7
200 and less than 500	6,672	1.13	1,869,980	8.2
500 and less than 1,000	1,391	.23	917,788	4.1
1,000 and less than 2,000	787	.13	948,305	4.13
2,000 and over	453	.07	2,283,442	10
TOTAL	591,178	100.0	22,929,921	100.0

Category of Holdings	Percentage of Holdings	Percentage of Area
Landless	8.79	0
Small owners (less than 1 and less than 40)	62.1	22.9
Medium owners (40 and less than 200)	27.56	50.7
Large owners (200 and less than 2,000)	1.5	16.4
Very large owners (2,000 and over)	.07	10

Source: Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973 (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), p. 71.

emerging by the 1980s. The inflationary impact of the oil price rises and the government's push for rapid development in the 1970s created a demand for scarce resources, including services of all kinds. A new upper class of mostly self-employed individuals emerged, with contractors, engineers, lawyers, and other professionals earning premium incomes. There are few statistics to bear this out, but there is much material evidence. Affluent suburbs have sprung up in Baghdad, inhabited by the newly wealthy. Despite rent control, real estate rentals and prices have skyrocketed on under-the-table deals. This group can afford luxuries not attainable by a salaried middle class adversely affected by inflation. Intermixed with this group is a political upper class consisting of Ba'th politicians and their relatives and supporters. This upper class lives in an increasingly affluent style, although conspicuous consumption is less blatant in the 1980s than it was in the 1950s. In February 1978 thirteen lawyers, some of them party members, were expelled from the bar for profiting from their official positions, indicating some attempt by the regime to discipline its own members and to keep conspicuous consumption under control.[101] This new class is relatively small, however.

The Middle Class

These developments have created a new socioeconomic structure in Iraq. As the old upper class has declined, the middle class, whether defined in educational or occupational terms, has expanded rapidly. By the mid-1970s, almost 10 percent of the work force were high school graduates, constituting an educated middle class. The 4 percent of the work force with a college education could be considered a professional and technical elite.

An analysis of the changing occupational structure likewise shows a large increase in the middle class. Although it is difficult to analyze the social structure of a country in rapid transition, a rough estimate can be based on occupations that would normally be considered middle class. Professionals—doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, and army officers; civil servants; and the middle levels of the commercial and service sectors can be said to constitute a solid middle class. Some could be considered upper or upper middle class. As figured in Table 9.9, those in upper-middle and middle-class occupations totaled over 600,000 by 1977. If this figure is multiplied by four to account for dependents (74 percent in 1977), we come up with an urban middle class of about 2.7 million. By 1977 this class constituted about 35 percent of the urban population and 22 percent of the total population. Civil servants and professionals constituted over 56 percent of the urban middle class.

The Iraqi lower middle class is made up of owners of small industrial workshops, small retail merchants, lower-level civil servants, and white collar workers with less education than the professionals. Skilled workers should probably be included in this class, rather than in the lower class, because of the high salaries they commanded relative to other manual workers. By 1977, this group, together with dependents, constituted over 20 percent of the urban population and about 13 percent of the total.

The middle and lower middle classes were thus about one-third of the total population and about half of the urban population. However, these statistics probably exaggerate the percentage of the urban population at middle- and lower-middle-class levels, since many of these workers lived in areas classified as rural, not urban. According to the 1978 *Statistical Abstract*, fully 37 percent of rural workers were engaged in nonagricultural occupations such as trade and services.[102] An estimate of a middle and lower middle class in nonagricultural occupations of about 35 percent of the total population is probably not too wide of the mark. It tallies with another estimate of the urban middle class (which may have included some elements considered as lower middle class here) at 10 percent of the population in 1958 and 18 percent in 1968.[103] If the figures are correct, the number of middle- and lower-middle-class workers in nonagricultural occupations has almost doubled each decade since 1958. By any standards, this is very rapid social change indeed.

The Lower Class

The urban working class has also grown rapidly. Included in this group would be semiskilled and unskilled workers in large and small industrial establishments and in the mining, gas, water, and electricity industries; lower-level workers in transportation, communications, and other service establishments; laborers of various kinds employed by the government; and construction workers. By 1977 this group comprised about 1 million workers, making the lower class about one-half of the urban population and about one-third of the total population when the workers' families are added in (Table 9.9). Again, the urban percentage is high, as some urban workers were probably living in rural areas.

The urban working class apparently grew more slowly than the middle class up until the mid-1970s. Employment for nonmanual laborers in the 1960s and early 1970s expanded much faster than the manual labor market: 11 percent versus 4.3 percent annual growth during the 1960s.[104] The average growth rate of salaries also surpassed the rate for wages.[105] This trend almost certainly continued into the early 1970s, with the rapid growth of the bureaucracy, but it had probably slowed by the end of the 1970s with the construction boom generated by the oil price increases. In 1973, construction workers constituted 2.6 percent of the work force; by 1977 they were 10.3 percent (Table 9.8). By 1977, among nonagricultural workers, manual laborers about equaled nonmanual. Most of the increase was in unskilled and semiskilled labor, especially in the construction sector.

The differentiation between skilled and unskilled workers became more pronounced in the 1970s. Just as inflation and a labor shortage created an affluent class of contractors, an acute shortage of skilled labor favored this group. By 1980, skilled workers in Iraq were in a class by themselves, earning a rising share of wealth. The demand for unskilled labor, however, was eased by the continued influx of cheap labor from the villages.

Foreign Labor

Meanwhile a new phenomenon appeared in Iraq—a foreign labor class. In 1976, at least 19,000 foreign workers were employed in nonagricultural pursuits, and an undetermined number of Egyptians and other Arabs were working in agriculture.[106] By the 1980s, with the mobilization of Iraqi manpower for the war effort, the number of foreign workers in Iraq had greatly increased. Although no accurate figures were available in 1984, estimates of the Egyptian population, the largest contingent, ranged from 500,000 to a high of 1 million.[107] By this time foreign workers were employed in a wide variety of occupations, from experts and bureaucrats to broom pushers.[108]

Ethnic and Sectarian Integration

Any discussion of ethnic and sectarian integration under the revolutionary regimes is hampered by the absence of relevant statistics. However, the available statistics on urbanization and education and the background data on Iraqi political leaders do provide evidence of certain trends. In urban areas, where the majority of the population now lives, and among the educated middle and urban working classes, considerable integration has taken place, but in rural areas ethnic and sectarian loyalties remain strong. All of the revolutionary regimes, whether military or Baʿthist, have been secular, and with the exception of Qāsim's, strongly Arab nationalist. This ideology had made it easier to integrate the Arab *shīʿah* than the Kurds. The extended war between the Kurds and the central government in the 1960s was a regression from old regime days, when Kurdish nationalism was at least contained.

Arab Sunnīs

Arab *sunnī*s have continued to dominate the political leadership of Iraq since the revolution. In the last decade of the old regime, 44 percent of all leaders were Arab *sunnī*, 33 percent were Arab *shīʿī*, and 19 percent were Kurds. This overrepresented the *sunnī*s, underrepresented the *shīʿah*, and was about right for the percentage of Kurds in the population. In the first decade of the new regime, the percentage of *sunnī*s in the leadership rose to 54 percent, at the expense of both the *shīʿah* and the Kurds. At the upper levels of political leadership the imbalance was even more pronounced, as shown in Table 9.11. The high *sunnī* percentages for 1958–1968 reflect Arab *sunnī* predominance in the officer corps. When the military dominated the government, so did the Arab *sunnī*s.

Under the Baʿth the situation fluctuated. By the end of almost a decade of rule, the leadership group remained unbalanced, despite

TABLE 9.11
Ethnic and Sectarian Background of Political Leaders, 1948-1982

	Arab Sunnīs	Arab Shī^{c}ah	Kurd	Other/ Unknown	Total
Old Regime 1948-1958					
Upper level[a]	24(61%)	8(21%)	6(15%)	1(3%)	39
Lower level[b]	17(31%)	23(43%)	12(22%)	2(4%)	54
Both levels	41(44%)	31(33%)	18(19%)	3(3%)	93
Military Regimes 1958-1968					
Upper level[c]	30(79%)	6(16%)	2(5%)	--	38
Lower level[b]	57(46%)	43(35%)	16(13%)	8(6%)	124
Both levels	87(54%)	49(30%)	18(11%)	8(5%)	162
The Ba^{c}th Regime in 1977					
Upper level[d]	15(71%)	5(24%)	--	1[e](4.7%)	21
Lower level[f]	6(35.3%)	3(17.6%)	6(35.3%)	2(11.8%)	17
Both levels	21(55.3%)	8(21%)	6(15.8%)	3[g](7.9%)	38
The Ba^{c}th Regime in 1982					
Upper level[h]	5(31.25%)	8(50%)	1(6.2%)	2[g](12.5%)	16

[a] Includes the regent, prime ministers, deputy prime ministers, and the ministers of interior, defense, finance, and foreign affairs.

[b] Includes all other ministers.

[c] Includes the president of the republic in place of the regent.

[d] The regional command of the party.

[e] A Christian.

[f] All ministers not on the regional command as of 26 March 1977.

[g] Includes one Christian.

[h] Includes the regional command of the Ba^{c}th party and the RCC. Complete background information for those ministers not on the regional command or the RCC (the lower level) was not available at this writing.

Sources: Phebe Marr, "Iraq's Leadership Dilemma: A Study in Leadership Trends, 1948-1968," Middle East Journal 24 (1970):288; unpublished data gathered by the author from newspaper sources, British diplomatic documents, and interviews.

attempts to bring *shīʿah* into the regional command.[109] In 1977, twenty-one of thirty-eight ministers and regional command members were Arab *sunnī,* eight were *shīʿī,* six were Kurds, one was Christian, and two were unknown. At the top level, *sunnī* dominance was overwhelming, and there were no Kurds in the regional command. The leadership at the top was mostly derived from the Arab *sunnī* heartland of the country, a triangular area that stretches from Baghdad in the south to Mosul in the north and ʿĀnah on the Syrian border in the east. In 1977, half of the regional command members came from Arab *sunnī* towns located in this triangle, excluding the mixed city of Baghdad; almost one-quarter came from the town of Tikrīt.

The Iran-Iraq war and the religious appeal of Iran to the *shīʿah* of Iraq prompted the Baʿth regime to incorporate more *shīʿah* into the top leadership structure. In 1982, a new regional command was elected and the cabinet was reshuffled. A majority of the seven new members of the regional command were *shīʿī*. Although eight members of the RCC were dropped, room was made on this body for its first Kurdish member. The result was a more balanced top leadership group.

Apart from the political leadership, the Arab *sunnī*s have apparently maintained their commanding lead in the officer corps, although there are certainly Arab *shīʿah* and Kurdish officers as well. The leadership relies heavily on the officer corps for support. In the bureaucracy and the professions, there is a higher percentage of *shīʿah* and Kurds. In the Baʿth Party, Arab *sunnī*s have predominated despite attempts to reverse the trend. Of the fifty-three members of the top command from 1963 to 1970, forty-four were Arab *sunnī*,[110] a pattern probably echoed at the intermediate and lower levels of active membership. The party's efforts to recruit *shīʿah* may have reduced this margin by the 1980s. A study of middle-level party representatives elected to the National Assembly in June 1980 shows a substantial percentage of *shīʿah*, although probably not an absolute majority.[111]

Arab Shīʿah

Until the changes of the early 1980s, Arab *shīʿah* had fared poorly in the political realm under revolutionary regimes, and they clearly lost out in the private sector as well. Under the old regime, the *shīʿah* had constituted a large portion of the wealthy landowners and urban traders and entrepreneurs. Many had used private enterprise to gain status, and often political power, along with wealth. The land reform laws and the nationalization acts eliminated this wealthy class almost completely, and with them, a large portion of the *shīʿah* in the upper and middle reaches of the social structure, many of whom left Iraq. In recent years, at least until the reversal of 1982, the *shīʿah* were also poorly represented in the upper echelons of the Baʿth Party. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, when the Baʿth was an opposition party, *shīʿah* actually predominated in the leadership cadres, with 53 percent of all leadership posts from 1952 to 1963.[112] After that date, the growing dominance of the Tikrītīs reversed the situation until the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war. In the 1970s and early 1980s substantial numbers of *shīʿah* could be found among the leadership of the opposition parties, including the Communist Party. Some opposition parties, like al-Daʿwah, are wholly *shīʿī* and devoted entirely to *shīʿī* interests.

In some areas, the *shīʿah* have made great strides. Urbanization and education have unquestionably helped integrate them into the middle class and the new urban working class. A large number of those in the bureaucracy and the professions are *shīʿī*, and some professions may well be predominantly *shīʿī*. The massive migration of *shīʿah* from the south to the central provinces, which have the highest income and the highest incidence of industry, urbanization, and education, has meant a higher standard of living for the *shīʿah*. The influx of *shīʿah* into Baghdad has shifted the population of the capital in favor of the *shīʿah*. Basra, the next largest city, is predominantly *shīʿī*. Already by 1965, of the seven medium-sized cities with a population between 50,000 and 100,000,[113] five were *shīʿī*. Al-Najaf, another *shīʿī* city, was well over 100,000. The shift of the *shīʿī* population from poorer rural areas to better-endowed urban areas and the increasing percentage of *shīʿah* in services and industry has blunted sectarianism. Even though many new migrants live in shantytowns and form part of the urban lower class, their income and standard of living still represent an improvement over their former living conditions.[114] It is in these comparatively poorer areas, however, that sectarian feelings are likely to fester.

A diminishing, but still significant, proportion of *shīʿah* constitute the bulk of the agriculturists in the south. Although rural areas are poorer than the urban areas, even here the *shīʿī* provinces are catching up with the Arab *sunnī* provinces. In 1978, in the strictly *shīʿī* provinces of the south, 20.8 percent of the total population was in primary schools, compared with 21.8 percent in three Arab *sunnī* provinces. Fewer of the *shīʿah* stayed in school, however. In the same *shīʿī* provinces, 0.28 percent of the population was in the last year of secondary school, compared to 0.45 percent for the Arab *sunnī* provinces. The purely *shīʿī* provinces had a slightly better ratio of medical facilities, with 1 hospital per 59,000 people compared to 1 per 61,000 for the Arab *sunnī*s; the *shīʿī* and Arab *sunnī* provinces had about equal ratios for medical personnel.[115]

At the same time, much of the rural-to-urban migration from the south feeds the lower classes in the cities. Al-Thawrah (renamed Ṣaddām City), an area built by Qāsim for these migrants, housed 350,000 in 1965 and close to a quarter of Baghdad's population by 1980. Largely a slum, it has a solidly *shīʿī* population.[116] In the south, which is less affected by secularism and urbanization, traditional leaders retain a tighter hold over the population, and *shīʿī* identification is stronger. This makes the southern *shīʿī* population a likely target for foreign powers interested in stirring up dissidence in Iraq, as Syria did in the mid-1970s and Iran in the 1980s.

The Kurds

The new regimes have clearly been less successful in integrating the Kurds than the *shīʿah*. This has been more of a political problem than a social one, as the long struggle for Kurdish autonomy or independence has shown. The Kurdish problem has been the political Achilles' heel of all revolutionary regimes and was still not completely solved by 1984, although the 1975 agreement showed more promise of working than previous solutions. The Kurdish wars intensified separatist feelings and also delayed the processes of education and urbanization in the Kurdish heartland. This changed after 1975.

The purely Kurdish areas of the north still had fewer educational facilities in 1978 than *shī'ī* or Arab *sunnī* areas, but the gap was narrowing. In the autonomous area, 17.7 percent of the population was in primary school; 3 percentage points less than in *shī'ī* areas, and 4 less than in Arab *sunnī* areas. However, only 0.22 percent of the Kurds were in the last year of secondary schools, slightly behind the *shī'ah* but only half that of the Arab *sunnīs*. Kurds had the highest ratio of hospitals, 1 for every 57,000 people, but it was well behind the other groups in medical personnel, with only one doctor for each 11,582 people.[117] In the countryside, the traditional upper class remained unaffected by land reform until 1975, and it was only after the 1975 settlement that roads, industry, and other elements of modernization penetrated the area to any degree.

Kurdish areas are also the least urbanized. Of the cities with over 100,000 people in 1965, only one, Kirkūk, had a sizable Kurdish population; of those between 50,000 and 100,000, only two, Arbīl and al-Sulaymāniyyah, were Kurdish.[118] In 1977, 51 percent of the population of the autonomous region lived in rural areas, whereas the average for the country was 36 percent.[119] Nevertheless, since 1975, urbanization and the spread of education have accelerated among the Kurdish population. Arbīl, al-Sulaymāniyyah, Dahūk, and Zākhū have experienced rapid growth due to considerable rural exodus. In contrast to the *shī'ah,* most Kurdish migration has been to urban centers within the region and to small and medium-sized towns, rather than to major cities such as Kirkūk and Mosul. War, the destruction of Kurdish villages, insecurity, and recent government expenditures have accelerated the process.

Although the expansion of education has lagged behind in Kurdish areas, the situation in the late 1970s had nevertheless improved greatly over mandate days. This improvement was reflected in the higher number of educated Kurds in political leadership positions, including those in opposition. Among the new twenty-one-member central committee of the Kurdish Democratic Party, elected in 1979, eighteen had college degrees or other postsecondary education; three had doctorates. Five had not gone beyond high school. Almost one-quarter had lived abroad, three of them in Eastern bloc countries, indicating the leftward shift in the movement.[120] Other Kurdish opposition parties, led by intellectuals such as Jalāl al-Ṭālabānī and Maḥmūd 'Uthmān, probably had an even higher percentage of educated members. Among the six Kurdish ministers in the Baghdad government in 1977, at least five had a higher education; four had careers as lawyers, bureaucrats, or diplomats; and one had a military career.

Whether more education and increased urbanization will mean greater assimilation remains to be seen. It will depend on the political climate in Baghdad and how well the Kurdish settlement of 1975 survives, particularly in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq war. The Ba‘th regime has made statements encouraging Kurds to join the party and moderating its Arab nationalist ideology in a cultural direction deemed more palatable to the Kurds. They are also pursuing modernization in the north with far greater consistency. Modernization may weaken separatist desires in the north, although it will certainly not eliminate a sense of Kurdish identity. Meanwhile, the Kurdish opposition has continued its operations in the north, including guerrilla activities.

Cultural Change

Since the revolution of 1958, there has been a sharp reversal in cultural orientation, at least at the official level. Leftist and nationalist ideologies have come to dominate cultural life, continuing the emphasis on the common man, the emancipation of women, and national liberation that had begun in the 1950s. Artistic works have become frankly political. One of the first major sculptures undertaken by Jawād Salīm after the revolution was the monument to liberty, a huge frieze with figures commemorating the 1958 revolution. It decorates one of Baghdad's largest squares. The left-wing poet ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī, who has become one of Iraq's most widely read poets, is freely published in Baghdad. Iraqi cinema has continued to depict life among the underprivileged. One of the best Iraqi films, "He Who Hopes for Prosperity"(1967), is a comedy of manners, portraying a lower-middle-class family that moves to a more affluent, Westernized neighborhood to accommodate the changing ways of their children. "The Thirsty," a film made in 1971–1972 by gifted producer Muḥammad Shukrī Jamīl, depicts the life of semisettled bedouin who refuse to abandon their land during a drought, and exposes the injustice of the female condition under traditional society. Similar themes have been explored in short stories, essays, and painting.

The new regimes have also replaced the previous laissez-faire attitude toward cultural and intellectual life with increasingly rigid government control over the press and the publishing industry. Censorship of the press was imposed from the first day of the 1958 revolution under martial law. Opposition papers disappeared. Under Qāsim, the left-wing press enjoyed a brief vogue, but by the end of the Qāsim period it had virtually disappeared. Under the ‘Ārif regime, the Arab nationalist press returned, but it, too, was soon muzzled. The most important journals published under ‘Ārif included *al-Jumhūriyyah, al-Thawrah,* and *al-Ta'ākhī,* the organ of the KDP, which only lasted for a short time. A 1964 press law passed by ‘Ārif specified that publications criticizing the government could be censored, and that licenses would be revoked if papers published material dangerous to the republic. In December 1965, Public Law 155 nationalized the daily press. Privately owned newspapers were abolished and the Press and Printing Organization was established under the Ministry of Guidance and Information. Under the Ba'th, even tighter controls were exercised. One of the two main newspapers published by the regime is *al-Thawrah*, now the party organ; the other, *al-Jumhūriyyah*, generally reflects the government's point of view. Other papers are published but no genuine opposition press is allowed. Under the Ba'th, a rigid ideological framework has been imposed on all official cultural and ideological activities.

In education, quality has often been sacrificed to politics. Politicization began during the 1960s, when demonstrations, riots and organized political activities often disrupted classroom activities. Under the Ba'th, these disruptions have been curtailed, and the education system has been molded after the regime's political principles. Non-Ba'thist professors have gradually been replaced by Ba'thists or Ba'thist sympathizers. Courses in Ba'thist ideology are required of undergraduates, and Ba'thist students report on the political views of their professors. Perhaps one of the most celebrated breaches of academic freedom was the case of a Western-educated economics professor who criticized one of the Ba'thist slogans in his class. He was brought before a small tribunal of Ba'thists, headed by Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, examined on his economics and his commitment to socialist principles, found guilty, and briefly imprisoned. Several students who tried to defend him were dismissed from the university.[121]

Since 1958, regimes have emphasized mass culture over the cultivation of individualism or the production of an elite group of artists, musicians, and writers. Although the spread of culture is commendable, quality has suffered. The increase in students has tended to outstrip the capacity of the system. A 1967 study of the Medical College, probably Iraq's best higher educational institution, showed that learning by rote was still a problem. Under the Ba'th, the government has frankly aimed at producing a new generation molded according to its own ideals. The regime has extended government control over all cultural activities. The cinema and theatre have been placed under the General Establishment for Cinema and Stage in the Ministry of Culture, along with the Iraqi Symphony Orchestra, the Music and Ballet School, and the Folklore Troupe, formed in 1971. All writers, musicians, and artists belong to the professional associations connected with their work, and these, too, are under government supervision.

The Ba'th government has supported the expansion of the arts and has clearly attempted to use the arts to create a national consensus at the popular level. Perhaps Ba'th intentions are best captured by the regime's own description of a new department of plastic arts at the university: "The Department endeavors to extend artistic education to the masses, by using all available means to enhance artistic awareness among the people, in compliance with the central aims defined by the Political Report of the Eighth Regional Conference and in the light of the ideas of the Arab Baath Socialist Party."[122] How deeply these ideological sentiments have penetrated among the general public and among intellectuals is questionable. It is clear, however, that the intensely secular and socialist ideas of the Ba'th have alienated some of the traditional elements of society and produced a reaction among religious elements, especially the *shī'ah*. They have also alienated a number of liberal thinkers, who have followed their predecessors under the old regime into exile.

Revolutionary regimes have removed some of the glaring social inequities of the old regime, in particular an upper class of landlords and urban wealthy who siphoned off considerable wealth and many of the benefits of the development program into unproductive enterprises. They have also created a healthier social structure for investment. Their plans have emphasized social justice and improving the lot of the poorer classes, whether or not this has been embodied in a rigorous ideology of socialism. Their programs have raised the standard of living among lower-income groups and augmented the country's infrastructure, human and physical. Yet development of the productive capacity of the country has been disappointing thus far, given the large amounts of capital invested.

This has been most apparent in agriculture, which has received little attention or money until recently. Inadequate production, rising food imports, and mismanaged land reform (only recently rectified) have characterized the agrarian sector since 1958. Revolutionary regimes have attempted to develop an industrial sector capable of diversifying the economy, achieving a measure of economic independence, and generating increased growth in other areas. Unfortunately, industrial growth has not kept pace with investment, mainly due to overcapacity, a lack of skilled labor, and mismanagement. There has been some shift in the economic structure from agriculture to services. Meanwhile, the country's dependence on oil has been magnified by oil price increases. Genuine economic independence is still not in sight.

Some of Iraq's difficulties have been due to an inherently intractable resource base. Iraq's agricultural problems, for example, are caused in part by an increased scarcity of water and the progressive salinization of the soil, which removes large areas of land from production each year. Another problem is the inevitable lag in creating the educated cadre to run modern sectors. It has proved far easier to build factories and schools than to train the skilled workers and teachers needed to staff them. The Iraqi population has continued to migrate from village to city, but it has been the bureaucracy, not the nascent industrial complex, that has absorbed them.

Despite these difficulties, undeniable gains have been made. Iraq's physical infrastructure has been developed in dams and barrages; roads and ports; houses, hospitals, and schools. The material conditions of the people have improved, and an educated middle class has emerged. An industrial network is being constructed. Most striking of all is the change in social structure, with the rapid shift from rural to urban occupations and the development of a mainly urban middle and lower class. The benefits of development, especially in education, are also reaching the countryside. The expanded infrastructure and improved living standards have created the conditions for future productivity if proper management is forthcoming.

Achieving a more equitable distribution of wealth has been more difficult, but progress has been made. In retrospect, the benefits of revolutionary programs have gone primarily to the middle class (including its lower echelons), whose leading members have spearheaded the revolutionary reforms. The middle class will form the backbone of a modern, developed Iraq. The lower classes have also benefited substantially, though the large amounts of revenue and the increased pace of development have, inevitably, created new income inequities. Despite recent improvements by the Ba'th, the fruits of development programs, whether in higher productivity or in more equitable distribution of wealth, would have been greater with better management. This has been graphically illustrated by the mismanagement that plunged Iraq into a costly and fruitless war with Iran, a war that has undermined many of the gains mentioned above.

10

The Iran-Iraq War

In one sense the Iran-Iraq war that began in 1980 was simply the latest outbreak in an age-old struggle between the Persians and Arabs for domination of the Gulf and the rich Tigris and Euphrates Valley to its north. The conflict, initiated with the Arab Islamic conquest of Persia in the seventh century and pursued in various forms under various regional empires, continued right up to the twentieth century. In the 1970s, the conflict intensified with the rapid development of the oil industry, the flood of wealth into the area, and after 1971, the withdrawal of the British, who had kept a loose Pax Britannica in the area. The borders between the two countries, arranged for the most part by outsiders, have never been firmly accepted by either side. (Ṣaddām Ḥusayn regarded the 1975 treaty not as a definitive settlement, but merely as a truce.) Iraqi fear of Persian hegemony was, in their minds, based on gradual Iranian encroachment on "Arab" land, including the Arab territory of Khūzistān (formerly al-Muḥammarah) in 1925, the incorporation of the waters around Khurramshahr in 1937, and the 1975 treaty that gave Iran half of the Shaṭṭ al-‘Arab. Iraqis regarded their country as the "eastern gate" of the Arab world and themselves as its defenders.

Cultural differences have also divided the two peoples. Persians and Arabs have their own languages, literary traditions, and independent (though mutually intertwined) histories. The clash of identities between the two peoples is ancient, dating back at least as far as the Umayyad Empire, with its underlying conflict between the new Persian converts and their Arab overlords, and the succeeding struggle for power and influence between Persians and Arabs within the Abbasid Empire. To cultural differences must be added religious differences. Persia adopted the *shī‘ī* interpretation of Islam, with its veneration of ‘Alī and Ḥusayn, its strong religious hierarchy, and its obedience to mujtahids and Āyat Allahs. The Arab people are predominantly *sunnī*s, with their emphasis on the Quran and the religious law, dislike of intermediaries between man and God, and more democratic religious structure. The Iranian revolution brought these ideological differences into sharp focus, and Iranian attempts to spread the revolution to Iraq have intensified Iraqi distrust of Persian expansionism.

However, apart from the underlying tensions, the war was more immediately the result of poor political judgment and miscalculation on the part of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn. Despite smoldering hostilities between Iran and Iraq and clear provocations by the revolutionary regime in Iran, the situation could have been contained and Iraq's interests advanced by means other than outright war. The decision to invade, taken at a moment of Iranian weakness, was Ṣaddām's. In September 1980, the Iraqis entered the war with confidence and a sense of optimism, calculating that they would redress a balance of power they felt had been unfairly inflicted upon them by the last shah of Iran. Four years later, after severe human losses and a damaged economy, the balance of power and the borders were essentially what they had been at the war's start. By the end of 1984, the end of this debilitating war was not yet in sight, although there was some indication that it was abating in intensity. How did Iraq become enmeshed in this conflict? What effect have over four years of war had on the country and its people?

Causes of the War

Much emphasis has been placed on Iraq's desire to reverse the 1975 decision on the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab as the chief motive for going to war. However, a close examination of the sequence of events indicates that this was not the dominating factor. It was the other portion of the agreement—noninterference in the internal affairs of each country and a strict policing of the frontiers—that provided the real *causus belli.* Faced with a potential revival of Kurdish unrest in the north, plus the more serious possibility of a *shīʿī* uprising in the south in response to al-Khumaynī's call, the Iraqi regime felt no legal or moral obligation to uphold the territorial concessions. Events played into their hands as the Iranian revolution temporarily reversed the previous power situation. Rather than a strong Iran facing a weak and isolated Iraq, a strong Iraq appeared to face a weak and divided Iran. Ṣaddām Ḥusayn reasoned that Iraq would never have a more favorable opportunity to reverse the 1975 decision on the Shaṭṭ.

The impact of the Iranian revolution on Iraq was first felt in the north among the Kurds. In the wake of the revolution, Iran ceased to police its northern borders, allowing Iraqi Kurdish guerrillas to take refuge in Iran. In July 1979, Masʿūd and Idrīs al-Bārzānī crossed the frontier from Iran to Iraq with a number of KDP *pēshmerga*s, in open defiance of the 1975 agreement.[1] From then on, Kurdish activities escalated in the north, with the Iraqi KDP firmly supporting al-Khumaynī and urging the overthrow of the Baghdad government.[2] In retaliation, the Iraqi government revived its support for dissident Arab groups in Khūzistān, who were in open revolt against the Iranian government, making the point that if Iran did not observe the agreement in the north, Iraq would not observe it in the south.[3]

More serious than the Kurdish skirmishes, however, was Iran's open call for the spread of revolution to Iraq and the other Gulf states. Incipient *shī'ī* unrest was already apparent in Iraq, and this was now deliberately stirred up by the new Iranian government, particularly after the fall of Bāzārgān and the accession to power of more militant Islamic elements in November 1979. In June 1979, when Āyat Allah Bāqir al-Ṣadr came out in favor of al-Khumaynī in al-Najaf and people demonstrated their support, the Iraqi security forces had arrested al-Ṣadr. These events initiated a bitter media war between the two countries that gradually escalated the crisis. The campaign also became a personal test of wills between al-Khumaynī and Ṣaddām Ḥusayn. Al-Khumaynī, who had spent thirteen years in exile in al-Najaf, had no love for the man who had expelled him in 1978. Ṣaddām, for his part, regarded the militant Islamic leader as a mortal threat to his own revolutionary credentials. Behind the personal struggle was a clash of ideologies, with the Iraqis championing secular Arab nationalism and socialism and Iran preaching the revival of a militant Islam.

Throughout the fall and winter of 1979, relations between the two powers deteriorated. On 30 October 1979, Iraq denounced the 1975 agreement, calling for Iran's withdrawal from the islands at the foot of the Gulf previously occupied by the shah and demanding protection for Iran's minority groups. On 1 April 1980, the crisis reached a critical turning point in Baghdad. During a public gathering, a grenade was thrown at Ṭāriq 'Azīz, an RCC and regional command member widely regarded as Ṣaddām Ḥusayn's right-hand man. The explosion only wounded 'Azīz slightly but killed and wounded a number of students. This incident was followed by another bombing on 5 April, during a funeral procession for the victims. More deaths and injuries resulted. A third incident took place on 12 April, when someone tried to assassinate Laṭīf Nṣayyif Jāsim, the minister of culture and information. The Iraqis immediately rounded up members of the Da'wah Party and their supporters and deported thousands of *shī'ah* of Persian origin to Iran. The number deported was estimated in mid-April at 16,000, and by summer the total had reportedly reached 35,000.[4] That summer the regime tried and executed the Āyat Allah al-Ṣadr and his sister, accused of fomenting the troubles.[5]

To these internal struggles were added not one, but several border issues. At the time of the Iranian revolution a joint Iran-Iraq border commission had been mapping and marking the frontiers between the two countries. Their work was completed except for a strip of territory around Qaṣr-i Shīrīn, in the central part of the border strip where the 1975 agreement had provided for a rectification of the previous borders in Iraq's favor. This was to compensate Iraq for the rectification in Iran's favor on the Shaṭṭ. However, in the internal upheaval in Iran that followed the revolution, the border commission ceased its work before the promised rectification had been made. It was in this area, not on the Shaṭṭ, that border troubles began, as the Kurdish nationalists operating on both sides of the border made a mockery of the treaty's provisions.

On 4 September 1980, the border skirmishes escalated. Iranian armed forces used artillery to shell the Iraqi cities of Khānaqīn and Mandalī from the disputed border area of Zayn al-Qaws, inflicting heavy losses of life and property among civilians. When the shelling was repeated on 7 September, the Iraqis delivered a protest but received no reply. Iraq then occupied the Zayn al-Qaws district. On 17 September, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn officially abrogated the 1975 treaty and announced that the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab was returning to Iraqi sovereignty. Iran rejected this action, and the conflict shifted to the Shaṭṭ.[6]

On 19 September, the Iranian government began to use heavy artillery and planes to bombard residential areas and vital economic installations on the Iraqi side of the Shaṭṭ. The Iranians also attacked foreign merchant ships in the river. Three days later, the Iraqis carried the war to the heart of Iran, with a bombing mission over Tehran. On 23 September, they began their military advance into Iranian territory. Iraq continued to reiterate that it had no territorial aims on Iran beyond a restoration of the 1975 status quo ante and the return of the Gulf islands to the Arabs. Nevertheless, a paramount aim was clearly to end any Iranian hopes of exporting revolution to Iraqi soil, if possible by toppling the militant Islamic regime in Tehran and replacing it with a more amenable government.

The Course of the War

Far from achieving the quick victory that Ṣaddām Ḥusayn apparently anticipated, the war bogged down in a bitter and protracted struggle. By the summer of 1984, after more than three and a half years of fighting, the boundary situation, was basically unchanged; the armies were still in combat, and the animosity between the two countries was deeper than at any time since the founding of the Iraqi state.

Initially, the Iraqis had made rapid advances into Iranian territory, occupying Qaṣr-i Shīrīn, Mahrān, and Mūsiyān on the central front, and subjecting Dizfūl to severe bombardment. In the south, their forces crossed the Karūn River, advanced on Ābādān, and after a bitter battle involving house-to-house combat and enormous casualties on both sides, took Khurramshahr on 24 October. By that time, Iraq occupied a strip of Iranian territory 600 km (373 miles) long and varying in width from 10 km (6.2 miles) in the north to 40 km (25 miles) in the south. Meanwhile, the oil-producing centers of both countries had been bombarded, with varying degrees of damage. The Iranian refinery at Ābādān had been largely destroyed, along with many facilities at Bandar Khumaynī (formerly Bandar 'Abbās). An undetermined amount of destruction had been wreaked on Iraq's pumping stations in Kirkūk and Mosul and on the petrochemical complex at Basra. Oil exports from both countries were temporarily suspended, then resumed at reduced levels.

At this point the Iraqi offensive ceased, and their army assumed a defensive posture, evidently expecting Iranian concessions in exchange for the territory won by these military victories. Misinformed, the Iraqis may also have expected the collapse of the Iranian government. This proved to be a critical error. The Iraqis had failed to take Dizfūl, a city in the north of Iran's oil region, and a major transportation link between the Iranian capital and the south. This permitted the Iranians to resupply and reorganize their forces in the south. The Iraqis likewise failed to capture the key town of Ābādān and thus did not gain control of the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab—one of their main professed aims in the war.

The Iraqi failure to pursue the offensive when they had the opportunity was probably due to a mixture of motives. First and foremost was Ṣaddām Ḥusayn's reluctance to accept the high casualties that would surely have accompanied further advances, especially the close combat required to take Ābādān. At that point, the morale of the Iraqi fighting forces was an unknown factor. Many Iraqis, civilian as well as military, opposed the risks and sacrifices involved in pursuing a war for purposes that might better have been achieved by other means. Moreover, the bulk of the soldiers were *shī'ah*, who might be prone to defect. Many Iraqis felt that their country's military capacity should be held in readiness for Israel rather than depleted in an unproductive war with Iran.

Military capabilities also played a role. Iraq's capacity to sustain the long lines of communications that in-depth penetration of Iran would have demanded and to absorb the inevitable losses was questionable. Military analysts have also suggested that too much centralized control from Baghdad may have paralyzed the local commanders and contributed to Iraq's inability to advance and hold ground. Iraq's strategy may also have been influenced by Soviet military training, which is strong on defense, weak on offense.

Whatever the reasons for Iraq's military strategy, it is clear that Ḥusayn made a catastrophic mistake in underestimating Iran's resources. Despite massive casualties, morale in both the regular Iranian army and the irregular forces of the revolutionary guards was much higher than Iraqi morale. The Iranians put up an effective defense of Iranian territory, consolidated and reorganized their forces, and mounted a counteroffensive. Rather than weakening the Khumaynī regime, the Iraqi offensive provided the opportunity for more militant elements in Iran to gain control of the political system.

The Iranian counteroffensive began in May 1981 on the central and northern fronts, forcing Iraqi forces to pull back to Khurramshahr. Thereafter, using a fighting style reminiscent of the eighteenth century, Iranian forces made slow but sure progress. Although they suffered extensive casualties because of their lack of air cover (due to a shortage of spare parts and ammunition), the Iranian offensive was relentless. By October, the Iranians had pushed the Iraqis back across the Karūn River, and had started their march on Khurramshahr, which they retook in May 1982.

Putting the best face possible on these reversals, in June 1982 Ṣaddām Ḥusayn announced an Iraqi withdrawal to the international borders, claiming that Iraq's objective—destroying the Iranian military apparatus—had been achieved. He used the Israeli invasion of Lebanon as an additional justification. Few inside or outside Iraq were deceived. The withdrawal announcement failed to contain the Iranian advance as planned. The Iranians now attempted to carry the war to Iraqi territory, with the professed aim of toppling Ṣaddām Ḥusayn and his regime and supplanting it with an Islamic republic. Before long, it was apparent that Iran was merely repeating the mistake that Ṣaddām had made earlier. When fighting to defend their own soil (with the advantage of unquestioned air superiority), the Iraqi forces proved equal to the task.

The War of Attrition

During the summer of 1982, Iran made several major but unsuccessful attempts to take Basra and to cut the main Basra-Baghdad road. Holding well-entrenched positions, the Iraqis held back the Iranian attacks and inflicted heavy losses on their enemies. From then on, the ground war bogged down in a stalemate and the conflict became a war of attrition. Despite these setbacks, Iran continued to probe. Throughout 1983 and early 1984 new Iranian attacks were launched in several areas, using human waves of young irregulars, as well as up to four divisions of the regular army.[7] These included two attacks in Kurdistan, one at Ḥājj 'Umrān in July 1983, and another—which almost succeeded—at Banjwīn in October. In most of these assaults, the Iranians initially made costly local advances, only to lose most of the territory gained because of Iraqi attacks on Iranian troops with helicopter gunships and fighter aircraft. Iraqi forces also made raids deep in Iranian territory, resulting in civilian casualties and showing up the Iranian inability to provide air cover. Early in 1984, the Iranians finally achieved one minor success in the south, the capture of Majnūn, an artificial island created on the site of a recent oil find near al-Qurnah. Majnūn gave the Iranians their first substantial bargaining chip on the ground, and a possible future source of oil. In the summer of 1984, the Iraqis flooded the area, a marshy swampland, making it difficult for Iran to use the island for further advances. However, they failed to dislodge the Iranians.

It was during the battle for Majnūn, and in the face of evidence that the Iranians were massing half a million troops on the southern front for a "final offensive," that reports reached the outside world that the Iraqis were using a new weapon—gas. Reports were unclear on whether this was mustard gas, a blistering agent, or the more lethal nerve gas.[8] Although Iraq officially denied the use of gas, the evidence was strong enough to slow down the Iranians. Throughout the spring and summer of 1984, the "final offensive" was delayed until its credibility was widely questioned. Except for Majnūn and a few pockets of Iraqi territory, Iran had little to show for its efforts except high casualties. While Iranian troops faced a formidable Iraqi defensive line, which was protected by greatly superior air power, a debate ensued inside the Iranian regime over what strategy to follow.

The Economic War

Although Iraq was able to fight Iran to a standstill on the ground, the war of attrition was costly on other fronts. The destruction of Iraq's Gulf port facilities in November 1980 and the closure of its pipeline through Syria to the Mediterranean in April 1982 had drastically reduced Iraq's oil revenue and its financial capacity to wage war. By 1983, the war was costing Iraq ID 312.5 million ($1 billion) a month, and it was estimated that the Arab Gulf countries had contributed nearly ID 8 billion ($25 billion) to Iraq's war effort. Meanwhile, some of Iran's ports as well as most of its oil fields remained intact. In fact, Iran's oil exports increased in the course of the war from around 1 million b/d in 1981 to 2.7 million b/d in 1983.

For Iraq, the year 1983 marked a turning point in the war. After the severe reversal of 1982, the government made a massive effort to rectify its economic situation and to redress the military balance with Iran. These efforts were largely successful. In a major attempt to restore its finances, Iraq turned first to the Arab Gulf countries. These countries had been contributing to the Iraqi war effort, mainly because of a shared interest in containing the Iranian revolution, but with the downturn of the oil market in 1983—plus the fear of Iranian retaliation—contributions had declined. By appealing to Arab solidarity and the fear of an Iranian victory, the Iraqis managed to gain continued, though reduced, financial support from these countries. Iraq then turned to Europe, where it was able to arrange for credits and a rescheduling of its debts from European customers who did not want to lose future markets in Iraq. At home, the government introduced an austerity program, cutting back on expenditures. By slashing nonessential imports, obtaining new credits and loans, and deferring hard currency payments, by the end of 1983 Iraq had achieved a fragile economic equilibrium.[9]

At the same time, Iraq moved to improve its long-term oil export position by exploring a number of new pipeline schemes. The first of these, an expansion of the pipeline through Turkey, was projected to boost Iraq's exports to about 1 million b/d upon completion in 1984.[10] Iraq also received approval from Saudi Arabia for a proposed new line to the Red Sea. The first phase of this project, a linkup with the existing Saudi line to Yanbu', could be completed within a year, giving Iraq an additional 500,000 b/d. The second stage involved a separate pipeline parallel to the Saudi line, which would take several years to build and would add another 1.6 million b/d. A third line through Jordan with an outlet at 'Aqabah was also considered, as well as a new gas pipeline through Turkey to the Mediterranean. The former would be capable of transporting up to 1 million b/d; the latter would have a capacity of

2 million metric tons, allowing Iraq to export previously flared gas for the first time. By 1985 implementation on the Turkish expansion and the spur to the Saudi line had begun; the potential revenue they represented, plus the steady improvement of Iraq's financial situation, were positive indications of Iraq's ability to survive a long war of attrition.

Iraq's position was also bolstered by the acquisition of new armaments. In 1983, Iraq negotiated a loan of five French Super Etendard war planes, equipped with heat-seeking Exocet missiles and guidance facilities designed mainly for use against ships in the Gulf. More surprisingly, in 1983 Iraq also repaired its deteriorating relationship with the USSR and was resupplied with Soviet arms, including SS-12 missiles, whose range of 800 km opened up sensitive targets deep inside Iran. Although they had not yet been delivered by mid-1984, SS-21s were reportedly promised as well. Egypt supplied Iraq with spare parts for Soviet weapons as well as tanks and other equipment.

By the end of 1983, Iraq had also largely won the diplomatic struggle for world opinion, shifting the blame for the continuation of the war to Iran. Iraq accepted the mediation efforts of numerous peace missions that traveled to Baghdad and Tehran, but the Iranians would not agree to negotiate a peace that did not involve the removal of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn and the Ba'th. These terms were naturally unacceptable to Ṣaddām. At the same time, the Iranian regime's arrest and execution of Tūdah Party members early in 1983 alienated the Soviet Union and left Iran more isolated than ever. Even the United States made a slight tilt to Iraq, following a high-level visit to the United States by 'Ismat Kittānī, undersecretary for foreign affairs, in the late summer of 1983, and Special Middle East Envoy Donald Rumsfelt's trip to Iraq in December 1983. The United States subsequently put pressure on its allies and friends to stop supplying Iran with weapons, and approved the participation of U.S. companies in constructing the pipelines through Jordan and Saudi Arabia. At the end of November 1984, warmer U.S.-Iraqi relations culminated in the long-awaited restoration of full diplomatic relations between the two countries, severed since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Not all diplomatic efforts met with success, however. Saudi attempts to persuade Syria to open its pipeline to the Mediterranean failed, as did the efforts to stop international trade with Iran. By 1984, thanks to Iran's increased oil shipments, Japan, West Germany, and even Turkey were doing a large volume of business with Iran.

The Tanker War

By 1984, with the economy improving and with clear superiority in armaments and air power, Iraq attempted to break through the stalemate and force Iran to the negotiating table. Shifting the war from land to sea, Iraq began escalating its attacks on tankers bound for Iran's ports, and especially the Kharj (Kharg) Island terminal, in an effort to cut off

Iran's oil exports.[11] In November 1983, Iraq declared a 700-mile (1126 km) war zone extending from the mouth of the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab to Iran's port of Būshihr.[12] Iraq had been sinking vessels bound for Iranian ports for several years, but in March 1984 it began serious interdiction of Kharj Island traffic. In that month an Indian carrier was sunk, a British freighter grounded, and a Turkish tanker hit and abandoned. These attacks were followed by damage to Greek freighters on 27 and 29 March; to an Indian freighter on 3 April, a Panamanian tanker on 16 April, and two Saudi tankers on 25 April and 7 May.

By this time, Iraq's blockade was beginning to substantially affect Iran's oil revenues. Iran retaliated by attacking first a Kuwaiti oil tanker near Bahrain on 13 May and then a Saudi tanker in Saudi waters five days later, making it clear that if Iraq continued to interfere with its shipping, no Arab Gulf state would be safe.[13] By the end of May, the tanker war had escalated to the level of an international crisis. Iranian oil exports from Kharj Island had been cut in half, shipping in the Gulf had dropped 25 percent, and Lloyds' insurance rates on tankers had risen sharply, slowing Gulf oil supplies to the outside.

Reserve supplies of oil in the West and the general low level of Western demand mitigated the crisis. At the same time, U.S. military assistance to Saudi Arabia, and Saudi Arabi's firm retaliation in shooting down at least one Iranian plane in Saudi waters, put Iran on the defensive. By June of 1984 it was clear that the tide had turned, at least temporarily. Now it was Iran that stood to lose the war of attrition, not Iraq. Iran's oil exports were declining as the price of its oil was pushed up by high insurance rates; the bulk of its air force was grounded for lack of spare parts; and its army was suffering from shortages of equipment. The first indication of a softening of Iran's position came in June 1984, when both Iraq and Iran agreed to a UN-sponsored moratorium on the shelling of civilian targets. Iran later proposed an extension of the moratorium to include Gulf shipping, a proposal the Iraqis rejected unless it included their own Gulf ports. These moves were accompanied by reports of internal debate in Iran on the future conduct of the war, and the emergence of moderate leaders interested in negotiating.

Effects of the War

Although the end of the war was not yet in sight by early 1985, it was possible to assess at least its short-term effects on Iraq. Iraq's economy had been hurt, but the damage was by no means irreversible. Nor, despite serious casualties, had Iraq's morale been destroyed. On the contrary, the Iraqi state had shown itself to be stronger and more resilient than expected; indeed, the war had probably strengthened the Iraqis' sense of nationhood.

The most serious effect of the war was the human toll. By 1984, Iraq had, according to one estimate, suffered at least 65,000 killed, three to five times as many wounded, and some 50,000 to 60,000 soldiers taken prisoner of war.[14] Every extended Iraqi family had suffered some loss. Casualty figures were far higher than for any war fought by Iraqis since independence. So serious were the losses that by 1984, Iraq was calling up some seventeen-year-olds for service.

The Iraqi government attempted to cushion losses by tactical moves to spare lives at the front, relying on heavy artillery and operational aircraft to repel human wave attacks. A comparison with Iranian casualties indicates the relative success of these tactics in reducing losses. By 1984 Iran had lost up to 180,000 killed, three to five times as many wounded, and only 8,000 taken prisoner of war.[15] Meanwhile, the Iraqi government made generous payments and benefits available to bereaved families and widows.

Economic Costs

By mid-1984, the economic costs of the war were serious, but not devastating. The damage inflicted by that time could be repaired if the war ceased within a year or two. Much of the destruction was concentrated in the south; the center and north of the country was little affected. The damage to Iraq's physical plant occurred mostly during the first months, even weeks, of the war. The country's major oil terminals in the south—Mīnā'-l-Bakr and Khawr al-'Amayyah—were destroyed, making oil exports through the Gulf impossible. Damage to oil installations in the south was also extensive. The Basra refinery was severely affected, as were the two fertilizer plants in the area. The petrochemical plant at al-Zubayr, ready for commissioning when the war broke out, suffered only slightly, but it has been unable to operate since the war began. The same has been true of the iron and steel plants. The massive damage to power generation facilities was soon repaired, and the focus of a new petrochemical and industrial complex has taken shape in the north at Bayjī.

More important than physical destruction was the cutoff of oil exports. When the war began in September 1980, Iraq was producing 3.5 million b/d and bringing in export revenues of ID 7.8 billion ($26.2 billion). Despite substantial increases in imports, Iraq recorded an ID 4.1 billion ($14 billion) trade surplus in 1980. As a result, its reserves had risen from ID 2 billion (just under $7 billion) in 1977 to over ID 10 billion (an estimated $35 billion) in 1980. The shutdown of Iraqi ports, however, reduced oil exports to about 1 million b/d and then, in April 1982, when Syria closed the pipeline, to 650,000 b/d, the lowest since 1958. By 1983, when OPEC prices fell, Iraq's export revenues had been reduced to between ID 2 and 2.5 billion ($7–8 billion), about 20 percent of prewar levels.[16] For the first two years of the war, Iraq drew down its reserves at a rate of about ID 300 million ($1 billion) a month and then borrowed from the Arab Gulf states at an estimated rate of ID 3 billion ($10 billion) a year, putting it well into the red by 1983. By this time, Iraq's per capita income had been cut in half.

To add to these woes, the war created serious labor shortages as all available manpower was mobilized for the front. According to one report, factories, state organizations, and government offices had their work forces reduced by as much as 40 to 45 percent, although many of the men who left were replaced by women.[17] To ease the shortage Iraq imported foreign labor on a large scale, a practice it had previously kept to a minimum. Indians, Filipinos, and Koreans flooded the construction industry, while many critical positions in the bureaucracy were taken by Egyptians. Even menial jobs for unskilled workers fell into foreign hands.

However, it was not until 1983 that the full economic impact of the war was felt in Iraq. Until the fall of 1982, Iraq continued to expand its development program, hoping to shield the civilian population from the war's effects. A good example of wasted funds was the over ID 2 billion ($7 billion) spent to refurbish Baghdad in preparation for the nonaligned conference (which was canceled), including money invested in an elaborate state yacht that could not be delivered from Europe through Iraq's closed ports. By mid-1982, however, it was apparent that expenditures would have to be curtailed. An austerity program was begun in November 1982. Most government employee benefits were reduced; imports were pared down by 50 percent; and the development program was cut back. By 1983, only those projects capable of aiding the war effort or expanding Iraq's potential for increased oil production and export were receiving funds. Among the projects eliminated were a number of large-scale irrigation and reclamation works (except for the important Mosul Dam, due for completion in 1985), the Baghdad metro, the Mosul auto and truck plant, and several expressway and railway projects. The need to cut back on remittances also meant a sharp drop in foreign workers. By 1983, the number of Asian workers had fallen by 50 percent; the number of Egyptians, by 30.[18] This saved foreign exchange but exacerbated the labor shortage, and by 1984 Iraq was turning again to foreign companies to supply labor and management contracts.

In the meantime, the cuts had the desired effect. By the end of 1983, the Iraqis were able to stabilize their debt situation and even prepare for long-term improvements. In addition to exploring new pipeline projects (described earlier), Iraq also restored and expanded its refining capacity. In 1983, Iraq began exporting refined products to Turkey and Jordan. It also went ahead with a major refinery and petrochemical complex at Bayjī in the north. Plans were made to install single mooring buoys at the Gulf offshore terminals to enable Iraq to lift 700,000 b/d as soon as a cease-fire was declared.

Not all of the economic results of the war have been negative. The conflict also brought some potentially beneficial changes in economic policy, including a liberalization of the economy, an emphasis on productivity, and a reduction in doctrinaire socialist practices. The government has turned to the private sector to manage a larger share of the economy. In the 1984 budget, private sector allocations were increased 8 percent in industry, 105 percent in trade, and 181 percent in agriculture.[19]

The new policy was particularly apparent in agriculture. Public Law 35 of 1983 allowed private individuals and companies to lease large blocks of land from the state. In 1983, 300 such contracts were concluded.[20] Most contracts called for large-scale mechanized farming to achieve immediate increases in productivity. Ironically, it was the large-scale private mechanized farms, particularly in the northern Jazīrah area, that had been eliminated in the early years of the land reform. Wider private participation in industry, especially in the mixed sector, has also been encouraged. Even in the service area, the regime has come to rely increasingly on private companies and individuals. In health services, critical to the war effort, the government has turned to foreign hospital management companies, and also encouraged doctors with previous experience in the state sector to establish private hospitals, a clear departure from socialism.[21]

The scaling down of the development program to a more manageable size may also have long-term benefits. Instead of large, expensive plants, whose export markets were by no means guaranteed, emphasis has shifted to import substitution and the manufacture of consumer goods that can provide Iraq with a greater measure of self-sufficiency.[22] Priority has been placed on finishing existing projects and improving the productivity of existing plant and human resources, a long overdue adjustment. Less beneficial was the shift of industry from the south of the country, where it had benefited the *shīʿī* population and helped integrate the Basra region into the national economy, to the northern region around Tikrīt, where it strengthens the already dominant Arab *sunnī* minority.

Social Repercussions

In the social realm, the most important repercussions of the war by 1984 were the toll in casualties and the fear of more to come. The drafting of young men from school and from work had become increasingly unpopular, and the loss of young lives had weakened support for a regime that had gotten the country into an unwinnable war from which it had so far been unable to extricate itself. After the casualties, the labor shortage was most acutely felt. Interestingly, the manpower drain has had one unforeseen consequence: It spurred the integration of women into the work force. A plan to employ more than 1 million women as unskilled workers in both the state and private sectors was prepared by the General Union of Iraqi Women. Significantly, only women who had completed the literacy course were eligible, a restriction designed to enhance female literacy. It was expected that by 1985 the female share of the industrial labor force would rise from 19 to 28 percent.[23]

On the negative side, the slowdown in development, cutbacks in imports, and the resulting inflation has bit deeply into the newly acquired prosperity of the middle class and impaired the social mobility on which the regime has based so much of its legitimacy. Many have been forced or pressured to give up savings for the war effort in a well-publicized campaign for gold contributions in 1982. These hardships have been endured by the Iraqi population for the past four years, but a long war of attrition, or even a military stalemate requiring full-scale mobilization and a diversion of resources, will gradually erode the social cohesion and progress achieved over the last decade.

Political Effects

These economic and social repercussions have naturally spilled over into the political arena, raising questions about support for the regime and Ṣaddām Ḥusayn. Ṣaddām's fortunes shifted with the war. His popularity was initially high, but the early reverses of the Iraqi army and its retreat to its own borders in 1982 unquestionably eroded loyalty to the regime. Much discontent was focused on Ṣaddām himself, and the highly personal role he had played in initiating the conflict. Iraqis have grown to resent his personality cult, especially in view of the sacrifices made by ordinary citizens.

Information on opposition to Ṣaddām is difficult to obtain, but substantial evidence exists of several attempts to remove him by both insiders and outsiders. The most serious occurred in 1982, after the military retreat from Iran and the deterioration of the economy. On 11 July 1982 a serious and well-organized assassination attempt took place in al-Dujayl, a mixed *shīʿī-sunnī* village about forty miles northeast of Baghdad, apparently led by *shīʿī* opposition forces.[24] The presidential party was reportedly pinned down for several hours and had to be rescued by the army. A number of Ṣaddām's bodyguards were killed, as were the assassins.[25] The villagers were subsequently deported and their houses razed.

Whether in response to these events or in general recognition that his base of support needed broadening, Ṣaddām moved to strengthen his position at the top of the party and at the same time, to propitiate the *shīʿī* opposition. In June 1982, as described in Chapter 9, Ṣaddām called a party congress to elect a new regional command. Seven regional command members were retired, possibly for their lukewarm support of his leadership and the conduct of the war, and of the seven new command members, a majority were *shīʿī*.[26] When added to the *shīʿah* already on the command, this gave the *shīʿah* a plurality, perhaps a majority, for the first time since 1968. The new members were also drawn from a wider geographic base than their predecessors and included members from Karbalāʾ and al-Najaf. More importantly, all were long-standing party stalwarts personally loyal to Ṣaddām. However, by 1985 these regional command members had not yet become members of the RCC, where most important decisions were made. These maneuvers strengthened Ṣaddām's position within the party and indicated that dissent would be swiftly dealt with.

Ṣaddām also attempted to bolster his position by a new alliance system. He revived the national front scheme, a tactic he had used successfully in the early 1970s when faced with a similar threat from the Kurds and Iran. In an attempt to woo the left, a number of Communists were let out of prison, but the Communist Party seemed unwilling to join any front. Ṣaddām's conciliatory attitude did help to pave the way for renewed cooperation with the Soviet Union.[27] Ṣaddām had more success with the Kurds. Jalāl al-Ṭālabānī and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan agreed to cease battle and join forces with the Ba'th. The first stages of the truce were carried out in January 1984, and al-Ṭālabānī's troops fought on the government side; but by 1985 relations between al-Ṭālabānī and the central government had cooled, and little was heard of the agreement.

These measures bolstered Ṣaddām's position, but they did not end opposition to his rule. Sporadic, but unsuccessful, attempts were made on his life, and various government installations were also attacked. Purges, dismissals, and even executions of party members and army officers pointed to continued dissatisfaction from within. In October 1983, for example, amidst news of another attempted coup, the president's brother-in-law and a number of senior army officers were reportedly executed.[28] Several senior officers were dismissed for alleged incompetence in the war, a move that may have improved army performance at the front, but also left lasting resentment in the army toward Ṣaddām.

Shortly after the rumored coup attempt, Ṣaddām's half-brother, Bārzān, was removed as head of intelligence, along with two other half-brothers: Waṭbān, governor of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Province, and Sab'āwī, deputy police chief. All three were placed under house arrest. The reason given was a family squabble over the marriage of one of Ṣaddām's daughters, but the move may also have reflected Ṣaddām's dissatisfaction with their inability to detect the coup—or worse, their own questionable loyalty. In any event, Bārzān had been criticized for his harsh security measures and for using his public position for personal interests, and his dismissal was not unpopular.[29] Ṣaddām's handling of these episodes shows the strength of his hold over the government. The war provided the justification for continued, indeed intensified, repression, extending even to the president's own family. Ṣaddām tightened the grip of the security mechanism in an attempt to root out all domestic opposition, inside and outside the party.

The repression was accompanied by a public relations campaign emphasizing Iraq's desire for peace and placing the onus for continuing the war on Iran's leadership. The Arab nationalist and secular progressive identity of the regime was also stressed. These themes apparently struck enough of a chord among the population to ensure their loyalty, if not their enthusiastic support for the war. Ṣaddām was thus able to ride out the worst of the crisis. By 1984, with prospects for some financial relief on the horizon, he was again seen in public, sounding an optimistic note. Iraqi morale had improved, and so had Ṣaddām's image. It was apparent that unseating him from inside or outside the party would be very difficult.

Foreign Policy

The war also affected the regime's regional and international position. Its foreign policy shifted by necessity in a more moderate and pragmatic direction. The first casualty of the conflict was Ṣaddām's ambition to assume a leadership role in the region and in the nonaligned movement. Owing to the war, the locus of the nonaligned conference of September 1982 was changed from Baghdad to New Delhi, despite the elaborate plans and expenditure to prepare Baghdad for the event. Instead of Ṣaddām Husayn, India's Indira Gandhi assumed the leadership of the nonaligned world for the next four years. The war also ended Ṣaddām's aspirations to play a dominant role in the Gulf and the Arab world. On the contrary, the destruction of Iraq's southern port facilities and its reduced income made Iraq heavily dependent financially and politically on the conservative Gulf states that were financing its war effort. What was begun as a policy of cooperation now became an economic necessity.

The war caused Iraq to tilt toward the West and its supporters in the Middle East. This was most striking in the case of Egypt. Iraq had taken the lead in ostracizing Egypt for its peace treaty with Israel, but war needs soon brought the two countries together. Contacts between Egypt and Iraq accelerated; Egyptian munitions, tanks, and volunteers played a role in sustaining the Iraqi war machine; and munitions factories in Egypt were revived to turn out spare sparts for Iraq's Soviet-supplied arsenal.[30] In return, Iraq helped smooth the way for Egypt's reintegration into the Arab world. Vice Prime Minister Ṭaha Ramaḍān (al-Jazrāwī) stated publicly early in 1984 that "Iraq—government and party—consider Egypt's return to the Arab nation as a primary pan-Arab objective and regard its relationship to israel as an internal affair."[31]

Likewise, Iraq became more dependent on Turkey, a pillar of NATO, not only because Turkey provided the sole outlet for its oil during much of the war but also because the Turks were policing the Kurds along Iraq's northern frontier while Iraq's troops were engaged with Iran.[32] Relations with Jordan, another pro-Western country, were also greatly strengthened. Jordan provided routes to 'Aqabah on the Red Sea over which 500,000 b/d of oil were transported in 1983, and also supplied Iraq with tanks and military volunteers. As relations with pro-Western neighbors improved, Iraqi-Syrian relations deteriorated to the lowest point in years. Despite blandishments and pressure from Saudi Arabia (which was still supplying Syria with funds for its effort in Lebanon), Syria refused to open its pipeline and continued its collaboration with Iran, an act viewed in Baghdad as little short of treason to the Arab cause.

Iraq even moderated its stand on the Palestine issue, participating in the Arab League summit conference of September 1982, which tacitly recognized Israel's right to exist in return for the creation of a West Bank Palestinian state. Ṣaddām Ḥusayn went even further, stating that a condition of security for Israel was necessary for a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This unprecedented statement was followed by a declaration by Foreign Minister Ṭāriq 'Azīz, that Iraq was "not opposed to a peaceful settlement of the problem, and therefore negotiations with Israel."[33] Iraq also strengthened its ties with Western European countries, especially France, on which it relied for much of its armaments, including Mirages and the loan of the Super Etendards. By 1983, Iraq was so deeply in debt to France that French financial circles worried about repayment problems, but the French government nevertheless decided to continue its support and its credits.

Above all, Iraq drew closer to the United States as its difficulties with Iran and its need for superpower support increased. In a sharp reversal of its previous position, by 1984 the Iraqi government was actively seeking great power intervention in the conflict to bring pressure to bear on Iran. By December 1983, relations with the United States had warmed sufficiently to allow a visit to Baghdad by U.S. Special Middle East Envoy Donald Rumsfelt, the highest ranking official to appear in Baghdad since diplomatic relations were severed in 1967. Although a sour note was struck in May 1984, when the U.S. government condemned Iraq for using chemical weapons in the war,[34] this did not prevent a renewal of diplomatic relations with the United States on 26 November.

Despite these trends, there were limits to the shift to the West. In November 1983, the Soviet Union abandoned its flirtation with Iran and turned again to Iraq. Iraq received a transfusion of new Soviet equipment and spare parts. The two countries also signed a new accord calling for increased cooperation on development schemes, including a nuclear power station to be used for development purposes.[35]

The Opposition

Despite Ṣaddām's success in surmounting various crises, the war provided opposition groups with an opportunity to engage in activity against the regime and to seek support from abroad. Within Iraq, the security apparatus kept the opposition underground, but it was not entirelv cowed, as the sporadic bombings and assassination attempts indicated. Most groups operated from headquarters in Syria, Iran, or Europe. However, the opposition groups posed little threat to the regime as of 1984, because of their obvious foreign support and because they appealed to very different constituencies. Their mutually exclusive ideologies precluded close cooperation.

Among the secular groups, the most important were the Communists, several Kurdish organizations, and a pro-Syrian Ba'th splinter party led by Ḥasan al-Naqīb, a former army colonel. In November 1980, shortly after the start of the war, a number of these groups formed a front, with a program calling for closer links with revolutionary Iran, the establishment of a democratic state in Iraq, self-rule for the Kurds, closer ties with the Soviet Union, and more support for an independent Palestinian state.[36] This program was announced in Damascus, clearly indicating the political orientation of the group. The door was left open for Islamic groups to join, but none did so. The split was too wide between those seeking to replace the Ba'th with a more democratic, secular state, oriented toward Arab union and Kurdish rights, and the religiously oriented *shī'ah*, who were inspired by Iran and sought a theocracy on the Iranian model. The secular groups were a nuisance to the central government, but they could not offer a real alternative to the Ba'th. More worrisome were the activities of the two traditional opponents of the regime, the Kurds and the theocratically oriented *shī'ah*, both supported by Iran.

The Kurds. The most serious danger was posed by the continued armed opposition of the KDP, led by the Bārzānī brothers, and by their active military alliance with Iran. The climax of their efforts was the joint Iranian-Kurdish attack on Banjwīn in October and November 1983, designed to establish a foothold for a pro-Iranian Kurdish regime, which could then extend its influence throughout the mountain region. Had the attempt succeeded, it would have represented a serious penetration of the Iraqi border.

The renewed KDP-Iranian alliance prompted the Ba'th regime to take political measures to neutralize the KDP. Ṣaddām Ḥusayn turned to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and Jalāl al-Ṭālabānī. By January 1984, there were reports of negotiations for an agreement between the two parties providing for more thoroughgoing Kurdish autonomy in the north. Under discussion were new and free elections to the Kurdish legislative and executive councils and a larger share of the budget, amounting to 25 to 30 percent of the total. The PUK militia was to be transformed into an army and allowed light and heavy arms to defend the north against foreign enemies. Al-Ṭālabānī apparently demanded that the autonomous zone be expanded to include the oil-producing areas of Kirkūk and Khānaqīn, adjacent to the Iranian border, a concession the government had steadfastly refused to make under previous agreements.[37] In return for some concessions to al-Ṭālabānī, the regime hoped to get seasoned fighters to use against the Iranians, and by extension against the KDP, thus neutralizing the KDP-Iranian alliance. An unspoken understanding with al-Ṭālabānī allowed for the expansion of his influence and authority in the autonomous zone, at the expense of the KDP.[38]

These measures helped shift the balance of power in the north in favor of the Iraqi central government. They sapped the power of the Iranian offensive and the KDP threat. However, by 1985 relations between al-Ṭālabānī and the central government had cooled. It was unclear whether an agreement had actually been concluded, and—if it had—whether it would survive the crisis. A renewed Iranian attack in the north might revive negotiations, in which case the terms given al-Ṭālabānī would reflect the degree of danger felt by the regime in the north.

The Shīʿah. Although the Kurds were the most active opposition group, *shīʿī* dissidence worried the regime the most. A variety of *shīʿī* groups, including al-Daʿwah, continued their underground activity throughout the war, despite severe persecution by the regime. Membership in these groups was punishable by death, a fate met by an estimated 600 members by 1984. A number of spectacular acts of violence called attention to the *shīʿī* revolutionary cause.

Meanwhile, the mullās in Tehran took the initiative in assembling a new group, led by the Ḥakīms. In the fall of 1982, they formed the High Council of the Islamic Revolution, headed by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ḥakīm and headquartered in Tehran. His brother, Mahdī-l-Ḥakīm, headed a European-based opposition group; inside Iraq, a third brother, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Ḥakīm, led an armed faction. In 1983, after the High Council decided to constitute itself as a government in exile, the Baʿth regime arrested about eighty members of the family still in Iraq, and in May 1983 executed six, all *shīʿī* religious leaders in good standing, as a warning to the rest of the family.[39] A month earlier, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn had attempted to allay the fears of other *shīʿī* leaders by inviting them to a conference on Islam. Although most came, the highly regarded Āyat Allah al-Khūʾī, the acknowledged leader of the *shīʿah* in Iraq, did not.

Despite their potential for disruption, the militant *shīʿī* opposition suffered from many of the same weaknesses as their secular counterparts. The High Council was regarded with suspicion by many Iraqi opposition groups because of its Iranian connection. Many *shīʿah* who opposed Ṣaddām and the Baʿth had no desire to be liberated by Tehran, or incorporated into a new Persian empire. Within Iraq, the *shīʿī* groups also disagreed on alliances. Those supported by Iran wanted a purely religious movement, whereas others favored cooperation with secular groups, such as the KDP and the Communists.[40] Meanwhile, Iran claimed to be training the 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war, the bulk of them *shīʿī* foot soldiers, as a potential fifth column to activate a *shīʿī* revolution after their return to Iraq.

In dealing with *shīʿī* opposition, potential and actual, Ṣaddām used his usual carrot-and-stick policy. He combined severe repression—including imprisonment and execution of members of clandestine organizations and their families, plus tight surveillance of mosques, coffee shops, and public places in al-Najaf, Karbalāʾ, and other holy cities—with generous public funding of housing projects, hospitals, playgrounds, water and sewage works, electricity, and even the improvement and embellishment of mosques in these same cities.[41] Meanwhile, the stress on Arab nationalism reminded the Iraqi *shīʿah* of their own Arab identity, and played on their traditional dislike and fear of Persian hegemony. After nearly four years of war, a genuine antipathy, if not hatred, of Iran and Iranians was taking hold in Iraq, bound to outlast the conflict itself. Thus, though the war was increasingly unpopular, particularly among the *shīʿāh*, there were no large-scale military defections (although there were some) nor other evidence of any great desire by the populace to follow in Iran's footsteps. Meanwhile, among many Iraqis, *shīʿī* and *sunnī*, a more genuine national identity was taking shape.

Iraq's Future

The end of the war with Iran, the longest official war fought by any Arab state in the twentieth century, was not yet in sight as it closed its fourth year, although there were signs that Iran was tiring. However, the likely outcome of the war, as well as the shape of Iraq's future, was becoming clearer. The physical damage to Iraq—to its human resources, its economy, and its social fabric—had been severe and sobering, but by no means permanently crippling. The Iraqi economy could be revived, probably within a short period of time following a cease-fire, providing no further damage were done. Despite its earlier reverses, Iraq's army and population had survived the onslaught of a country with three times its population and with greater potential resources, although Iran's military machine had been badly crippled by the revolution. Iraq's resilience and its success in holding the eastern front strengthened its sense of pride, and appeared to vindicate its policy of progressive nationalism.

The greatest change wrought by the war was the decline in Iraq's financial independence and its maneuverability in foreign policy. How much of this dependence on other powers would remain was contingent on the length and the outcome of the war. Should genuine peace ensue, allowing Iraq's Gulf ports to reopen, Iraq could soon regain considerable freedom of action. A continued closure of its ports, however, would soon result in the construction of the proposed network of new pipelines designed to circumvent the Gulf. Although this move would revive the economy, it would also permanently alter Iraq's regional position, making it more thoroughly dependent on its neighbors, and necessitate a foreign policy shift in a more moderate, pro-Western direction. The war has clearly shown the limitations of Iraq's power and demonstrated the dominance of geography over ideology and personal ambition. Iraq's small Gulf shoreline, its vulnerable port facilities, and its increased dependence on oil have in large measure made it hostage to its neighbors.

Internally, the war has resulted in less change than might have been expected. After four years of war, the Baʿth Party mechanism was still intact, the security system stronger than ever, and Ṣaddām Ḥusayn still entrenched in power. Indeed, the war had strengthened his position by suppressing opposition and creating Iraqi pride in having withstood the Iranian attacks. There was little reason to believe that the war's end would substantially change this situation. After the cessation of hostilities, Iraq's economy and society will need rebuilding. This might well entail some concessions to both the Kurds—especially the PUK—and the *shīʿah* who had remained loyal to Iraq despite intense propaganda from Iran, but it is unlikely that these concessions would be substantial. The policy of moderate and pragmatic nationalism and cooperation with Arab neighbors evolved during the war would probably continue. Meanwhile, Ṣaddām could be expected to return to his successful formula of social mobility, economic growth, and a relatively egalitarian distribution of the benefits of development to support his centralized rule and to substitute for political freedoms.

However, it is also possible that Iraq might face an extended, if sporadic, war of attrition, continuing as long as Ṣaddām's arch rival, al-Khumaynī, wields power in Iran and chooses to prolong the conflict. This would make Iraq's future less certain. The costs would be high for Iraq, for Iran, and for the other Gulf states as well. Iran is unlikely to decisively defeat Iraq or topple its government, but Iranian forces could make inroads into Iraqi territory, forcing Iraq to divert substantial human and economic resources to the war effort. Over an extended period of time, this would sap Iraqi morale and strength and undo most of the gains of the Ba'th era. The long-term consequences for the economy would be severe. Much of the capital stock in industry and agriculture, so carefully accumulated over the past decade in the form of factories and irrigation works, might be lost for lack of spare parts, maintenance, and labor. The longer the war lasts, the more difficult it will be to start up the large-scale iron, steel, and petrochemical plants designed to fuel the industrial economy. Even more important would be the loss in skills, as Iraq's ambitious education and literacy programs were put on hold and the country's active manpower sent to the front. A continuing slowdown in the education program would mean a chronic shortage of skilled labor and a decline in the literacy rate, one of the showpieces of Iraq's development program.

A war of attrition might also gradually erode the fabric of state, which has thus far held up well. Real, rather than paper, concessions would have to be made to the Kurds, and *shī'i* disaffection might grow and spread. Increased opposition to the war and the leadership would generate additional repressive measures, which would in turn lead to more opposition. Under these circumstances, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn might be removed by assassination, coup, or even party action. Should Ṣaddām go, the future of the party would also be put into question. Despite the high degree of institutionalization achieved by the Ba'th Party, it has little popularity at the grass-roots level.

The future of the regime hinges on Ṣaddām. If he were removed, Iraq's future policy and direction would depend on whether his replacement were another Ba'thist, a military leader, or a civilian with a different orientation. It seems unlikely that Iraq's secular government would be replaced by a religious theocracy on the Iranian model, first because secular Arab nationalism appears to have struck roots, and second because the ethnic, religious, and cultural fragmentation of Iraq's population would make *shīʿi* hegemony almost impossible to impose. The most likely outcome of a change of government would be a period of political instability, a struggle for power, and the kind of drift and economic stagnation that accompanied the military rule of the 1960s. Whatever the outcome, the war has made it clearer than ever that political management remains the key to Iraq's progress.

Still, by the end of 1984, Iraqis could, for the first time in four years, face their future with a reasonable degree of confidence. The expenditures on development early in the war, especially those in Baghdad, were bearing fruit in visible improvements in housing, public buildings, and other projects. The end of the financial crisis was in sight as the pipeline projects gradually moved toward implementation. Iraq's considerable resources, human and economic, had not been so well developed since the inception of the state, and the infrastructure created in the last three decades had stood the country in good stead in its war effort. Even on the more intangible cultural level, the majority of Iraqis had appeared to agree with the progressive nationalist ideology of the Baʿth as long as it was primarily centered on Iraq.

Notes

Chapter 1

1. For convenience, the term Iraq will be used throughout the book to designate the territory constituting the modern state, even in periods prior to the twentieth century when the state did not exist as such. Before 1920, parts of the country were known by various names. The most common was Mesopotamia, which in ancient times included the two river valleys. The early Muslim Arabs called the southern delta lands al-‘Irāq and the northern portion al-Jazīrah. By the twentieth century, Europeans were again using the term Mesopotamia in its ancient sense as the lands between the two rivers. The country was named Iraq only when it became a state in the twentieth century.

2. Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Pocketbook 1982* (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), p. 11.

3. Because of the dispute between Iran and the Arab countries over the name of the Persian/Arab Gulf, it will be referred to throughout this work as the Gulf.

4. Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1944), pp. 1–3.

5. *Middle East Economic Survey* (*MEES*) 24 (23 February 1981), Annex, p. i, from Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), *Seventh Annual Statistical Report, 1978–1979*. A Rand study done in 1975 gave a minimal estimate of 40 million barrels and a likely estimate of 70 million.

6. *MEES* 24 (6 April 1981):5.

7. The population figures on the Kurds vary widely depending on the source. This estimate is taken from R. I. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population Patterns," *Populations of the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. J. I. Clarke and W. F. Fisher (London: University of London Press, 1972), p. 103.

8. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago, Ill.: Benton, 1973) 13:515. Kurdish nationalists claim a higher figure of 10 to 12 million Kurds, difficult to substantiate in the absence of censuses enumerating Kurds in countries other than Iraq. Ibid.

9. Great Britain, India Office, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920), p. 29.

10. The *shī‘ah* are estimated to constitute about 55 percent of the population. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," p. 101.

11. Ibid., p. 102.

12. Ibid., p. 103.

13. Richard Nyrop, ed., *Iraq: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1979), p. 67.

14. Ibid., p. 63. The figures on the Persian-speaking population vary. Hanna Batatu estimated them at 1.2 percent of the population in 1947. Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba'thists, and Free Officers* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 40. Lawless placed the number of Iranians with Iranian passports in 1968 at about 23,000 (Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," p. 103), but this did not include the much larger group of resident Iraqis who were Persian speakers of Persian origin.

15. The Lurs speak a dialect of Persian that some consider a separate language. Bruce Ingham, "Languages of the Persian Gulf," in Alvin J. Cottrell, ed., *The Persian Gulf States* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p. 329. Others consider the Lur dialect as a variant of Kurdish. However, because of dialectical and tribal ties they have developed sufficient ethnic identity to warrant considering them as a separate group.

16. Lawless estimated the non-Muslim population at about 5 percent in 1972. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," pp. 101, 107. Nyrop gave a similar figure for 1977, and estimated the Christian element at 3.2 percent. Nyrop, *Iraq*, p. 67. The Christian population in 1981 was estimated at about 4 percent [*Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago, Ill.: Benton, 1981) 9:876].

17. Foreign Area Studies, *Area Handbook for Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 66.

18. Ibid., p. 64.

19. Ibid.

20. The Kurds consider the Yazīdīs to be Kurds speaking a Kurdish dialect.

21. Stephen Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 22.

22. Memorandum by King Fayṣal, cited in 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Ta'rīkh al-Wizārāt al-'Irāqiyyah* [The History of Iraqi Cabinets] (Sidon: Maṭba'at al-'Irfān, 1953–1967) 3:287.

23. Great Britain, Colonial Office, *The Arab of Mesopotamia* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1916), p. 4.

24. Great Britain, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf*, pp. 353–354.

25. Great Britain, *Civil Administration*, p. 29.

26. Georges Roux, *Ancient Iraq* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1964), pp. 50–51.

27. Ibid., pp. 111–118.

28. Ibid., pp. 302–305.

29. Ibid., p. 134.

30. Ibid., p. 347.

31. Robert McC. Adams, *Land Behind Baghdad* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 82.

32. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī, "Baghdad," in *Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1960), p. 925.

33. Adams, *Land Behind Baghdad*, p. 107.

34. Al-Dūrī, "Baghdad," p. 904.

35. Great Britain, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf*, pp. 261–263.

36. Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Beirut: Lebanon Bookstore, 1968 reprint of Oxford University Press 1925 original), pp. 123–124.

37. Al-Dūrī, "Baghdad," p. 906.

38. Ibid., p. 905.

39. Longrigg, *Four Centuries*, p. 266.

40. Sāṭi‘-l-Ḥuṣrī, *Mudhakkirātī fi-l-‘Irāq* [My Memoirs in Iraq] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah, 1967) 1:116.

41. Great Britain, *Civil Administration,* p. 54.

42. Charles Issawi, ed., *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800–1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 164. See also Albertine Jwaideh, "Midhat Pasha and the Land System of Lower Iraq," in Albert Hourani, ed., *Middle Eastern Affairs,* St. Anthony's Papers, no. 16 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1963), p. 131.

43. Issawi, *Economic History,* p. 131.

44. Ernest Dowson, *An Inquiry into Land Tenure and Related Questions* (Letchworth, Eng.: Garden City Press, 1932), p. 29.

45. Issawi, *Economic History,* p. 132.

46. M. S. Hasan, "Growth and Structure of Iraq's Population, 1867–1947," in Ibid., p. 155.

47. Ibid., p. 157.

48. H. Peres, "al-Alusi," in *Encyclopedia of Islam* 1:425.

49. ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Hilālī, *Ta'rīkh al-Ta‘līm fi-l-‘Irāq fi-l-Ahd al-‘Uthmānī, 1638–1917* [The History of Education in Iraq in the Ottoman Era, 1638–1917] (Baghdad: National Printing and Publishing Company, 1959), pp. 159–160.

50. ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Qaysī, *The Impact of Modernization on Iraqi Society During the Ottoman Era* (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1958), pp. 108–109.

51. ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Ta'rīkh al-Ṣiḥāfah-l-‘Irāqiyyah* [A History of the Iraqi Press] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-Zahrā', 1957), p. 2. A list of the journals is given on pp. 25–30; of the newspapers on pp. 49–61.

52. ‘Abbās al-‘Azzāwī, *Ta'rīkh al-‘Irāq bayn Iḥtilālayn* [The History of Iraq Between Two Occupations] (Baghdad: Sharikat al-Tijārah wa-l-Ṭibā‘ah, 1956) 8:165–168.

53. ‘Alī Jawdat, *Dhikrayātī* [My Memories] (Beirut: Maṭba‘at al-Wafā', 1968), pp. 20–21.

Chapter 2

1. Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq, 1914–1932* (London: Ithaca Press, 1976), pp. 231–258.

2. Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Administrative Report, Baghdad, 1917,* cited in Philip Ireland, *Iraq: A Study in Political Development* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), p. 147.

3. Al-Muntafiq was a province. Under the mandate, Iraq was divided into sixteen *liwā*'s, or provinces. In 1969 several new provinces were created and names of others changed. The earlier names of the provinces will be used in this book for the period before 1969; thereafter the new names will be used with the older names indicated in parentheses to avoid confusion. Map 2.1 gives the names of the provinces in 1984.

4. Stephen Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 112, and ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *al-Thawrah-l-‘Irāqiyyah-l-Kubrā* [The Great Iraqi Revolt] (Sidon: Maṭba‘at al-‘Irfān, 1952), pp. 124–170.

5. Ireland, *Iraq,* p. 273; Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950,* p. 123.

6. For the treaty see ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Ta'rīkh al-Wizārāt al-‘Irāqiyyah* [The History of Iraqi Cabinets] (Sidon: Maṭba‘at al-‘Irfān, 1953–1967) 1:94–98; for the agreements, see 1:223–258.

7. Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Special Report on the Progress of Iraq, 1920–1931* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1932), pp. 289–292.

8. For the constitution, see al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 1:259–275.

9. The electoral law is to be found in Iraq, Ministry of Justice, *Compilation of Laws and Regulations, January 1, 1924–December 31, 1925* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1926).

10. Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1944), p. 390.

11. British reports of the period make clear just how tenuous the British position was in the north; for example, Sir Reader Bullard, 10 February 1922, CO 730/19/1922.

12. C. J. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks and Arabs* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 300–353, 380–384.

13. Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq*, pp. 103–104, 114.

14. Edith Penrose and E. F. Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978), pp. 60–69.

15. Two members of the cabinet resigned over this issue. For the Iraqi debate over the issue of 20 percent participation, see al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 1:209–210.

16. Stephen Longrigg, *Oil in the Middle East* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 65–70.

17. The first strike in commercial quantities was made at Nafṭ Khānah in 1923, but it was made by the Khānaqīn Oil Company, a subsidiary of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. This concession was relinquished to the Iraqi government in 1958. Keith McLachlan, "Oil in the Persian Gulf Area," in Alvin J. Cottrell, ed., *The Persian Gulf States* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p. 200.

18. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, p. 139.

19. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks and Arabs*, p. 431.

20. It is not generally realized how close Fayṣal came to losing his throne or the extent to which he forced on the British a reevaluation of their policy in Iraq. A fascinating series of cables in 1922 shows their disappointment in Fayṣal and reveals much about their own assumptions in placing him on the throne. Writing as early as April 1922, Cox complained that Fayṣal had "displayed the cloven hoof"; by July he was calling his tactics crooked and insincere. By August the two were on the verge of a rupture, and Cox wrote a cable expressing his complete disillusion with Fayṣal. So serious was the situation that Churchill even contemplated a change of policy with the possible exile of Fayṣal himself. Cox to Shuckburgh, 28 April 1922, CO 730/21/1922; Cox to Churchill, 29 July 1922, CO 730/23/1922; Cox to Churchill, 27 August 1922, CO 730/24/1922; Churchill to Cox, 25 August 1922, CO 730/24/25.

21. Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950,* p. 129.

22. Iraq, *Majmū'at Mudhākkirāt al-Majlis al-Ta'sīsī-l-'Irāqī* [Compilation of the Proceedings of the Iraqi Constituent Assembly] (Baghdad: Dār al-Salām, 1924) 1:22, 23, 48, 52, 57, 252; 2:1027.

23. Ibid., 2:659, 754, 1303, 1144.

24. Ibid., 2:793.

25. Tawfīq al-Suwaydī, *Wujūh 'Irāqiyyah 'Abr al-Ta'rīkh* [Iraqi Figures Through History] (Beirut, 1967, typescript), pp. 6–8.

26. Khayrī-l-'Umarī, *Shakhsiyyāt 'Irāqiyyah* [Iraqi Personalities] (Baghdad: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1955), pp. 49–57.

27. Lord Birdwood, *Nuri as-Said* (London: Cassell, 1959), pp. 18, 24.

28. Ernest Dowson, *An Inquiry into Land Tenure and Related Questions* (Letchworth, Eng.: Garden City Press, 1932), p. 29.

29. Hilton Young, *Report on Economic Conditions and Policy and Loan Policy*(Baghdad: Government Press, 1930), p. 15; U.S. Consular Dispatch, Baghdad, 17 June 1932, 890g.00/203, Department of State.

30. Young, *Report*, p. 12.

31. Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Report on Education in Iraq for 1957–1958* (Baghdad: Republic Government Press, 1959), pp. 20–21.

32. *London Times*, 15 November 1929.

33. For the treaty and its subsidiary agreements, see al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 3:17–28.

34. Iraq, Ministry of Justice, *Compilation of Laws and Regulations, 1931* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1932), Amendment no. 73 of 1931 to the income tax rate.

35. U.S. Consular Dispatch, 890g.00/203.

36. Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz, interview with author, 20 May 1959.

Chapter 3

1. Khaldun S. Husry [Khaldūn al-Ḥuṣrī], "The Assyrian Affair of 1933 (I)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5, 2 (1974).

2. Ibid., pp. 165–166.

3. This account has been drawn from Stephen Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 229–237; R. S. Stafford, *The Tragedy of the Assyrians* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1935), and Husry, "Assyrian Affair I," pp. 161–176.

4. Khaldun S. Husry, "The Assyrian Affair of 1933 (II)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5, 3:348–352.

5. Great Britain, Foreign Office, "Review of Events in 1934," FO 371/18949.

6. Khaldūn al-Ḥuṣrī, interview with author, Beirut, 12 December 1967. Assessments of Ghāzī's potential vary. The British documents reflect dissatisfaction with his performance. Iraqi writers such as Khaldūn al-Ḥuṣrī and Ṭālib Mushtāq attribute this view to Ghāzī's nationalist sentiments, and take a much more favorable view of his character and outlook.

7. 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Ta'rīkh al-Wizārāt al-'Irāqiyyah* [The History of Iraqi Cabinets] (Sidon: Maṭba'at al-'Irfān, 1953–1967), 3:298.

8. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:10–11; Majid Khadduri, *Independent Iraq 1932–1958* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 46–47.

9. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:31–34.

10. On this problem see Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), Chapters 5, 6; Ernest Dowson, *An Inquiry into Land Tenure and Related Questions* (Letchworth, Eng.: Garden City Press, 1932), pp. 16–39.

11. Iraq, Ministry of Justice, *Compilation of Laws and Regulations, 1932* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1933), pp. 42–43.

12. Great Britain, Foreign Office, Air Force Intelligence Report No. 112, 15 June 1932, FO 731/16049.

13. Iraq, *Compilations 1933*, pp. 69–77.

14. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 3:220–221.

15. Muḥsin Abū Ṭabīkh, *al-Mabādi' wa-l-Rijāl* [Principles and Men] (Damascus: Maṭba'at Abū Zaydān, 1938), p. 24; Ḥikmat Sulaymān, interview with author, Baghdad, 26 May 1958.

16. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:48–49.

17. Ibid., pp. 84–86.

18. On these revolts, see al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:106–132, 139–144, 150–180.

19. Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950*, p. 246.

20. Iraq, *Compilations, 1935*, pp. 89–90.

21. For example, *Jarīdat al-Bilād* (Baghdad), 25 June 1936.

22. *Jarīdat al-Bilād*, 6 September 1936. There have been various contradictory interpretations of this speech. Longrigg (*Iraq, 1900 to 1950*, p. 247) claims that al-Hāshimī was not aiming at a dictatorship, which in any event would have been difficult to establish. Al-Hāshimī's brother Ṭaha agrees (interview with author, Baghdad, 3 June 1959). The contrary view is taken by Ḥikmat Sulaymān (interview with author, Baghdad, 3 June 1959).

23. Phebe Marr, "Yāsīn al-Hāshimī: The Rise and Fall of a Nationalist" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1967) 2:393–400.

24. Examples of this thinking were to be found in several newspapers but especially *al-Bilād*. See *Jarīdat al-Bilād*, 28 May 1936, and Sāṭi'-l-Ḥuṣrī, *Ārā' wa Aḥādīth fi-l-Ta'rīkh wa-l-Ijtimā'* [Ideas and Discussions on History and Society] (Cairo, n.p., 1957).

25. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Ibrāhīm, *Muṭāl'āt fi-l-Sha'biyyah* [Studies in Populism], Ahālī Series, no. 3 (Baghdad: Ahālī Press, 1935), cited in Khadduri, *Independent Iraq*, pp. 70–73.

26. Khadduri, *Independent Iraq*, pp. 78–82; al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:192–194.

27. For the events of the coup, see al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:192–202; Khadduri, *Independent Iraq*, pp. 80–92; and Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950*, pp. 245–250.

28. Great Britain, Foreign Office, Archibald Clark Kerr to Eden, Baghdad, 16 November 1936, FO 37/20014.

29. Confidential Letter No. 654, from the Governor of Baghdad to the Minister of Interior, 30 November 1937, cited in al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:207–208.

30. "The Conflict with Iran," *Arab World File* 177 (1977):I i9.

31. For this program see al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:265–267.

32. Great Britain, Foreign Office, Minute by General Hay on the Military Policy of the Iraq Government, December 1936, and Kerr to Eden, Baghdad, 22 December 1936, both FO 371/20796.

33. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:292.

34. Kāmil al-Jādirjī, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1970), pp. 45–46. Al-Jādirjī claims that ministers were intimidated into resigning.

35. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:314, note 1.

36. Great Britain, Foreign Office, Sir M. Lampson, Cairo, to the Foreign Office, 25 November 1936, FO 371/20014.

37. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 4:314–319; Khayrī-l-'Umarī, interview with author, Baghdad, 12 February 1968.

38. U.S. Department of State, Paul Knabenshue to Department of State, Baghdad, 29 December 1938, 890g.00/461; al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 5:44–46.

39. U.S. Department of State, Paul Knabenshue to Department of State, Baghdad, 25 March 1939, 890g.00/461. ʿAbd al-Ilāh testified that he did not know Ḥikmat Sulaymān personally and that his name was not mentioned to him in connection with the plot. This testimony was included in the file of the case, which according to the president of the court, ʿAzīz Yāmulkī, was given to Nūrī and never returned. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 5:66.

40. For this version see Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (Damascus, n.p., 1956), pp. 80–97; and Ṭālib Mushtāq, *Awrāq Ayyāmī* [Papers from My Days] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalīʿah, 1968), pp. 314–325.

41. Tawfīq al-Suwaydī, interview with author, Beirut, 2 November 1967.

42. On the selection of ʿAbd al-Ilāh, see Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī, *Mudhakkirātī, 1919–1943* [My Memoirs, 1919–1943] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalīʿah, 1967), p. 305; al-Ṣabbāgh, *Memoirs*, p. 79; al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 5:75–76.

43. Information on ʿAbd al-Ilāh is taken from interviews in Beirut and London with men who knew him closely or worked with him, including Stewart Perrone, Tawfīq al-Suwaydī, Aḥmad Mukhtār Bābān, and ʿAbd Allah Bakr. An assessment of his character is also found in Fāliḥ Ḥanẓal, *Asrār Maqtal al-ʿĀʾilah-l-Malikah fi-l-ʿIrāq 14 Tammūz, 1958* [Secrets of the Murder of the Royal Family in Iraq, 14 July 1958] (n.p., 1971), pp. 31–47.

44. Khadduri, *Independent Iraq*, p. 166.

45. Al-Ṣabbāgh, *Memoirs*, pp. 18–25.

46. Ibid., p. 29.

47. Khayrī-l-ʿUmarī, *Yūnis al-Sabʿāwī: Sīrat Siyāsī ʿIṣāmī* [Yūnis al-Sabʿāwī: Biography of a Self-made Politician] (Baghdad: Ministry of Culture and Information, 1980), p. 65.

48. Edith Penrose and E. F. Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978), p. 153.

49. Ismāʿīl Aḥmad Yāghī, *Ḥarakat Rashīd ʿĀlī al-Kaylānī* [The Rashīd ʿĀlī al-Kaylānī Movement] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalīʿah, 1974), pp. 44–45.

50. On the Rashīd ʿĀlī movement, see ibid.; Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī, *Memoirs*, pp. 314–430; Maḥmūd al-Durrah, *al-Ḥarb al-ʿIrāqiyyah-l-Barīṭāniyyah, 1941* [The Iraqi-British War of 1941] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalīʿah, 1969), pp. 120–237; al-Ṣabbāgh, *Memoirs*, pp. 135–223; Tawfīq al-Suwaydī, *Wujūh ʿIrāqiyyah ʿAbr al-Taʾrīkh* [Iraqi Figures Through History] (Beirut, 1967, typescript), pp. 343–368; ʿUthmān Ḥaddād, *Ḥarakat Rashīd ʿĀlī al-Kaylānī* [The Rashīd ʿĀlī al-Kaylānī Movement] (Sidon: al-Maktabah-l-ʿAṣriyyah, n.d.); al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 5:121–231; ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *al-Asrār al-Khafiyyah* [The Hidden Secrets] (Sidon: Maṭbaʿat al-ʿIrfān, 1958); Khayrī-l-ʿUmarī, *Yūnis al-Sabʿāwī;* and Khadduri, *Independent Iraq*, pp. 157–243.

51. For this aspect of affairs, and the view of the neutralist party, see Nājī Shawkat, *Sīrah wa Dhikrayāt Thamānīn ʿAmman 1894–1974* [Biography and Memories Through Eighty Years, 1894–1974] (Beirut: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub, n.d.), pp. 384–423.

52. Khadduri, *Independent Iraq*, pp. 177–189.

53. Yāghī, *Rashīd ʿĀlī*, p. 58.

54. Al-Hāshimī, *Memoirs*, pp. 372–373; al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 5:150–151.

55. Al-Hāshimī, *Memoirs*, pp. 414–415.

56. Al-Suwaydī, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (n.p., Dār al-Kātib al-ʿArabī, 1969), pp. 344–345.

57. For an excellent analysis of the Rashīd ʿĀlī coup, see the introduction by Khaldūn al-Ḥuṣrī in al-Hāshimī, *Memoirs*, pp. 21–40.

58. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 6:11; Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950*, pp. 298–300.

59. Al-Durrah, an ardent nationalist, has claimed that over 1,000 were interned (*Iraqi-British War*, p. 417), and Ṭālib Mushtāq, an internee, has estimated the figure at about 750 (*Papers*, p. 455). Progovernment sources like ‘Ālī Mumtāz put it at not more than 500. ‘Ālī Mumtāz, interview with author, Beirut, 5 December 1967. Many internees were released as early as 1942, and most were out by 1943. For an account of life in an internment camp see Mushtāq, *Papers*, pp. 455–459.

60. Al-Durrah, *Iraqi-British War*, p. 417.

61. Letter from al-Durrah, cited in al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 6:170–171.

62. Among the texts to receive this treatment were those of Darwīsh al-Miqdādī and Akram Zu‘aytar, teachers recruited by Sāṭi‘-l-Ḥuṣrī. For a good analysis of the texts and the role of education in creating a climate of nationalism see Reeva Simon, "Iraq Between the Wars: The Creation and Implementation of a Nationalist Ideology" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, New York, 1982), Chapter 4.

63. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 6:128–129.

64. Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1947* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1949), p. 208.

65. Ibid., p. 235.

66. ‘Alī Mumtāz, interview with author, Beirut, 5 December 1967.

67. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Uzrī, interview with author, Baghdad, 10 February 1968. A dunam equals 0.25 hectares, 0.62 acres.

68. ‘Abd al-Hādī-l-Jalabī, interview with author, Beirut, 5 December 1967.

69. Yaḥyā Qāsim, interview with author, London, 19 August 1967.

70. Philip Drue, MP, *Manchester Guardian*, 26 January 1946.

71. *Statistical Abstract 1947*, p. 211.

72. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 6:72. Batatu estimates that the wages of unskilled laborers rose 400 percent between 1939 and 1948, while the price of food rose 800 percent, the salaries of lower-level civil servants rose less than 150 percent, and the wholesale price index rose to 690. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 472–473.

73. *Statistical Abstract 1958*, p. 123.

Chapter 4

1. ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Ta'rīkh al-Wizārāt al-‘Irāqiyyah* [The History of Iraqi Cabinets] (Sidon: Maṭba‘at al-‘Irfān, 1953–1967) 6:294–296.

2. For the establishment of al-Istiqlāl and its program, see Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah, 1965), pp. 108–208; ‘Abd al-Amīr Hādī al-‘Akām, *Ta'rīkh Ḥizb al-Istiqlāl al-‘Irāqī, 1946–1958* [History of the Iraqi Independence Party, 1946–1958] (Baghdad: Ministry of Culture and Information, 1980), pp. 11–70.

3. For the establishment of the National Democratic Party and its program, see Kāmil al-Jādirjī, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah, 1970), pp. 53–103, 179–225; Kāmil al- Jādirjī, *Min Awrāq Kāmil al-Jādirjī* [From the Papers of Kāmil al-Jādirjī] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah, 1971), pp. 101–145; and Fāḍil Ḥusayn, *Ta'rīkh al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī-l-Dimuqrāṭī* [The History of the National Democratic Party] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-Sha‘b, 1963), pp. 29–49, 103–214.

4. The most authoritative study of the Iraq Communist Party is Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978). For the early history of the party, see pp. 390–462. For the composition of Fahd's central committee in 1941, see pp. 494–495.

5. Tawfīq al-Suwaydī, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (n.p., Dār al-Kātib al-‘Arabī, 1969), pp. 440–443.

6. Yaḥyā Qāsim, interview with author, London, 19 August 1967.

7. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 7:221–224; al-Suwaydī, *Memoirs*, pp. 459–460.

8. For the events of the *wathbah* see al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 7:219–233, 253–274; al-Suwaydī, *Memoirs*, pp. 473–477; al-Jādirjī, *Memoirs*, pp. 170–177; Kubbah, *Memoirs*, pp. 223–233; and al-‘Akām, *Iraqi Independence Party*, pp. 210–228. In addition, the following material draws on interviews with several Iraqis, including al-Suwaydī, Tawfīq Wahbī, and Yaḥyā Qāsim, the editor of *al-Sha‘b* who accompanied the party to Portsmouth.

9. Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1947* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1949), p. 235. The base year was 1938.

10. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 7:261–262.

11. *London Times*, 19 June 1948.

12. Al-‘Akām, *Iraqi Independence Party*, p. 99; Fred Khoury, *The Arab-Israeli Dilemma* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1969), p. 73.

13. Al-‘Akām, *Iraqi Independence Party*, p. 102; Khoury, *Arab-Israeli Dilemma*, pp. 68–109.

14. The following draws heavily on Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), the best study of Iraq's relations with Syria in the postwar period.

15. Ibid., pp. 82–83.

16. For this episode see ‘Alī Jawdat, *Dhikrayātī* [My Memories] (Beirut: Maṭba‘at al-Wafā’, 1968), pp. 275–286.

17. Ferhang Jalal, *The Role of Government in the Industrialization of Iraq, 1950–1965* (London: Cass, 1972), p. 8.

18. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *The Economic Development of Iraq* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1957), p. 2.

19. The United Popular Front was a party, or more properly a grouping, of dissatisfied establishment politicians. Many were young deputies who felt frustrated by the slowness of reform and the lack of change at the top of the political structure. ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Jalīlī, interview with author, Baghdad, 5 February 1968.

20. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 8:276–277.

21. *London Times*, 19 January 1953.

22. For insight into Fayṣal's personality and home life see Fāliḥ Ḥanẓal, *Asrār Maqtal al-‘Ā’ilah-l-Malikah fi-l-‘Irāq 14 Tammūz, 1958* [Secrets of the Murder of the Royal Family in Iraq, 14 July 1958] (n.p., 1971), pp. 26–31.

23. This is attested by many sources, including Ḥanẓal, *Secrets;* ‘Alī Jawdat, interview with author, Beirut, 22 December 1967; and ‘Abd Allah Bakr, interview with author, Beirut, 17 December 1967. Bakr was chief of the Royal Diwan from 1954 to 1958.

24. Fāḍil al-Jamālī, interview with author, Zurich, 22 September 1967. Al-Jamālī was prime minister during this period and entirely cognizant and supportive of the overthrow of al-Shīshaklī.

25. Ibid.; al-Suwaydī, *Memoirs*, pp. 523–533.

26. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 9:89.

27. Khalīl Kannah, *al-ʿIrāq, Amsuhu wa Ghaduhu* [Iraq, Its Past and Its Future] (Beirut: Dār al-Rīḥānī, 1966), p. 172; Aḥmad Mukhtār Bābān, interview with author, Beirut, 21 December 1967.

28. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 9:113–117. A previous law had made membership in Communist or anarchist organizations a criminal offense. The cabinet now extended the definition to cover "front" organizations working for Communist aims directly or indirectly.

29. *New York Times*, 25 September 1954.

30. Najīb al-Rāwī, interview with author, Geneva, 5 January 1968. As Iraq's ambassador to Egypt, al-Rāwī was present at the meeting. Another account of the meeting is contained in Kennett Love, *Suez: The Twice Fought War* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 195–196. The British point of view is found in Anthony Eden, *Full Circle* (London: Cassell, 1960), pp. 244–260.

31. Aḥmad Mukhtār Bābān, interview with author, Beirut, 18 December 1967; al-Suwaydī, *Memoirs*, pp. 537–538.

32. Radio Cairo, 30 January 1955, cited in Seale, *Struggle for Syria*, p. 216.

33. Al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 10:103–109.

34. ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Jalīlī, *al-Iʿmār fi-l-ʿIrāq* [Development in Iraq] (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāh, 1968), p. 218.

35. Kannah, *Iraq*, p. 270.

36. D. J. Mossman, "Strong Man of Iraq," *Daily Telegraph* (London), 17 July 1956.

37. Dairy of Slade Baker, 3 February 1957, Monroe Papers 9:1560, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

38. Jawdat, *Memories*, pp. 306–307.

39. Ibid., p. 318; Bābān, interview with author, Beirut, 21 December 1967.

40. For the constitution of the federation, see al-Ḥasanī, *Iraqi Cabinets* 10:211–223.

41. Al-Suwaydī, *Memoirs*, pp. 583–585; Kannah, *Iraq*, pp. 297–299.

42. Al-Suwaydī, *Memoirs*, pp. 594–597.

Chapter 5

1. Stephen Longrigg, *Oil in the Middle East* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 176.

2. Charles Issawi and Mohammed Yeganeh, *The Economics of Middle Eastern Oil* (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 93.

3. Ibid., p. 14.

4. Ibid., p. 8.

5. Edith Penrose and E. F. Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978), pp. 142–144.

6. Ibid., p. 158.

7. Ibid., p. 148.

8. Ibid., p. 167.

9. Issawi and Yeganeh, *Economics of Oil*, pp. 143, 147.

10. Khair el-Din Haseeb [Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb], "Plan Implementation in Iraq, 1951–1967" (ECWA, Beirut, 1969), p. 6.

11. ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Jalīlī, *al-Iʿmār fi-l-ʿIrāq* [Development in Iraq] (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāh, 1968), pp. 239–242.

12. The allocation percentages are taken from Haseeb, "Plan Implementation," p. 6. Somewhat different figures are given in Ferhang Jalal, *The Role of Government in the Industrialization of Iraq, 1950–1965* (London: Cass, 1972), p. 33. Jalal lists only three plans, probably combining the first two.

13. Āl-Jalīlī, *Development in Iraq*, p. 243.

14. Doreen Warriner, *Land Reform and Development in the Middle East* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1957), p. 118.

15. John Simmons, "Agricultural Development in Iraq: Planning and Management Failure," *Middle East Journal* 19, 2 (1965):131.

16. The figures are taken from James Salter's report, *The Development of Iraq* (Baghdad: Iraq Development Board, 1955), cited by Keith McLachlan in Abbas Kelidar, ed., *The Integration of Modern Iraq* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), p. 148.

17. Warriner, *Land Reform and Development*, p. 130.

18. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, p. 177.

19. For an assessment of this project see Warriner, *Land Reform and Development*, pp. 162–170.

20. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, p. 17.

21. United Nations, "Population: Its Growth and Trend" (ECWA, Beirut, 1963), p. 8. These figures must be considered a rough approximation at best. The report draws heavily on a 1956 study by K. G. Fenelon, statistics expert to the Iraq Ministry of Economics, prepared before the results of the 1957 census were known.

22. Kathleen Langley, *The Industrialization of Iraq* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 91–94.

23. Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Report on Education in Iraq for 1957–1958* (Baghdad: Republic Government Press, 1959), p. 1.

24. Ibid., pp. 8, 19.

25. Ibid., pp. 9, 22. These figures include both intermediate and preparatory levels.

26. Ibid., pp. 14–15.

27. Nils Strom, "Manpower in Iraq: Population Growth, Education, and Economic Development," Manpower Report No. 16 (ECWA, Beirut, 1970), pp. 4, 6, 7.

28. Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1958* (Baghdad: Zahra Press, 1959), pp. 328–331.

29. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, p. 166.

30. Warriner, *Land Reform and Development*, pp. 172–176.

31. Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 54.

32. David Pool, "From Elite to Class: The Transformation of Iraqi Political Leadership," in Kelidar, *Integration of Modern Iraq*, p. 83.

33. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Uzrī, interview with author, Baghdad, 10 February 1968. The law provided for the conversion of the land, first to TAPU by payment of a quarter of the assessment value, and then to outright ownership by payment of another quarter. The law was intended to induce landlords to relinquish large tracts of land in their possession for redistribution by the government, but like many such regulations, it was soon abused by those with wealth and privilege.

34. *Statistical Abstract 1958*, p. 305.

35. There were, in addition, about 1,200 to 1,300 graduates of primary teachers' training schools, also secondary-level institutions. The first preparatory-

level class did not graduate until 1924. In 1925/1926 there were 37 who passed the secondary-level exams; by 1930/1931 the figure had increased to 159. The total figure given here is based on estimates of an even rate of growth in the intervening years. Iraq, *Report on Education, 1957–1958*, pp. 21–25. Secondary graduates include only those who successfully passed the preparatory-level examination.

36. Ibid., pp. 21, 23. These include private and government secondary schools. In addition, there were over 1,000 graduates of teachers' training schools, and 1,900 graduates of secondary-level vocational schools such as the police and agricultural schools. Figures for the years 1946–1950 have been estimated.

37. Ibid., pp. 16, 26, 31. Figures are given for five-year intervals. Estimates have been made for the intervening years on the assumption of a steady rate of increase.

38. Ibid. In this sequence, figures for the years between 1945 and 1950 have been estimated.

39. Statistics are derived from *Statistical Abstract 1958*, pp. 12, 79. Estimates on the relevant school-age population in 1957 are taken from Nils Strom, "Manpower in Iraq," pp. 13–14.

40. United Nations, "Population," p. 8.

41. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1126.

42. Ibid.

43. United Nations, "Population," p. 8.

44. *Statistical Abstract 1958*, pp. 179, 304.

45. According to a 1964 industrial survey, 55 percent of the workers in these industries were skilled or semiskilled. Foreign Area Studies, *Area Handbook for Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 285. The figure used here represents 55 percent of the workers in such establishments, about 45,000 in 1954 (see Table 5.2).

46. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, p. 164.

47. Ibid., p. 182. The study was made by the Doxiadis Associates in 1957.

48. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 54.

49. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, pp. 174–175.

50. Ibid., pp. 166–167.

51. Data gathered from newspapers, British diplomatic documents, and interviews with Iraqi politicians and their families, 1957–1967. The leadership group encompassed most (but not all) ministers, key members of the royal family, and a few tribal leaders and army officers deemed to have played an important role in decision making. The selection was not made on the basis of position, but on reputation for exercising real decision-making power. However, it excluded the British, who of course exercised considerable power. Top-ranking leaders, also determined by reputation, included the kings, the crown prince, most prime ministers, other key ministers, and a few army officers.

52. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 62.

53. Ibid., p. 271.

54. Fāḍil al-Jamālī, interview with author, Zurich, 20 September 1967.

55. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 62.

56. Ibid., p. 271.

57. Iraq, Committee of the Ministry of Education, *Aḥwāl al-ʿIrāq al-Ijtimāʿiyyah wa-l-Iqtiṣādiyyah* [Iraq's Social and Economic Conditions] (Baghdad: Government Press, 1947), p. 49.

58. Ibid., pp. 147–148.

59. I am indebted for much of the spadework on the short story writers to a student, Isabelle Risolevi. For the short story writers, see ʻAlī Jawād al-Ṭāhir, *Fī-l-Qaṣaṣ al-ʻIrāqi-l-Muʻāṣir* [On the Contemporary Iraqi Short Story] (Beirut: al-Maktabah-l-ʻAṣriyyah, 1965); Khāliṣ ʻAzmī, "Modern Iraqi Literature" (in Arabic), in *al-Adib* (Beirut), January 1967, p. 36; Ṣāliḥ al-Tūmā, "On the Roots of Dramatic Literature in Iraq" (in Arabic), in *al-Adib*, May 1966, p. 17; and Ṣāliḥ al-Tūmā, "'Culture nouvelle,' Mouvement revolutionnaire des intellectuel Iraqiens," *Orient* 8 (1958):59.

60. ʻAbd al-Malik Nūrī, *Nashid al-Ard* [Song of the Earth] (Baghdad: Manshūrāt al-Thaqāfah-l-Jadīdah, 1954). For a collection of Nūrī's work, see his *Rusul al-Insāniyyah wa Qiṣaṣ Ukhrā* [Prophets of Humanity and Other Stories] (Beirut: Dār al-Amal, 1946).

61. For a French translation of *al-Ākharin*, see "Les Autres," *Orient* 5 (1958):19.

62. For a French translation of one of al-ʻĀnī's works, see "Ana Ummak, Ya Shakir" [I Am Your Mother, O Shakir], *Orient* 8, 29 (1964):105.

63. For the works of Maʻrūf al-Raṣāfī, see *Dīwān Maʻrūf al-Raṣāfī* [Collection of Maʻrūf al-Rasāfī], 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-ʻAwdah, 1972); for Jamīl Ṣidqī-l-Zahāwī, see *Dīwān Jamil Ṣidqi-l-Zahāwi* [Collection of Jamīl Ṣidqī-l-Zahāwī] (Beirut: Dār al-ʻAwdah, 1972).

64. For this school of poetry, see ʻĪsā Yūsuf Bullāṭah, ***al-Rūmāntīqiyyah wa** Maʻālimuha fī-l-Shiʻr al-ʻIrāqi al-Ḥadith* [Romanticism and Its Characteristics in Modern Iraqi Poetry] (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfah lil Ṭibāʻah wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʻ, 1960); Nāzik al-Malāʼikah, *Qaḍāyā-l-Shiʻr al-Muʻāṣir* [Issues of Contemporary Poetry] (Baghdad: Manshūrāt Maktabat al-Nahḍah, 1965); Muḥammad al-Nuwayhī, *Qaḍiyyat al-Shiʻr al-Jadīd* [The Issue of New Poetry] (Cairo: Maṭbaʻat al-ʻIlmiyyah, 1964); Jabra Jabra, "Modern Arabic Literature and the West," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 2 (1971):77–91; and Pierre Rossi, "Impressions sur la poesie d'Irak," *Orient* 12 (1959):199–212.

65. For Nāzik al-Malāʼikah's poetry, see *Dīwān Nāzik al-Malāʼikah* [Collection of Nāzik al-Malāʼikah], 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-ʻAwdah, 1972).

66. Issa J. Boullata [ʻĪsā Y. Bullāṭah], "The Poetic Technique of Badr Shakir al-Sayyāb," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 2 (1971):104–115. For al-Sayyāb's works, see *Azhār wa Asāṭir* [Flowers and Fables] (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāh, n.d.), and *Anshūdat al-Maṭar* [Song of the Rain] (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāh, 1969); for samples of his work in translation, see M. A. Khouri and H. Algar, "Modern Arabic Poetry," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 1 (1970):119–128.

67. For examples of al-Bayātī, see his *Dīwān* ***ʻAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī*** [Collection of ʻAbd al Wahhāb al-Bayātī] (Beirut: Dār al-ʻAwdah, 1971); for a translation of his work, see Khouri and Algar, "Modern Arabic Poetry."

68. ʻAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayātī, "Lovers in Exile," in Khouri and Algar, "Modern Arabic Poetry," p. 82.

69. Jabra Jabra, "L'Art Moderne en Irak," *Orient* 17 (1961):109–117.

Chapter 6

1. Fāliḥ Ḥanẓal, *Asrār Maqtal al-ʻĀʼilah-l-Malikah fi-l-ʻIrāq 14 Tammūz, 1958* [Secrets of the Murder of the Royal Family in Iraq, 14 July 1958] (n.p., 1971), pp. 61, 65; Khalīl Kannah, *al-ʻIrāq, Amsuhu wa Ghaduhu* [Iraq, Its Past and Its Future] (Beirut: Dār al-Rīḥānī, 1966), pp. 301–302; ʻAbd al-Muṭṭalib Amīn, interview with author, Baghdad, 30 May 1968.

2. Majid Khadduri, *Republican Iraq* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 17, 20–25; Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 773–783; Ṣabīḥ 'Alī Ghālib, *Qiṣṣat Thawrat 14 Tammūz wa-l-Ḍubbāt al-Aḥrār* [The Story of the Revolution of 14 July and the Free Officers] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1968), pp. 18–24.

3. Sirrī was not on the central committee because he was being watched. The members of the committee were Muḥyī-l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, Nājī Ṭālib, 'Abd al-Wahhāb Amīn, Muḥsin Ḥusayn al-Ḥabīb, Ṭāhir Yaḥyā, Rajab 'Abd al-Majīd, 'Abd al-Karīm Farḥān, Waṣfī Ṭāhir, Ṣabīḥ 'Alī Ghālib, Muḥammad Sab', 'Abd al-Karīm Qāsim, 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif, 'Abd al-Raḥman 'Ārif, 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Shawwāf.

4. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 778–783.

5. Ghālib, *Story of the Revolution*, pp. 65–68; Iraq, Ministry of Defense, Coordinating Committee for the Special High Military Court, *Muḥākamāt* [Trials], 22 vols. (Baghdad: Ministry of Defense, 1958–1962) 5:1989–1990, 2004–2006, 2035, 2087–2088. One of the main disagreements was over the presence of 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif on the committee. The story that 'Ārif was imposed on the committee by Qāsim and made to wait six months before acceptance (Testimony of 'Abd al-Wahhāb Amīn, Iraq, *Trials* 5:2004; Ghālib, *Story of the Revolution*, p. 25) is not true. There is no doubt, however, that Qāsim brought him into the committee and that a number of members were unhappy about it because of 'Ārif's impetuosity and independence. Iraq, *Trials*: Testimony of Nājī Ṭālib, 5:2087–2088; Muḥyī-l-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, p. 1989; Rif'at al-Ḥājj Sirrī, p. 2001.

6. Testimony of 'Abd al-Wahhāb Amīn, Iraq, *Trials* 5:2005–2006; Ghālib, *Story of the Revolution*, p. 28.

7. Ghālib, *Story of the Revolution*, pp. 44–45. Nājī Ṭālib pointed out that there was not much discussion of a program beforehand, because "removal of the previous regime was the most important point." Testimony of Nājī Ṭālib, Iraq, *Trials* 5:2093.

8. Ghālib, *Story of the Revolution*, pp. 52–68. Testimony of Nājī Ṭālib, Iraq, *Trials* 5:2090; Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 795–799.

9. Ghālib, *Story of the Revolution*, pp. 68–69; Testimony of 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif, Iraq, *Trials* 5:2014.

10. Ḥanẓal, *Secrets*, pp. 126–130.

11. King Husayn, *Uneasy Lies the Head* (New York: B. Geis, 1962), pp. 159–161.

12. Muḥammad Ḥadīd (finance) and Hdayb al-Ḥājj Ḥmūd (agriculture) represented the National Democrats; Ṣaddīq Shanshal (guidance), the Istiqlāl; Fu'ād al-Rikābī (development), the Ba'th; and Ibrāhīm Kubbah (economics), the Communists. The Kurd was Bābā 'Alī, son of Shaykh Maḥmūd, who took the Ministry of Communications; the Arab nationalist was 'Abd al-Jabbār Jūmard, who became minister of foreign affairs.

13. For the temporary constitution, see 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Ta'rīkh al-Wizārāt al 'Irāqiyyah* [The History of Iraqi Cabinets] (Sidon: Maṭba'at al-'Irfān, 1953–1967) 10:259–262.

14. Fu'ād 'Ārif, interview with author, Baghdad, 10 February 1968. See also Testimony of Fu'ād 'Ārif, Iraq, *Trials* 5:1983, and of 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif, 5:1985; and 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif, "Mudhakkirāt 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif" [The Memoirs of

'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif], as told to 'Alī Munīr in *Rūz al-Yūsuf,* 30 May 1966, p. 29.

15. See Iraq, *Trials,* vol. 5. The testimony given by the officers must be read with caution as some of it was self-serving. Moreover, the trial was conducted by Qāsim's cousin, Fāḍil 'Abbās al-Mahdāwī, at the height of Qāsim's influence.

16. Khadduri, *Republican Iraq,* pp. 100–104. Whatever Rashīd 'Ālī's involvement, the real threat came from the Nāṣirite and Ba'thist army officers.

17. On the role of the Iraq Communist Party in this period see Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* pp. 847–860, 890–911. Batatu estimates that at the flood tide of ICP influence there were 235 officers who were Communist or had "in one way or another, signified their support." Although an impressive gain over prerevolutionary days, this was still a minority in an officer corps estimated by Batatu in 1958 at 4,000 (p. 1126), and it was admittedly soft, as the support was given when the ICP appeared to be in the ascendancy.

18. The plot itself was hatched by a number of nationalist groups, including middle-level nationalist officers; Free Officers; and civilian Ba'thists. The officers named above were only the best known, and al-Shawwāf only joined the group on 1 March.

19. On the Mosul revolt, see Khadduri, *Republican Iraq,* pp. 104–112; Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* pp. 866–889. Details of the revolt are to be found in Iraq, *Trials,* vols. 8 and 9.

20. On the Ba'th attempt see Fu'ād al-Rikābī, *al-Hall al-Awḥad* [The Sole Solution] (Cairo: al-Sharikah-l-'Arabiyyah lil Ṭibā'ah wa-l-Nashr, 1963); Khadduri, *Republican Iraq,* pp. 126–132.

21. Al-Rikābī, *Sole Solution,* pp. 53–56.

22. See Iraq, *Trials,* vols. 20–22.

23. The Ba'th attempt on Qāsim came after the Kirkūk events described below.

24. For the text of these agreements, see Muḥammad Ḥasan Salmān, *Dirāsāt fi-l-Iqtiṣād al-'Irāqī* [Studies on the Iraqi Economy] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1966), pp. 417–440.

25. Roger Pajak, "Soviet Military Aid to Iraq and Syria," *Strategic Review* 4, 1 (Winter 1976):52.

26. On the Kirkūk episode see Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* pp. 912–921.

27. Ibid., p. 704. Batatu's estimate of officers who were Communist or Communist sympathizers (see note 17 above) would have been sufficient for carrying out a coup but not, as the party recognized, without provoking a civil war.

28. Ibid., pp. 926–930.

29. For a discussion of this subject see Khaldūn al-Ḥuṣrī, *Thawrat 14 Tammūz* [The 14 July Revolution] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1963), Chapter 7.

30. For these political parties, see Khadduri, *Republican Iraq,* pp. 132–147; Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem* (New York: Praeger, 1969), pp. 265–307.

31. Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem,* pp. 55–56.

32. The text of the law is taken from Salman, *Studies on the Iraqi Economy,* pp. 383–416.

33. For an account of these events and the Communist role in them, see Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem,* pp. 56–61; Rony Gabbay, *Communism and Agrarian Reform in Iraq* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), pp. 108–151. As Gabbay points out, the Communists were challenged in the countryside by the National Democratic Party and did not have the field wholly to themselves.

34. Gabbay, *Communism and Agrarian Reform*, pp. 133–135.

35. Ibid., p. 134.

36. John Simmons, "Agricultural Development in Iraq: Planning and Management Failure," *Middle East Journal* 19, 2 (1965):131.

37. J.N.D. Anderson, "A Law of Personal Status for Iraq," *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 9 (1960):542–563.

38. Office of the Iraqi Cultural Attaché, *Education in Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Embassy of Iraq, n.d.), p. 2; Arab Information Center, *Education in Iraq* (New York: Arab Information Center, 1966), p. 32.

39. Khair el-Din Haseeb [Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb], "Plan Implementation in Iraq, 1951–1967 (ECWA, Beirut, 1969), pp. 4, 6.

40. Edith Penrose and E. F. Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978), p. 268.

41. Kathleen Langley, "Iraq: Some Aspects of the Economic Scene," *Middle East Journal* 18 (1964):184.

42. Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 162–163.

43. For an excellent discussion of these negotiations and their outcome, see Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, pp. 257–269, from which the following section has largely been drawn.

44. Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 72–79.

45. Ibrāhīm Kubbah has described Qāsim as "a man of strange personality" who lacked the mentality to be constructive and was swayed by colleagues, friends, and relations. He had no ideology, hated criticism, and pretended to know everything. He was interested in insignificant things on which he spent his time day and night. Ibrāhīm Kubbah, *Hādhā Huwa Ṭarīq 14 Tammūz* [This Is the Way of the 14 July (Revolution)] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalīʻah, 1969), pp. 17–18. For a more favorable view of Qāsim see Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, pp. 288–292.

46. Derk Kinnane, *The Kurds and Kurdistan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 69.

47. Chris Kutschera, *Le Mouvement national Kurde* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), p. 216.

48. Dana Adams Schmidt, *Journey Among Brave Men* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1964), pp. 62–63.

49. On the foundation of the KDP see Kutschera, *Mouvement Kurde*, pp. 191–194.

50. Schmidt, *Journey*, p. 82. These are Kurdish figures and may be high.

51. For the Kurdish side of this story see Ismet Cheriff Vanley, *Le Kurdistan Irakien entite nationale* (Boudry-Neuchâtel, Switzerland: Editions de la Baconnière, 1970), pp. 81–177; for the Iraqi central government side, see Maḥmūd al-Durrah, *al-Qaḍiyyah-l-Kurdiyyah* [The Kurdish Question] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalīʻah, 1966), pp. 275–304.

52. "Iraq: Relations with Iran," *Arab World File*, 25 April 1979, i141.

53. Louay Bahry, "Iraq and the Gulf" (Paper delivered at the Middle East Institute Conference, Washington, D.C., September 1980), p. 2.

54. The following account has been drawn largely from Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 166–173.

Chapter 7

1. For a synopsis of the Baʻth program in this period, see the translation of the party constitution in Sylvia Haim, *Arab Nationalism: An Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), pp. 233–241.

2. Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 741–743.

3. For a general history of the party in this period see John Devlin, *The Ba‘th Party: A History from Its Origins to 1966* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institute Press, 1976), and Munīf al-Razzāz, *al-Tajribah al-Murrah* [The Bitter Experience] (Beirut: Dār al-Ghandūr, 1967).

4. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 966–970. A military bureau of the party was also created, consisting of al-Sa‘dī, Jawād, Shabīb, and three military men—Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh, and ‘Abd al-Sattār ‘Abd al-Laṭīf. The last two were long-standing party members, but al-Bakr may have joined only after the 1958 revolution. Other Ba‘thist officers attended some of these meetings, including Ḥardān al-Tikrītī and Mundhir al-Wandāwī.

5. Majid Khadduri, *Republican Iraq* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 188–190; Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 968–973.

6. The eighteen command members included sixteen Ba‘thists; ten were military men. These were ‘Ālī Ṣāliḥ Sa‘dī, Ḥāzim Jawād, Ṭālib Shabīb, Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Majīd, Karīm Shintāf, Muḥsin al-Shaykh Rāḍī, Ḥamīd Khalkhāl, Hānī-l-Fukaykī, ‘Abd al-Salām ‘Ārif, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh, ‘Abd al-Sattār ‘Abd al-Laṭīf, Ṭāhir Yaḥyā, ‘Abd al-Karīm Naṣrat, ‘Abd al-Ghanī-l-Rāwī, Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī, Ḥardān al-Tikrītī, and ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥadīthī. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 1004–1006.

7. On the Ba‘thist persecution of the Communists, see Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 982–991. In addition to those killed in the battle, between 7,000 and 10,000 Communists were imprisoned, and 149 officially executed. The unofficial death toll was much higher. Ibid., p. 988.

8. George Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1972), p. 137.

9. This was undoubtedly due to the thinness of their ranks and the need to garner support from a broad spectrum of the populace, as well as to the fact that their "socialism" was still not translated into any practical program for Iraq.

10. *Al-Ahrām* (Cairo), 27 September 1963.

11. Maḥmūd al-Durrah, *Kurdish Question*, pp. 308–309.

12. Ibid., pp. 315–317. Nāṣir was drawn into discussions with the Kurds recognizing their importance in any unity equation. For these discussions see Dana Adams Schmidt, *Journey Among Brave Men*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), pp. 253–255, 261–265.

13. Chris Kutschera, *Le Mouvement national Kurde* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), p. 237.

14. For this aspect of inter-Arab politics, see Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 44–95; Kemal Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966), pp. 75–95; and Devlin, *Ba‘th Party*, pp. 239–271.

15. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1020. This is not to say that this faction had any well-thought-out program, coordinated with Iraq's needs. The Marxist approach provided more slogans than programs.

16. Ibid., p. 1019.

17. Ernest Penrose, "Essai sur l'Irak," *Orient* 35 (1965):33–64.

18. Abu Jaber, *Arab Ba‘th Party*, p. 144.

19. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1010.

20. For this historic congress see Itamar Rabinovich, *Syria Under the Ba‘th, 1963–1966* (New York: Halsted Press, 1972), pp. 75–108; Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 1020–1022.

21. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 1022–1026; Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 211–214.

22. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1025.

23. Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 88–90; 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif, "Mudhakkirāt 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif" [The Memoirs of 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif], as told to 'Alī Munīr, *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, 30 May 1966, pp. 15–17.

24. Roger Pajak, "Soviet Military Aid to Iraq and Syria," *Strategic Review* 4, 1 (Winter 1976):52.

25. Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb, *Natā'ij Taṭbīq al-Qarārāt al-Ishtirākiyyah fī-l-Sanah-l-Ūlā* [Results of the Application of the Socialist Decisions in the First Year] (Baghdad: Economic Organization, n.d.), pp. 3–5.

26. Economic Organization, *Majmū'at al-Qawānīn al-Ishtirākiyyah* [Collection of the Socialist Laws] (Baghdad: Sharikat al-Awqāf līl Ṭibā'ah wa-l-Nashr, 1965).

27. Ḥasīb's report to the president on the results of nationalization a year after the laws were made contains statistics showing an increase in profits of 24 percent for the first eight months after nationalization compared with the previous eight months. Ḥasīb, *Results*, pp. 60–61. The Central Bank statistics show that the quantum index of industrial production rose from 100 in 1962 to 119.4 in 1965. Central Bank of Iraq, *Bulletin* 4 (1973):44. An unpublished report by Shukrī Ṣāliḥ Zakī—an admitted opponent of the program—claimed a discernible decline in the economy (report cited in Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1033, note 20). For a more detailed analysis of the nationalization laws, see Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, pp. 460–467.

28. 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Bazzāz, interview with author, Baghdad, 18 April 1958; Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 250–252.

29. *QER, Iraq* (*Economist*, London), 1965, no. 4:2.

30. *QER, Iraq*, 1966, no. 1:6.

31. *Al-Jumhūriyyah* (Baghdad), 12 September 1965.

32. Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 264–266; Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1062.

33. For the text of the government announcement see al-Durrah, *Kurdish Question*, pp. 351–353.

34. Kutschera, *Mouvement Kurde*, pp. 245–253.

35. Ismet Cheriff Vanley, *Le Kurdistan Irakien entite nationale* (Boudry-Neuchâtel, Switzerland: Editions de la Baconnière, 1970), pp. 248–249. For the text of the Kurdish constitution and administrative laws of 17 October 1964, see Annexes 8 and 9, pp. 375–377.

36. For these negotiations and the demands of the parties see al-Durrah, *Kurdish Question*, pp. 358–387.

37. The text of the government statement is to be found in Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, pp. 274–276.

38. Ibid., p. 281.

39. Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb, interview with author, Beirut, 16 June 1980.

40. The following material has been drawn mainly from Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, pp. 381–390, 394–397.

41. Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb, interview with author, Beirut, 16 June 1980.

42. *MEES* 10 (11 August 1967):1–5; 10 (24 November 1967):1–4; 11 (12 April 1968):1–5.

43. Khadduri, *Republican Iraq*, p. 293.

44. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, pp. 426–427.

45. Pajak, "Soviet Military Aid," p. 52.

46. For this movement see Abbas Kelidar, "Aziz al-Ḥaj, A Communist Radical," in Abbas Kelidar, ed., *The Integration of Modern Iraq* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), pp. 183–192; and Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* pp. 1069–1072, 1100–1101. Al-Ḥājj later recanted, and in 1981 was an Iraqi representative in Europe.

47. *Middle East Record* 4 (1968):515–520.

48. This information is from an Iraqi who does not wish to be identified, who obtained it from 'Abd al-Razzāq. It should be noted that Yaḥyā and other members of the regime were arrested on charges of corruption after the coup but were later released without convictions.

49. Ibid.

50. Interview with a prominent Iraqi who does not wish to be identified.

51. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* p. 1074, based on an interview with 'Abd al-Raḥman 'Ārif after the coup.

52. Amīr Iskandar, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn: Munāḍilān, Mufakkirān wa Insānān* [Ṣaddām Ḥusayn: The Fighter, the Thinker, and the Man] (n.p., Hachette, 1980), p. 97.

53. It was headed by 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shaykhlī and had as members, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, Muḥammad Ṣabrī-l-Ḥadīthī, and Ḥasan al-'Āmirī. Ibid., p. 80.

54. For these events see Devlin, *Ba'th Party,* pp. 281–307, and Rabinovich, *Syria Under the Ba'th,* pp. 109–208.

55. In addition to al-Bakr and Ḥusayn, the command included 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shaykhlī, Ṣāliḥ Mahdī 'Ammāsh, Ṭaha-l-Jazrāwī, 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Sāmarrā'ī, Ṣalāḥ 'Umar al-'Alī, 'Izzat Muṣṭafā, and 'Abd Allah Sallūm al-Sāmarrā'ī. Iskandar, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn,* pp. 98–102.

56. It included Amīn al-Ḥāfiz, Ilyās Faraḥ, Zayd Haydar, Shiblī-l-'Aysamī, 'Alī Ghannām, 'Abd al-Majīd al-Rifā'ī, and Muḥammad Sulaymān (all non-Iraqis), and Iraqis al-Bakr, 'Ammāsh, al-Shaykhlī, 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Sāmarrā'ī, and Shafīq al-Kamālī.

57. The military branch was under the control of al-Bakr, 'Ammāsh, and al-Jazrāwī, the latter a noncommissioned officer who had fought in the Kurdish war in 1963 and been arrested in 1964. He was sent in detention to al-Nāṣiriyyah, where he worked to reorganize the party in that region. Ṣalāḥ 'Umar al-'Alī was put in charge of workers; 'Abd al-Khāliq al-Sāmarrā'ī, external affairs; 'Izzat Muṣṭafā, professionals; and Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, the Baghdad branch, women, peasants, and—most important of all—the special apparatus. Iskandar, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn,* p. 101.

58. *Middle East Record* 4 (1968):515.

59. Ibid., pp. 516–517.

60. Iskandar, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn,* p. 109.

61. Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, *Revolutionary Iraq, 1968–1973,* Report of the Eighth Regional Party Congress (Baghdad: Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, 1974), pp. 39–40.

Chapter 8

1. Both factions were represented in the cabinet. The young officers could count on al-Nāyif (prime minster), Nāṣir al-Ḥānī (foreign affairs), and al-Dā'ūd (defense); and probably on Ṣāliḥ Kubbah (finance), Ṭaha-l-Ḥājj Ilyās (culture

and information), Muḥsin al-Qazwīnī (agriculture), ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Jumaylī (agrarian reform), and Nājī al-Khalaf. All were dropped in the subsequent cabinet. The Ba‘th had at least nine members or supporters seated, in addition to al-Bakr as president. They were: Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh (interior), Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Sattār al-Jawārī (education), ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ḥadīthī (labor and social affairs), ‘Izzat Muṣṭafā (health), Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī (industry), Dhiyāb ‘Alqāwī (youth), Ghā’ib Mawlūd Mukhliṣ (municipal and rural affairs), Rashīd al-Rifā‘ī (presidential affairs), and Kāẓim al-Mu‘alla (liaison with RCC). In addition, there were a number of independents and technocrats, including ‘Abd al-Karīm Zaydān (*awqāf*), Jāsim al-‘Azzāwī (unity affairs), Maḥmūd Khaṭṭāb (communications), Muḥammad Ya‘qūb al-Sa‘īdī (planning), and Mahdī Ḥantūsh (oil). There were four Kurds: Muḥsin Dīzā’ī (reconstruction of the north), Muṣliḥ al-Naqshabandī (justice), Iḥsān Shīrzād (works and housing), and ‘Abd Allah al-Naqshabandī (economics). Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 1076; Majid Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1978), pp. 25–26; and *Middle East Record* 4 (1968):519.

2. *Middle East Record* 4 (1969):520. According to a participant in these events, over 2,000 Ba‘thist officers and noncommissioned officers were transferred to key units during this period. Ṭaha Ramaḍān [al-Jazrāwī], “Shay’min Asrār al-Ḥizb; Shay’min Asrār al-Thawrah” [Some Secrets of the Party; Some Secrets of the Revolution], *Alif Bā’* (Baghdad) 513 (July 1978):20–23.

3. The ministers who were dropped were al-Nāyif and al-Dā’ūd; Nāṣir al-Ḥānī, Ṭaha-l-Ḥājj Ilyās, Muḥsin al-Qazwīnī, ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Jumaylī, and Ṣāliḥ Kubbah (presumed supporters of al-Nāyif and al-Dā’ūd); Ba‘thists Kāẓim al-Mu‘alla and Dhiyāb ‘Alqāwī; ‘Abd al-Karīm Zaydān, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood; independents Jāsim al-‘Azzawī, Muḥammad Ya‘qūb al-Sa‘īdī, and Mahdī Ḥantūsh; and Muṣliḥ and ‘Abd Allah al-Naqshabandī, both Kurds.

4. The members of the RCC were Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ḥardān al-Tikrītī, Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh, Hammād Shihāb, and Sa‘dūn Ghaydān. The first three were Ba‘thists, and al-Bakr, al-Tikrītī, and Shihāb were Tikrītīs.

5. There were non-Ba‘thists in the cabinet but they were mainly independents. After 26 August, when Muḥsin Dizā’ī and Iḥsān Shīrzād, both representatives of al-Bārzānī, left the cabinet, no member of a recognized alternative political party or group held an important post in this cabinet.

6. *Economist* (London), 24–30 June 1978, p. 78.

7. *New York Times,* 15 December 1968; Radio Baghdad, 14 December 1968; *al-Ḥayāh* (Beirut), 20 December 1968.

8. On 28 June 1973, al-Bazzāz died after an illness due to maltreatment during a long prison sentence. He was released from prison before his death.

9. The figures are taken from newspaper accounts. The actual total may be higher.

10. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* pp. 1100–1102.

11. The new members of the RCC were Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Shaykhlī, ‘Abd Allah Sallūm al-Sāmarrā’ī, ‘Izzat Muṣṭafā, Shafīq al-Kamālī, Ṣalāḥ ‘Umar al-‘Alī, ‘Izzat al-Dūrī, Murtaḍā-l-Ḥadīthī, and Ṭaha-l-Jazrāwī. Of these, al-Jazrāwī had, for a time, been a noncommissioned officer in the army, and so must be counted as partly military, although most of his professional experience had been in clandestine party activity. Ṭaha Ramaḍān [al-Jazrāwī], “Some Secrets,” pp. 20–23.

12. Iraq, *al-Waqā’i‘-l-‘Irāqiyyah* [The Iraqi Gazette], 19 July 1970.

13. Abbas Kelidar, *Iraq: The Search for Stability,* Conflict Studies, no. 59 (London: Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1975), p. 9. For the regime's policy toward the Kurds and the Soviet Union, see below under "Ba'th Foreign Policy: The Radical Phase."

14. Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq,* pp. 63–67.

15. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* p. 1084.

16. Information on al-Bakr has been drawn from Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq,* pp. 69–71, and Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* pp. 1084, 1086, 1087.

17. Much of the following bibliographical material has been taken from Amīr Iskandar, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn: Munāḍilān, Mufakkirān wa Insānān* [Ṣaddām Ḥusayn: The Fighter, the Thinker, and the Man] (n.p., Hachette, 1980), pp. 22–209. For details on Ḥusayn's biography see also Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq,* pp. 71–76; Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* pp. 1084–1086; and Amazia Baram, "Saddam Hussein: A Political Profile," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 17 (1980):115–144.

18. Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq,* p. 73.

19. He did not remove the bullet while fleeing in a car as is frequently stated. Iskandar, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn,* p. 50.

20. Ibid., pp. 96–102.

21. Khadduri claims that the Iraqis had a "tacit agreement" to station troops on Kuwaiti soil to protect the estuary from Iran and that fighting started only when they began to build a defense post at al-Sāmitah. Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq,* pp. 154–156.

22. On contacts between al-Bārzānī and the Israelis and on Israel's economic and military aid, see Edmond Ghareeb, *The Kurdish Question in Iraq* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1981), pp. 142–145.

23. Some have argued that the word used in the agreement was "self-rule," something less than "autonomy." Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq,* p. 103. The issue was not semantics, but how much self-rule or autonomy would be granted the Kurds.

24. For an English translation of the agreement see ibid., pp. 231–240.

25. See the discussion of the Kurdish problem in Chapter 7 under "The Regime of 'Ārif the Second." The 1970 agreement's favorable position toward the Kurds was one of the motive forces behind the Kzār coup attempt, as previously mentioned.

26. Interview with Ibrāhīm Aḥmad, 1973, cited in Chris Kutschera, *Le Mouvement national Kurde* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), p. 277. See also Ismet Cheriff Vanley, "Le Kurdistan d'Irak," in Gerard Chaliand, ed., *Les Kurdes et le Kurdistan* (Paris: François Masperio, 1978), pp. 250–268.

27. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq,* p. 433.

28. Ibid., pp. 399, 406.

29. Ibid., p. 408.

30. Ibid., pp. 409–411.

31. *MEES* 16 (2 March 1973).

32. The ERAP contract remained intact for a time but friction between the company and the government finally resulted in Iraq's taking over the operation and management of the concession in July 1977, although ERAP's supplies were not affected. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq,* p. 435.

33. George Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1972), p. 142.

34. Alvin Cottrell and R. M. Burrell, "Soviet-U.S. Naval Competition in the Indian Ocean," *Orbis* 23 (1975):1113.

35. Pajak, "Soviet Military Aid," p. 53.

36. Alvin Rubenstein, "The Soviet Union and the Arabian Peninsula," *World Today* 35 (November 1979):450.

37. The Regional Command now consisted of Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, ‘Izzat al-Dūrī, ‘Izzat Muṣṭafā, Ṭaha-l-Jazrāwī, Na‘īm Ḥaddād, Tāyih ‘Abd al Karīm, Muḥammad Maḥjūb, ‘Adnān al-Ḥamdānī, Ghānim ‘Abd al-Jalīl, Ṭāhir Tawfīq al-‘Ānī, ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ al-Yāsīn, and Ḥasan al-‘Āmirī.

38. The new members were Sa‘dūn Shākir, Ja‘far Qāsim Ḥammūdī, Ḥikmat Ibrāhīm al-‘Azzāwī, Muḥammad ‘Āyish, ‘Abd Allah Fāḍil, Ṭāriq ‘Azīz, ‘Adnān Khayr Allah Ṭalfāḥ, and Fulayḥ Ḥasan Jāsim. In March 1977 two members of the Regional Command—‘Izzat Muṣṭafā and Fulayḥ Ḥasan Jāsim—were expelled, and Muḥyī-l-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ḥusayn and Burhān al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥman were elected in their places. FBIS, 11 January 1977, E2–3; FBIS, 29 March 1977, E1.

39. Kemal Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966), pp. 139–145; Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, pp. 744–745; Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, p. 40.

40. Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, p. 44.

41. Iraq News Agency (INA) (Baghdad), 6 February 1983, in British Broadcasting Service (BBC), 9 February 1983; see also Christine Moss Helms, *Iraq Eastern Flank of the Arab World* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1984) p. 100.

42. *Economist* (London), 24–30 June 1978, pp. 78–79. These figures can only be approximate. Batatu claims that "active" members, i.e., those at the highest level, numbered about 10,000 in 1976. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1078.

43. Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, pp. 100–101. See also Helms, *Iraq*, p. 87.

44. Two other major organizations are worth mention: the National Union of Iraqi Students and the General Federation of Women in Iraq.

45. Al-Bakr subsequently died of natural causes in 1982.

46. *New York Times*, 17 July 1980.

47. INA, cited in FBIS, 30 July 1979, E1–4; INA, 7 August 1979, cited in FBIS, 8 August 1979, E1. An account of the plot reportedly drawn from tapes of the public confession is given by the Middle East News Agency (Cairo), 5 August 1979, in FBIS, 8 August 1979, E2–7. Analyses of the motives behind the plot are numerous, but of necessity highly speculative. Among the best are those in *An-Nahār Arab Report and Memo* (Paris), 6 August 1979, and *Weltwoche Report* (Zurich), 12 September 1979. The latter includes an interview in which Ṭāriq ‘Azīz admits that the causes of the government's actions were multiple.

48. INA, 16 March 1980, in FBIS, 19 March 1980, E1–3.

49. For the names of the candidates and their backgrounds, see *al-Thawrah* (Baghdad), 4, 7, and 8 June 1980.

50. Kutschera, *Mouvement Kurde*, pp. 282–283. On the CIA aid, see the portions of the Pike Report (made to congress) that appeared in the *Village Voice* (New York), 16 February 1976, p. 88.

51. For the English text of the agreement and its protocols, see Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, pp. 245–260.

52. For the denouement of al-Bārzānī's relations with the shah and the CIA see the Pike Report as cited in the *Village Voice*, 16 February 1976, and Kutschera, *Mouvement Kurde*, pp. 327–333.

53. Iraq, *al-Waqā’i‘-l-‘Irāqiyyah* [The Iraqi Gazette], 26 March 1974.

54. INA, 16 March 1980, in FBIS, 19 March 1980, E3.

55. Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq*, pp. 93–94.

56. *QER, Iraq* (*Economist*, London), 1978, no. 4:2.

57. "Deportation of Kurds and the Arabization of Kurdistan," Report of the KDP to the United Nations, 18 March 1978, Exhibit A, pp. 27–29 (mimeographed).

58. Chris Kutschera, "La Fiction de l'autonomie au Kurdistan Irakien," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 6 August 1977, pp. 6–7.

59. Vanley, "Le Kurdistan d'Irak," p. 300.

60. Muḥammad Dosky, interview with author, Washington, D.C., 13 September 1980. At the time, Muḥammad Dosky was the KDP representative in the United States and a member of the party's central committee.

61. These actually broke out in armed clashes. The extent of bitterness between the two groups emerges in a press release issued by the KDP in July 1978, which accused al-Ṭālabānī of "megalomania" and his followers of "irrational hatred and bitter animosity" against the KDP. KDP Provisional Leadership, press release, London, 18 July 1981.

62. Hanna Batatu, "Iraq's Underground Shī'ī Movements: Characteristics, Causes, and Prospects," *Middle East Journal* 35 (1981):578.

63. *Al-Ḥawādith* (Beirut), 20 December 1974.

64. *Manchester Guardian*, 1 March 1977; *al-Thawrah* (Damascus), 11 February 1977.

65. *Al-Thawrah* (Baghdad), 25 March 1977; *Le Monde* (Paris), 26 March 1977; Damascus Radio, 23 March 1977, cited in FBIS, 24 March 1977, H1.

66. *Alif Bā'* (Baghdad) 602 (9 April 1980):8–9.

67. Batatu, "Iraq's Underground Shī'ī Movements," p. 1. See also Helms, *Iraq*, p. 30.

68. *Al-Nahār* (Beirut), 15 June 1979.

69. *Ṭarīq al-Sha'b* (Baghdad), 11 April 1979.

70. Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978* (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 178–183; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Pocketbook 1982* (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 36–41.

71. Amanda Cuthbert, "Iraq: Communists Under Pressure," *Arab Report*, 29 April 1979, pp. 11–12.

72. Memorandum of the central committee of the Iraq Communist Party to al-Bakr and Ḥusayn, cited in *Le Monde*, 23 March 1979.

73. Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, *Revolutionary Iraq, 1968–1973*, Report of the Eight Regional Party Congress (Baghdad: Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, 1974), p. 182.

74. *Al-Thawrah* (Baghdad), 8–10 September 1976.

75. Iraq, *al-Waqā'i'-l-'Irāqiyyah* [The Iraqi Gazette], 30 May 1970.

76. *Statistical Pocketbook 1976*, pp. 27–28.

77. *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, p. 25.

78. Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973* (Baghdad: Government Press, n.d.), p. 132; *Statistical Pocketbook 1976*, p. 29.

79. *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, p. 26.

80. Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Man: The Object of Revolution* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1978), p. 87; *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, pp. 56, 57, 59, 60.

81. Iraq, *Man*, p. 98; World Bank, *World Tables*, 3d ed., vol. 2, *Social Data* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 45.

82. *Statistical Pocketbook 1976*, p. 29; Iraq, *Man*, p. 45.

83. *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, p. 26.

84. *Middle East Economic Digest* (*MEED*) (London) 28 (13 January 1984):14.

85. Iraq, *Man,* p. 34; *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978,* p. 135; *Statistical Pocketbook 1982,* p. 46.

86. The figures for 1968 are taken from Zeki Fattah, "Development and Structural Change in the Iraqi Economy and Manufacturing Industry: 1960–1970," *World Development* 7 (1979):813; the 1980 figures are from United States Interests Section, "Foreign Economic Trends Report: Iraq 1984" (Baghdad: United States Interests Section, 1984), p. 2.

87. Claudia Wright, "Iraq: New Power in the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs* 58 (Winter 1979/1980):272.

88. Iraq, *Man,* p. 133.

89. Ibid., p. 57; U.S. Interests Section, "Report: Iraq 1984," p. 15; *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973,* p. 177; *Statistical Pocketbook 1982,* p. 32.

90. Iraq, *Man,* p. 61.

91. *Al-Thawrah* (Baghdad), 3 March 1980.

Chapter 9

1. Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1958* (Baghdad: Zahra Press, 1959), p. 342; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Abstract 1965* (Baghdad: Government Press, 1966), p. 394; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Pocketbook 1976* (Baghdad: Government Press, n.d.), p. 111; "The 1981 Budget," *Arab World File* 1879 (1981):Irq 1701/7.

2. United Nations, Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA), "Industrial Development in Iraq: Prospects and Problems" (ECWA, Beirut, 1979, unpublished paper), p. 7.

3. Ibid.

4. "The 1981 Budget," Irq 1701/7.

5. ECWA, "Industrial Development," p. 9.

6. Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Pocketbook 1982* (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 49–50.

7. "Oil: Iraq," *Arab World File* 1939 (1979):III i7.

8. Exxon, *Middle East Oil,* 2d ed., Exxon Background Series, September 1980, p. 9.

9. Richard Nyrop, ed., *Iraq, A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1979), p. 145.

10. "Special Report: Iraq," *Middle East Economic Digest* (*MEED*) (London) 26 (October 1982):9.

11. Ibid., pp. 9–11.

12. "Oil: Iraq," *Arab World File* 1364 (1979):III i6.

13. United States Interests Section, "Foreign Economic Trends Report: Iraq 1984" (Baghdad: United States Interests Section, 1984), p. 9.

14. "Oil: Iraq," *Arab World File* 1382 (1979):III i9.

15. "Foreign Economic Trends Report: Iraq 1984," p. 10.

16. "Special Report: Iraq," p. 11.

17. ECWA, "Industrial Development," p. 42.

18. World Bank, *World Tables,* 3d ed., vol. 1, *Economic Data* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), pp. 90–91. For an exposition of the growth of industry in this period, see also Zeki Fattah, "Production, Capital Stock, Productivity and Growth in the Industrial Sector of an Oil Economy: Iraq, 1960–1970" (Ph.D. diss., Oxford University, 1976); Zeki Fattah, "Devel-

opment and Structural Change in the Iraqi Economy and Manufacturing Industry: 1960–1970," *World Development* 7 (1979):813, 821, and note 1, p. 822.

19. *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, pp. 29, 30, 32. Small establishments are those employing under ten workers; large, those employing ten or more.

20. Ibid.

21. Fattah, "Production, Capital Stock," p. 190.

22. Ibid., p. 150.

23. Ibid., pp. 152–153. In fact, capital productivity declined 48.8 percent in this period, an annual average decrease of 5.1 percent (except for one year, 1967). Ibid., p. 153.

24. ECWA, "Industrial Development," pp. 125–126.

25. These bottlenecks have been amply documented, for example, by Edith Penrose, "Industrial Policy and Performance in Iraq," in Abbas Kelidar, ed., *The Integration of Modern Iraq* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), pp. 150, 155–161; Edith Penrose and E. F. Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978), pp. 470–476; Fattah, "Production, Capital Stock," p. 165; and Yusif Sayigh, *The Economies of the Arab World: Development Since 1945* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), p. 42.

26. *Quarterly Economic Review, Iraq* (*QER, Iraq*) (*Economist,* London), 1978, no. 4:13.

27. *QER, Iraq*, 1978, no. 1:2, 12.

28. Fattah, "Production, Capital Stock," p. 144.

29. Keith McLachlan, "Iraq: Problems of Regional Development," in Kelidar, *Integration of Modern Iraq*, p. 146.

30. "Agriculture," *Arab World File* 288 (1975):I i21.

31. *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, p. 23.

32. "Special Report: Iraq," p. 30.

33. World Bank, *World Development Report, 1983* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 159.

34. Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973* (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 105, 113; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978* (Baghdad: Central Statistical Organization, n.d.), pp. 58, 61. As Penrose and Penrose warn, these figures must be viewed with considerable caution. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, p. 457.

35. ECWA, "Industrial Development," p. 14.

36. Ibid., p. 28.

37. *World Development Report, 1983*, p. 159.

38. "Special Report: Iraq," p. 30.

39. *World Tables*, 3d ed., vol. 2, *Social Data* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 45.

40. McLachlan, "Iraq," p. 146.

41. Ibid., p. 147.

42. *MEED* 27 (12 August 1983), p. 24.

43. World Bank, *World Tables* 2:45; *World Development Report, 1983,* p. 197.

44. Nils Strom, "Manpower in Iraq: Population Growth, Education, and Economic Development," Manpower Report No. 16 (Beirut: ECWA, 1970), p. 15.

45. *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, p. 58.

46. *World Tables* 2:45.

47. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978,* p. 35.

48. Suad Joseph, "The Iraqi State's Mobilization of Women into the Wage Labor Force" (Paper presented at symposium, Iraq: The Contemporary State, Exetor, Eng., July 1981), pp. 5–6. Typescript.

49. *Statistical Abstract 1958*, pp. 328, 329; *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, p. 65.

50. *Statistical Abstract 1958*, p. 331; *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, p. 68.

51. *World Tables* 2:45.

52. *World Development Report, 1983*, p. 193.

53. Sayigh, *Economies of the Arab World*, p. 45.

54. *World Tables* 1:90–91.

55. The most accurate figures on employment are derived from the 1977 census and are contained in the *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978*. The figures prior to that date are estimates made by Nils Strom, United Nations labor expert. See *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973*, p. 138.

56. For example, Table 9.8 contains a column "others," the components of which are not known. This group may include people employed in the "informal" service sector in such jobs as petty traders, difficult to measure.

57. ECWA, "Industrial Development," pp. 24–25.

58. The World Bank gives an employment figure of 42 percent for agriculture in 1980. *World Tables* 2:45.

59. J. S. Birks and C. Sinclair, "The Challenge of Human Resources Development in Iraq," Tim Niblock, ed., *Iraq: The Contemporary State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), p. 248.

60. Sayigh, *Economies of the Arab World*, p. 50.

61. McLachlan, "Iraq," p. 149.

62. ECWA, "Industrial Development," p. 22.

63. Ibid., p. 28.

64. *World Tables* 2:45.

65. ECWA, "Industrial Development," p. 10.

66. *World Tables* 1:91.

67. Shakir Moosa Issa, "Distribution of Income in Iraq, 1971" (Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1978), p. ii.

68. Ibid., p. 171.

69. Ibid., p. ii.

70. Ibid., p. 243. See also McLachlan, "Iraq," p. 139.

71. Issa, "Distribution of Income"; Kelidar, *Integration of Modern Iraq*, p. 132.

72. *Statistical Abstract 1958*, p. 12; *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973*, pp. 43, 63. For the purposes of the census, Iraqis define an urban place as one with a municipal government. This would include some settlements not genuinely urban in structure and occupation. On the other hand, many urbanized suburbs are not classified as such. On balance, therefore, the level of urbanization in the census data is probably reasonably accurate. R. I. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population Patterns," in *Populations of the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. J. I. Clarke and W. F. Fisher (London: University of London Press, 1972), p. 115.

73. *World Development Report, 1983*, p. 191.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid.; *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, p. 11.

76. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," p. 122.

77. *World Development Report, 1983*, p. 191.

78. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," p. 123.

79. *World Development Report, 1983*, p. 191.

80. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," p. 125.

81. Fahim Qubain, ***Education and Science in the Arab World*** (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966), p. 287.

82. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978*, p. 34.

83. Ibid., p. 258.

84. Ibid., p. 34.

85. Ibid., pp. 34, 38.

86. *Official Gazette* (Baghdad), 20 February 1978.

87. Amal Rassam, "Revolution Within the Revolution? Women and the State in Iraq," in Niblock, *Iraq*, p. 94.

88. Joseph, "Iraqi Mobilization of Women," pp. 14–15.

89. *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, pp. 56–57; *MEED* 27 (9 September 1983), p. 35.

90. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978*, pp. 38, 39, 93.

91. Joseph, "Iraqi Mobilization of Women," p. 3.

92. ECWA, "Industrial Development," p. 24.

93. The figures for 1958 and 1968 are taken from Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 1126; the figures for 1973, from the *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973*, p. 404.

94. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978*, pp. 39, 267.

95. ECWA, "Industrial Development," p. 13. These government employment figures exclude the armed forces, as do the figures above.

96. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978*, pp. 38, 39, 98, 118, 119, 125. Percentages of manual laborers are based on job breakdowns in various industries in the 1978 abstract.

97. *Statistical Pocketbook 1982*, pp. 29, 30, 81.

98. Birks and Sinclair, "Human Resource Development," p. 248.

99. Issa, "Distribution of Income," p. 234.

100. *Middle East Executive Reports* (Washington, D.C.) 4 (1981):14.

101. *Arab Report and Record* (London), 1–14 February 1978, p. 88.

102. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978*, pp. 46–47.

103. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1126.

104. Fattah, "Production, Capital Stock," p. 165.

105. Ibid., p. 191.

106. Nyrop, *Iraq*, p. 119.

107. U.S. Interests Section, "Report: Iraq 1984," p. 8.

108. *MEED* 27 (28 January 1983), p. 19.

109. The background data on the Baʿth leadership has been gathered by the author from various newspaper sources and interviews with Iraqis.

110. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1073.

111. Amazia Baram, "The June Elections to the National Assembly in Iraq," *Orient* 22:3 (September 1981):391–412.

112. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, p. 1078.

113. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," p. 123.

114. Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, pp. 182, 183, 248.

115. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978*, pp. 26, 221, 226, 239, 245. In determining *shīʿī* and *sunnī* provinces, those with a mixed population (Baghdad, Nineveh, and Basra) have been eliminated. The purely *shīʿī* provinces include Wāsiṭ, Babylon, Karbalā', al-Najaf, al-Qādisiÿyah, al-Muthannā, Maysān, and Dhī Qār; the purely *sunnī* provinces are Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, Diyālā, and al-Anbār.

116. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," p. 121; Hanna Batatu, "Iraq's Underground *Shīʿa* Movements: Characteristics, Causes, and Prospects," *Middle East Journal* 35 (1981):4.

117. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978,* pp. 26, 221, 239, 245. The mixed province of Kirkūk has not been included. The Kurdish provinces used here are those of the autonomous area: Dahūk, al-Sulaymāniyyah, and Arbīl.

118. Lawless, "Iraq: Changing Population," p. 123.

119. *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1978,* p. 27.

120. I am indebted to Muḥammad Dosky for his kindness in gathering this information for me during the meeting at which the new central committee members were elected.

121. Interview with an Iraqi who does not wish to be identified.

122. Iraq, Ministry of Culture and the Arts, *Culture and the Arts in Baghdad* (Baghdad: Ministry of Culture and the Arts, 1978), p. 45.

Chapter 10

1. *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), 17 July 1979.

2. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) (Washington, D.C.), 8 October 1980, E8.

3. Iraq News Agency (INA) (Baghdad), 29 June 1979, in FBIS, 2 July 1979, E4; INA, 30 June 1979, in FBIS, 3 July 1979, E1; INA, 4 August 1980, in FBIS, 8 August 1980, E5.

4. *Middle East Economic Digest* (*MEED*) (London) 24 (18 April 1980):40.

5. The executions were kept secret in Iraq, but the news soon reached Iran, where there were large, anti-Iraqi demonstrations.

6. Text of Foreign Minister Saʿdūn Ḥammādī's speech, UN General Assembly, 3 October 1980, in FBIS, 7 October 1980, E1–6; UN Security Council, 16 October 1980, in FBIS, 17 October 1980, E1–8.

7. *Quarterly Economic Review, Iraq* (*QER, Iraq*) (*Economist,* London), 1983, no. 2:5.

8. *New York Times,* 30 March 1984.

9. *MEED* 28 (16 March 1984):25. See also United States Interests Section, "Foreign Economic Trends Report: Iraq 1984" (Baghdad: United States Interests Section, 1984), p. 6.

10. U.S. Interests Section, "Report: Iraq 1984," p. 9.

11. Anthony Cordesman, "The Iran-Iraq War in 1984: An Escalating Threat to the Gulf and the West," *Armed Forces Journal International,* March 1984, p. 23.

12. *New York Times,* 4 June 1984.

13. *New York Times,* 24 May 1984.

14. Cordesman, "Iran-Iraq War," p. 24. Other estimates placed the total killed in 1984 at 100,000–150,000, wounded at 400,000, and prisoners of war at 60,000–70,000. *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (Washington, D.C.) 3 (28 May 1984):3. In the absence of hard information, it is difficult to confirm either set of figures.

15. Cordesman, "Iran-Iraq War," p. 24. Again, the *Washington Report* gives higher figures for Iranian casualties: 300,000 killed, 750,000 wounded, and 15,000 taken prisoner. *Washington Report,* 28 May 1984, p. 3.

16. U.S. Interests Section, "Report: Iraq 1984," p. 4.

17. "Special Report: Iraq," *MEED* 26 (October 1982):4.

18. U.S. Interests Section, "Report: Iraq 1984," p. 8.
19. *MEED* 28 (13 January 1984):14.
20. Ibid.
21. *MEED* 28 (20 April 1984):27.
22. *MEED* 28 (17 February 1984):19.
23. *MEED* 27 (9 September 1983):35.
24. Thomas Mullen, "Will Saddam Outlast the Iran Iraq War?" ***Middle East Insight*** 3 (1984):36.
25. London *Economist* 288 (29 January 1983):46.
26. FBIS, 29 June 1982, E1–2.
27. INA, 27 April 1983, in BBC, weekly economic report, 10 May 1983.
28. *QER*, *Iraq*, 1983, no. 4:12.
29. *Wall Street Journal*, 3 October 1983.
30. *QER*, *Iraq*, 1983, no. 4:11.
31. *Al-Muṣawwar* (Cairo), 19 January 1984, in FBIS, 19 January 1984, E1.
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The Land and People of Iraq

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Iraq Under the Ottomans

This period has largely been neglected by scholars and no good general history of the entire period exists. The two standard works are Stephen Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Beirut: Lebanon Bookstore, 1968 reprint of Oxford University Press 1925 original), and ʿAbbās al-ʿAzzāwī, *Taʾrīkh al-ʿIrāq bayn Iḥtilālayn* [The History of Iraq between Two Occupations], 8 vols. (Baghdad:

Sharikat al-Tijārah wa-l-Ṭibā'ah, 1956). Both are little more than detailed chronologies, although the former is more succinct and readable than the latter. Briefer summaries of the period may be found in M. Huart, *Histoire de Baghdad dans les temps modernes* (Paris: Leroux, 1901), and 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī, "Baghdad," in *Encyclopedia of Islam,* new ed. (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1960), 1:894–908. A good commentary on the social aspects of the period is contained in 'Alī al-Wardī, *Lamaḥāt Ijtimā'iyyah min Ta'rīkh al-'Irāq al-Ḥadīth* [Social Aspects of the Modern History of Iraq] (Baghdad: Maṭba'at 'Irshād, 1969). Saleh Haider, "Land Problems of Iraq" (Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1942), covers in detail the problems of tribal settlement and land tenure left by the Ottomans. The section on Iraq in *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800–1914,* edited by Charles Issawi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), has an excellent selection of scholarly excerpts dealing with economic changes in Iraq during the last century of Ottoman rule. One of the only accounts of the Mamlūk period is given in Aḥmad 'Alī al-Ṣūfī, *al-Mamālik fi-l-'Irāq* [The Mamlūks in Iraq] (Mosul: Maṭba'at al-Ittiḥād, 1954). For an analysis of the social and intellectual changes in the last quarter of the nineteenth century the best work is 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Qaysī, *The Impact of Modernization on Iraqi Society During the Ottoman Era* (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1958). Of the various travelers' accounts that give descriptions of Iraq in this period, J. B. Rousseau, *Description du pachalik de Baghdad* (Paris: Treuttel & Würtz, 1809); Habib Chiha, *La Province de Baghdad* (Cairo: Imprimerie el-Maarif, 1908); and James Frazer, *Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia, Etc.* (London: Bentley, 1840), are among the best. A colorful picture of life in Iraq at the end of the Ottoman era is contained in several memoirs of Iraqi politicians, among them Sulaymān Fayḍī, *Fī Ghamrat al-Niḍāl* [In the Heat of the Struggle] (Baghdad: 'Abd al-Majīd Sulaymān Fayḍī, 1952), and 'Abd al-'Azīz Qaṣṣāb, *Min Dhikrayātī* [From My Memories] (Beirut: Editions Oueidat, 1966).

The British Occupation and the Mandate

This subject has been dealt with extensively, and only the most useful works can be mentioned here. By far the most essential work on this period, and in fact on Iraqi history up to 1958, is 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Ta'rīkh al-Wizārāt al-'Irāqiyyah* [The History of Iraqi Cabinets], 10 vols. (Sidon: Maṭba'at al-Īrfān, 1953–1967). Although weak on analysis, it is exhaustive in its inclusion of facts, documents, and statements from participants in the main historical events. A more recent study of Iraq by Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), is not only a definitive study of social structure, but also contains a wealth of political material on this period. Two standard older works that draw heavily on a wealth of British documents are Stephen Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), and Philip Ireland, *Iraq: A Study in Political Development* (New York: Macmillan, 1938). An inside account of events as well as the view of the India School can be found in A. T. Wilson, *Loyalties: Mesopotamia, 1914–1917* and *Mesopotamia: 1917–1920, A Clash of Loyalties* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930, 1931). For the opposing view see Elizabeth Burgoyne, *Gertrude Bell, From Her Personal Papers, 1914–1926* (London: Ernest Benn, 1961). British accounts of affairs in Kurdistan just before the mandate are to be found in W. R. Hay, *Two Years in Kurdistan: Experiences of a Political Officer, 1918–1920* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1921), and E.

B. Soane, *To Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise*, 2d ed. (London: John Murray, 1926). Edith Penrose and E. F. Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978), contains an interesting analysis of the international politics behind the mandate. Specialized studies of the mandate are to be found in Marion Kent, *Oil and Empire: British Policy and Mesopotamian Oil, 1900–1920* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976); Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq, 1914–1932* (London: Ithaca Press, 1976); Aaron S. Klieman, *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: The Cairo Conference of 1921* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970); Stuart Cohen, *British Policy in Mesopotamia, 1903–1914* (London: Ithaca Press, 1976); and Helmut Mejcher, *The Imperial Quest for Oil: Iraq, 1910–1928* (London: Ithaca Press, 1976). Official accounts of British policy and the mandate regime are to be found in Great Britain, India Office, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1920), and in Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Report on the Administration of Iraq, 1922–1932,* 10 vols. (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1924–1933). A summation of these is contained in Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Special Report on the Progress of Iraq During the Period 1920–1931* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1931). Some insights on Iraqi politics in the period are contained in Khayrī-l-'Umarī, *Ḥikāyāt Siyāsiyyah min Ta'rīkh al-'Irāq al-Ḥadīth* [Political Tales from the Modern History of Iraq] (Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 1961).

The Struggle for Independence

The material on this subject is much scarcer, and most of it has focused on the 1920 revolt. One of the more recent studies is Ja'far al-Khayyāṭ, *al-Thawrah-l-'Irāqiyyah* [The Iraqi Revolt] (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub, 1971). 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī also has a volume out, *al-Thawrah-l- 'Irāqiyyah-l-Kubrā* [The Great Iraqi Revolt] (Sidon: Maṭba'at al-'Irfān, 1952). An inside view that presents the various strands in the independence movement from the prewar period to about 1922 is Muḥammad Mahdī al-Baṣīr, *Ta'rīkh al-Qaḍiyyah-l-'Irāqiyyah* [The History of the Iraqi Question], 2 vols. (Baghdad: Maṭba'at al-Falāḥ, 1923). Among the memoirs that deal with this period are 'Alī Jawdat, *Dhikrayātī* [My Memories] (Beirut: Maṭba'at al-Wafā', 1968); Sāti'-l-Ḥuṣrī, *Mudhakkirātī fi-l-'Irāq* [My Memoirs in Iraq], 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1967) and those of Sulaymān Fayḍī, *In the Heat of the Struggle*. A collection of eleven biographies of key mandate figures, with interesting insights, is to be found in Khayrī-l-'Umarī, *Shakhsiyyāt 'Irāqiyyah* [Iraqi Personalities] (Baghdad: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1955).

Independent Iraq to World War II

The best accounts covering this period are to be found in Majid Khadduri, *Independent Iraq 1932–1958* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), and in Batatu, *The Old Social Classes.* The standard version of the Assyrian affair is that published by R. S. Stafford, *The Tragedy of the Assyrians* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1935). Stafford was a British officer who served in Mosul at the time. This has been criticized and updated in Khaldun S. Husry, "The Assyrian Affair of 1933," I and II, in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5, 2 and 3 (1974). An excellent study of the army and its role in Iraq between 1920 and 1941 is Mohammad Tarbush, *The role of the Military in Politics, a Case Study of Iraq to 1941* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1982). On the Rashīd 'Ālī movement there is no shortage of material, particularly by Iraqis. German involvement is meticulously presented by the Polish scholar Lukasz Hirszowitz in *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966). The German point of view, as well as an interesting analysis of Iraq, is put forth by Fritz Grobba, *Irak* (Berlin: Junker and Dunnhaupt, 1941). Grobba was the German representative in Baghdad until just before the events of 1941 and played an important role in the prelude to the coup.

Iraqi accounts of the movement and its aftermath from a nationalist point of view are found in 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *al-Asrār al-Khafiyyah* [The Hidden Secrets] (Sidon: Maṭba'at al-'Irfān, 1958), and Maḥmūd al-Durrah, *al-Ḥarb al-'Irāqiyyah-l-Barīṭāniyyah, 1941* [The Iraqi-British War of 1941] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1969). A thorough academic study of the Rashīd 'Ālī movement is to be found in Ismā'īl Aḥmad Yāghī, *Ḥarakat Rashīd 'Ālī al-Kaylānī* [The Rashīd 'Ālī al-Kaylānī Movement] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1974), and an excellent biography of Yūnis al-Sab'āwī has been written by Khayrī-l-'Umarī, *Yūnis al-Sab'āwī: Sīrat Siyāsī 'Iṣāmī* [Yūnis al-Sab'āwī: Biography of a Self-made Politician] (Baghdad: Ministry of Culture and Information, 1980). Among the memoirs by major participants in the events are those of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ṣabbāgh, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (Damascus, n.p., 1956); 'Uthmān Ḥaddād, *Ḥarakat Rashīd 'Ālī al-Kaylānī* [The Rashīd 'Ālī al-Kaylānī Movement] (Sidon: al-Maktabah-l-'Aṣriyyah, n.d.); Nājī Shawkat, *Sīrah wa Dhikrayāt Thamānīn 'Amman, 1894–1974* [Biography and Memories Through Eighty Years, 1894–1974] (Beirut: Maṭba'at Dār al-Kutub, n.d.); Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī, *Mudhakkirātī, 1919–1943* [My Memoirs, 1919–1943] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1967); and 'Alī Maḥmūd al-Shaykh 'Alī, *Muḥākamātunā-l-Wijāhiyyah* [Our Face-to-Face Trials] (Sidon: al-Maktabah-l-'Aṣriyyah, n.d.). Sketches of Iraq and Iraqis during this period are to be found in Alan David MacDonald, *Euphrates Exile* (London: Bell, 1946), and Freya Stark, *Baghdad Sketches* (London: John Murray, 1946).

The Post–World War II Monarchy

In addition to Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, and Khadduri, *Independent Iraq*, a good general history is provided in Stephen Longrigg and Frank Stoakes, *Iraq* (London: Ernest Benn, 1958), an updated version of Longrigg's *Iraq, 1900 to 1950* with much social material. Two books that include factual but little analytical material are Fahim Qubain, *The Reconstruction of Iraq, 1950–1957* (London: Stevens, 1958), and George Harris, *Iraq: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture* (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press, 1958). Elie Kedourie, "The Kingdom of Iraq: A Retrospect," in *The Chatham House Version and Other Essays* (New York: Praeger, 1970), has a critical but incisive analysis of the monarchy and its politicians. The main wealth of material for these years, however, is to be found in a series of memoirs published by leading Iraqi politicians since 1958. These memoirs cover various periods of time, usually from 1920 to 1958 with particular emphasis on the 1950s. Their usefulness varies. Most significant are those of Ṭaha-l-Hāshimī (*Memoirs*), mainly because they constitute a diary of the author's reflections at the time, and those of Tawfīq al-Suwaydī, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (Beirut: Dār al-Kātib al-'Arabī, 1969). Also important are Jawdat, *Memories*, and Khalil Kannah, *al-'Irāq, Amsuhu wa Ghaduhu* [Iraq, its Past and its Future] (Beirut: Dār al-Rīḥānī, 1966). These naturally reflect an establishment point of view. The same can be said of Ibrāhīm al-Rāwī, *Min al-Thawrah-l-'Arabiyyah-l-Kubrā ilā-l-'Irāq al-Ḥadīth: Dhikrayātī* [From the Great Arab Revolt to Modern Iraq: My Memories] (Beirut: Maṭba'at Dār al-Kutub, 1969), and Jamīl al-Ūrfahlī, *Lamaḥāt min Dhikrayāt Wazīr 'Irāqī Sābiq* [Highlights from the Memories of a Former Iraqi Minister] (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāh, 1971). Representative of the opposition in this period are the memoirs of Kāmil al-Jādirjī, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1970) and *Min Awrāq Kāmil al-Jādirjī* [From the Papers of Kāmil al-Jādirjī] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1971), and Fāḍil Ḥusayn, *Ta'rīkh al-Hizb al-Waṭanī al-Dimuqrāṭī* [The History of the National Democratic Party] (Baghdad: Maṭba'at al-Sha'b, 1963), for the National Democratic Party; Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1965), and 'Abd al-Amīr Hādī al-'Akām, *Ta'rīkh Ḥizb al-Istiqlāl al-'Irāqī, 1946–1958* [The History of the Iraqi Independence Party, 1946–1958] (Baghdad: Ministry of Culture and Information, 1980), for the Istiqlāl; and Ṭālib Mushtāq, *Awrāq Ayyāmī* [Papers from my Days] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1968), for the nationalist point of view in general. More recently a Communist version of these events has been published: 'Abd al-Karīm Ḥassūn al-Jār Allah, *Taṣaddu'-l-Basharīyyah* [The Crack-up of Humanity] (Beirut: al-Maktabah-l-'Aṣriyyah, n.d.).

Representing a Western point of view and more of interest for the opinions expressed than for incisive analysis are two books, by the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Waldemar Gallman, *Iraq Under General Nuri* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964); and by Britain's prime minister, Anthony Eden, *Full Circle* (London: Cassell, 1960). The only biography of Nūrī al-Sa'īd is Lord Birdwood, *Nuri as-Said* (London: Cassell, 1959). Essential for an understanding of Iraq's involvement in Syrian affairs is Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).

Economic and Social Developments

Both the development program under the old regime and the opposition to emerging social conditions have inspired a number of economic and sociological studies on Iraq. Unquestionably the most comprehensive and authoritative study on the social structure of the old regime is contained in Batatu's volume, *The Old Social Classes*. A short but excellent summary of social conditions in this period has been written by David Pool, "From Elite to Class: The Transformation of Iraqi Political Leadership," in *The Integration of Modern Iraq*, edited by Abbas Kelidar (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979). The best overall analysis of economics and oil policy in this and later periods is Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*. The best summation of the agricultural situation is contained in Doreen Warriner, *Land Reform and Development in the Middle East* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1957). For more detailed studies of the landholding system there are two excellent works. One is the classic examination of the landholding system and the recommendation that led to the misguided policy followed by the government: Ernest Dowson, *An Inquiry into Land Tenure and Related Questions* (Letchworth, Eng.: Garden City Press, 1932); the other is A.P.G. Poyck, *Farm Studies in Iraq* (Wageningen, Netherlands, 1962). The best sociological study of relations between landowners and peasants in the mid-Euphrates is that of Robert Fernea, *Shaikh and Effendi* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970). Two good monographs on Iraqi rural conditions are Ja'far al-Khayyāṭ, *al-Qaryah-l-'Irāqiyyah* [The Iraqi Village] (Beirut: Dār al-Kashshāf, 1950), and Salīm's study, *Marsh Dwellers*. Among several good works on peasant conditions and the need for land reform are Muḥammad 'Alī-l-Sūrī, *al-Iqtā' fī-*

l-Liwā’-al-Kūt [Feudalism in the Kūt *Liwā’*] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-Sa‘d, 1959), and ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ẓāhir, *Fī-l-Iṣlāḥ al-Zirā‘ī wa-l-Siyāsī* [Toward Agrarian and Political Reform] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at Shafīq, 1959).

The best review of the accomplishments of the development program, as seen by one of its architects, is ‘Abd al-Raḥman al-Jalīlī, *al-I‘mār fī-l-‘Irāq* [Development in Iraq] (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāh, 1968). This should be counterbalanced by James Salter, *The Development of Iraq* (Baghdad: Iraq Development Board, 1955), which criticizes some aspects of the development policy and which helped set new directions in development policy. More detailed monographs on the economy are K. G. Fenelon, *Iraq: National Income and Expenditure, 1950–1956* (Baghdad: al-Rābitaḥ Press, 1958); Khair el-Din Haseeb [Khayr al-Dīn Ḥasīb], *The National Income of Iraq, 1953–1961* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964); and Ferhang Jalal, *The Role of Government in the Industrialization of Iraq, 1950–1965* (London: Cass, 1972). Other useful works are Kathleen Langley, *The Industrialization of Iraq* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961), and Abbas al-Nasrawi, *Financing Economic Development in Iraq: The Role of Oil in a Middle Eastern Economy* (New York, Praeger, 1967). Statistical data is available in numerous Iraqi publications, most notably Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstracts 1947–1957* (Baghdad: Government Press 1949–1958), *Statistical Abstract 1958* (Baghdad: Zahra Press, 1959).

Education in Iraq

A number of competent works are available. For the Ottoman period the best sources are ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Hilālī, *Ta’rīkh al-Ta‘līm fī-l-‘Irāq fī-l-Ahd al-‘Uthmānī, 1638–1917* [The History of Education in Iraq in the Ottoman Era, 1638–1917] (Baghdad: National Printing and Publishing Company, 1959), and al-Qaysī, *Impact of Modernization.* An inside account of the mandate period is given in the memoirs of Sāṭi‘-l-Ḥuṣrī, *Mudhakkirātī* [My Memoirs], and John Diskin provides a comparison of Ottoman and mandate education in "The Genesis of the Government Education System in Iraq" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1971). Al-Ḥuṣrī's influence is analyzed in part in William Cleveland, *The Making of an Arab Nationalist* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971). The development of education in the post–World War II period is covered in a booklet by the Arab Information Center, *Education in Iraq* (New York: Arab Information Center, 1966), and in Ḥasan al-Dujaylī, *Muqaddimat al-Ta‘līm al-‘Ālī fī-l-‘Irāq* [An Introduction to Higher Education in Iraq] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at ‘Irshād, 1963). Fahim Qubain, *Education and Science in the Arab World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966), contains a good statistical survey of Iraqi higher education both before and after the revolution.

The Press

The two standard works are ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Ta’rīkh al-Ṣiḥāfaḥ-l-‘Irāqiyyah* [A History of the Iraqi Press] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-Zahrā’, 1957), and Rūfā’īl Buṭṭī, *al-Ṣiḥāfah fī-l-‘Irāq* [The Press in Iraq] (Cairo: Dār al-Hanā’, 1955). In English, Foreign Area Studies, *Area Handbook,* and Harris, *Iraq,* contain chapters on the press.

Iraqi Literature and Art

There is considerable material in Arabic, very little in Western languages. On the novel and short story among the best sources are ‘Alī Jawād al-Ṭāhir, *Fī-l-Qaṣaṣ al-‘Irāqī-l-Mu‘āṣir* [On the Contemporary Iraqi Short Story] (Beirut: al-Maktabah-l-‘Aṣriyyah, 1965) and Ja‘far al-Khalīlī, *al-Qiṣṣah-l-‘Irāqiyyah, Qadīman wa Ḥadīthan* [The Iraqi Short Story, Old and New] (Beirut: Maṭba‘at al-Anṣāf, 1962). Pierre Rossi, "Littérature Irakienne d'aujourd'hui," *Orient* 4 (1957):17–36, deals with the literature of the 1950s. Articles and translations of Iraqi short stories have appeared in *Orient* and in the *Journal of Arabic Literature*.

Works on Iraqi poets and poetry are voluminous. The best work in English is Salma Khadra Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements in Contemporary Arabic Poetry* (London: University of London, 1970). Among the most useful sources in Arabic are ‘Īsā Yūsuf Bullāṭah, *al-Rūmānantiqiyyah wa Ma‘ālimuha fi-l-Shi‘r al-‘Irāqī al-Ḥadīth* [Romanticism and its Characteristics in Modern Iraqi Poetry] (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfah, 1960), and two books on Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb, one by Bullāṭah, *Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Nahār lil-Nashr, 1971), the other by Iḥsān ‘Abbās, *Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb* (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfah, 1969). In Western languages there are several good articles, including that by Pierre Rossi, "Impressions sur la poesie d'Irak," *Orient* 12 (1959):199–212, and Jabra Jabra, "Modern Arabic Literature and the West," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 2 (1971):77–91. Translations of the poets can also be found in the *Journal of Arabic Literature*. An analysis of the content of the earlier poets, al-Raṣāfī and al-Jawāhirī, can be found in al-Qaysī, *Impact of Modernization*.

On the modern art of Iraq, the best pieces are the article by Jabra Jabra, "L'Art moderne en Irak," *Orient* 17 (1961):109–117; and Khaldun al-Husry, "The Wandering," *Middle East Forum* 33 (1958).

Revolutionary Regimes of the Military Era

This area of study suffers from a lack of original source material, particularly as many critical events were conducted in secrecy. Memoirs and accounts are often self-serving, and the situation worsens the closer one draws to the contemporary period. On the Qāsim era a number of standard works are available. Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qassem* (New York: Praeger, 1969), deals with the subject in a straight political account drawn largely from newspaper sources. Bernard Vernier, *L'Irak d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1963), presents more information on social and economic conditions but often with a broad brush stroke that leaves many minor inaccuracies. Majid Khadduri, *Republican Iraq* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969) draws on extensive interviews with participants, a factor that makes his work more authoritative. In many ways these books have now been superceded by Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq*, and Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*. The Penroses, who observed many events of the period firsthand, are the most sympathetic toward Qāsim.

The causes of the revolution of 1958 as seen through the eyes of Iraqis are well set forth by an unidentified Englishman, Caractacus [pseud.], in *Revolution in Iraq: An Essay in Comparative Public Opinion* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1959). An inside account of the development of the Free Officers' movement is given by a member, Ṣabīḥ ‘Alī Ghālib, in *Qiṣṣat Thawrat 14 Tammūz wa-l-Ḍubbāṭ al-Aḥrār* [The Story of the Revolution of 14 July and the Free Officers] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah, 1968). Although it must be used with some caution because of the self-interest of the participants, the trial of ‘Abd al-Salām ‘Ārif, recorded in Iraq, Ministry of Defense, Coordinating Committee for the Special High Military Court, *Muḥākamāt* [Trials], vol. 5 (Baghdad: Ministry of Defense, 1958–1962), has fascinating material on the Free Officers' movement, as well as on the later split between ‘Ārif and Qāsim. On the assassination of the royal family there are several accounts, the first in *al-Ḥayāh*, "Majzarat Qaṣr al-Riḥāb" [Massacre in the Riḥāb Palace] (Beirut: Dār al-Ḥayāh, 1960), written shortly after the event and containing some factual errors. This account has definitely been superceded by the work of a member of the Royal Guard who was present at the time: Fāliḥ Ḥanẓal, *Asrār Maqtal al-‘Ā'ilah-l-Malikah fi-l-‘Irāq 14 Tammūz, 1958* [Secrets of the Murder of the Royal Family in Iraq 14 July 1958] (n.p., 1971). Fāḍil Ḥusayn, *Suqūṭ al-Niẓām al-Malikī fi-l-‘Irāq* [The Fall of the Monarchical Regime in Iraq] (n.p., al-Munaẓẓamah-l-‘Arabiyyah lil Tarbiyyah wa-l-Thaqāfah wa-l-‘Ulūm, 1974), adds little to the previous accounts.

A highly colored view of the Qāsim era can be found in a collection of Qāsim's speeches, ‘Abd al-Karīm Qāsim, *Mabādi' Thawrat 14 Tammūz fi Khuṭab* [The Principles of the 14 July Revolution in Speeches] (Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-Ḥukūmah, 1958–1961), and in Iraq, Committee for the Celebrations of the 14 July Revolution, *The Iraqi Revolution in its First Year* (Baghdad: Times Press, 1959). A new volume of *The Iraqi Revolution*, containing an account of the regime's accomplishments, was published every year until 1962. On the role of the Communist Party under Qāsim, Batatu's work, *The Old Social Classes*, which deals exhaustively with the ICP from a wealth of data, including secret ICP publications and the government's intelligence documents, is definitive. Rony Gabbay, *Communism and Agrarian Reform in Iraq* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), is more limited in scope. For opposition to Qāsim there is no dearth of material. A number of tracts have been published, some more reasoned than others. Among the better of these are Khaldūn al-Ḥuṣrī, *Thawrat 14 Tammūz* [The 14 July Revolution] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah, 1963); Muṣṭafā Shākir Salīm, *Min Mudhakkirāt Qawmī Muta'āmir* [From the Memoirs of a Nationalist Plotter] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah, 1960); and ‘Adnān al-Rāwī, *Min al-Qāhirah ilā mu‘taqal Qāsim* [From Cairo to the Assassination of Qāsim] (Beirut: Dār al-Adāb, 1963). Muhammad Bāqir Sharrī in *al-‘Irāq al-Thā'ir* [Iraq in Revolution] (Beirut: Dār al-Kātib al-‘Arabī, 1963) has interviews with various leaders, including Qāsim, ‘Abd al-Salām ‘Ārif, and Nājī Ṭālib. Ibrāhīm Kubbah, *Hādhā Huwa Ṭarīq 14 Tammūz* [This Is the Way of the 14 July (Revolution)] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘ah, 1969), expresses left-wing dissatisfaction, whereas Jāsim Mukhliṣ, *Mudhakkirāt al-Ṭabaqjalī wa Dhikrayāt Jāsim Mukhliṣ al-Muḥāmī* [Memoirs of al-Ṭabaqjalī and Memories of Jāsim Mukhliṣ the Lawyer] (Sidon: al-Maktabah-l-‘Aṣriyyah, 1969), expresses the nationalist point of view.

The 14 Ramaḍān revolt and the short-lived Ba‘th regime that followed Qāsim need to be put into the perspective of Ba‘th politics. There are several good books in English that do this, among them Kemal Abu Jaber, *The Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966), and Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971). To these should be added two works that deal specifically with internal party struggles in this period: Itamar Rabinovich, *Syria Under the Ba‘th, 1963–1966* (New York: Halsted Press, 1972), and John Devlin, *The Ba‘th Party: A History from Its Origins to 1966* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institute Press, 1976).

Ba‘thists themselves have written voluminously on their party and its ideology. On the latter, the classic is still Michel ‘Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī* [In the Cause of the Arab Resurrection], 2d ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1963). The Ba'th Party National Command, *Niḍāl al-Ba'th* [The Ba'th Struggle], vol. 4 (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1964), includes the important proceedings of the sixth Ba'th congress in 1963, which contributed to the downfall of the Ba'th regime in Iraq in that year. Also useful in shedding light on this experience is Munīf al-Razzāz, *al-Tajribah-l-Murrah* [The Bitter Experience] (Beirut: Dār al-Ghandūr, 1967). For the point of view of a Ba'thist who later defected there is Fu'ād al-Rikābī, *al-Ḥall al-Awḥad* [The Sole Solution] (Cairo: al-Sharikah-l-'Arabiyyah līl Ṭibā'ah wa-l-Nashr, 1963). One of the best short accounts of the overthrow of the Ba'th in 1963 from one who observed it in Baghdad is E. F. Penrose, "L'Irak en 1963, une année de coups d'état," *Orient* 28 (1963):17.

On the 'Ārif regime little has yet been published. Of the standard works mentioned previously, Khadduri's *Republican Iraq* deals most extensively with the regime. 'Ārif's own views, as told to 'Alī Munīr, are represented in "Mudhakkirāt 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif" [The Memoirs of 'Abd al-Salām 'Ārif], *Rūz al-Yūsuf*, 30 May 1966. These must be used with considerable caution, however, as they are self-serving and were related to the interviewer from memory. A good analysis of the al-Bazzāz cabinet is to be found in Ernest Penrose, "Essai sur l'Irak," *Orient* 35 (1965); an exposition of al-Bazzāz's own views in a Western language is contained in "Tel est notre nationalisme" (extracts from *Hādhihī Qawmiyyatuna*), in *Orient* 35 (1965). For an analysis of changes in the structure of political elites in this period there are two articles: Phebe Marr, "Iraq's Leadership Dilemma: A Study in Leadership Trends, 1948–1968," *Middle East Journal* 24 (1970):283–301, and a longer chapter, "The Political Elite in Iraq," in George Lenczowski, *Political Elites in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1975). On the decline and ultimate overthrow of the regime, much detailed information is to be found in the *Middle East Record 1967* and the *Middle East Record 1968* (Tel Aviv: Shiloah Institute, 1973).

The Kurds

The Kurdish problem has received considerable attention in a number of recent works. The most detailed and balanced account of the Kurds in this period, drawing on diplomatic sources as well as interviews with the main participants, is Chris Kutschera, *Le Mouvement national Kurde* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979). The Kurdish point of view is well represented by a member of the Kurdish movement, Ismet Cheriff Vanley, *Le Kurdistan Irakien entite nationale* (Boudry-Neuchâtel, Switzerland: Editions de la Baconnière, 1970). Vanley also has a chapter, "Le Kurdistan d'Irak," in Gerard Chaliand, ed., *Les Kurdes et le Kurdistan* (Paris: François Maspero, 1978). A firsthand account of the Kurdish movement and the war during the early 1960s, as well as interviews with Kurdish leaders, is provided by Dana Adams Schmidt, *Journey Among Brave Men* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), and a short overview of the problem is presented in Derk Kinnane, *The Kurds and Kurdistan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964). Still another war account is given by Edgar O'Ballance, *The Kurdish Revolt, 1961–1970* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973). These are all fairly sympathetic to the Kurds. The Iraqi nationalist point of view is to be found in Maḥmūd al-Durrah, *al-Qaḍiyyah al-Kurdiyyah* [The Kurdish Question] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1966), and in two good recent accounts, by Edmond Ghareeb, *The Kurdish Question in Iraq* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1981), and Sa'ad Jawad, *Iraq and the Kurdish Question, 1958–1970* (London: Ithaca

Press, 1981). The most recent work on the Kurdish nationalist movement in the twentieth century is Stephen C. Pelletiere, *The Kurds: An Unstable Element in the Gulf* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984).

The Contemporary Ba'th Regime

Journalistic accounts abound, but good histories are rare, particularly in view of the difficulties of carrying out research in the country. The most recent account of the regime and the war by an author relatively sympathetic to the Ba'th is that of Christine Moss Helms, *Iraq Eastern Flank of the Arab World* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1984). This can be supplemented by Majid Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1978), but it is weak on social and economic affairs. Both Penrose and Penrose, *Iraq,* and Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* cover the Ba'th, but both stop in the mid-1970s. A good collection of essays assessing the political, economic, and social status of Iraq at the opening of the 1980s is contained in Tim Niblock, ed., *Iraq: The Contemporary State* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982). An interesting analysis of political dynamics within the regime is to be found in Abbas Kelidar, "Iraq: The Search for Stability," Conflict Studies, no. 59 (London: Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1975). The more recent volume edited by Kelidar, *Integration of Modern Iraq,* has a few excellent chapters—in particular the chapter by David Pool already mentioned, one by Edith Penrose on industrial policy, and one by Keith McLachlan on problems of regional development and agriculture—but the rest of the book is uneven. The book by Guerreau and Guerreau-Jalabert, *L'Iraq,* has much useful information on the Ba'th but little analysis. A better attempt to understand the regime, and Saddām Husayn, is the short article by Claudia Wright, "Iraq: New Power in the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs* 58 (Winter 1979/1980):257–277. A most useful work on Ṣaddām Ḥusayn and his role in Ba'th politics is a semiofficial biography by an Egyptian journalist, Amīr Iskandar, *Saddām Ḥusayn: Munāḍilān, Mufakkirān wa Insānān* [Ṣaddām Ḥusayn: The Fighter, the Thinker, and the Man] (n.p., Hachette, 1980), which fills several gaps in Western knowledge. For the thinking of the regime's leaders there are many published tracts, a number of them translated into English. The most important is the report of the eighth party congress, published by the Ba'th Party as *Revolutionary Iraq, 1968–1973* (Baghdad: Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, 1974). A number of speeches by Ṣaddām Ḥusayn have been translated by Khalid Kishtainy and published as *Saddam Hussein on Current Events in Iraq* (London: Longman, 1977). Also useful is Ṭāriq 'Azīz, *The Revolution of the New Way* (Milan: Grafis, 1977). The Baghdad weekly journal *Alif Bā'* publishes interviews and memoirs of key figures from time to time. The best source for daily events as well as ideology is the party newspaper *al-Thawrah,* published in Baghdad. In Western languages, *Le Monde* has had the best reporting on Iraq in this period, and the *Quarterly Economic Review, Iraq,* published by the *Economist* (London), has good analyses of political and economic developments.

There is a much better selection of material on Iraq's economic and social situation since the revolution than on its politics. On economics and oil in this period, the Penroses' book, *Iraq,* has the most depth; it also offers some penetrating criticisms. Batatu, *The Old Social Classes,* has a wealth of data and analyses on the Ba'th leaders as well as on social change in this period. A large number of economic studies of high quality have been published by Iraqis, among them Haseeb, *The National Income* and "Plan Implementation in Iraq, 1951–1967"

(ECWA, Beirut, 1969), Jalal, *The Role of Government*, and al-Nasrawi, *Financing Economic Development.* Two unpublished theses that are excellent in their measured assessment of economic progress are Zeki Fattah, "Production, Capital Stock, Productivity and Growth in the Industrial Sector of an Oil Economy: Iraq 1960–1970" (Ph.D. diss., Oxford University, 1976), and Shakir Moosa Issa, "Distribution of Income in Iraq, 1971" (Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1978). A number of unpublished studies on Iraq's labor force are to be found in the ECWA office in Beirut: Among the most useful are those by Nils Strom. Land reform has been the subject of analysis by Doreen Warriner, *Land Reform in Principle and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); Robert Fernea, "Land Reform and Ecology in Postrevolutionary Iraq," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 17 (1969):356–381; and John Simmons, "Agricultural Development in Iraq: Planning and Management Failure," *Middle East Journal* 19, 2 (1965):129–140. The views of the longtime Ba'thist minister Sa'dūn Ḥammādī are reflected in *Naḥwa Iṣlāḥ Zirā'ī Ishtirākī* [Toward a Socialist Agrarian Reform] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 1964). An excellent overall assessment of economic change in Iraq in the 1960s and 1970s is to be found in Yusif Sayigh, *The Economies of the Arab World: Development Since 1945* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978). For more up-to-date material on the economy, the best sources are the *Middle East Economic Digest* (London), the *Middle East Economic Survey* (Nicosia: Middle East Research and Publishing Center), and the *Quarterly Economic Review, Iraq,* published by the *Economist* (London). The Iraqi government publishes statistical abstracts each year and its central bank puts out yearly reports, but they are sometimes difficult to obtain outside of Iraq, and publication has been irregular since the start of the Iran-Iraq war. The *Arab World File* [Fiche du monde Arabe], published in Beirut in both English and French, contains well-researched background material on economic and political conditions. The World Bank publishes up-to-date statistics on the countries of the world, including Iraq. Among them are a yearly collection contained in *The World Development Report,* published every year since 1978 (New York: Oxford University Press) and *World Tables,* in two volumes, one with economic data and the other with social data. The latest edition of *World Tables* was published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 1984.

Glossary

Abbasid	An Arab dynasty that governed the Islamic Empire from 750 to 1258. Its capital was Baghdad.
Aghā	A Kurdish tribal leader.
al-Ahd	Covenant. A secret Arab nationalist society formed in Ottoman territories prior to World War I.
Amīr	Prince.
Amṣār	Settlements built by early Muslim rulers to house their troops. These settlements often grew into cities.
Awqāf	Plural of *waqf.*
Āyat Allah	Model or exemplar of God. A title and high rank given to mujtahids in *shīʿī* Islam.
Baʿth	Resurrection or renaissance. A short form for the Arab Socialist Baʿth Party.
Bedouin	An Arab nomad.
Bidʿah	Innovation in Islamic doctrine.
Caliph	Successor to the Prophet Muḥammad. Caliphs were the political and military leaders of the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet in 632.
Derebey	Valley lords or local leaders of the mountainous regions of Kurdistan. They controlled considerable territory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
Dīrah	The land recognized as belonging to a tribe by customary rights.
Dīwān	Council. In Iraq, the council appointed by the king to advise him.
Dīwān	A collection of poems written by one author.
Fallāḥīn	Peasants.
Farʿ	A branch of the Baʿth Party, usually operating at the provincial level.
Fatimid	A *shīʿī* dynasty that governed in parts of North Africa and Southwest Asia from 909 until 1171. Also the name of a *shīʿī* political party operating in Iraq during the 1960s.

Fatwā	A formal legal opinion on religious matters handed down by a muftī (jurist) in *sunnī* Islam and by a mujtahid in *shīʿī* Islam.
Firqah	A local division of the Baʿth Party, usually functioning in small urban quarters or at the village level.
al-Futuwwah	A medieval Islamic brotherhood committed to chivalrous precepts. The name given to an Iraqi youth organization formed in the schools during the 1930s.
Ḥalaqah	A circle or cell. A unit of the Baʿth Party composed of less than ten members.
Hāshimite	The Prophet's clan. In contemporary times, the reference is to the family of the Sharīf Ḥusayn of Mecca whose sons were placed on the throne in Jordan and Iraq. All claim descent from the Prophet and his clan.
Hīwā	Hope. A Kurdish nationalist party formed in the early 1940s.
Iʿdādī	Preparatory or secondary school.
Il-Khān	A Mongol dynasty that governed Persia and parts of Iraq from 1258 to 1349.
Imām:	Among *sunnī*s, a prayer leader. Among the *shīʿah*, one of twelve descendants of ʿAlī, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet. These *shīʿī* imāms are considered by the *shīʿī* community to be sinless and infallible.
Intifāḍah	An uprising. Used to describe the riots of 1952.
al-Istiqlāl	Independence. An Iraqi nationalist party in existence from 1946 to 1958.
al-Jawwāl	The wanderer. An Iraqi nationalist organization operating among youth, especially in the military academy, in the 1930s.
Kharijite	A medieval Islamic sect that opposed most regimes in power.
Lazmah	A type of land tenure.
Liwāʾ	A province; the largest unit of local administration in Iraq under the mandate and independence. Now called a *muḥāfaẓah*.
Madrasah	Higher religious school, teaching theology and jurisprudence. In modern times the ordinary word for school.
Maktab	Elementary religious school, teaching the Quran and reading and writing, usually in the village mosque.
Mallāk	Landowner.

Mamlūk	Mamlūks were slaves captured or purchased by Islamic rulers and used for military and administrative purposes. They often rose through the ranks to acquire high positions in the state.
Mīrī	Land owned by the state and often leased to landowners.
Mudīr	A director. The mudīr al-nāḥiyyah is head of the smallest unit of local government.
Muftī	In *sunnī* Islam, the jurist with the authority to issue a *fatwā*. A man learned in Islamic law.
Mujtahid	In the *shīʿī* sect, a highly learned religious leader with the authority to interpret the Quran and to issue a *fatwā*.
Mukhtār	A village chief or the head of an urban quarter.
Mullā	An elementary-level religious teacher; a religious leader with some Islamic learning.
Mutaṣarrif	Governor of a province.
al-Muthannā	An Arab tribal hero distinguished for making the first Islamic attacks on the Sassanian Empire in 635. An Iraqi nationalist organization active in the 1930s.
Nāḥiyyah	A unit of local government.
Naqīb	The leader, in any Muslim city, of the descendants of the Prophet, designated to look after their interests. A man of prestige and authority.
Pasha	A high-ranking military and administrative official in the Ottoman Empire. An honorary title of respect.
Pēshmerga	Commando. The Kurdish fighting force gathered by Mullā Muṣṭafā-l-Bārzānī in his struggle against the central government in Baghdad.
Qaḍā'	An administrative district approximately the size of a county.
Qāḍī	A religious judge responsible for applying Islamic law in religious courts.
Qā'imaqām	Administrative official in charge of a *qaḍā'*.
Ramaḍān	The ninth month of the Islamic calendar, during which Muslims fast during daylight hours.
Rushdiyyah	Middle-level (intermediate) school under the Ottomans.
Safavid	A dynasty that governed Persia from 1500 to 1794. Its first ruler was responsible for establishing *shīʿī* Islam as the official religion of Persia.
al-Salafiyyah	An Islamic reform movement founded by Muḥammad ʿAbduh, an Egyptian, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Ṣarīfah	Mud-hut dwelling with a reed-mat roof.
Sassanian	The last pre-Islamic dynasty to govern Persia, from 226 to 651.
Sha'b	People.
Shaqāwah	A thug or bully. A local tough.
Sharī'ah	The Islamic way of life, often translated as Islamic law. The ***sharī'ah*** involves a wide variety of conduct from religious duties to regulations involving marriage and divorce.
Sharīf	Descendant of the Prophet. Also refers to the Sharīf Ḥusayn.
Shaykh	Among the Arabs, the head of a tribe; among the Kurds, a man respected for his religious learning.
Shī'ah	One of the two major sects of Islam, a minority in the Islamic world as a whole, a slight majority in Iraq. The ***shī'ah*** split from the main body of Islam in the first Islamic century over a political issue and later developed doctrinal differences with the ***sunnī***s.
Shu'bah	An administrative division of the Ba'th Party.
Sirkāl	The agent of a tribal shaykh; in southern Iraq the ***sirkāl*** was often the leader of a clan as well.
Sunnah	The practice of the Prophet, eventually codified by religious scholars.
Sunnī	The majority sect in Islam; followers of the ***sunnah***. In principle, the ***sunnī***s follow the elective principle in selecting their leaders; in reality they have tended to follow those leaders who could make their claims to leadership effective.
Tanẓīmāt	Reorganization. The reform movement, largely based on administrative and legal reorganization, of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century.
TAPU	A title deed to land given by the Ottomans. The initials stand for the department that issued them.
'Ulamā'	Those who know, or are learned in religious matters. Religious leaders in Islam, and specifically theologians.
Umayyad	An Arab dynasty that governed an expanding Islamic Empire from 661 to 750. Its capital was Damascus.
Waḥdah	Unity, usually used to refer to Arab unity.
Waqf	A Muslim endowment. Money or property given in perpetuity to the religious establishment, usually for charitable purposes.
Wathbah	Uprising, specifically the 1948 uprising against the

	Portsmouth Treaty.
Wilâyah	A large province or administrative unit under the Ottomans. In Ottoman times the territory later to become Iraq was divided into three ***wilāyahs***: Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra.

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